

# THE PROPHECIES OF EZEKIEL

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## Introduction

### I. The Person of the Prophet

Ezekiel, **יְהוֹקִיאֵל** (Eze. 1: 3; 24:24), i.e., **יְהוֹקִיאֵל**, *God strengthens*, **Ἰεζεκιήλ** (LXX and Book of Sirach, ch. Eze. 49: 8), in the Vulgate *Ezechiel*, while Luther, after the example of the LXX, writes the name *Hesekiel*, was the son of Busi, of priestly descent, and was carried away captive into exile to Babylon in the year 599 B.C., — i.e., in the eleventh year before the destruction of Jerusalem, — along with King Jehoiachin, the nobles of the kingdom, many priests, and the better class of the population of Jerusalem and of Judah (Eze. 1: 2; 40: 1; cf. 2Ki. 24:14ff.; Jer. 29: 1). He lived there in the northern part of Mesopotamia, on the banks of the Chaboras, married, and in his own house, amidst a colony of banished Jews, in a place called Tel-abib (Eze. 1: 1; 3:15, 24; 8: 1; 24:18). In the fifth year of his banishment, i.e., 595 B.C., he was called to be a prophet of the Lord, and laboured in this official position, as may be shown, twenty-two years; for the latest of his prophecies is dated in the twenty-seventh year of his exile, i.e., 572 B.C. (Eze. 29:17). Regarding the other circumstances and events of his life, as also of his death, nothing is known. The apocryphal legends found in the Fathers and in the Rabbinical writings, to the effect that he was put to death by a prince of his own nation for rebuking his idolatry, and was buried in the tomb of Shem and Arphaxad, etc. (cf. Carpzov, *Intro.* ii. p. 203ff.), are without any historical value. So much alone is certain, that he ended his life among the exiles, where God had assigned him his sphere of labour, and did not, like his contemporary Daniel (comp. Dan. 1:21; 20: 1), outlive the termination of the Captivity and the commencement of the redemption of Israel from Babylon, as his prophecies do not contain the slightest allusion to that effect.

### II. The Times of the Prophet

Ezekiel, like Daniel, is a prophet of the exile, but in a different fashion from the latter, who had been already carried away prisoner before him to Babylon on the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Jehoiakim, and who lived there upwards of seventy years at the Babylonian and Medo-Persian

court, and who held from time to time very important offices of State. Daniel was placed by God in this high position, which afforded him a view of the formation and evolution of the world- kingdom, in order that from this standpoint he might be enabled to see the development of the world-kingsdoms in the struggle against the kingdom of God, and to predict the indestructible power and glory of the latter kingdom, which overcomes all the powers of the world. Ezekiel, on the other hand, was appointed a watcher over the exiled nation of Israel, and was in this capacity to *continue* the work of the earlier prophets, especially that of Jeremiah, with whom he in several ways associates himself in his prophecies; to preach to his contemporaries the judgment and salvation of God, in order to convert them to the Lord their God. — Rightly to understand his work as a prophet, the ripe fruit of which lies before us in his prophetic writings, we must not only keep in view the importance of the exile for the development of the kingdom of God, but also form a clear conception of the relations amidst which Ezekiel carried on his labours.

What the Lord had caused to be announced by Moses to the tribes of Israel while they were yet standing on the borders of the Promised Land, and preparing to take possession of it, viz., that if they should persistently transgress His commands, He would not only chastise them with heavy punishments, but would finally drive them out of the land which they were about to occupy, and disperse them among all nations (Lev. 26:14-45; Deu. 28:15-68), — this threatening, repeated by all the prophets after Moses, had been already executed by the Assyrians upon the ten tribes, who had revolted from the house of David, and was now in process of fulfilment by the Chaldeans upon the kingdom of Judah also. In the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, for the first time invaded Judah, captured Jerusalem, made Jehoiakim tributary, and carried away to Babylon a number of Israelitish youths of noble birth and of the blood-royal, amongst whom was Daniel, along with a portion of the vessels of the temple, in order that these youths might be trained up for the service of his court (Dan. 1: 1-7). With this invasion of the Chaldeans begin the seventy years of Chaldean servitude and exile in Babylon, predicted by Jeremiah. As Jehoiakim, so early as three years afterwards, revolted against Nebuchadnezzar, the latter, after a lengthened siege, took Jerusalem a second time, in the third month of the reign of Jehoiachin, and carried away into captivity to Babylon, along with the captive monarch and the members of his court, the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem, a great number of priests, warriors, carpenters, and smiths, leaving behind in the land only the meaner portion of the people, over whom he appointed as his vassal King Mattaniah, the uncle of the banished monarch, whose name he changed to Zedekiah (2Ki. 24:10-17; Jer. 29: 2). By this removal of the heart and strength of the nation the power of the kingdom of Judah was broken; and although Nebuchadnezzar did not at that

time *destroy* it, but still allowed it to remain as a subject kingdom under his sway, yet its existence could not be of any long duration. Judah had fallen too deeply to recognise in the calamities which she had suffered the chastening hand of her God, and to bow herself repentantly under His mighty arm. Instead of listening to the voice of the prophet Jeremiah, and bearing the Chaldean yoke in patience (2Ch. 36:12), both monarch and people placed their trust in the assistance of Egypt, and Zedekiah broke the oath of fealty which he had sworn to the king of Babylon. To punish this perfidy, Nebuchadnezzar again marched against Jerusalem, and by the capture and burning of the city and temple in the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign put an end to the kingdom of Judah.

Zedekiah, who had fled from the beleaguered city, was taken by the Chaldeans, and brought with his sons to Riblah into the presence of King Nebuchadnezzar, who first caused the sons of Zedekiah to be put to death before the eyes of their father; next, Zedekiah himself to be deprived of sight, and then commanded the blind monarch to be conducted in chains to Babylon (2Ki. 25: 1-21; Jer. 52: 1-30). Many military officers and priests of rank were also put to death at Riblah; while those who had been taken prisoners at Jerusalem, along with the deserters and a great portion of the rest of the people, were led away into exile to Babylon (2Ki. 25: 1-21; Jer. 52: 1-30). By this catastrophe the Old Testament theocracy lost its political existence; the covenant people were now driven out of their own land amongst the heathen, to bear the punishment of their obstinate apostasy from the Lord their God. Nevertheless this dispersion among the heathen was no entire rejection of Israel; it was merely a *suspension*, and not an *annihilation*, of the covenant of grace. Man's unfaithfulness cannot destroy the faithfulness of God. "In spite of this terrible judgment, brought down upon them by the heaviest transgressions, Israel was, and remained," — as Auberlen (*The Prophet Daniel*, p. 27, 2nd ed.) well remarks, — "the chosen people, through whom God was still to carry out His intentions towards humanity. His gifts and calling may not be repented of" (Rom. 11:29). Even *after* the Babylonian exile the theocracy was not again restored; the covenant people did not after their return again recover their independence, but remained, with the exception of the short period when under the Maccabees they won for themselves their freedom, in constant dependence upon the heathen world-rulers, until, after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, they were completely dispersed among all the nations of the earth. The kingdom of God, however, was not *really* to perish along with the external theocracy; it was only to pass into a new phase of development, which was intended to be the medium of transition towards its renewal and perfection in that kingdom of God which was to be founded by Christ. To pave the way to this end, and at the same time to serve as a witness to the exiles, that Israel, notwithstanding its dispersion among the heathen, still remained God's people, the Lord raised up in Ezekiel, the son of a priest, a prophet of uncommon power and energy in the midst of

the captives, “one who raised his voice aloud, like a trumpet, and showed to Israel its misdeeds, — whose whole manifestation furnished the most powerful testimony that the Lord was still amongst His people; who was himself a temple of the Lord, before whom the visible temple, which yet remained standing for a short time at Jerusalem, sank back into its nothingness; a spiritual Samson, who seized with mighty arm the pillars of the idol temple, and dashed it to the ground; a powerful, gigantic nature, which was fitted by that very qualification to effectually subdue the Babylonian spirit of the time, which delighted in powerful, gigantic, and grotesque forms; standing alone, but equal to a hundred of the sons of the prophets” (Hengstenberg’s *Christol.* II. p. 531).

The call of Ezekiel to the prophetic office took place in the fifth year of the reign of Zedekiah, in the fourth month of the year (Eze. 1: 1, 2), at a point of time when, amongst those who had remained behind in the land, as well as amongst those who had been carried to Babylon, the hope of the speedy downfall to the Babylonian monarchy, and of the return of the exiles to their native country, which was then to follow, was very strong, and was powerfully encouraged by the lying statements of false prophets; cf. Jer. 29. In the same year and month prophesied Hananiah, a prophet from Gibeon, in the temple at Jerusalem, before the eyes of the priests and the whole people, saying that Jehovah would break the yoke of the king of Babylon, and within two years bring back to Jerusalem all the temple-vessels carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, as well as King Jechoniah and all the captives who had been brought to Babylon, Jer. 28: 1-4. And the prophet Jeremiah, who with the word of the Lord rebuked and opposed those lying predictions and empty hopes, and foretold that the Babylonian servitude would be of long duration, was violently assailed and persecuted by the lying prophets, even by those of them who were to be found in Babylon; cf. Jer. 28: 5-17; 29:21-32. This delusion regarding the political condition of affairs, this spirit of resistance to the decree of the Lord, had seized not only upon the people, but also upon the nobles and the king, so that they formed and eagerly carried on conspiracies against the king of Babylon. The meeting of the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon, with Zedekiah in Jerusalem, had no other object than this (Jer. 27: 3). The embassy, moreover, sent by Zedekiah to Babylon (Jer. 24: 3), as well as his own journey thither in the fourth year of his reign (Jer. 51:59), were intended merely to deceive the king of Babylon, by assurances of devotion and fidelity, in order that the intended revolt might be carried out. But this baseless hope of a speedy liberation from the Babylonian yoke was ignominiously disappointed: in consequence of the treacherous rebellion of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar, after a blockade and siege of a year and a half, captured Jerusalem, burnt the city and temple to the ground, and destroyed the kingdom of Judah. By this blow all the supports upon which the God-alienated nation had vainly relied were broken.

The delusive statements of the false prophets had proved to be lies; the predictions of the Lord's prophets, on the contrary, had been strikingly justified as divine truth. The destruction of Jerusalem, the burning of the temple, and the downfall of the kingdom, form accordingly a turning-point for the prophetic labours of Ezekiel. Hitherto, prior to the calamity, he had to announce to the people (animated with the hope of speedy liberation from exile) the judgment of the downfall of Jerusalem and Judah, although such preaching found little acceptance. The time, however, had now arrived when, in order to preserve from despair the nation languishing in exile, and given over to the scorn, contempt, and tyranny of the heathen, he was able to open up the sources of comfort by announcing that the Lord, in requital of the ignominy heaped upon His people, would overwhelm all the heathen nations with destruction, but that, if His people whom they had oppressed would repent and return to Him, He would again gather them out of their dispersion; would make of them a holy nation, walking in His commands and yielding Him a willing service; would conduct them back to their own land; would give them His servant David for a prince, and once more gloriously establish His kingdom.

### **III. The Book of Ezekiel**

The collection of the prophecies placed together in this book, as forming a complete unity, falls into two main divisions: — I. Announcements of judgment upon Israel and the heathen nations, Eze. 1-32; II. Announcements of salvation for Israel, Eze. 33-48. Each of these main divisions is subdivided into two sections. The first, namely, contains the prophecies of judgment (*a*) upon Jerusalem and Israel, Eze. 3:22-24; (*b*) upon the heathen nations, Eze. 25-32. The second main division contains (*c*) the predictions of the redemption and restoration of Israel, and the downfall of the heathen world-power, Eze. 33-39; (*d*) the prophetic picture of the re-formation and exaltation of the kingdom of God, Eze. 40-48; and the entire collection opens with the solemn dedication of Ezekiel to the prophetic office, Eze. 1: 1-3:21. The prophecies of the first, third, and fourth parts are throughout arranged in chronological order; those of the second part — the threatenings predicted against the heathen nations — are disposed according to their actual subject-matter. This is attested by the chronological data in the superscriptions, and confirmed by the contents of the whole of the groups of prophecies in the first three parts. The first part contains the following chronological notices: the fifth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin (Eze. 1: 2) as the time of Ezekiel's call to the office of prophet, and of the first predictions regarding Jerusalem and Israel; then the sixth (Eze. 8: 1), seventh (Eze. 20: 1), and ninth years of the captivity of that monarch (Eze. 24: 1). The second part contains the predictions against seven foreign nations, of which those against Tyre fall in the eleventh (Eze. 26: 1), those against Egypt in the

tenth (Eze. 39: 1), twenty-seventh (Eze. 29:17), eleventh (Eze. 30:20 and 31: 1), and twelfth years of the exile. Of the two last parts, each contains only one chronological notice, namely, Eze. 33:21, the twelfth year of the captivity, i.e., one year after the destruction of Jerusalem; and Eze. 40: 1, the twenty-fifth year of the captivity, or the fourteenth after the destruction of Jerusalem. The remaining prophecies, which bear at their head no note of time, connect themselves closely as to their contents with those which are furnished with chronological data, so that they belong to the same period with those. From this it appears that the prophecies of the first part wholly, those of the second part to a great extent, date before the destruction of Jerusalem; those of the third and fourth parts proceed from the time after this catastrophe. This chronological relationship is in favour of the view that the prophecies against foreign nations, Eze. 25-32, are not — as the majority of expositors suppose — to be assigned to the second, but rather to the first half of the book. This view is confirmed, on the one hand, by the contents of the prophecies, inasmuch as these, without an exception, announce only the downfall of the heathen nations and kingdoms, making no reference to the future forgiveness and conversion of the residue of these nations, and through this very peculiarity connect themselves closely with the prophecies of threatening against Israel in the first part; on the other hand, by the resemblance which exists between Eze. 30: 1-20 and Eze. 3:16-21, compared with Eze. 18:19-32, and which leaves no doubt upon the point that Eze. 33: 1-20 marks out to the prophet the task which was to occupy his attention after the destruction of Jerusalem, and consequently forms the introduction to the second half of his prophecies. — For further remarks upon the contents and subdivisions of the book, see the expositions in the introductory observations to the individual sections and chapters.

Ezekiel's *style of prophetic representation* has many peculiarities. In the first place, the clothing of symbol and allegory prevails in him to a greater degree than in all the other prophets; and his symbolism and allegory are not confined to general outlines and pictures, but elaborated in the minutest details, so as to present figures of a boldness surpassing reality, and ideal representations, which produce an impression of imposing grandeur and exuberant fulness. Even the simplest prophetic discourse is rich in imagery, and in bold, partly even strange, comparisons, and branches out into a copiousness which strives to exhaust the subject on all sides, in consequence of which many peculiar expressions and forms are repeated, rendering his language diffuse, and occasionally even clumsy. These peculiarities of his style of representation it has been attempted, on the one hand, to explain by the influence of the Babylonian spirit and taste upon the form of his prophecy; while others, again, would regard them as the result of a literary art, striving to supply the defect of prophetic spirit, and the failing power of the living word, by the aid of learning and an elaborate

imitation of actual life. The supposed Babylonian spirit, however, in the forms of our prophet's symbolism, has no existence. The assertion of Hävernick, that "the whole of these symbols has a colossal character, which points in many ways to those powerful impressions experienced by the prophet in a foreign land, — Chaldea, — and which here are grasped and given out again with a mighty and independent spirit," remains yet to be proved. For the observation that these symbols, in reference to form and contents, resemble in many respects the symbols of his contemporary Daniel, is not sufficient for the purpose, and cannot in itself be accepted as the truth, by reference to the picture of the eagle, and the comparison of rich men to trees, cedars, in Eze. 17, because these pictures already occur in the older prophets, and lions as well as cedars are native in Palestine. Just as little are Babylonian impressions to be recognised in the vision of the field with the dead men's bones, Eze. 37, and of the new temple, Eze. 40, so that there only remains the representation of the cherubim with four faces, in Eze. 1 and 10, which is peculiar to Ezekiel, as presumptive evidence of Chaldean influence. But if we leave out of account that the throne, upon which the Lord appears in human form, indisputably forms the central point of this vision, and this central point has no specific Babylonian impress, then the representation of the cherubim with faces of men, lions, oxen, and eagles, cannot be derived from the contemplation of the Assyrian or Chaldean sculptures of human figures with eagle heads and wings, or winged oxen with human heads, or sphinxes with bodies of animals and female heads, such as are found in the ruins of ancient Nineveh, inasmuch as the cherubim of Ezekiel were not pictures of oxen with lions' manes, eagles' wings, and human countenances furnished with horns, — as W. Neumann has still portrayed them in his treatise upon the tabernacle, — but had, according to Ezekiel, Eze. 1: 5, the *human* form. There are indeed also found, among the Assyrian sculptures, winged human figures; but these Ezekiel had no reason to copy, because the cherubic images in human form, belonging to Solomon's temple, lay much nearer to his hand. The whole of Ezekiel's symbolism is derived from the Israelitish sanctuary, and is an outcome of Old Testament ideas and views. As the picture of the idea temple in Eze. 40ff. is sketched according to the relations of Solomon's temple, which was burnt by the Chaldeans, so the elements for the description of the majestic theophany, in Eze. 1 and 10, are contained in the throne of Jehovah, which was above the cherubim, who were over the covering of the ark of the covenant; and in the phenomena amid which was manifested the revelation of the divine glory at the establishment of the covenant on Sinai. On the basis of these facts, Isaiah had already represented to himself the appearance of the Lord, as a vision, in which he beholds Jehovah in the temple, sitting on a high and lofty throne, and, standing around the throne, seraphim with six wings, who began to sing, "Holy, holy" (Isa. 6). This symbolism we find modified in Ezekiel, so as to correspond with the aim of his vocation, and

elaborated to a greater extent. The manner in which he works out this vision and other symbols certainly gives evidence of his capacity to describe, distinctly and attractively in words, what he had beheld in spirit; although the symbolism itself is, just as little as the vision, a mere product of poetic art, or the subjective framework of a lively fancy, without any real objective foundation; for it rests, in harmony with its contents and form, upon views which are *spiritually* real, i.e., produced by the Spirit of God in the soul of the prophet, in which the art of the author is reduced to a faithful and distinct reproduction of what had been seen in the spirit.

It is only the abundance of pictures and metaphors, which is in this respect *characteristic* of Ezekiel, and which betrays a lively imagination, and many-sidedness of his knowledge. These qualities appear not merely in the sketch of the new temple (Eze. 40ff.), but also in the description of the widespread commerce of Tyre (Eze. 27), and of the relations of Egypt (Eze. 29 and 31), as well as in the endeavours manifest in *all* his representations, — not merely in the symbolical descriptions and allegorical portraits (Eze. 16 and 23), but also in the simple discourses, in the rebukes of the current vices and sins, and in the threatenings of punishment and judgment, — to follow out the subject treated of into the most special details, to throw light upon it from all sides, to penetrate through it, and not to rest until he has exhausted it, and that without any effort, in so doing, to avoid repetitions. This style of representation, however, has its foundation not merely in the individuality of our prophet, but still more in the relations of his time, and in his attitude towards that generation to whom he had to announce the counsel and will of the Lord. As symbolism and the employment of parables, pictures, and proverbs is, in general, only a means for the purpose of presenting in an attractive light the truths to be delivered, and to strengthen by this attractiveness the impression made by speech and discourse, so also the copiousness and circumstantiality of the picture, and even the repetition of thoughts and expressions under new points of view, serve the same end. The people to whom Ezekiel was not to preach repentance, by announcing the divine judgment and salvation, was “a rebellious race, impudent and hard-hearted” (Eze. 3: 7-9, 26; 12: 2, etc.). If he was faithfully and conscientiously to discharge the office, laid upon him by the Lord, of a watcher over the house of Israel, he must not only punish with stern words, and in drastic fashion, the sins of the people, and distinctly paint before their eyes the horrors of the judgment, but he must also set forth, in a style palpable to the senses, that salvation which was to bloom forth for the repentant nation when the judgment was fulfilled.

Closely connected with this is the other peculiarity of Ezekiel’s style of prophecy, namely, the marked prominence assigned to the divine origin and contents of his announcements, which distinctly appears in the standing form of



address — "Son of man" — with which God summons the prophet to speech and action; in the continual use of אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה; in the formulae כֹּה אָמַר יְיָ or יְיָ אָמַר; in the introduction to almost every discourse of God's requirement to him to prophesy or to do this and that; and in the formula which recurs frequently in all the discourses, — "Ye shall know that I am Jehovah." The standing address, "Son of man," and the frequent call to speech and action, are likewise regarded by modern critics as a token of the failure of the prophetic spirit-power. Both phrases, however, could only be held to convey so much, if — in conformity with the view of Ewald, who, agreeably to the *naturalistic* representation of prophecy, assumes it to be a result of high poetic inspiration — they had been selected by Ezekiel of his own free choice, and employed with the intention of expressing the feeling of his own profound distance from God, and of imparting to himself courage to prophesy. If, on the contrary, according to the *Scriptural* conception of prophecy, God the Lord addressed Ezekiel as "son of man," and called him, moreover, on each occasion to utter predictions, then the use of the God-given name, as well as the mention of the summons, as proceeding from God only, furnishes an evidence that Ezekiel does not, like the false prophets, utter the thoughts and inspirations of his own heart, but, in all that he says and does, acts under a *divine* commission and under *divine* inspiration, and serves to impress the rebellious nation more and more with the conviction that a prophet of the Lord is in their midst (Eze. 2: 5; 33:33), and that God had not departed with His Spirit from Israel, notwithstanding their banishment among the heathen. In favour of the correctness of this view of the expressions and phrases in question, there speak decisively the manner and fashion in which Ezekiel was called and consecrated to the prophetic office; not only the instruction which God communicates to him for the performance of his calling (Eze. 2: 1-3, 21), — and which, immediately upon the first act of his prophetic activity, He supplements to the effect of enjoining upon him dumbness or entire silence, only then permitting him to open his mouth to speak when He wishes to inspire him with a word to be addressed to the rebellious people (Eze. 3:26, 27; cf. 24:27 and 33:22), — but also the theophany which inaugurated his call to the prophetic office (Eze. 1), which, as will appear to us in the course of the exposition, has unmistakably the significance of an explanation of a reality, which will not be dissolved and annihilated with the dissolution of the kingdom of Judah, and the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the temple of that covenant of grace which Jehovah had concluded with Israel.

It is usual, moreover, to quote, as a peculiarity of Ezekiel's prophecies, the prominence given to his priestly descent and disposition, especially in the visions, Eze. 1, cf. Eze. 10, Eze. 8-11 and 40-48, and in the individual traits, as Eze. 4:13ff., 20:12ff., 22: 8; 26:24, 16ff., etc. etc., which Ewald explains as "a result of the one-sided literary conception of antiquity according to mere books

and traditions, as well as of the extreme prostration of spirit intensified by the long duration of the exile and bondage of the people;” while de Wette, Gesenius, and others would see in it an intellectual narrowness on the part of the prophet. The one view is as groundless and perverse as the other, because resting upon the superficial opinion that the copious descriptions of the sacred articles in the temple were sketched by Ezekiel only for the purpose of preserving for the future the elevating recollection of the better times of the past (Ewald). When we recognise, on the contrary the symbolical character of these descriptions, we may always say that for the portrayal of the conception of the theophany in Eze. 1 and 10, and of the picture of the temple in Eze. 40, no individual was so well fitted as a priest, familiar with the institutions of worship. In this symbolism, however, we may not venture to seek for the products of intellectual narrowness, or of sacerdotal ideas, but must rise to the conviction that God the Lord selected a priest, and no other, to be His prophet, and permitted him to behold the future of His kingdom on earth in the significant forms of the sanctuary at Jerusalem, because this form was the symbolical covering which presented the closest correspondence to the same. — Still less to the passages Eze. 4:13ff., 20:12ff., and others, in which stress is laid upon the ceremonial commands of the law, and where their violation is mentioned as a cause of the judgment that was breaking over Israel, furnish evidence of priestly one-sidedness or narrowness of spirit. Ezekiel takes up towards the Mosaic Law no other position than that which is taken by the older prophets. He finds impressed on the precepts, not only of the Moral, but also of the Ceremonial Law, divine thoughts, essential elements of the divine holiness, attesting itself in and to Israel; and penetrated by a sense of the everlasting importance of the whole law, he urges obedience to its commands. Even the close adherence to the Pentateuch is not at all peculiar to him, but is common to all the prophets, inasmuch as all, without exception, criticize and judge the life of the nation by the standard of the prescriptions in the Mosaic Law. Ezekiel, with his nearest predecessor Jeremiah, is in this respect only distinguished from the earlier prophets, that the verbal references to the Pentateuch in both occur with greater frequency, and receive a greater emphasis. But this has its ground not so much in the descent of both from a priestly family, as rather in the relations of their time, especially in the circumstance that the falling away of the nation from the law had become so great, in consequence of which the penal judgments already threatened in the Pentateuch upon transgressors had fallen upon them, so that the prophets of the Lord were obliged, with all their energy, to hold up before the rebellious race not merely the commandments, but also the threatenings of the law, if they were faithfully to discharge the office to which they had been called.

The *language* of Ezekiel is distinguished by a great number of words and forms, which do not occur elsewhere, and which, probably, were for the greater part coined by himself (see an enumeration of these in the *Manual of Historico-Critical Introduction*, § 77, Rem. 6), and shows a strong leaning towards the diction of the Pentateuch. It has, however, been unable to resist the influences of the inaccurate popular dialect, and of the Aramaic idiom, so that it betrays, in its many anomalies and corruptions, the decline and commencement of the dying out of the Hebrew tongue (cf. § 17, of the *Historico-Critical Manual*), and reminds us that the prophet's residence was in a foreign country.

The *genuineness* of Ezekiel's prophecies is, at the present day, unanimously recognised by all critics. There is, moreover, no longer any doubt that the writing down and relation of them in the volume which has been transmitted to us were the work of the prophet himself. Only Ewald and Hitzig, for the purpose of setting aside the predictions which so much offend them, have proposed very artificial hypotheses regarding the manner and way in which the book originated; but it appears unnecessary to enter into a closer examination of these, as their probability and trustworthiness depend only upon the dogmatic views of their authors.

For the exegetical literature, see the *Historico-Critical Manual*, vol. i. p. 353 (new ed. p. 254), where is also to be added, as of very recent date, *Das Buch Ezechiels*. Uebersetzt und erklärt von Dr. Th. Kleifoth. Zwei Abtheilungen. Rostock, 1864 and 1865.

## EXPOSITION

### First Half — The Prophecies of Judgment

#### CH. 1-32

#### **Ch. 1-3:21 — The Consecration and Calling of Ezekiel to the Office of Prophet**

In a vision of God, Ezekiel beholds in a great cloud, through which shone the splendour of fire, and which a tempestuous wind drives from the north, the glory of the Lord above the cherubim upon a majestic throne in human form (Eze. 1), and hears a voice, which sends him as a prophet to Israel, and inspires him with the subject-matter of his announcements (Eze. 2: 1-3: 3). He is thereafter transported in spirit to Tel-abib on the Chebar, into the midst of the exiles, and the duties and responsibilities of his calling laid before him (Eze. 3: 4-21). By this divine appearance and the commission therewith connected is he consecrated, called, and ordained to the prophetic office. The

whole occurrences in the vision are subdivided into the copious description of the theophany, Eze. 1, by which he is consecrated for his calling; and into the revelation of the word, Eze. 2: 1-3, 21, which prepares him for the discharge of the same. From these contents it clearly appears that these chapters do not constitute the *first section* of the book, but the *introduction* to the whole, to which the circumstantial notices of the time and place of this revelation of God at the commencement, 1: 1-3, also point.

*Eze. 1.* THE APPEARANCE OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD. — V. 1-3. Time and place of the same. —

*V. 1. Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth (month), on the fifth (day) of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. V. 2. On the fifth day of the month, it was the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, V. 3. The word of the Lord came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Busi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.*

Regarding **וַיִּהְיֶה** at the beginning of a book, as e.g., in Jon. 1: 1, cf. the note on Jos. 1: 1. The two notices of the year in vv. 1 and 2 are closely connected with the twofold introduction of the theophany. This is described in verse first, according to its form or phenomenal nature, and then in verses second and third, according to its intended purpose, and its effect upon the prophet. The phenomenon consisted in this, that the heavens were opened, and Ezekiel saw visions of God. The heaven opens not merely when to our eye a glimpse is disclosed of the heavenly glory of God (Calvin), but also when God manifests His glory in a manner perceptible to human sight. The latter was the case here. **מַרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים**, “visions of God,” are not “*visiones praestantissimae*,” but visions which have divine or heavenly things for their object; cf. Isa. 6: 1; 1Ki. 22:19; 2Ki. 6:17. Here it is the manifestation of Jehovah’s glory described in the following verses. This was beheld by Ezekiel in the thirtieth year, which, according to verse second, was in the fifth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin. The real identity of these two dates is placed beyond doubt by the mention of the same day of the month, “on the fifth day of the month” (v. 2 compared with v. 1). The fifth year from the commencement of Jehoiachin’s captivity is the year 595 B.C.; the thirtieth year, consequently, is the year 625 B.C. But the era, in accordance with which this date is reckoned, is matter of dispute, and can no longer be ascertained with certainty. To suppose, with Hengstenberg, that the reference is to the year of the prophet’s own life, is forbidden by the addition “in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month,” which points to an era generally recognised. In the year 625 B.C., Nabopolassar became king of Babylon, and therefore many of the older expositors have supposed that Ezekiel means the thirtieth year of the era of Nabopolassar. Nothing, however, is know

of any such era. Others, as the Chaldee paraphrast and Jerome, and in modern times also Ideler, are of opinion that the thirtieth year is reckoned from the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, because in that year the book of the law was discovered, and the regeneration of public worship completed by a solemn celebration of the Passover. No trace, however, can elsewhere be pointed out of the existence of a chronology dating from these events. The Rabbins in *Seder Olam* assume a chronology according to the periods of the years of jubilee, and so also Hitzig; but for this supposition too all reliable proofs are wanting. At the time mentioned, Ezekiel found himself **בְּתוֹךְ הַגְּזָלָה**, “in the midst of the exiles,” i.e., *within the circuit of their settlements*, not, *in their society*; for it is evident from Eze. 3:15 that he was alone when the theophany was imparted to him, and did not repair till afterwards to the residences of the settlers. V. 3. By the river *Chebar*, in the land of the Chaldees, i.e., in Babylon or Mesopotamia. The river **כְּבַר**, to be distinguished from **חֲבוֹר**, the river of Gosan, which flows into the Tigris, see on 2Ki. 17: 6, is the Mesopotamian *Chaboras*, **Ἀβόρρας** (Strabo, xvi. 748), or **Χαβώρας** (Ptolem. v. 18, 3), Arab. *châbûr* (Edrisi Clim. iv. p. 6, ii. p. 150, ed. Jaubert and Abulf. Mesopot. in the *N. Repertor.* III. p. xxiv.), which according to Edrisi takes its rise from “nearly three hundred springs,” near the city *Ras-el-’Ain*, at the foot of the mountain range of Masius, flows through Upper Mesopotamia in a direction parallel with its two principal streams, and then, turning westward, discharges itself into the Euphrates near Kirkesion. There the hand of Jehovah came upon Ezekiel. The expression **יְדֵי יְיָ הִתְהַלְּלוּ** always signifies a miraculous working of the power or omnipotence of God upon a man, — the hand being the organ of power in action, — by which he is placed in a condition to exert superhuman power, 1Ki. 18:46, and is the regular expression for the supernatural transportation into the state of ecstasy for the purpose of beholding and announcing (cf. 2Ki. 3:15), or undertaking, heavenly things; and so throughout Ezekiel, cf. 3:22; 8: 1; 33:22; 37: 1; 40: 1.

*Eze. 1: 4-28.* Description of the theophany seen by the spirit of the prophet.

V. 4. *And I saw, and, lo, a tempestuous wind came from the north, a great cloud, and a fire rolled together like a ball, and the brightness of light round about it, and out of its midst, as the appearance of glowing metal from the midst of the fire.*

The description begins with a general outline of the phenomenon, as the same presented itself to the spiritual eye of the prophet on its approach from the north. A tempestuous wind brings hither from the north a great cloud, the centre of which appears as a lump of fire, which throws around the cloud the brightness of light, and presents in its midst the appearance of glowing metal. The coming of the phenomenon from the north is, as a matter of course, not connected with the Babylonian representation of the mountain of the gods

situated in the extreme north, Isa. 14:13. According to the invariable usage of speech followed by the prophets, especially by Jeremiah (cf. e.g., Jer. 1:14; 4: 6; 6: 1, etc.), the north is the quarter from which the enemies who were to execute judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah break in. According to this usage, the coming of this divine appearance from the north signifies that it is from the north that God will bring to pass the judgment upon Judah. אֵשׁ מִתְּלַקְחָהּ, “fire rolled together like a ball,” is an expression borrowed from Exo. 9:10. לוֹ refers to עֵינַי, and מִתְּלַקְחָהּ to אֵשׁ, as we see from the words in apposition, הָאֵשׁ מִתְּלַקְחָהּ. The fire, which formed the centre of the cloud, had the appearance of חֲשֵׁמֶל. The meaning of this word, which occurs again in v. 27 and Eze. 8: 2, is disputed. The Septuagint and Vulgate translate it by ἤλεκτρον, *electrum*, i.e., a metal having a bright lustre, and consisting of a mixture of gold and silver. Cf. Strabo, III. 146; Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxxiii. 4. To the explanation of Bochart, that it is a compound of נְחֹשֶׁת, “brass,” and the Talmudic word מִלֵּל or מִלֵּלָא, “*aurum rude*,” and signifies “rough gold ore,” is opposed the fact that the reading מִלֵּלָא in the Talmud is not certain, but purports to be מִמֵּלָא (cf. Gesen. *Thesaur.* p. 535, and Buxtorf, *Lexic. Talmud.* p. 1214), as well as the circumstance that raw gold ore has not a lustre which could shine forth out of the fire. Still less probability has the supposition that it is a compound of חֲשֵׁל, in Syriac “*conflavit, fabricavit*,” and חֲשֵׁם, “*fricuit*,” on which Hävernicks and Maurer base the meaning of “a piece of metal wrought in the fire.” The word appears simply to be formed from חֲשֵׁם, probably “to glow,” with ל appended, as כְּרָמֶל from כָּרַם, and to denote “glowing ore.” This meaning is appropriate both in v. 27, where עֵינַי חֲשֵׁמֶל is explained by מִרְאֵה-אֵשׁ, as well as in Eze. 8: 2, where זֹהָר, “brilliancy,” stands as parallel to it. חֲשֵׁמֶל, however, is different from נְחֹשֶׁת קָלִיל in v. 7 and in Dan. 10: 6, for חֲשֵׁמֶל refers in all the three places to the person of Him who is enthroned above the cherubim; while נְחֹשֶׁת קָלִיל in v. 7 is spoken of the feet of the cherubim, and in Dan. 10: 6 of the arms and feet of the personage who there manifests Himself. In verse fifth the appearance is described more minutely. There first present themselves to the eye of the seer four beings, whom he describes according to their figure and style.

#### *Eze. 1: 5-14.* The four cherubim.

V. 5. *And out of its midst there prominently appeared a figure, consisting of four creatures, and this was their appearance: they had the figure of a man.* V. 6. *And each had four faces, and each of them had four wings.* V. 7. *And their feet were upright-standing feet; and the soles of their feet like the soles of a calf, and sparkling like the appearance of shining brass.* V. 8. *And the hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and all four had faces and wings.* V. 9. *Their*

wings were joined one to another; they turned not as they went; they went each one in the direction of his face. V. 10. And the form of their faces was that of a man; and on the right all four had a lion's face; and on the left all four had the face of an ox; and all four had an eagle's face. V. 11. And their faces and their wings were divided above, two of each uniting with one another, and two covering their bodies. V. 12. And they went each in the direction of his face; whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went; they turned not as they went. V. 13. And the likeness of the creatures resembled burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches: it (the fire) went hither and thither amongst the beings; and the fire was brilliant, and from the fire came forth lightning. V. 14. And the beings ran hither and thither in a zig-zag manner.

From out of the fiery centre of the cloud there shows itself the form (דְמוֹת, properly “resemblance,” “picture”) of four חַיֹּת, *animantia*, “living creatures;” ζῶα, Rev. 4: 6; not θηρία, “wild beasts,” as Luther has incorrectly rendered it, after the *animalia* of the Vulgate. These four creatures had דְמוֹת אָדָם, “the figure of a man.” Agreeably to this notice, placed at the head of the description, these creatures are to be conceived as presenting the appearance of a human body in all points not otherwise specified in the following narrative. Each of them had four faces and four wings (אַרְבַּע) without the article stands as a distributive, and בְּנַפְיָם are “pinions,” as in Isa. 6: 2, not “pairs of wings”). Their feet were רַגְלֵי יֶשֶׁר, “a straight foot;” the singular stands generically, stating only the nature of the feet, without reference to their number. We have accordingly to assume in each of the four creatures two legs, as in a man. יֶשֶׁר, “straight,” i.e., standing upright, not bent, as when sitting or kneeling. רַגְלֵי is the whole leg, including the knee and thigh, and כַּף רַגְלֵי, “sole of the foot,” or the under part of the leg, with which we tread on the ground. This part, not the whole leg, resembled the calf's foot, which is firmly planted on the ground. The legs sparkled like the appearance of נְהַשֵּׁת קָלָל. The subject of נֹצְצִים is not “the בְּרוּבִים, which are understood to be intended under the חַיֹּת in verse fifth” (Hitzig), for this subject is too far distant, but רַגְלֵיהֶם, which is here construed as masculine, as in Jer. 13:16. In this sense are these words apprehended in Revelation 1:15, and נְהַשֵּׁת קָלָל there translated by χαλκοκρίβανος. On this word see Hengstenberg and Düsterdieck on Rev. 1:15. נְהַשֵּׁת קָלָל probably signifies “light,” i.e., “bright, shining brass,” as the old translators have rendered it. The Septuagint has ἑξαστράπτων; the Vulgate, *aes candens*; and the Chaldee paraphrase, *aes flammans*. The signification “smoothed, polished brass” (Bochart), rests upon uncertain combinations; cf. Gesen. *Thes.* p. 1217, and is appropriate neither here nor in Dan. 10: 6, where these words precede, “His face had the appearance of lightning, and his eyes were as a flame of fire.” Under the four wings were four hands on the four sides

of each cherub, formed like the hands of a man. The wings accordingly rested upon the shoulders, from which the hands came forth. The *Chetib* **וידו** may certainly be defended if with Kimchi and others we punctuate **וידו**, and take the suffix distributively and **אדם** elliptically, “his (i.e., each of the four creatures) hands were (the hands of) a man;” cf. for such an ellipsis as this, passages like that in Psa. 18:34, **רגלי באַיִלוֹת**, “my feet as the (feet) of hinds;” Job. 35: 2, **מֵאֵל**, “before the righteousness of God.” It is extremely probable, however, that **ו** is only the error of an old copyist for **י**, and that the *Keri* **וידו** is the correct reading, as the taking of **אדם** elliptically is not in keeping with the broad style of Ezekiel, which in its verbosity verges on tautology. The second half of v. 8 is neither, with Hävernick, to be referred to the following ninth verse, where the faces are no more spoken of, nor, with Hitzig, to be arbitrarily mutilated; but is to be taken as it stands, comprising all that has hitherto been said regarding the faces and wings, in order to append thereto in v. 9ff. the description of the use and nature of these members. The definite statement, that “the wings were joined one to another,” is in v. 11 limited to the two upper wings, according to which we have so to conceive the matter, that the top or the upper right wing of each cherub came in contact with the top of the left wing of the neighbouring cherub. This junction presented to the eye of the seer the unity and coherence of all the four creatures as a complete whole — a **חֵזָקָה**, and implied, as a consequence, the harmonious action in common of the four creatures. They did not turn as they went along, but proceeded each in the direction of his face. **אֶל-עֵבֶר פָּנָיו**, “over against his face.” The meaning is thus rightly given by Kliefoth: “As they had four faces, they needed not to turn as they went, but went on as (i.e., in the direction in which) they were going, always after the face.”

In the closer description of the faces in v. 10, the face of the man is first mentioned as that which was turned towards the seer, that of the lion to the right side, the ox to the left, and that of the eagle (behind). In naming these three, it is remarked that all the four creatures had these faces: in naming the man’s face, this remark is omitted, because the word **פְּנֵיהֶם** (referring to all the four) immediately precedes. In v. 11, it is next remarked of the faces and wings, that they were divided above (**מִלְמַעְלָה**, “from above,” “upward”); then the direction of the wings is more precisely stated. The word **וּפְנֵיהֶם** is neither to be referred to the preceding, “and it was their faces,” nor, with Hitzig, to be expunged as a gloss; but is quite in order as a statement that not only the wings but also the faces were divided above, consequently were not like *Janus’* faces upon one head, but the four faces were planted upon four heads and necks. In the description that follows, **חֹבְרוֹת אִישׁ** is not quite distinct, and **אִישׁ** is



manifestly to be taken as an abbreviation of אֵשׁ לְאַחֲזֵתָהּ in v. 9: on each were two wings joining one another, i.e., touching with their tops the tips of the wings of the cherub beside them, in accordance with which we have to conceive the wings as expanded. Two were covering their bodies, i.e., each cherub covered his body with the pair of wings that folded downwards; not, as Kliefoth supposes, that the lower wings of the one cherub covered the body of the other cherub beside him, which also is not the meaning in v. 23; see note on that verse. In v. 12, what is to be said about their movements is brought to a conclusion, while both statements are repeated in v. 9b, and completed by the addition of the *principium movens*. In whatever direction the רוּחַ “was to go, in that direction they went;” i.e., not according to the action of their own will, but wherever the רוּחַ impelled them. רוּחַ, however, signifies not “impulse,” nor, in this place, even “the wind,” as the vehicle of the power of the spiritual life palpable to the senses, which produced and guided their movements, (Kliefoth), but spirit. For, according to v. 20, the movement of the wheels, which was in harmony with the movements of the cherubim, was not caused by the wind, but proceeded from the רוּחַ הַחַיָּה, i.e., from the spirit dwelling in the creature. On the contrary, there is not in the whole description, with the exception of the general statement that a tempestuous wind drove from the north the great cloud in which the theophany was enwrapped, any allusion to a means of motion palpable to the senses. In the 13th and 14th verses is described the entire impression produced by the movement of the whole appearance. וְדָמוֹת הַחַיּוֹת precedes, and is taken absolutely “as regards the form of the creatures,” and corresponds to the דָּמוֹת אֲרָבַע חַיּוֹת in v. 5, with which the description of the individual figures which appeared in the brightness of the fire was introduced. Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches. אֵשׁ refers to אֵשׁ as the principal conception. Fire, like the fire of burning coals and torches, went, moved hither and thither amongst the four creatures. This fire presented a bright appearance, and out of it came forth lightnings. The creatures, moreover, were in constant motion. רָצוּא, from רָצָא, an Aramaising form for the Hebrew רוּץ, to run. The *infin. absol.* stands instead of the *finite verb*. The conjecture of רָצוּא, after Gen. 8: 7 (Hitzig), is inappropriate, because here we have not to think of “coming out,” and no reason exists for the striking out of the words, as Hitzig proposes. The continued motion of the creatures is not in contradiction with their perpetually moving on straight before them. “They went hither and thither, and yet always in the direction of their countenances; because they had a countenance looking in the direction of every side” (Kliefoth). בְּרָק, signifies not “lightning” (= בְּרָק), but comes from בָּרַק; in Syriac, “to be split,” and denotes “the splitting,” i.e., the zigzag course of the lightning (Kliefoth).

*Eze. 1:15-21.* The four wheels beside the cherubim. —

V. 15. *And I saw the creatures, and, lo, there was a wheel upon the earth beside the creatures, towards their four fronts.* V. 16. *The appearance of the wheels and their work was like the appearance of the chrysolite; and all four had one kind of figure: and their appearance and their work was as if one wheel were within the other.* V. 17. *Towards their four sides they went when they moved: they turned not as they went.* V. 18. *And their felloes, they were high and terrible; and their felloes were full of eyes round about in all the four.* V. 19. *And when the creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the creatures raised themselves up from the earth, the wheels also raised themselves.* V. 20. *Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went in the direction in which the spirit was to go; and the wheels raised themselves beside them: for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels.* V. 21. *When the former moved, the latter moved also; when the former stood, the latter stood; and when the former raised themselves from the ground, the wheels raised themselves beside them: for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels.*

The words, “and I saw the creatures,” prepare the way for the transition to the new object which presented itself in these creatures to the eye of the seer. By the side of these creatures upon the ground he sees a wheel, and that at the four fronts, or front faces of the creatures. The singular suffix in **לְאַרְבַּעַת פָּנָיו** can neither be referred, with Rosenmüller, to the chariot, which is not mentioned at all, nor, with Hitzig, to the preposition **אַצֵּל**, nor, with Hävernick, Maurer, and Kliefoth, to **אַרְבַּן**, and so be understood as if every wheel looked towards four sides, because a second wheel was inserted in it at right angles. This meaning is not to be found in the words. The suffix refers *ad sensum* to **חַיּוֹת** (Ewald), or, to express it more correctly, to the figure of the cherubim with its four faces turned to the front, conceived as a unity — as *one* creature (**הַחַיָּה**, v. 22).

Accordingly, we have so to represent the matter, that by the side of the four cherubim, namely, beside his front face, a wheel was to be seen upon the earth. Ezekiel then saw four wheels, one on each front of a cherub, and therefore immediately speaks in v. 16 of wheels (in the plural). In this verse **מְרֻאָה** is *adspectus*, and **מַעֲשֵׂה** “work;” i.e., both statements employing the term “construction,” although in the first hemistich only the appearance, in the second only the construction, of the wheels is described. **תְּרֻשֵׁשׁ** is a chrysolite of the ancients, the topaz of the moderns, — a stone having the lustre of gold. The construction of the wheels was as if one wheel were within a wheel, i.e., as if in the wheel a second were inserted at right angles, so that without being turned it could go towards all the four sides. **נִבְיָהֶן**, in v. 18, stands absolutely. “As regards their felloes,” they possessed height and terribleness, — the latter because they were full of eyes all round. Hitzig arbitrarily understands **גְּבוּהָ** of the upper sides; and **נִרְאָה**, after the Arabic, of the under side, or that which lies towards the back. The movement of the wheels completely followed the

movement of the creatures (vv. 19-21), because the spirit of the creature was in the wheels. **הַחַיִּים**, in vv. 20 and 21, is not the “principle of life” (Hävernick), but the cherubic creatures conceived as a unity, as in v. 22, where the meaning is undoubted. The sense is: the wheels were, in their motion and rest, completely bound by the movements and rest of the creatures, because the spirit which ruled in them was also in the wheels, and regulated their going, standing, and rising upwards. By the **רוּחַ הַחַיִּים** the wheels are bound in one with the cherub-figures, but not by means of a chariot, to or upon which the cherubim were attached.

*Eze. 1:22-28.* The throne of Jehovah. —

*V. 22. And over the heads of the creature there appeared an expanse like the appearance of the terrible crystal, stretched out over their heads above. V. 23. And under the expanse were their wings, extended straight one towards another: each had two wings, covering to these, and each two (wings), covering to those, their bodies. V. 24. And I heard the sound of their wings, as the sound of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, as they went: a loud rushing like the clamour of a camp: when they stood, they let down their wings. V. 25. And there came a voice from above the expanse which was above their heads; when they stood, they let their wings sink down. V. 26. Over the expanse above their heads was to be seen, like a sapphire stone, the figure of a throne: and over the figure of the throne was a figure resembling a man above it. V. 27. And I saw like the appearance of glowing brass, like the appearance of fire within the same round about; from the appearance of his loins upwards, and from the appearance of his loins downwards, I saw as of the appearance of fire, and a shining light was round about it. V. 28. Like the appearance of the bow, which is in the clouds in the day of rain, was the appearance of the shining light round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And I saw it, and fell upon my face, and I heard the voice of one that spake.*

Above, over the heads of the figures of the cherubim, Ezekiel sees something like the firmament of heaven (v. 22f.), and hears from above this canopy a voice, which re-echoes in the rushing of the wings of the cherubim, and determines the movement as well as the standing still of these creatures. The first sentence of v. 22 literally signifies: “And a likeness was over the heads of the creature, — a canopy, as it were, stretched out.” **רָקִיעַ** is not the genitive after **דְּמוּת**, but an explanatory apposition to it, and before **רָקִיעַ**; neither has **כִּי** fallen out (as Hitzig supposes), nor is it to be supplied. For **דְּמוּת** denotes not any definite likeness, with which another could be compared, but, properly, *similitudo*, and is employed by Ezekiel in the sense of “something like.” **רָקִיעַ**, without the article, does not mean the firmament of heaven, but any expanse, the appearance of which is first described as resembling the firmament by the words **כַּעֲשֵׂן הַקָּרָח**. It is not the firmament of heaven which Ezekiel sees above

the heads of the cherubim, but an expanse resembling it, which has the shining appearance of a fear-inspiring crystal. נִזְרָא, used of crystal, in so far as the appearance of this glittering mass dazzles the eyes, and assures terror, as in Jud. 13: 6, of the look of the angel; and in Job. 37:22, of the divine majesty. The description is based upon Exo. 24:10, and the similitude of the crystal has passed over to the Apocalypse, Rev. 4: 6. Under the canopy were the wings of the cherubim, יְשָׁרוֹת, standing straight, i.e., spread out in a horizontal direction, so that they appeared to support the canopy. אֲשֶׁה אֶל-אֲהַזְתָּהּ is not, with Jerome and others, to be referred to the cherubim (הַחֲזִיָּה), but to בְּנִפְיָהֶם, as in v. 9. The לְאִישׁ which follows does refer, on the contrary, to the cherub, and literally signifies, “To each were two wings, covering, namely, to these and those, their bodies.” לְהִנָּה corresponds to לְאִישׁ, in a manner analogous to לְאִחָתָּ לָהֶם in v. 6. By the repetition of the לְהִנָּה, “to these and those,” the four cherubim are divided into two pairs, standing opposite to one another. That this statement contradicts, as Hitzig asserts, the first half of the verse, is by no means evident. If the two creatures on each side covered their bodies with the two wings, then two other wings could very easily be so extended under the canopy that the tops of the one should touch those of the other. As the creatures moved, Ezekiel hears the sound, i.e., the rustling of their wings, like the roaring of mighty billows. This is strengthened by the second comparison, “like the voice of the Almighty,” i.e., resembling thunder, cf. 10: 5. The קוֹל הַמְּלָאָה that follows still depends on הַמְּלָאָה אֲשֶׁמַע, which occurs only here and in Jer. 11: 6, is probably synonymous with הַמוֹן, “roaring,” “noise,” “tumult.” This rushing sound, however, was heard only when the creatures were in motion; for when they stood, they allowed their wings to fall down. This, of course, applies only to the upper wings, as the under ones, which covered the body, hung downwards, or were let down. From this it clearly appears that the upper wings neither supported nor bore up the canopy over their heads, but only were so extended, when the cherubim were in motion, that they *touched* the canopy. In v. 25 is also mentioned whence the loud sound came, which was heard, during the moving of the wings, from above the canopy, consequently from him who was placed above it, so that the creatures, always after this voice resounded, went on or stood still, i.e., put themselves in motion, or remained without moving, according to its command.

With the repetition of the last clause of v. 24 this subject is concluded in v. 25. Over or above upon the firmament was to be seen, like a sapphire stone, the likeness of a throne, on which sat one in the form of a man — i.e., Jehovah appeared in human form, as in Dan. 7: 9f. Upon this was poured out a fiery, shining light, like glowing brass (עֵינַי הַשָּׁמַיִל, as in v. 4) and like fire, סָבִיב

בֵּית־לָהּ, “within it round about” (מִבֵּית = בֵּית, “within,” and לָהּ, pointing back to דְּמוּת כֶּסֶף). This appears to be the simplest explanation of these obscure words. They are rendered differently by Hitzig, who translates them: “like fire which has a covering round about it, i.e., like fire which is enclosed, whose shining contrasts so much the more brightly on account of the dark surrounding.” But, to say nothing of the change which would then be necessary of בֵּית into בֵּית, this meaning seems very far-fetched, and cannot be accepted for this reason alone, that מְרֹאֵה אֵשׁ, neither in the following hemistich (v. 27b) nor in 8: 2, has any such or similar strengthening addition. The appearance above shows, as the centre of the cloud (v. 4), a fiery gleam of light, only there is to be perceived upon the throne a figure resembling a man, fiery-looking from the loins upwards and downwards, and round about the figure, or rather round the throne, a shining light (נֹגַהּ, cf. v. 4), like the rainbow in the clouds, cf. Rev. 4: 3. This [הוֹאֵ, v. 28, does not refer to הַנֹּגַהּ, but to the whole appearance of him who was enthroned, — the covering of light included, but throne and cherubim (Eze. 10: 4, 19) excluded (Hitzig)] was the appearance of the likeness of Jehovah’s glory. With these words closes the description of the vision. The following clause, “And I saw, etc.,” forms the transition to the word of Jehovah, which follows on the second chapter, and which summoned Ezekiel to become a prophet to Israel. Before we pass, however, to an explanation of this word, we must endeavour to form to ourselves a clear conception of the significance of this theophany.

For its full understanding we have first of all to keep in view that it was imparted to Ezekiel not merely on his being called to the office of prophet, but was again repeated three times, — namely, in Eze. 3:22ff., where he was commissioned to predict symbolically the impending siege of Jerusalem; Eze. 8: 4ff., when he is transported in spirit to the temple-court at Jerusalem for the purpose of beholding the abominations of the idol-worship practised by the people, and to announce the judgment which, in consequence of these abominations, was to burst upon the city and the temple, in which it is shown to him how the glory of the Lord abandons, first the temple and thereafter the city also; and in Eze. 43: 1ff., in which is shown to him the filling of the new temple with the glory of the Lord, to swell for ever among the children of Israel. In all three passages it is expressly testified that the divine appearance was like the first which he witnessed on the occasion of his call. From this Kliefoth has drawn the right conclusion, that the theophany in Eze. 1: 4ff. bears a relation not to the call only, but to the whole prophetic work of Ezekiel: “We may not say that God so appears to Ezekiel at a later time, because He so appeared to him at his call; but we must say, conversely, that because God wills and must so appear to Ezekiel at a later time while engaged in his prophetic vocation,

therefore He also appears to him in this form already at his call.” The intention, however, with which God so appears to him is distinctly contained in the two last passages, Eze. 8-11 and Eze. 43: “God withdraws in a visible manner from the temple and Jerusalem, which are devoted to destruction on account of the sin of the people: in a visible manner God enters into the new temple of the future; and because the whole of what Ezekiel was inspired to foretell was comprehended in these two things, — the destruction of the existing temple and city, and the raising up of a new and a better; — because the whole of his prophetic vocation had its fulfilment in these, therefore God appears to Ezekiel on his call to be a prophet in the same form as that in which He departs from the ancient temple and Jerusalem, in order to their destruction, and in which He enters into the new edifice in order to make it a temple. The form of the theophany, therefore, is what it is in Eze. 1: 4ff., because its purpose was to show and announce to the prophet, on the one side the destruction of the temple, and on the other its restoration and glorification.” These remarks are quite correct, only the significance of the theophany itself is not thereby made clear. If it is clear from the purpose indicated why God here has the cherubim with Him, while on the occasion of other appearances (e.g., Dan. 7: 9; Isa. 6: 1) He is without cherubim; as the cherubim here have no other significance than what their figures have in the tabernacle, viz., that God has there His dwelling-place, the seat of His gracious presence; yet this does not satisfactorily explain either the special marks by which the cherubim of Ezekiel are distinguished from those in the tabernacle and in Solomon’s temple, or the other attributes of the theophany. Kliefoth, moreover, does not misapprehend those diversities in the figures of the cherubim, and finds indicated therein the intention of causing it distinctly to appear that it is the one and same Jehovah, enthroned amid the cherubim, who destroys the temple, and who again uprears it. Because Ezekiel was called to predict both events, he therefore thinks there must be excluded, on the one hand, such attributes in the form of the manifestation as would be out of harmony with the different aims of the theophany; while, on the other, those which are important for the different aims must be combined and comprehended in one form, that this one form may be appropriate to all the manifestations of the theophany. It could not therefore have in it the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat; because, although these would probably have been appropriate to the manifestation for the destruction of the old temple (Eze. 8: 1ff.), they would not have been in keeping with that for entering into the new temple. Instead of this, it must show the living God Himself upon the throne among “the living creatures;” because it belongs to the new and glorious existence of the temple of the future, that it should have Jehovah Himself dwelling within it in a visible form.

From this, too, may be explained the great fulness of the attributes, which are divisible into three classes:

1. Those which relate to the manifestation of God for the destruction of Jerusalem;
  2. Those which relate to the manifestation of God for entering into the new temple;
- and,
3. Those which serve both objects in common.

To the last class belongs everything which is essential to the manifestation of God in itself, e.g., the visibility of God in general, the presence of the cherubim in itself, and so on: to the first class all the signs that indicate wrath and judgment, consequently, first, the coming from the north, especially the fire, the lightnings, in which God appears as He who is coming to judgment; but to the second, besides the rainbow and the appearance of God in human form, especially the wheels and the fourfold manifestation in the cherubim and wheels. For the new temple does not represent the rebuilding of the temple by Zerubbabel, but the economy of salvation founded by Christ at His appearing, to which they belong as essential tokens; to be founded, on the one hand, by God's own coming and dwelling upon the earth; on the other, to be of an oecumenic character, in opposition to the particularities and local nature of the previous ancient dispensation of salvation. God appears bodily, in human form; lowers down to earth the canopy on which His throne is seated; the cherubim, which indicate God's gracious presence with His people, appear not merely in symbol, but in living reality, plant their feet upon the ground, while each cherub has at his side a wheel, which moves, not in the air, but only upon the earth. By this it is shown that God Himself is to descend to the earth, to walk and to dwell visibly among His people; while the oecumenic character of the new economy of salvation, for the establishment of which God is to visit the earth, is represented in the fourfold form of the cherubim and wheels. The number four — the sign of the oecumenicity which is to come, and the symbol of its being spread abroad into all the world — is assigned to the cherubim and wheels, to portray the spreading abroad of the new kingdom of God over the whole earth. But how much soever that is true and striking this attempt at explanation may contain in details, it does not touch the heart of the subject, and is not free from bold combinations. The correctness of the assumption, that in the theophany attributes of an opposite kind are united, namely, such as should refer only to the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, and such as relate only to the foundation and nature of the new economy of salvation, is beset with well-founded doubts. Why, on such a hypothesis, should the form of the theophany remain the same throughout in all three or four cases? This question, which lies on the surface, is not satisfactorily answered by the remark that Ezekiel had to predict not only the destruction of the old, but also the foundation of a new and much more glorious kingdom of God. For not only would this end, but also the

object of showing that it is the same God who is to accomplish both, have been fully attained if the theophany had remained the same only in those attributes which emblemize in a general way God's gracious presence in His temple; while the special attributes, which typify only the one and the other purpose of the divine appearance, would only they have been added, or brought prominently out, where this or that element of the theophany had to be announced.

Moreover, the necessity in general of a theophany for the purpose alleged is not evident, much less the necessity of a theophany so peculiar in form. Other prophets also, e.g., Micah, without having seen a theophany, have predicted in the clearest and distinctest manner both the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the raising up of a new and more glorious kingdom of God. The reason, then, why Ezekiel witnessed such a theophany, not only at his call, but had it repeated to him at every new turn in his prophetic ministry, must be deeper than that assigned; and the theophany must have another meaning than that of merely consecrating the prophet for the purpose of announcing both the judgment upon Jerusalem and the temple, and the raising up of a new and more glorious economy of salvation, and strengthening the word of the prophet by a symbolical representation of its contents.

To recognise this meaning, we must endeavour to form a distinct conception, not merely of the principal elements of our theophany, but to take into consideration at the same time their relation to other theophanies. In our theophany three elements are unmistakeably prominent, — 1st, The peculiarly formed cherubim; 2nd, The wheels are seen beside the cherubim; and, 3rd, The firmament above, both with the throne and the form of God in human shape seated upon the throne. The order of these three elements in the description is perhaps hardly of any importance, but is simply explicable from this, that to the seer who is on earth it is the under part of the figure which, appearing visibly in the clouds, first presents itself, and that his look next turns to the upper part of the theophany. Especially significant above all, however, is the appearance of the cherubim under or at the throne of God; and by this it is indisputably pointed out that He who appears upon the throne is the same God that is enthroned in the temple between the cherubim of the mercy-seat upon their outspread wings. Whatever opinion may be formed regarding the nature and significance of the cherubim, this much is undoubtedly established, that they belong essentially to the symbolical representation of Jehovah's gracious presence in Israel, and that this portion of our vision has its real foundation in the plastic representation of this gracious relation in the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle or temple. As, however, opinions are divided on the subject of the meaning of these symbols, and the cherubim of Ezekiel, moreover, present no inconsiderable differences in their four faces and four wings from the figures of the cherubim upon the mercy-seat and in the temple, which had only one face



and two wings, we must, for the full understanding of our vision, look a little more closely to the nature and significance of the cherubim.

While, according to the older view, the cherubim are angelic beings of a higher order, the opinion at the present day is widely prevalent, that they are only symbolical figures, to which nothing real corresponds, — merely ideal representations of creature life in its highest fulness. <sup>n</sup>

This modern view, however, finds in the circumstance that the cherubim in the Israelitish sanctuary, as well as in Ezekiel and in the Apocalypse, are symbolical figures of varying shape, only an apparent but no real support. The cherubim occur for the first time in the history of Paradise, where, in Gen. 3:22-24, it is related that God, after expelling the first human pair from Paradise, placed at the east side of the garden the cherubim and the flame of a sword, which turned hither and thither, to guard the way to the tree of life. If this narrative contains historical truth, and is not merely a myth or philosopheme; if Paradise and the Fall, with their consequences, extending over all humanity, are to remain real things and occurrences, — then must the cherubim also be taken as real beings. “For God will not have placed symbols — pure creations of Hebrew fancy — at the gate of Paradise,” Kliefoth. Upon the basis of this narrative, Ezekiel also held the cherubim to be spiritual beings of a higher rank. This appears from Eze. 28:14-16, where he compares the prince of Tyre, in reference to the high and glorious position which God had assigned him, to a cherub, and to Elohim. It does not at all conflict with the recognition of the cherubim as real beings, and, indeed, as spiritual or angelic beings, that they are employed in visions to represent super-sensible relations, or are represented in a plastic form in the sanctuary of Israel. “When angels,” as Kliefoth correctly remarks in reference to this, “sing the song of praise in the holy night, this is an historical occurrence, and these angels are real angels, who testify by their appearance that there are such beings as angels; but when, in the Apocalypse, angels pour forth sounds of wrath, these angels are figures in vision, as elsewhere, also, men and objects are seen in vision.” But even this employment of the angels as “figures” in vision, rests upon the belief that there are actually beings of this kind. Biblical symbolism furnishes not a single undoubted instance of abstract ideas, or ideal creations of the imagination, being represented by the prophets as living beings. Under the plastic representation of the cherubim upon the mercy-seat, and in the most holy and holy place of the tabernacle and the temple, lies the idea, that these are heavenly, spiritual beings; for in the tabernacle and temple (which was built after its pattern) essential relations of the kingdom of God are embodied, and all the symbols derived from things having a real existence. When, however, on the other hand, Hengstenberg objects, on Rev. 4: 6, “that what Vitranga remarks is sufficient to refute those who, under the cherubim, would understand angels of rank, — viz. that these four creatures are throughout the whole of this

vision connected with the assembly of the elders, and are distinguished not only from the angels, but from *all* the angels, as is done in Eze. 7:11,” — we must regard this refutation as altogether futile. From the division of the heavenly assembly before the throne into two choirs or classes (Rev. 5 and 7), — in which the ζῶα (cherubim) and the elders form the one (Eze. 5: 8), the ἄγγελοι the other choir (v. 11), — an argument can be as little derived against the angelic nature of the cherubim, as it could be shown, from the distinction between the στρατιὰ οὐράνιος and ἄγγελος, in Luk. 2:13, that the “multitude of the heavenly host” were no angels at all. And the passage in Rev. 7:11 would only then furnish the supposed proof against the relationship of the cherubim to the angels, if πάντες ἄγγελοι (in general — all angels, how numerous soever they may be — were spoken of. But the very tenor of the words, πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι, “all the angels,” points back to the choir of angels already mentioned in Eze. 5:11, which was formed by πολλοὶ ἄγγελοι, whose number was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.<sup>12</sup>

From the distinction between the ζῶα and the ἄγγελοι in the Apocalypse, no further inference can be deduced than that the cherubim are not common angels, “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister” (Heb. 1:14), but constitute a special class of angels of higher rank.

More exact information regarding the relationship of the cherubim to the other angels, or their nature, cannot indeed be obtained, either from the name *cherubim* or from the circumstance that, with the exception of Gen. 3, they occur always only in connection with the throne of God. The etymology of the word כְּרוּבִים is obscure: all the derivations that have been proposed from the Hebrew or any other Semitic dialect cannot make the slightest pretensions to probability. The word appears to have come down from antiquity along with the tradition of Paradise. See my *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 88ff. If we take into consideration, however, that Ezekiel calls them חַיִּים, and first in Eze. 10 employs the name כְּרוּבִים, known from the tabernacle, or rather from the history of Paradise; since, as may be inferred from 10:20, he first recognised, from the repetition of the theophany related in Eze. 10, that the living creatures seen in the vision *were* cherubim, — we may, from the designation חַיִּים, form a supposition, if not as to their nature, at least as to the significance of their position towards the throne of God. They are termed חַיִּים, “living,” not as being “ideal representatives of all living things upon the earth” (Hengstenberg), but as beings which, among all the creatures in heaven and earth, possess and manifest life in the fullest sense of the word, and on that very account, of all spiritual beings, stand nearest to the God of the spirits of all flesh (who lives from eternity to eternity), and encircle His throne. With this representation harmonises not only the fact, that after the expulsion of the first human beings

from Paradise, God commanded them to guard the way to the tree of life, but also the form in which they were represented in the sanctuary and in the visions. The cherubim in the sanctuary had the form of a man, and were only marked out by their wings as super-terrestrial beings, not bound by the earthly limits of space. The cherubim in Ezekiel and the Apocalypse also preserve the appearance of a man. Angels also assume the human form when they appear visibly to men on earth, because of all earthly creatures man, created in the image of God, takes the first and highest place. For although the divine image principally consists in the spiritual nature of man, — in the soul breathed into him by the Spirit of God, — yet his bodily form, as the vessel of this soul, is the most perfect corporeity of which we have any knowledge, and as such forms the most appropriate garment for the rendering visible the heavenly spiritual being within. But the cherubim in our vision exhibit, besides the figure of the human body with the face of a man, also the face of the lion, of the ox, and of the eagle, and four wings, and appear as four-sided, square-formed beings, with a face on each of their four sides, so that they go in any direction without turning, and yet, while so doing, they can always proceed in the direction of one face; while in the vision in the Apocalypse, the four faces of the creatures named are divided among the four cherubim, so that each has only one of them. In the countenance of man is portrayed his soul and spirit, and in each one also of the higher order of animals, its nature. The union of the lion, ox, and eagle-faces with that of man in the cherubim, is intended, doubtless, to represent them as beings which possess the fulness and the power of life, which in the earthly creation is divided among the four creatures named. The Rabbinical dictum (*Schemoth Rabba*, Schöttgen, *Horae Hebraicae*, p. 1168): *Quatuor sunt qui principatum in hoc mundo tenent. Inter creaturas homo, inter aves aquila, inter pecora bos, inter bestias leo*, contains a truth, even if there lies at the foundation of it the idea that these four creatures represent the entire earthly creation. For in the cherub, the living powers of these four creatures are actually united. That the eagle, namely, comes into consideration only in reference to his power of flight, in which he excels all other birds, may be concluded from the circumstance that in Rev. 4: 7 the fourth ζῴον is described as resembling an eagle flying. According to this principle, the ox and the lion are only to be considered in reference to their physical strength, in virtue of which the ox amongst tame animals, the lion amongst wild beasts, take the first place, while man, through the power of his mind, asserts his supremacy over all earthly creatures. <sup>13</sup>

The number four, lastly, both of the cherubim and of the four faces of each cherub, in our vision, is connected with their capacity to go in all directions without turning, and can contribute nothing in favour of the assumption that these four indicate the whole living creation, upon the simple ground that the

number four is not essential to them, for on the mercy-seat only two cherubim are found. That they are also represented in the vision as higher spiritual beings, appears not only from Eze. 10: 7, where a cherub stretches forth his hand and fetches out fire from between the cherubim, and places it in the hands of the angel clothed in white linen, who was to accomplish the burning of Jerusalem; but, still more distinctly, from what is said in the Apocalypse regarding their working. Here we observe them, as Kliefoth has already pointed out, “in manifold activity: they utter day and night the Tersanctus; they offer worship, Eze. 4: 8, 9; 5: 8; 19: 4; they repeat the Amen to the song of praise from all creation, Eze. 5:14; they invite John to see what the four first seals are accomplishing, Eze. 6: 1, 3, 5, 7; one of them gives to the seven angels the seven phials of wrath, Eze. 15: 7.”

Besides this activity of theirs in the carrying out of the divine counsel of salvation, we must, in order to gain as clear a view as possible of the significance of the cherubim in our vision, as well as in Biblical symbolism generally, keep also in view the position which, in the Apocalypse, they occupy around the throne of God. Those who are assembled about the throne form these three concentric circles: the four ζῳα (cherubim) form the innermost circle; the twenty-four elders, seated upon thrones, clothed in white garments, and wearing golden crowns upon their heads, compose the wider circle that follows; while the third, and widest of all, is formed by the many angels, whose number was many thousands of thousands (Rev. 4: 4, 6; 5: 6, 8; 7:11). To these are added the great, innumerable host, standing before the throne, of the just made perfect from among all heathens, peoples, and languages, in white raiment, and with palms in their hands, who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and now, before the throne of God, serve Him day and night in His temple (Eze. 7: 9, 14, 15). Accordingly the twenty-four elders, as the patriarchs of the Old and New Testament congregation of God, have their place beside God’s throne, between the cherubim and the myriads of the other angels; and in the same manner as they are exalted above the angels, are the cherubim exalted even above them. This position of the cherubim justifies the conclusion that they have the name of ζῳα from the indwelling fulness of the everlasting blessed life which is within them, and which streams out from the Creator of spirits — the King of all kings, and Lord of all lords — upon the spiritual beings of heaven, and that the cherubim immediately surround the throne of God, as being representatives and bearers of the everlasting life of blessedness, which men, created in the image of God, have forfeited by the Fall, but which they are again, from the infinitude of the divine compassion, to recover in the divine kingdom founded for the redemption of fallen humanity.

It is easier to recognise the meaning of the wheels which in our vision appear beside the cherubim. The wheel serves to put the chariot in motion. Although the throne of God is not now expressly represented and designated as a chariot-throne, yet there can be no doubt that the wheels which Ezekiel sees under the throne beside the cherubim are intended to indicate the possibility and ease with which the throne can be moved in the direction of the four quarters of the heavens. The meaning of the eyes, however, is matter of controversy, with which, according to 1:18, the felloes of the wheels, and, as is expressly mentioned in Eze. 10:12, and also noted in Rev. 4: 6, the cherubim themselves are furnished all round. According to Kliefoth, the eyes serve the purpose of motion; and as the movement of the cherubim and wheels indicates the spreading abroad over the whole earth of the new economy of salvation, this mass of eyes in the cherubim and wheels must indicate that this spreading abroad is to take place, not through blind accident, but with conscious clearness. The meaning is not appropriate to Rev. 4: 6, where the cherubim have no wheels beside them, and where a going forth into all countries is not to be thought of. Here therefore, according to Kliefoth, the eyes only serve to bring into view the moral and physical powers which have created and supported the kingdom of God upon earth, and which are also to bring it now to its consummation. This is manifestly arbitrary, as any support from passages of the Bible in favour of the one view or the other is entirely wanting. The remark of Rosenmüller is nearer the truth, that by the multitude of the eyes is denoted *Coelestium naturarum perspicacia et ὄξυωπία*, and leads to the correct explanation of Rev. 5: 6, where the seven eyes of the Lamb are declared to be *τὰ ἑπτὰ πνεύματα τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὰ ἀπεσταλμένα εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν*; the eyes consequently indicate the spiritual effects which proceed from the Lamb over the entire earth in a manner analogous to His seven horns, which are the symbols of the completeness of His power. The eye, then, is the picture and mirror of the Spirit; and the ornamentation of the cherubim and wheels with eyes, shows that the power of the divine Spirit dwells within them, and determines and guides their movements.

The remaining objects of the vision are not difficult to explain. The appearance of the expanse over above the cherubim and wheels, upon which a throne is to be seen, represents the firmament of heaven as the place of God's throne. God appears upon the throne in human form, in the terrible glory of His holy majesty. The whole appearance draws nigh to the prophet in the covering of a great fiery cloud (v. 4). This cloud points back to the "thick cloud" in which Jehovah, in the ancient time, descended upon Mount Sinai amid thunders and lightnings (Exo. 19:16) to establish His covenant of grace, promised to the patriarchs with their seed, — the people of Israel brought forth from Egypt, — and to found His kingdom of grace upon the earth. If we observe the

connection of our theophany with that manifestation of God on Sinai for the founding of the Old Testament dispensation of salvation, we shall neither confine the fire and the lightnings in our vision to the manifestation of God for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, nor refer the splendour which appears above the throne in the form of a rainbow to the grace which returns after the execution of judgment, or to the new dispensation of salvation which is to be established. Nor may we regard these differing attributes, by referring them specially to individual historical elements of the revelation of God in His kingdom, as in opposition; but must conceive of them, more generally and from the point of view of unity, as symbols of the righteousness, holiness, and grace which God reveals in the preservation, government, and consummation of His kingdom. It holds true also of our theophany what Düsterdieck remarks on Rev. 4: 3 (cf. p. 219 of the second edition of his Commentary) regarding the importance of the divine appearance described in that passage: "We may not hastily apply in a general way the description before us by special reference to the judgments of God (which are seen at a later time) in their relation to the divine grace; it is enough that here, where the everlasting and personal ground of all that follows is described, the sacred glory and righteousness of God appear in the closest connection with His unchanging, friendly grace, so that the entire future development of the kingdom of God, and of the world down to the final termination, as that is determined by the marvellous unity of being which is in the holy, righteous, and gracious God, must not only according to its course, but also according to its object, correspond to this threefold glory of the living God." As this fundamental vision (of the Apocalypse) contains all that serves to alarm the enemies and to comfort the friends of Him who sits on the throne, so the vision of Ezekiel also has its fundamental significance not only for the whole of the prophet's ministry, but, generally, for the continuation and development of the kingdom of God in Israel, until its aim has been reached in its consummation in glory. This, its fundamental significance, unmistakably appears from the twofold circumstance, — firstly, that the theophany was imparted to the prophet at his call, and was then repeated at the principal points in his prophetic ministry, at the announcement both of the dissolution of the old kingdom of God by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, Eze. 9-11, and also at the erection of the new temple and a new arrangement of the kingdom (Eze. 40-48). Since, as was formerly already remarked (p. 22), a theophany was not required either for the calling of Ezekiel to the office of a prophet, or for the announcement which was entrusted to him of the annihilation of the old and the foundation of the new kingdom of God, so the revelation of God, which pointed in its phenomenal shape to the dwelling of the Lord among His people in the Holy of Holies in the temple (and which was imparted in this place to Ezekiel, living among the exiles in the land of Chaldea by the banks of the Chebar), could only be intended, in view of the dissolution of the theocracy,

which had already begun, and was shortly to be completed, to give to the prophet and those of his contemporaries who were living with him in exile, a real pledge that the essential element of the theocracy was not to be removed by the penal judgment which was passing over the sinful people and kingdom; but that God the Lord would still continue to attest Himself to His people as the living God, and preserve His kingdom, and one day bring it again to a glorious consummation. — In correspondence with this aim, God appears in the temple in the symbolical forms of His gracious presence as He who is throned above the cherubim; but cherubim and throne are furnished with attributes, which represent the movement of the throne in all directions, not merely to indicate the spreading of the kingdom of God over all the earth, but to reveal Himself as Lord and King, whose might extends over the whole world, and who possesses the power to judge all the heathen, and to liberate from their bondage His people, who have been given into their hands, if they repent and turn unto Him; and who will again gather them together, and raise them in the place of their inheritance to the glory which had been promised.

Such is the significance of the theophany at the inauguration of Ezekiel to the prophetic office. The significance, however, which its repetition possesses is clearly contained in the facts which the prophet was herewith permitted by God to behold. From the temple and city, polluted by sinful abominations, the gracious presence of God departs, in order that temple and city may be given over to the judgment of destruction; into the new and glorious temple there enters again the glory of God, to dwell for ever among the children of Israel.

*Eze. 2: 1-3: 3.* CALL OF EZEKIEL TO THE PROPHETIC OFFICE. — Vv. 1 and 2. Upon the manifestation of the Lord follows the word of vocation. Having, in the feeling of his weakness and sinfulness, fallen to the ground before the terrible revelation of Jehovah's glory, Ezekiel is first of all raised up again by the voice of God, to hear the word which calls him to the prophetic function. —

- V. 1. *And He said to me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, I will speak with thee.* V.  
 2. *Then came spirit unto me as He spake unto me, and it placed me on my feet, and I heard Him speaking unto me.*

The address **אֲנִי ה' אֵלֶיךָ** occurs so frequently in Ezekiel, that it must be regarded as one of the peculiarities of his prophecies. Elsewhere it occurs only once, Dan. 8:17. That it is significant, is generally recognised, although its meaning is variously given. Most expositors take it as a reminder of the weakness and frailness of human nature; Coccejus and Kliefoth, on the contrary, connect it with the circumstance that God appears to Ezekiel in human form, and find in it a **τεκμήριον** *amicitiae*, that God speaks in him as man to man, converses with him as a man with his friend. This last interpretation, however, has against it the

*usus loquendi.* As בִּן־אָדָם denotes man according to his natural condition, it is used throughout as a synonym with אָנוּשׁ, denoting the weakness and fragility of man in opposition to God; cf. Psa. 8: 5; Job. 25: 6; Isa. 51:12; 56: 2; and Num. 23:19. This is the meaning also of בִּן־אָדָם in the address, as may be distinctly seen from the various addresses in Daniel. Daniel is addressed, where comfort is to be imparted to him, as אִישׁ הַמְדוּת, “man greatly beloved,” Dan. 10:11, 19, cf. 9:23; but, on the contrary, in Eze. 8:17, where he has fallen on his face in terror before the appearance of Gabriel, with the words, “Understand, O son of man,” in order to remind him of his human weakness. This is also the case in our verse, where Ezekiel, too, had fallen upon his face, and by God’s word spoken to him, is again raised to his feet. It is only in Ezekiel that this address is constantly employed to mark the distance between the human weakness of his nature and the divine power which gives him the capacity and the impulse to speak. Not, however, with the design, mentioned by Jerome on Dan. 8:17, “that he may not be elated on account of his high calling,” because, as Hävernick subjoins, Ezekiel’s extremely powerful and forcible nature may have needed to be perpetually reminded of what it is in reality before God. If this were the meaning and object of this address, it would also probably occur in the writings of several of the other prophets, as the supposition that the nature of Ezekiel was more powerful and forcible than that of the other prophets is altogether without foundation. The constant use of this form of address in Ezekiel is connected rather with the manner and fashion in which most of the revelations were imparted to him, that is, with the prevalence of “vision,” in which the distinction between God and man comes out more prominently than in ordinary inspiration or revelation, effected by means of an impression upon the inner faculties of man. The bringing prominently forward, however, of the distance between God and men is to remind the prophet, as well as the people to whom he communicated his revelations, not merely of the weakness of humanity, but to show them, at the same time, how powerfully the word of God operates in feeble man, and also that God, who has selected the prophet as the organ of His will, possesses also the power to redeem the people, that were lying powerless under the oppression of the heathen, from their misery, and to raise them up again. — At the word of the Lord, “Stand upon thy feet,” came רִיחַ into the prophet, which raised him to his feet. רִיחַ here is not “life, consciousness” (Hitzig), but the spirit-power which proceeds from God, and which is conveyed through the word which imparted to him the strength to stand before the face of God, and to undertake His command. מַדְבֵּר, *partic. Hithpa.*, properly “collocutor,” occurs here and in Eze. 43: 6, and in Num. 7:89; elsewhere, only in 2Sa. 14:13.



*Eze. 2: 3-7.* The calling of the prophet begins with the Lord describing to Ezekiel the people to whom He is sending him, in order to make him acquainted with the difficulties of his vocation, and to encourage him for the discharge of the same.

V. 3. *And He said to me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to the rebels who have rebelled against me: they and their fathers have fallen away from me, even until this very day.* V. 4. *And the children are of hard face, and hardened heart. To them I send thee; and to them shalt thou speak: Thus says the Lord Jehovah.* V. 5. *And they, — they may hear thee or fail (to do so); for they are a stiff-necked race, — they shall experience that a prophet has been in their midst.* V. 6. *But thou, son of man, fear not before them, and be not afraid of their words, if thistles and thorns are found about thee, and thou sittest upon scorpions; fear not before their words, and tremble not before their face; for they are a stiff-necked race.* V. 7. *And speak my words to them, whether they may hear or fail (to do so); for they are stiff-necked.*

The children of Israel have become heathen, no longer a people of God, not even a heathen nation (גוֹי, Isa. 1: 4), but גוֹיִם, “heathens,” that is, as being rebels against God. הַמּוֹרְדִים (with the article) is not to be joined as an adjective to גוֹיִם, which is without the article, but is employed substantively in the form of an apposition. They have rebelled against God in this, that they, like their fathers, have separated themselves from Jehovah down to this day (as regards פָּשַׁע בַּ, see on Isa. 1: 2; and עֲצָם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, as in the Pentateuch; cf. Lev. 23:14; Gen. 7:13; 17:23, etc.). Like their fathers, the sons are rebellious, and, in addition, they are קָשִׁי פָּנִים, of hard countenance” = חֲזָקִי מִצַּח, “of hard brow” (Eze. 3: 7), i.e., impudent, without hiding the face, or lowering the look for shame. This shamelessness springs from hardness of heart. To these hardened sinners Ezekiel is to announce the word of the Lord. Whether they hear it or not (אִם-יִשְׁמָעוּ, *sive — sive*, as in Jos. 24:15; Ecc. 11: 3; 12:14), they shall in any case experience that a prophet has been amongst them. That they will neglect to hear is very probable, because they are a stiff-necked race (בֵּית, “house” = family). The *Vau* before יִדְעוּ (v. 5) introduces the *apodosis*. הִנֵּה is perfect, not present. This is demanded by the *usus loquendi* and the connection of the thought. The meaning is not: they shall now from his testimony that a prophet is there; but they shall experience from the result, viz., when the word announced by him will have been fulfilled, that a prophet has been amongst them. Ezekiel, therefore, is not to be prevented by fear of them and their words from delivering a testimony against their sins. The ἀπάξ λεγόμενα, סִרְבִּים and סְלוֹנִים, are not, with the older expositors, to be explained adjectively: “*rebelles et renuentes*,” but are substantives. As regards סְלוֹן, the signification “thorn” is placed beyond doubt by סְלוֹן in 28:24, and סִרְבַּ in Aramaic does

indeed denote “*refractarius*,” but this signification is a derived one, and inappropriate here. **סָרַב** is related to **צָרַב**, “to burn, to singe,” and means “*urtica*,” “stinging-nettle, thistle,” as Donasch in *Raschi* has already explained it. **אֲזַתָּהּ** is, according to the later usage, for **אֲזַתָּהּ**, expressing the “by and with of association,” and occurs frequently in Ezekiel. Thistles and thorns are emblems of dangerous, hostile men. The thought is strengthened by the words “to sit on (**אֲל** for **אֲל**) scorpions,” as these animals inflict a painful and dangerous wound. For the similitude of dangerous men to scorpions, cf. Sir. 26:10, and other proof passages in Bochart, *Hierozoic.* III. p. 551f., ed. Rosenmüll.

**Eze. 2: 8-3: 3.** After the Lord had pointed out to the prophet the difficulties of the call laid upon him, He prepared him for the performance of his office, by inspiring him with the divine word which he is to announce. —

V. 8. *And thou, son of man, hear what I say to thee, Be not stiff-necked like the stiff-necked race; open thy mouth, and eat what I give unto thee.* V. 9. *Then I saw, and, lo, a hand outstretched towards me; and, lo, in the same a roll of a book.* V. 10. *And He spread it out before me, the same was written upon the front and back: and there were written upon it lamentations, and sighing, and woe.* Ch. 3: 1. *And He said to me: Son of man, what thou findest eat; eat the roll, and go and speak to the house of Israel.* V. 2. *Then opened I my mouth, and He gave me this roll to eat.* V. 3. *And said to me: Son of man, feed thy belly, and fill thy body with this roll which I give thee. And I ate it, and it was in my mouth as honey and sweetness.*

The prophet is to announce to the people of Israel only that which the Lord inspires him to announce. This thought is embodied in symbol, in such a way that an outstretched hand reaches to him a book, which he is to swallow, and which also, at God’s command, he does swallow; cf. Rev. 10: 9ff. This roll was inscribed on both sides with lamentations, sighing, and woe (**אֲזַתָּהּ** is either abbreviated from **אֲזַתָּהּ**, not = **אֲז**, or as Ewald, § 101c, thinks, is only a more distinct form of **אֲזַתָּהּ** or **אֲזַתָּהּ**). The meaning is not, that upon the roll was inscribed a multitude of mournful expressions of every kind, but that there was written upon it all that the prophet was to announce, and what we now read in his book. These contents were of a mournful nature, for they related to the destruction of the kingdom, the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple. That Ezekiel may look over the contents, the roll is spread out before his eyes, and then handed to him to be eaten, with the words, “Go and speak to the children of Israel,” i.e., announce to the children of Israel what you have received into yourself, or as it is termed in v. 5, **אֲזַתָּהּ**, “my words.” The words in 3: 3a were spoken by God while handing to the prophet the roll to be eaten. He is not merely to eat, i.e., take it into his mouth, but he is to fill his body and belly therewith, i.e., he is to receive into his innermost being the word of God

presented to him, to change it, as it were, into sap and blood. Whilst eating it, it was sweet in his mouth. The sweet taste must not, with Kliefoth, be explained away into a sweet “after-taste,” and made to bear this reference, that the destruction of Jerusalem would be followed by a more glorious restoration. The roll, inscribed with lamentation, sorrow, and woe, tasted to him sweetly, because its contents was God’s word, which sufficed for the joy and gladness of his heart (Jer. 15:16); for it is “infinitely sweet and lovely to be the organ and spokesman of the Omnipotent,” and even the most painful of divine truths possess to a spiritually-minded man a joyful and quickening side (Hengstenberg on Rev. 10: 9). To this it is added, that the divine penal judgments reveal not only the holiness and righteousness of God, but also prepare the way for the revelation of salvation, and minister to the saving of the soul.

*Eze. 3: 4-21.* THE SENDING OF THE PROPHET. — This consists in God’s promise to give him power to overcome the difficulties of his vocation (vv. 4-9); in next transporting him to the place where he is to labour (vv. 10-15); and lastly, in laying upon him the responsibility of the souls entrusted to his charge (vv. 16-21). After Ezekiel had testified, by eating the roll which had been given him, his willingness to announce the word of the Lord, the Lord acquaints him with the peculiar difficulties of his vocation, and promises to bestow upon him strength to overcome them. —

*V. 4. And He said to me, Son of man, go away to the house of Israel, and speak with my words to them. V. 5. For not to a people of hollow lips and heavy tongue art thou sent, (but) to the house of Israel. V. 6. Not to many nations of hollow lips and heavy tongue, whose words thou dost not understand; but to them have I sent thee, they can understand thee. V. 7. But the house of Israel will not hear thee, because they will not hear me; for the whole house of Israel, of hard brow and hardened heart are they. V. 8. Lo, I make thy countenance hard like their countenances, and thy brow hard like their brow. V. 9. Like to adamant, harder than rock, do I make thy brow: fear not, and tremble not before them, for they are a stiff-necked race. —*

The contents of this section present a great similarity to those in Eze. 2: 3-7, inasmuch as here as well as there the obduracy and stiff-neckedness of Israel is stated as a hindrance which opposes the success of Ezekiel’s work. This is done here, however, in a different relation than there, so that there is no tautology. Here, where the Lord is sending the prophet, He first brings prominently forward what lightens the performance of his mission; and next, the obduracy of Israel, which surrounds it with difficulty for him, in order at the same time to promise him strength for the vanquishing of these difficulties. Ezekiel is to speak, in the words communicated to him by God, to the house (people) of Israel. This he can do, because Israel is not a foreign nation with an unintelligible language, but possesses the capacity of understanding the words of the prophet (vv. 5-7), **אִם עֲמִקֵּי שִׁפָּה**, “a people of deep lips,” i.e., of a style

of speech hollow, and hard to be understood; cf. Isa. 33:19. עִמְקֵי שׁ is not genitive, and אִם is not the *status constructus*, but an adjective belonging to אִם, and used in the plural, because אִם contains a collective conception. “And of heavy tongue,” i.e., with a language the understanding of which is attended with great difficulty. Both epithets denote a barbarously sounding, unintelligible, foreign tongue. The unintelligibility of a language, however, does not alone consist in unacquaintance with the meaning of its words and sounds, but also in the peculiarities of each nation’s style of thought, of which language is only the expression in sounds. In this respect we may with Coccejus and Kliefoth, refer the prophet’s inability to understand the language of the heathen to this, that their manner of thinking and speaking was not formed according to the word of God, but was developed out of purely earthly, and even God-resisting factors. Only the exclusive prominence given by Kliefoth to this side of the subject is incorrect, because irreconcilable with the words, “many nations, whose words (discourse) thou didst not understand” (v. 6). These words show that the unintelligibility of the language lies in not understanding the sounds of its words. Before אִם-בֵּית יֵשׁ, in v. 5, the adversative particle *sed* is omitted (cf. Ewald, § 354a); the omission here is perhaps caused by this, that אִתָּהּ שְׁלוֹחַ, in consequence of its position between both sentences, can be referred to both.

In v. 6 the thought of v. 5 is expanded by the addition of אַמִּים רַבִּים, “many nations” with different languages, in order to show that it is not in the ability, but in the willingness, to hear the word of the Lord that the Israelites are wanting. It is not to many nations with unintelligible languages that God is sending the prophet, but to such men as are able to hear him, i.e., can understand his language. The second hemistich of v. 6 is rendered by the old translators as if they had not read אִם לֹא after אִם, “if I sent thee to them (the heathen), they would hear thee.” Modern expositors have endeavoured to extract this meaning, either by taking אִם לֹא as a particle of adjuration, *profecto*, “verily” (Rosenmüller, Hävernicks, and others), or reading אִם לֹא as Ewald does, after Gen. 23:13. But the one is as untenable as the other: against אִם לֹא stands the fact that לוֹ is written with ו, not with א; against the view that it is a particle of adjuration, stands partly the position of the words before אִם-לֹא, which, according to the sense, must belong to הִמָּה יִשְׁמַע, partly the impossibility of taking שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ conditionally after the preceding אִם לֹא. “If such were the case, Ezekiel would have really done all he could to conceal his meaning” (Hitzig), for אִם לֹא, after a negative sentence preceding, signifies “but;” cf. Gen. 24:38. Consequently neither the one view nor the other yields an appropriate sense. “If I had sent thee to the heathen,” involves a repenting of the act, which is not befitting in God. Against the meaning “*profecto*” is the

consideration that the idea, “Had I sent thee to the heathen, verily they would hear thee,” is in contradiction with the designation of the heathen as those whose language the prophet does not understand. If the heathen spoken a language unintelligible to the prophet, they consequently did not understand his speech, and could not therefore comprehend his preaching. It only remains, then, to apply the sentence simply to the Israelites, “not to heathen nations, but to the Israelites have I sent thee,” and to take **יִשְׁמְעוּ** as potential, “they are able to fear thee,” “they can understand thy words.” This in v. 7 is closed by the *antithesis*, “But the house of Israel will not hear thee, because they will not hear me (Jehovah), as they are morally hardened.” With *7b*, cf. 2: 4. The Lord, however, will provide His prophet with power to resist this obduracy; will lend him unbending courage and unshaken firmness, v. 8; cf. Jer. 15:20. He will make his brow hard as adamant (cf. Zec. 7:12), which is harder than rock; therefore he shall not fear before the obduracy of Israel. **צַר**, as in Exo. 4:25, = **צָוֵר**. As parallel passages in regard of the subject-matter, cf. Isa. 50: 7 and Jer. 1:18.

**Eze. 3:10-15.** Prepared then for his vocation, Ezekiel is now transported to the sphere of his activity. —

V. 10. *And He said to me, Son of man, all my words which I shall speak to thee, take into thy heart, and hear with thine ears.* V. 11. *And go to the exiles, to the children of thy people, and speak to them, and say to them, “Thus saith the Lord Jehovah,” whether they may hear thee or fail (to hear thee).* V. 12. *And a wind raised me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great tumult, “Praised be the glory of Jehovah,” from their place hitherward.* V. 13. *And the noise of the wings of the creatures touching each other, and the noise of the wheels beside them, the noise of a great tumult.* V. 14. *And a wind raised me up, and took me, and I went thither embittered in the warmth of my spirit; and the hand of Jehovah was strong upon me.* V. 15. *And I came to Tel-Abib to the exiles, who dwelled by the river Chebar, and where they at there sat I down seven days, motionless and dumb, in their midst. —*

The apparent *hysteron proteron*, “take into thy heart, and hear with thine ears” (v. 10), disappears so soon as it is observed that the clause “hear with thine ears” is connected with the following “go to the exiles,” etc. The meaning is not, “*postquam auribus tuis percepisses mea mandata, ea ne oblivioni tradas, sed corde suscipe et animo infige*” (Rosenmüller), but this, “All my words which I shall speak to thee lay to heart, that thou mayest obey them. When thou hast heard my words with thine ears, then go to the exiles and announce them to them.” With v. 11 cf. Eze. 2: 4, 5. Observe that it is still **בְּנֵי אֲמֹתַי**, “the children of thy” (not “my”) “people.” Stiff-necked Israel is no longer Jehovah’s people. The command “to go to the people” is, in v. 12ff., immediately executed by the prophet, the wind raising him up and transporting him to Tel-Abib, among the exiles. **רוּחַ**, phenomenally considered, is a wind of which God

makes use to conduct the prophet to the scene of his labour; but the wind is only the sensible substratum of the spirit which transports him thither. The representation is, that “he was borne thither through the air by the wind” (Kliefoth); but not as Jerome and Kliefoth suppose, *in ipso corpore*, i.e., so that an actual bodily removal through the air took place, but the raising up and taking away by the wind was effected in spirit in the condition of ecstasy. Not a syllable indicates that the theophany was at an end before this removal; the contrary rather is clearly indicated by the remark that Ezekiel heard behind him the noise of the wings of the cherubim and of the wheels. And that the words **תִּשְׂאֵנִי רוּחַ** do not necessitate us to suppose a bodily removal is shown by the comparison with Eze. 8: 3; 11: 1, 24, where Kliefoth also understands the same words in a spiritual sense of a merely internal — i.e., experienced in a state of ecstasy — removal of the prophet to Jerusalem and back again to Chaldea. The great noise which Ezekiel hears behind him proceeds, at least in part, from the appearance of the **כְּבוֹד יְהוָה** being set in motion, but (according to v. 13) not in order to remove itself from the raptured prophet, but by changing its present position, to attend the prophet to the sphere of his labour. It tells decidedly in favour of this supposition, that the prophet, according to v. 23, again sees around him the same theophany in the valley where he begins his work. This reappearance, indeed, presupposes that it had previously disappeared from his sight, but the disappearance is to be supposed as taking place only after his call has been completed, i.e., after v. 21. While being removed in a condition of ecstasy, Ezekiel heard the rushing sound, “Praised be the glory of Jehovah.” **מִמְקוֹמוֹ** belongs not to **בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה**, which would yield no appropriate sense, but to **אֲשַׁמַּע**, where it makes no difference of importance in the meaning whether the suffix is referred to **יְהוָה** or to **כְּבוֹד**. Ezekiel heard the voice of the praise of God’s glory issuing forth from the place where Jehovah or His glory were to be found, i.e., where they had appeared to the prophet, not at all from the temple. Who sounded this song of praise is not mentioned. Close by Ezekiel heard the sound, the rustling of the wings of the cherubim setting themselves in motion, and how the wings came into contact with the tips of each other, touched each other (**מִשִּׁיקוֹת**, from **נָשַׁק**, “to join,” “to touch one another”).

Verse 14 describes the prophet’s mood of mind as he is carried away. Raised by the wind, and carried on, he went, i.e., drove thither, **מֵר בְּחַמַּת רוּחַ**, “bitter in the heat of his spirit.” Although **מֵר** is used as well of grief and mourning as of wrath and displeasure, yet mourning and sorrow are not appropriate to **חֶמָה**, “warmth of spirit,” “anger.” The supposition, however, that sorrow as well as anger were in him, or that he was melancholy while displeased (Kliefoth), is

incompatible with the fundamental idea of מַר as “sharp,” “bitter.” Ezekiel feels himself deeply roused, even to the bitterness of anger, partly by the obduracy of Israel, partly by the commission to announce to this obdurate people, without any prospect of success, the word of the Lord. To so heavy a task he feels himself unequal, therefore his natural man rebels against the Spirit of God, which, seizing him with a strong and powerful grasp, tears him away to the place of his work; and he would seek to withdraw himself from the divine call, as Moses and Jonah once did. The hand of the Lord, however, was strong upon him, i.e., “held him up in this inner struggle with unyielding power” (Klieföth); cf. Isa. 8:11. חֲזָק, “firm,” “strong,” differs from כָּבֵד, “heavy,” Psa. 32: 4. תֵּל אָבִיב, i.e., “the hill of ears,” is the name of the place where resided a colony of the exiles. The place was situated on the river Chebar (see on Eze. 1: 3), and derived its name, no doubt, from the fertility of the valley, rich in grain (הַבְּקָעָה, v. 23), by which it was surrounded; nothing further, however, is known of it; cf. Gesen. *Thesaur.* p. 1505. The *Chetib* וַאֲשֶׁר, at which the Masorettes and many expositors have unnecessarily taken offence, is to be read וַאֲשֶׁר, and to be joined with the following שָׁם, “where they sat” (so rightly the Chaldee, Syriac, and Vulgate). That this signification would be expressed differently, as Hitzig thinks, cannot be established by means of Job. 39:30. The *Keri* וַאֲשֶׁב is not only unnecessary but also inappropriate, which holds true also of other conjectures of modern expositors. Ezekiel sat there seven days, מְשֻׁמִּים, i.e., neither “deprived of sensation,” nor “being silent,” but as the *partic. Hiphil* from שָׁם, as מְשֻׁמִּים in Ezr. 9: 3, 4, “rigidly without moving,” therefore “motionless and dumb.” The seven days are not regarded as a period of mourning, in support of which Job. 2:13 is referred to; but as both the purification and the dedication and preparation for a holy service is measured by the number seven, as being the number of God’s works (cf. Exo. 29:29ff.; Lev. 8:33ff.; 2Ch. 29:17), so Ezekiel sits for a week “motionless and dumb,” to master the impression which the word of God, conveyed to him in ecstatic vision, had made upon his mind, and to prepare and sanctify himself for his vocation (Klieföth).

**Eze. 3:16-21.** When these seven days are completed, there comes to him the final word, which appoints him watchman over Israel, and places before him the task and responsibility of his vocation. —

V. 16. *And it came to pass after the lapse of seven days, that the word of Jehovah came to me as follows:* V. 17. *Son of man, I have set thee to be a watchman over the house of Israel; thou shalt hear the word from my mouth, and thou shalt warn them from me.* V. 18. *If I say to the sinner, Thou shalt surely die, and thou warnest him not, and speakest not to warn the sinner from his evil way that he may live, then shall he, the sinner, die because of his evil deeds, but his blood will I require at thy*

hand. V. 19. But if thou warnest the sinner, and he turn not from his wickedness and his evil way, then shall he die because of his evil deeds, but thou hast saved thy soul. V. 20. And if a righteous man turn from his righteousness, and do unrighteousness, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, then shall he die; if thou hast not warned him, he shall die because of his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered, but his blood will I require at thy hand. V. 21. But if thou warnest him — the righteous man — so that the righteous man sin not, and he do not sin, then will he live, because he has been warned, and thou hast saved thy soul. —

As a prophet for Israel, Ezekiel is like one standing upon a watchtower (Hab. 2: 1), to watch over the condition of the people, and warn them of the dangers that threaten them (Jer. 6:17; Isa. 56:10). As such, he is responsible for the souls entrusted to his charge. From the mouth of Jehovah, i.e., according to God's word, he is to admonish the wicked to turn from their evil ways, that they die not in their sins. מִמֶּנִּי, "from me," i.e., in my name, and with my commission. "If I say to the sinner," i.e., if I commission thee to say to him (Kimchi). As מוֹת תְּמוּת reminds us of Gen. 2:17, so is the threatening, "his blood will I require at thy hand," an allusion to Gen. 9: 5. If the prophet does not warn the wicked man, as God has commanded him, he renders himself guilty of a deadly sin, for which God will take vengeance on him as on the murderer for the shedding of blood. An awfully solemn statement for all ministers of the word. הִרְשָׁעָה, in vv. 18 and 19, at which the LXX have stumbled, so that they have twice omitted it, is not a substantive, and to be changed, with Hitzig, into רִשְׁעָה, but is an adjective, *foemin. gen.*, and belongs to דָּרְכּוֹ, which is construed as feminine. The righteous man who backslides is, before God, regarded as equal with the sinner who persists in his sin, if the former, notwithstanding the warning, perseveres in his backsliding (v. 20ff.). שׁוּב מִצְדִּיקוֹ, "to turn oneself from his righteousness," denotes the formal falling away from the path of righteousness, not mere "stumbling or sinning from weakness." עָשָׂה עָוֹל, "to do unrighteousness," "to act perversely," is "*se prorsus dedere impietati*" (Calvin). וְנִתְּתִי מִכְשׁוֹל, belongs still to the *protasis*, הוּא יָמוּת forming the *apodosis*, not a relative sentence, — as Ewald and Hitzig suppose, — "so that he, or, in consequence of which, he die." מִכְשׁוֹל, "object of offence," by which any one comes to fall, is not destruction, considered as punishment deserved (Calvin, Hävernick), but everything that God puts in the way of the sinner, in order that the sin, which is germinating in his soul, may come forth to the light, and ripen to maturity. God, indeed, neither causes sin, nor desires the death of the sinner; and in this sense He does not tempt to evil (Jam. 1:13), but He guides and places the sinner in relations in life in which he must come to a decision for or against what is good and divine, and either suppress and sinful lusts of his heart, or burst the barriers which are opposed to their satisfaction. If he does not do the former, but the latter, evil



gains within him more and more strength, so that he becomes the servant of sin, and finally reaches a point where conversion is impossible. In this consists the **מִכְשׁוֹל**, which God places before him, who turns away from righteousness to unrighteousness or evil, but not in this, that God lets man run on in order that he may die or perish. For **יְמוֹת** does not stand for **נְמוֹת**, and there is therefore no ground for a change of punctuation to carry forward *Athnach* to **הַנְּהַרְתּוּ** (Hitzig). For the subject spoken of is not that the backsliding righteous man “in general only dies if he is not warned” (Hitzig), — that meaning is not in v. 21, “that he, in contrast to the **רָשָׁע**, gives sure obedience to the warning,” — but only the possibility is supposed that a **צַדִּיק**, who has transgressed upon the way of evil, will yield obedience to the warning, but not that he will of a certainty do this. As with the **רָשָׁע** in v. 19, only the case of his resisting the warning is expressly mentioned; while the opposite case — that he may, in consequence of the warning, be converted — is not excluded; so in v. 21, with the **צַדִּיק**, who has entered upon the path of unrighteousness, only the case of conversion in consequence of the warning is expressly mentioned, without the possibility of his hardening himself against the prophet’s word being thereby excluded. For the instruction of the prophet it was sufficient to bring forward the two cases mentioned, as it appears from them that in the one case as well as in the other he has done his duty, and saved his soul.

### **Ch. 3:22-5:17. The Destiny of Jerusalem and Its Inhabitants**

*Eze. 3:22-27.* Verses 22-27 in Eze. 3 no longer belong to the prophet’s inauguration and introduction into office, nor do they form the conclusion of his call, but the introduction to his first prophetic act and prediction, as has been rightly recognised by Ewald and Kliefoth. This appears already from the introductory formula, “The hand of Jehovah came upon me” (v. 22), and, more distinctly still, from the glory of Jehovah appearing anew to the prophet (when, in obedience to a divine impulse, he had gone down into the valley), in the form in which he had seen it by the river Chebar, and giving him a commission to announce by word and symbol the siege of Jerusalem, and the fate of its inhabitants. For, that the divine commission did not consist merely in the general directions, Eze. 3:25-27, but is first given in its principal parts in Eze. 4 and 5, is indisputably evident from the repetition of the words **וְאִתָּהּ בְּנִי אָדָם** in Eze. 3:25; 4: 1, and 5: 1. With **וְאִתָּהּ** neither can the first nor, in general, a new prophecy begin. This has been recognised by Hitzig himself in Eze. 4: 1, where he remarks that the first of the three oracles which follow down to Eze. 8: 1, and which he makes begin with Eze. 4: 1, “attaches itself to Eze. 3:25-27 as a continuation of the same.” But what holds true of 4: 1 must hold true also of Eze. 3:25, viz., that no new oracle can begin with this verse,

but that it is connected with Eze. 3:22-24. The commencement, then, we have to seek in the formula, “and the hand of Jehovah came upon me” (Eze. 3:22), with which also 8: 1 (where only **וַיָּהַרְלֵךְ** stands instead of **וַיָּהַרְלֵךְ**) and Eze. 40: 1 — new oracles — are introduced. No doubt these passages are preceded by chronological notices, while in Eze. 3:22 every note of time is wanting. But nothing further can be inferred from this, than that the divine word contained in Eze. 3:25-5:17 was imparted to the prophet immediately after his consecration and call, so that it still falls under the date of Eze. 1: 2; which may also be discovered from this, that the **שֹׁמֵר** in v. 22 points to the locality named in v. 15.

Immediately after his call, then, and still in the same place where the last word of calling (Eze. 3:16-21) was addressed to him, namely, at Gel-Abib, in the midst of the exiles, Ezekiel received the first divine revelation which, as prophet, he has to announce to the people. This revelation is introduced by the words in Eze. 3:22-24; and divided into three sections by the thrice-occurring, similar address, “And thou, son of man” (Eze. 3:25; 4: 1; 5: 1). In the first section, Eze. 3:25-27, God gives him general injunctions as to his conduct while carrying out the divine commission; in the second, Eze. 4, He commands him to represent symbolically the siege of Jerusalem with its miseries; and in the third, Eze. 5, the destiny of the inhabitants after the capture of the city.

*Eze. 3:22-27.* Introduction to the first prophetic announcement. —

*V. 22. And there came upon me there the hand of Jehovah, and He said to me, Up! go into the valley, there will I speak to thee. V. 23. And I arose, and went into the valley: and, lo, there stood the glory of Jehovah, like the glory which I had seen at the river Chebar: and I fell upon my face. V. 24. And spirit came into me, and placed me on my feet, and He spake with me, and said to me, Go, and shut thyself in thy house. —*

**הַבְּקִיעַ** is, without doubt, the valley situated near Tel-Abib. Ezekiel is to go out from the midst of the exiles — where, according to v. 15, he had found himself — into the valley, because God will reveal Himself to him only in solitude. When he had complied with this command, there appears to him there the glory of Jehovah, in the same form in which it had appeared to him at the Chaboras (Eze. 1: 4-28); before it he falls, a second time, on his face; but is also, as on the first occasion, again raised to his feet, cf. Eze. 1:28-2: 2. Hereupon the Lord commands him to shut himself up in his house, — which doubtless he inhabited in Tel-Abib, — not probably “as a sign of his future destiny,” as a realistic explanation of the words, “Thou canst not walk in their midst (v. 25); they will prevent thee by force from freely exercising thy vocation in the midst of the people.” For in that case the “shutting of himself up in the house” would be an arbitrary identification with the “binding with fetters” (v. 25); and besides, the significance of the address **וַאֲנִי בִּן אָדָם**, and its

repetition in 4: 1 and 5: 1, would be misconceived. For as in Eze. 4: 1 and Eze. 5: 1 there are introduced with this address the principal parts of the duty which Ezekiel was to perform, so the proper divine instruction may also first begin with the same in Eze. 3:25; consequently the command “to shut himself up in his house” can only have the significance of a preliminary divine injunction, without possessing any significance in itself; but only “serve as a means for carrying out what the prophet is commissioned to do in the following chapters” (Kliefoth), i.e., can only mean that he is to perform in his own house what is commanded him in Eze. 4 and 5, or that he is not to leave his house during their performance. More can hardly be sought in this injunction, nor can it at all be taken to mean that, having shut himself up from others in his house, he is to allow no one to approach him; but only that he is not to leave his dwelling. For, according to 4: 3, the symbolical representation of the siege of Jerusalem is to be a sign for the house of Israel; and according to 4:12, Ezekiel is, during this symbolical action, to bake his bread before their eyes. From this it is seen that his contemporaries might come to him and observe his proceedings.

*Eze. 3:25-27.* The general divine instructions.

*V. 25. And thou, son of man, lo, they will lay cords upon thee, and bind thee therewith, so that thou canst not go out into their midst. V. 26. And I shall make thy tongue cleave to thy palate, that thou mayest be dumb, and mayest not serve them as a reprovcr: for they are a stiff-necked generation. v. 27. But when I speak to thee, I will open thy mouth, that thou mayest say to them, Thus sayeth the Lord Jehovah, Let him who wishes to hear, hear, and let him who neglects, neglect (to hear): for they are a stiff necked generation. —*

The meaning of this general injunction depends upon the determination of the subject in **נְתַנְנִי**, v. 25. Most expositors think of the prophet’s countrymen, who are to bind him with cords so that he shall not be able to leave his house. The words **וְלֹא תֵצֵא בְּתוֹכָם** appear to support this, as the suffix in **בְּתוֹכָם** indisputably refers to his countrymen. But this circumstance is by no means decisive; while against this view is the twofold difficulty, — firstly, that a binding of the prophet with cords by his countrymen is scarcely reconcilable with what he performs in Eze. 4 and 5; secondly, of hostile attacks by the exiles upon the prophet there is not a trace to be discovered in the entire remainder of the book. The house of Israel is indeed repeatedly described as a stiff-necked race, as hardened and obdurate towards God’s word; but any embitterment of feeling against the prophet, which should have risen so far as to bind him, or even to make direct attempts to prevent him from exercising his prophetic calling, can, after what is related in Eze. 33:30-33 regarding the position of the people towards him, hardly be imagined. Further, the binding and fettering of the prophet is to be regarded as of the same kind with the cleaving of his tongue to his jaws, so that he should be silent and not speak (v. 26). It is God,

however, who suspends this dumbness over him; and according to Eze. 4: 8, it is also God who binds him with cords, so that he cannot stir from one side to the other. The demonstrative power of the latter passage is not to be weakened by the objection that it is a passage of an altogether different kind, and the connection altogether different (Hävernick). For the complete difference between the two passages would first have to be proved. The object, indeed, of the binding of the prophet in Eze. 4: 8 is different from that in our verse. Here it is to render it impossible for the prophet to go out of the house; in Eze. 4: 8, it is to prevent him from moving from one side to the other. But the one object does not exclude the other; both statements coincide, rather, in the general thought that the prophet must adapt himself entirely to the divine will, — not only not leave the house, but lie also for 390 days upon one side without turning. — We might rather, with Kliefoth, understand Eze. 4: 8 to mean that God accomplished the binding of the prophet by human instruments — viz. that He caused him to be bound by foreigners (Eze. 3:25). But this supposition also would only be justified, if either the sense of the words in Eze. 3:25, or other good reasons, pronounced in favour of the view that it was the exiles who had bound the prophet. But as this is not the case, so we are not at liberty to explain the definite **נָתַתִּי**, “I lay on” (Eze. 4: 8), according to the indefinite **נָתְנוּ**, “they lay on,” or “one lays on” (Eze. 3:25); but must, on the contrary, understand our verse in accordance with 4: 8, and (with Hitzig) think of heavenly powers as the subject to **נָתְנוּ**, — as in Job. 7: 3; Dan. 4:28; Luk. 12:20, — without, in so doing, completely identifying the declaration in our verse with that in Eze. 4: 8, as if in the latter passage only that was brought to completion which had been here (Eze. 3:25) predicted. If, however, the binding of the prophet proceeds from invisible powers, the expression is not to be understood literally, — of a binding with material cords; — but God binds him by a spiritual power, so that he can neither leave his house nor go forth to his countrymen, nor, at a later time (Eze. 4: 8), change the position prescribed to him. This is done, however, not to prevent the exercise of his vocation, but, on the contrary, to make him fitted for the successful performance of the work commanded him. He is not to quit his house, nor enter into fellowship and intercourse with his exiled countrymen, that he may show himself, by separation from them, to be a prophet and organ of the Lord. On the same grounds he is also (vv. 26, 27) to keep silence, and not even correct them with words, but only to speak when God opens his mouth for that purpose; to remain, moreover, unconcerned whether they listen to his words or not (cf. Eze. 2: 4, 7). He is to do both of these things, because his contemporaries are a stiff-necked race; cf. v. 9 and Eze. 2: 5, 7. That he may not speak from any impulse of his own, God will cause his tongue to cleave to his jaws, so that he cannot speak; cf. Ps. 137: 6. “That the prophet is to refrain from all speech — even from the utterance of the

words given him by God — will, on the one hand, make the divine words which he utters appear the more distinctly as such; while, on the other, be an evidence to his hearers of the silent sorrow with which he is filled by the contents of the divine word, and with which they also ought justly to be filled” (Kliefoth).

This state of silence, according to which he is only then to speak when God opened his mouth for the utterance of words which were to be given him, is, indeed, at first imposed upon the prophet — as follows from the relation of vv. 25-27 to Eze. 4 and 5 — only for the duration of the period Eze. 3:25 to 5:17, or rather 7:27. But the divine injunction extends, as Kliefoth has rightly recognised, still further on — over the whole period up to the fulfilment of his prophecies of threatening by the destruction of Jerusalem. This appears especially from this, that in Eze. 24:27 and Eze. 33:22 there is an undeniable reference to the silence imposed upon him in our verse, and with reference to which it is said, that when the messenger should bring back the news of the fall of Jerusalem, his mouth should be opened and he should be no longer dumb. The reference in Eze. 24:27 and in Eze. 33:22 to the verse before us has been observed by most expositors; but several of them would limit the silence of the prophet merely to the time which lies between Eze. 24 and Eze. 33:21ff. This is quite arbitrary, as neither in Eze. 24 nor in Eze. 33 is silence imposed upon him; but in both chapters it is only stated that he should no longer be dumb after the receipt of the intelligence that Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Chaldeans. The supposition of Schmieder, moreover, is untenable, that the injunction of v. 25 refers to the turning-point in the prophet’s office, which commenced on the day when the siege of Jerusalem actually began. For although this day forms a turning-point in the prophetic activity of Ezekiel, in so far as he on it announced to the people for the last time the destruction of Jerusalem, and then spake no more to Israel until the occurrence of this event, yet it is not said in Eze. 24:27 that he was then to be dumb from that day onwards. The hypothesis then only remains, that what was imposed and enjoined on the prophet, in vv. 26 and 27, should remain in force for the whole period from the commencement of his prophetic activity to the receipt of the news of the fall of Jerusalem, by the arrival of a messenger on the banks of the Chaboras. Therewith is also connected the position of this injunction at the head of the first prophecy delivered to him (not at his call), if only the contents and importance of this oracle be understood and recognised, that it embraces not merely the siege of Jerusalem, but also the capture and destruction of the city, and the dispersion of the people among the heathen, — consequently contains *in nuce* all that Ezekiel had to announce to the people down to the occurrence of this calamity, and which, in all the divine words from Eze. 6 to Eze. 24, he had again and again, though only in different ways, actually announced. If all the discourses down to Eze. 24 are only further expositions and attestations of the revelation of God in

Eze. 4 and 5, then the behaviour which was enjoined on him at the time of this announcement was to be maintained during all following discourses of similar contents. Besides, for a correct appreciation of the divine precept in vv. 26 and 27, it is also to be noticed that the prophet is not to keep entire silence, except when God inspires him to speak; but that his keeping silence is explained to men, that he is to be to his contemporaries no **אִישׁ מוֹכִיחַ**, “no reprover,” and consequently will place their sins before them to no greater extent, and in no other way, than God expressly directs him. Understood in this way, the silence is in contradiction neither with the words of God communicated in Eze. 6 to 24, nor with the predictions directed against foreign nations in Eze. 25-33, several of which fall within the time of the siege of Jerusalem. Cf. with this the remark upon Eze. 24:27 and Eze. 33:22.

**Eze. 4.** THE SIGN OF THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM. — This sign, which Ezekiel is to perform in his own house before the eyes of the exiles who visit him, consists in three interconnected and mutually-supplementary symbolical acts, the first of which is described in vv. 1-3, the second in vv. 4-8, and the third in vv. 9-17. In the first place, he is symbolically to represent the impending siege of Jerusalem (vv. 1-3); in the second place, by lying upon one side, he is to announce the punishment of Israel’s sin (vv. 4-8); in the third place, by the nature of his food, he is, while lying upon one side, to hold forth to view the terrible consequences of the siege to Israel. The close connection as to their subject-matter of these three actions appears clearly from this, that the prophet, according to v. 7, while lying upon one side, is to direct his look and his arm upon the picture of the besieged city before him; and, according to v. 8, is to lie upon his side as long as the siege lasts, and during that time is to nourish himself in the manner prescribed in v. 9ff. In harmony with this is the formal division of the chapter, inasmuch as the three acts, which the prophet is to perform for the purpose of portraying the impending siege of Jerusalem, are co-ordinated to each other by the repetition of the address **וְאַתָּה** in vv. 3, 4, and 8, and subordinated to the general injunction — to portray Jerusalem as a besieged city — introduced in v. 1 with the words **וְאַתָּה בֶּן אָדָם**.

**Eze. 4: 1-3.** The first symbolical action. —

*V. 1. And thou, son of man, take to thyself a brick, and lay it before thee, and draw thereon a city, Jerusalem: V. 2. And direct a siege against it; build against it siege-towers, raise up a mound against it, erect camps against it, and place battering-rams against it round about. V. 3. And thou, take to thyself an iron pan, and place it as an iron wall between thee and the city, and direct thy face towards it; thus let it be in a state of siege, and besiege it. Let it be a sign to the house of Israel.*

The directions in vv. 1 and 2 contain the general basis for the symbolical siege of Jerusalem, which the prophet is to lay before Israel as a sign. Upon a brick he

is to sketch a city (חָקַק, to engrave with a writing instrument) which is to represent Jerusalem: around the city he is to erect siege-works — towers, walls, camps, and battering-rams; i.e., he is to inscribe the representation of them, and place before himself the picture of the besieged city. The selection of a brick, i.e., of a tile-stone, not burnt in a kiln, but merely dried in the sun, is not, as Hävernicks supposes, a reminiscence of Babylon and monumental inscriptions; in Palestine, also, such bricks were a common building material (Isa. 9: 9), in consequence of which the selection of such a soft mass of clay, on which a picture might be easily inscribed, was readily suggested. מְצוֹר = נָתַן מְצוֹר שׁוֹם, Mic. 4:14, “to make a siege,” i.e., “to bring forward siege-works.” מְצוֹר is therefore the general expression which is specialized in the following clauses by דְּיָיִק, “siege-towers” (see on 2Ki. 24: 1); by סִלְלָה, “mound” (see on 2Sa. 20:15); by מַחֲנֹת, “camps” in the plural, because the hostile army raises several camps around the city; כְּרִיִּים, “battering-rams,” “wall-breakers,” *arietes*; according to Joseph Kimchi, “iron rams,” to break in the walls (and gates, 21:27). They consisted of strong beams of hard wood, furnished at the end with a ram’s head made of iron, which were suspended by a chain, and driven forcibly against the wall by the soldiers. Compare the description of them by Josephus, *de bello Judaico* iii. 7. 19. The suffix in עֲלִיָּהּ, in v. 2, refers to עִיר. The siege-works which are named were not probably to be placed by Ezekiel as little figures around the brick, so that the latter would represent the city, but to be engraved upon the brick around the city thereon portrayed. The expressions, “to *make* a siege,” “to *build* towers,” “to erect a mound,” etc., are selected because the drawing was to represent what is done when a city is besieged. In v. 3, in reference to this, the inscribed picture of the city is at once termed “city,” and in v. 7 the picture of the besieged Jerusalem, “the siege of Jerusalem.” The meaning of the picture is clear. Every one who saw it was to recognise that Jerusalem will be besieged. But the prophet is to do still more; he is to take in hand the siege itself, and to carry it out. To that end, he is to place an iron pan as an iron wall between himself and the city sketched on the brick, and direct his countenance stedfastly towards the city (הַכִּיּוֹן), and so besiege it. The iron pan, erected as a wall, is to represent neither the wall of the city (Ewald) nor the enemies’ rampart, for this was already depicted on the brick; while to represent it, i.e., the city wall, as “iron,” i.e., immoveably fast, would be contrary to the meaning of the prophecy. The iron wall represents, as Rosenmüller, after the hints of Theodoret, Cornelius a Lapide, and others, has already observed, a firm, impregnable wall of partition, which the prophet as messenger and representative of God is to raise between himself and the beleaguered city, *ut significaret, quasi ferreum murum interjectum esse cives inter et se*, i.e., *Deum Deique decretum et sententiam contra illos latam esse*

*irrevocabilem, nec Deum civium preces et querimonias auditorum aut iis ad misericordiam flectendum.* Cf. Isa. 59: 2; Lam. 3:44. **פַּח**, “pan,” i.e., an iron plate for baking their loaves and slices of cakes; see on Lev. 2: 5. The selection of such an iron plate for the purpose mentioned is not to be explained, as Kliefoth thinks, from the circumstance that the pan is primarily to serve the prophet for preparing his food while he is occupied in completing his sketch. The text says nothing of that. If he were to have employed the pan for such a purpose, he could not, at the same time, have placed it as a wall between himself and the city. The choice is to be explained simply from this, that such a plate was to be found in every household, and was quite fitted for the object intended. If any other symbolical element is contained on it, the hard ignoble metal might, perhaps, with Grotius, be taken to typify the hard, wicked heart of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; cf. 22:18; Jer. 15:12. The symbolical siege of Jerusalem is to be a sign for the house of Israel, i.e., a pre-announcement of its impending destiny. The house of Israel is the whole covenant people, not merely the ten tribes as in v. 5, in contradistinction to the house of Judah (v. 6).

*Eze. 4: 4-8.* The second symbolical act.

*V. 4. And do thou lay thyself upon thy left side, and lay upon it the evil deeds of the house of Israel; for the number of the days during which thou liest thereon shalt thou bear their evil deeds. V. 5. And I reckon to thee the years of their evil deeds as a number of days; three hundred and ninety days shalt thou bear the evil deeds of the house of Israel. V. 6. And (when) thou hast completed these, thou shalt then lay thyself a second time upon thy right side, and bear the evil deeds of the house of Judah forty days; each day I reckon to thee as a year. V. 7. And upon the siege of Jerusalem shalt thou stedfastly direct thy countenance, and thy naked arm, and shalt prophesy against it. V. 8. And, lo, I lay cords upon thee, that thou stir not from one side to the other until thou hast ended the days of thy siege.*

Whilst Ezekiel, as God’s representative, carries out in a symbolical manner the siege of Jerusalem, he is in this situation to portray at the same time the destiny of the people of Israel beleaguered in their metropolis. Lying upon his left side for 390 days without turning, he is to bear the guilt of Israel’s sin; then, lying 40 days more upon his right side, he is to bear the guilt of Judah’s sin. In so doing, the number of the *days* during which he reclines upon his sides shall be accounted as exactly equal to the same number of *years* of their sinning. **עָוֹן נָשָׂא**, “to bear the evil deeds,” i.e., to take upon himself the consequence of sin, and to stone for them, to suffer the punishment of sin; cf. Num. 14:34, etc. Sin, which produces guilt and punishment, is regarded as a burden or weight, which Ezekiel is to lay upon the side upon which he reclines, and in this way bear it. This bearing, however, of the guilt of sin is not to be viewed as vicarious and mediatorial, as in the sacrifice of atonement, but is intended as purely epideictic and symbolical; that is to say, Ezekiel, by his lying so long bound under the



burden of Israel and Judah which was laid upon his side, is to show to the people how they are to be cast down by the siege of Jerusalem, and how, while lying on the ground, without the possibility of turning or rising, they are to bear the punishment of their sins. The full understanding of this symbolical act, however, depends upon the explanation of the specified periods of time, with regard to which the various views exhibit great discrepancy.

In the first place, the separation of the guilt into that of the house of Israel and that of the house of Judah is closely connected with the division of the covenant people into the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. That Ezekiel now is to bear the sin of Israel upon the left, that of Judah on the right side, is not fully explained by the circumstance that the kingdom of the ten tribes lay to the left, i.e., to the north, the kingdom of Judah to the right, i.e., to the south of Jerusalem, but must undoubtedly point at the same time to the pre-eminence of Judah over Israel; cf. Ecc. 10: 2. This pre-eminence of Judah is manifestly exhibited in its period of punishment extending only to 40 days = 40 years; that of Israel, on the contrary, 390 days = 390 years. These numbers, however, cannot be satisfactorily explained from a chronological point of view, whether they be referred to the time during which Israel and Judah sinned, and heaped upon themselves guilt which was to be punished, or to the time during which they were to atone, or suffer punishment for their sins. Of themselves, both references are possible; the first, viz., in so far as the days in which Ezekiel is to bear the guilt of Israel, might be proportioned to the number of the years of their guilt, as many Rabbins, Vatablus, Calvin, Lightfoot, Vitranga, J. D. Michaelis, and others suppose, while in so doing the years are calculated very differently; cf. des Vignoles, *Chronol.* I. p. 479ff., and Rosenmüller, *Scholia, Excurs.* to ch. iv. All these hypotheses, however, are shattered by the impossibility of pointing out the specified periods of time, so as to harmonize with the chronology. If the days, reckoned as years, correspond to the duration of their sinning, then, in the case of the house of Israel, only the duration of this kingdom could come into consideration, as the period of punishment began with the captivity of the ten tribes. But this kingdom lasted only 253 years. The remaining 137 years the Rabbins have attempted to supply from the period of the Judges; others, from the time of the destruction of the ten tribes down to that of Ezekiel, or even to that of the destruction of Jerusalem. Both are altogether arbitrary. Still less can the 40 years of Judah be calculated, as all the determinations of the beginning and the end are mere phantoms of the air. The fortieth year before our prophecy would nearly coincide with the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and therefore with the year in which this pious king effected the reformation of religion. Ezekiel, however, could not represent this year as marking the commencement of Judah's sin. We must therefore, as the literal meaning of the words primarily indicates, regard the specified periods of

time as periods of punishment for Israel and Judah. Since Ezekiel, then, had to maintain during the symbolical siege of Jerusalem this attitude of reclining for Israel and Judah, and after the completion of the 390 days for Israel must lie a second time (שְׁנֵי־יָמִים, v. 6) 40 days for Judah, he had to recline in all 430 (390 + 40) days. To include the *forty* days in the *three hundred and ninety* is contrary to the statements in the text. But to reckon the two periods *together* has not only no argument against it, but is even suggested by the circumstance that the prophet, while reclining on his left and right sides, is to represent the siege of Jerusalem. Regarded, however, as periods of punishment, both the numbers cannot be explained consistently with the chronology, but must be understood as having a symbolical signification. The space of 430 years, which is announced to both kingdoms together as the duration of this chastisement, recalls the 430 years which in the far past Israel had spent in Egypt in bondage (Exo. 12:40). It had been already intimated to Abraham (Gen. 15:13) that the sojourn in Egypt would be a period of servitude and humiliation for his seed; and at a later time, in consequence of the oppression which the Israelites then experienced on account of the rapid increase of their number, it was — upon the basis of the threat in Deu. 28:68, that God would punish Israel for their persistent declension, by bringing them back into ignominious bondage in Egypt — taken by the prophet as a type of the banishment of rebellious Israel among the *heathen*. In this sense Hosea already threatens (Hos. 8:13; 9: 3, 6) the ten tribes with being carried back to Egypt; see on Hos. 9: 3. Still more frequently, upon the basis of this conception, is the redemption from Assyrian and Babylonian exile announced as a new and miraculous exodus of Israel from the bondage of Egypt, e.g., Hos. 2: 2; Isa. 11:15, 16. — This typical meaning lies also at the foundation of the passage before us, as, in accordance with the statement of Jerome,<sup>14</sup> it was already accepted by the Jews of his time, and has been again recognised in modern times by Hävernicks and Hitzig. That Ezekiel looked upon the period during which Israel had been subject to the heathen in the past as “typical of the future, is to be assumed, because only then does the number of 430 cease to be arbitrary and meaningless, and at the same time its division into 390 + 40 become explicable.” — Hitzig.

This latter view is not, of course, to be understood as Hitzig and Hävernicks take it, i.e., as if the 40 years of Judah’s chastisement were to be viewed apart from the 40 years’ sojourn of the Israelites in the wilderness, upon which the look of the prophet would have been turned by the sojourn in Egypt. For the 40 years in the wilderness are not included in the 430 years of the Egyptian sojourn, so that Ezekiel could have reduced these 430 years to 390, and yet have added to them the 40 years of the desert wanderings. For the coming period of punishment, which is to commence for Israel with the siege of Jerusalem, is fixed at 430 years with reference to the Egyptian bondage of the

Israelites, and this period is divided into 390 and 40; and this division therefore must also have, if not its point of commencement, at least a point of connection, in the 430 years of the Egyptian sojourn. The division of the period of chastisement into two parts is to be explained probably from the sending of the covenant people into the kingdom of Israel and Judah, and the appointment of a longer period of chastisement for Israel than for Judah, from the greater guilt of the ten tribes in comparison with Judah, but not the incommensurable relation of the divisions into 390 and 40 years. The foundation of this division can, first of all, only lie in this, that the number *forty* already possessed the symbolical significance of a measured period of divine visitation. This significance it had already received, not through the 40 years of the desert wandering, but through the 40 days of rain at the time of the deluge (Gen. 7:17), so that, in conformity with this, the punishment of dying in the wilderness, suspended over the rebellious race of Israel at Kadesh, is already stated at 40 years, although it included in reality only 38 years; see on Num. 14:32ff. If now, however, it should be supposed that this penal sentence had contributed to the fixing of the number 40 as a symbolical number to denote a longer period of punishment, the 40 years of punishment for Judah could not yet have been viewed apart from this event. The fixing of the chastisement for Israel and Judah at 390 + 40 years could only in that case be measured by the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, if the relations of this sojourn presented a point of connection for a division of the 430 years into 390 and 40, i.e., if the 40 last years of the Egyptian servitude could somehow be distinguished from the preceding 390. A point of contact for this is offered by an event in the life of Moses which falls within that period, and was fertile in results for him as well as for the whole of Israel, viz., his flight from Egypt in consequence of the slaughter of an Egyptian who had ill-treated an Israelite. As the Israelites, his brethren, did not recognise the meaning of this act, and did not perceive that God would save them by his hand, Moses was necessitated to flee into the land of Midian, and to tarry there 40 years as a stranger, until the Lord called him to be the saviour of his nation, and sent him as His messenger to Pharaoh (Exo. 2:11-3:10; Act. 7:23-30). These 40 years were for Moses not only a time of trial and purification for his future vocation, but undoubtedly also the period of severest Egyptian oppression for the Israelites, and in this respect quite fitted to be a type of the coming time of punishment for Judah, in which was to be repeated what Israel had experienced in Egypt, that, as Israel had lost their helper and protector with the flight of Moses, so now Judah was to lose her king, and be given over to the tyranny of the heathen world-power. <sup>15</sup>

While Ezekiel thus reclines upon one side, he is to direct his look unchangingly upon the siege of Jerusalem, i.e., upon the picture of the besieged city, and keep his arm bare, i.e., ready for action (Isa. 52:10), and outstretched, and prophesy

against the city, especially through the menacing attitude which he had taken up against it. To be able to carry this out, God will bind him with cords, i.e., fetter him to his couch (see on 3:25), so that he cannot stir from one side to another until he has completed the time enjoined upon him for the siege. In this is contained the thought that the siege of Jerusalem is to be mentally carried on until its capture; but no new symbol of the state of prostration of the besieged Jerusalem is implied. For such a purpose the food of the prophet (v. 9ff.) during this time is employed.

*Eze. 4: 9-17.* The third symbolical act.

*V. 9. And do thou take to thyself wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and spelt, and put them in a vessel, and prepare them as bread for thyself, according to the number of the days on which thou liest on thy side; three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat it. V. 10. And thy food, which thou eatest, shall be according to weight, twenty shekels for a day; from time to time shalt thou eat it. V. 11. And water shalt thou drink according to measure, a sixth part of the hin, from time to time shalt thou drink it. V. 12. And as barley cakes shalt thou eat it, and shalt bake it before their eyes with human excrement. V. 13. And Jehovah spake; then shall the children of Israel eat their bread polluted amongst the heathen, whither I shall drive them. V. 14. Then said I: Ah! Lord, Jehovah, my soul has never been polluted; and of a carcass, and of that which is torn, have I never eaten from my youth up until now, and abominable flesh has not come into my mouth. V. 15. Then said He unto me: Lo, I allow thee the dung of animals instead of that of man; therewith mayest thou prepare thy bread. V. 16. And He said to me, Son of man, lo, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, so that they will eat bread according to weight, and in affliction, and drink water by measure, and in amazement. V. 17. Because bread and water shall fail, and they shall pine away one with another, and disappear in their guilt.*

For the whole duration of the symbolical siege of Jerusalem, Ezekiel is to furnish himself with a store of grain corn and leguminous fruits, to place this store in a vessel beside him, and daily to prepare in the form of bread a measured portion of the same, 20 shekels in weight (about 9 ounces), and to bake this as barley cakes upon a fire, prepared with dried dung, and then to partake of it at the different hours for meals throughout the day. In addition to this, he is, at the hours appointed for eating, to drink water, in like manner according to measure, a sixth part of the hin daily, i.e., a quantity less than a pint (cf. *Biblisches Archäol.* II. p. 141). The Israelites, probably, generally prepared the עֲגוּרָה from wheat flour, and not merely when they had guests (Gen. 18: 6). Ezekiel, however, is to take, in addition, other kinds of grain with leguminous fruits, which were employed in the preparation of bread when wheat was deficient; barley — baked into bread by the poor (Jud. 7:13; 2Ki. 4:42; Joh. 6: 9; see on 1Ki. 5: 8); פֶּבֶל, “beans,” a common food of the

Hebrews (2Sa. 17:28), which appears to have been mixed with other kinds of grain for the purpose of being baked into bread.<sup>16</sup>

This especially holds true of the lentiles, a favourite food of the Hebrews (Gen. 25:29f.), from which, in Egypt at the present day, the poor still bake bread in times of severe famine (Sonnini, *R.* II. 390; ἄρτος φάκινος, *Athenaeus*, IV. 158). דִּהֵן, “millet,” termed by the Arabs “*Dochn*” (Arab. *dchn*), *panicum*, a fruit cultivated in Egypt, and still more frequently in Arabia (see Wellsted, *Arab.* I. 295), consisting of longish round brown grain, resembling rice, from which, in the absence of better fruits, a sort of bad bread is baked. Cf. Celsius, *Hierobotan*, i. 453ff.; and Gesen. *Thesaur.* p. 333. כֶּסֶם, “spelt or German corn” (cf. Exo. 9:32), a kind of grain which produces a finer and whiter flour than wheat flour; the bread, however, which is baked from it is somewhat dry, and is said to be less nutritive than wheat bread; cf. Celsius, *Hierobotan*, ii. 98f. Of all these fruits Ezekiel is to place certain quantities in a vessel — to indicate that all kinds of grain and leguminous fruits capable of being converted into bread will be collected, in order to bake bread for the appeasing of hunger. In the intermixture of various kinds of flour we are not, with Hitzig, to seek a transgression of the law in Lev. 19:19; Deu. 22: 9. מִסְפֵּר is the accusative of measure or duration. The quantity is to be fixed according to the number of the days. In v. 9 only the 390 days of the house of Israel’s period of punishment are mentioned — *quod plures essent et fere universa summa* (Prado); and because this was sufficient to make prominent the hardship and oppression of the situation, the 40 days of Judah were omitted for the sake of brevity.<sup>17</sup>

מֵאֲכָלְךָ וְגוֹ, “thy food which thou shalt eat,” i.e., the definite portion which thou shalt have to eat, shall be according to weight (between subject and predicate the substantive verb is to be supplied). Twenty shekels = 8 or 9 ounces of flour, yield 11 or 12 ounces of bread, i.e., at most the half of what a man needs in southern countries for his daily support.<sup>18</sup>

The same is the case with the water. A sixth part of a hin, i.e., a quantity less than a pint, is a very niggardly allowance for a day. Both, however, — eating the bread and drinking the water, — he shall do from time to time, i.e., “not throughout the entire fixed period of 390 days” (Hävernick); but he shall not eat the daily ration at once, but divided into portions according to the daily hours of meals, so that he will never be completely satisfied. In addition to this is the pollution (v. 12ff.) of the scanty allowance of food by the manner in which it is prepared. עֲנַת שְׂעֵרִים is predicate: “as barley cakes,” shalt thou eat them. The suffix in מֵאֲכָלְנָהּ is neuter, and refers to לֶחֶם in v. 9, or rather to the kinds of grain there enumerated, which are ground and baked before them: לֶחֶם, i.e., “food.” The addition שְׂעֵרִים is not to be explained from this, that the principal

part of these consisted of barley, nor does it prove that in general no other than barley cakes were known (Hitzig), but only that the cakes of barley meal, baked in the ashes, were an extremely frugal kind of bread, which that prepared by Ezekiel was to resemble. The **עֲנָה** was probably always baked on hot ashes, or on hot stones (1Ki. 19: 6), not on pans, as Kliefoth here supposes. The prophet, however, is to bake them in (with) human ordure. This is by no means to be understood as if he were to mix the ordure with the food, for which view Isa. 36:12 has been erroneously appealed to; but — as **עֲלֵיהֶם** in v. 15 clearly shows — he is to bake it *over* the dung, i.e., so that dung forms the material of the fire. That the bread must be polluted by this is conceivable, although it cannot be proved from the passages in Lev. 5: 3; 7:21, and Deu. 23:13 that the use of fire composed of dung made the food prepared thereon levitically unclean. The use of fire with human ordure must have communicated to the bread a loathsome smell and taste, by which it was rendered unclean, even if it had not been immediately baked in the hot ashes. That the pollution of the bread is the object of this injunction, we see from the explanation which God gives in v. 13: “Thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the heathen.” The heart of the prophet, however, rebels against such food. He says he has never in his life polluted himself by eating food forbidden in the law; from his youth up he has eaten no unclean flesh, neither of a carcase, nor of that which was torn by wild beasts (cf. Exo. 22:30; Deu. 14:21), nor flesh of sacrifices decayed or putrefying (**פְּגוּל**, see on Lev. 7:18; Isa. 65: 4). On this God omits the requirement in v. 12, and permits him to take for firing the dung of oxen instead of that of men.<sup>19</sup>

In v. 16f., finally, is given the explanation of the scanty allowance of food meted out to the prophet, namely, that the Lord, at the impending siege of Jerusalem, is to take away from the people the staff of bread, and leave them to languish in hunger and distress. The explanation is in literal adherence to the threatenings of the law (Lev. 26:26 and 39), which are now to pass into fulfilment. Bread is called “staff of bread” as being indispensable for the preservation of life. To **בַּמֶּשְׁקֶל**, Lev. 26:26, **בְּדָאָה**, “in sorrow,” is added; and to the water, **בַּשִּׁמּוֹן**, “in astonishment,” i.e., in fixed, silent pain at the miserable death, by hunger and thirst, which they see before them. **נִמְקוּ בְּעוֹנֵם** as Lev. 26:39. If we, finally, cast a look over the contents of this first sign, it says that Jerusalem is soon to be besieged, and during the siege is to suffer hunger and terror as a punishment for the sins of Israel and Judah; that upon the capture of the city of Israel (Judah) they are to be dispersed among the heathen, and will there be obliged to eat unclean bread. To this in Eze. 5 is joined a second sign, which shows further how it shall fare with the people at and after the capture of Jerusalem (vv. 1-4); and after that a longer oracle, which develops the

significance of these signs, and establishes the necessity of the penal judgment (vv. 5-17).

*Eze. 5: 1-4.* THE SIGN WHICH IS TO PORTRAY ISRAEL'S IMPENDING DESTINY.

V. 1. *And thou, son of man, take to thyself a sharp sword, as a razor shalt thou take it to thyself, and go with it over thy head, and over thy chin, and take to thee scales, and divide it (the hair).* V. 2. *A third part burn with fire in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are accomplished: and take the (other) third, smite with the sword round about it: and the (remaining) third scatter to the winds; and the sword will I draw out after them.* V. 3. *Yet take a few of them by number, and bind them in the skirt of thy garment.* V. 4. *And of these again take a few, and cast them into the fire, and burn them with fire; from thence a fire shall go forth over the whole house of Israel.*

The description of this sign is easily understood. **תַּאֲרֵהְגַלְבַּיִם**, “razor of the barbers,” is the predicate, which is to be understood to the suffix in **תִּקְחֶנְהָ**; and the clause states the purpose for which Ezekiel is to use the sharp sword — viz. as a razor, in order to cut off therewith the hair of his head and beard. The hair, when cut off, he is to divide into three parts with a pair of scales (the suffix in **חֲלֶקְתָּם** refers *ad sensum* to the hair). The one third he is to burn in the city, i.e., not in the actual Jerusalem, but in the city, sketched on the brick, which he is symbolically besieging (Eze. 4: 3). To the city also is to be referred the suffix in **סְבִיבוֹתֶיהָ**, v. 2, as is placed beyond doubt by v. 12. In the last clause of v. 2, which is taken from Lev. 26:33, the description of the sign passes over into its exposition, for **אֶחְרֵיהֶם** does not refer to the hair, but to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The significance also of this symbolical act is easily recognised, and is, moreover, stated in v. 12. Ezekiel, in this act, represents the besieged Jerusalem. What he does to his hair, that will God do to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. As the hair of the prophet falls under the sword, used as a razor, so will the inhabitants of Jerusalem fall, when the city is captured, into destruction, and that verily an ignominious destruction. This idea is contained in the picture of the hair-cutting, which was a dishonour done to what forms the ornament of a man. See on 2Sa. 10: 4ff. A third of the same is to perish in the city. As the fire destroys the hair, so will pestilence and hunger consume the inhabitants of the beleaguered city (v. 12). The second third will, on the capture of the city, fall by the sword in the environs (v. 12); the last third will God scatter to the winds, and — as Moses has already threatened the people — will draw forth the sword after them, still to persecute and smite them (v. 12). This sign is continued (vv. 3 and 4) in a second symbolical act, which shadows forth what is further to happen to the people when dispersed among the heathen. Of the third scattered to the winds, Ezekiel is to bind a small portion in the skirt of his garment.

**מִשָּׁם**, “from thence,” refers not to **הַשְּׁלִישִׁית**, but, *ad sensum*, to **תְּזַרְהָ לָרוּחַ**: “from the place where the third that is scattered to the winds is found” — i.e., as regards the subject-matter, of those who are to be found among the dispersion. The binding up into the **בְּנִפְיִים**, “the corners or ends of the garment” (cf. Jer. 2:34), denotes the preservation of the few, who are gathered together out of the whole of those who are dispersed among the heathen; cf. 1Sa. 25:29; Eze. 16: 8. But even of these few He shall still cast some into the fire, and consume them. Consequently those who are gathered together out of exile are not all to be preserved, but are still to be sifted by fire, in which process a part is consumed. This image does not refer to those who remain behind in the land, when the nation is led away captive to Babylon (Theodoret, Grotius, and others), but, as Ephrem the Syrian and Jerome saw, to those who were saved from Babylon, and to their further destiny, as is already clear from the **מִשָּׁם**, rightly understood. The meaning of the last clause of v. 4 is disputed; in it, as in the final clause of v. 2, the symbolical representation passes over into the announcement of the thing itself. **מִמֶּנִּי**, which Ewald would arbitrarily alter into **מִמֶּנִּי**, cannot, with Hävernick, be referred to **אֵל-תּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ**, because this yields a very forced sense, but relates to the whole act described in vv. 3 and 4: that a portion thereof is rescued and preserved, and yet of this portion many are consumed by fire, — from that a fire shall go forth over the whole house of Israel. This fire is explained by almost all expositors, from Theodoret and Jerome onwards, of the penal judgment which were inflicted after the exile upon the Jews, which reached their culminating point in the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and which still continue in their dispersion throughout the whole world. But this view, as Kliefoth has already remarked, is not only in decided antagonism to the intention of the text, but it is, moreover, altogether impossible to see how a judgment of extermination for all Israel can be deduced from the fact that a small number of the Israelites, who are scattered to the winds, is saved, and that of those who are saved a part is still consumed with fire. From thence there can only come forth a fire of purification for the whole of Israel, through which the remnant, as Isaiah had already predicted (Is. 6:12ff.), is converted into a holy seed. In the last clause, consuming by fire is not referred to. The fire, however, has not merely a destructive, but also a cleansing, purifying, and quickening power. To kindle such a fire on earth did Christ come (Luk. 12:40), and from Him the same goes out over the whole house of Israel. This view, for which Kliefoth has already rightly decided, receives a confirmation through Eze. 6: 8-10, where is announced the conversion of the remnant of those Israelites who had been dispersed among the nations.



So far the symbolical acts. Before, however, we pass on to the explanation of the following oracle, we must still briefly touch the question, whether these acts were undertaken and performed by the prophet in the world of external reality, or whether they were occurrences only *internally* real, which Ezekiel experienced in spirit — i.e., in an ecstatic condition — and afterwards communicated to the people. Amongst modern expositors, Kliefoth has defended the former view, and has adduced the following considerations in support: A significant act, and yet also a silent, leisurely one, must be performed, that it may show something to those who behold it. Nor is the case such, as Hitzig supposes, that it would have been impossible to carry out what had been required of the prophet in Eze. 4: 1-17. It had, indeed, its difficulty; but God sometimes requires from His servants what is difficult, although He also helps them to the performance of it. So here He will make it easy for the prophet to recline, by binding him (Eze. 4: 8). “In the sign, this certainly was kept in view, that it should be performed; and it, moreover, *was* performed, although the text, in a manner quite intelligible with reference to an act commanded by God, does not expressly state it.” For these latter assertions, however, there is anything but convincing proof. The matter is not so simple as Kliefoth supposes, although we are at one with him in this, that neither the difficulty of carrying out what was commanded in the world of external reality, nor the non-mention of the actual performance, furnishes sufficient grounds for the supposition of merely internal, spiritual occurrences. We also are of opinion that very many of the symbolical acts of the prophets were undertaken and performed in the external world, and that this supposition, as that which corresponds most fully with the literal meaning of the words, is on each occasion the most obvious, and is to be firmly adhered to, unless there can be good grounds for the opposite view. In the case now before us, we have first to take into consideration that the oracle which enjoins these symbolical acts on Ezekiel stands in close connection, both as to time and place, with the inauguration of Ezekiel to the prophetic office. The hand of the Lord comes upon him at the same place, where the concluding word at his call was addressed to him (the □שׁ, Eze. 3:22, points back to □שׁ in Eze. 3:15); and the circumstance that Ezekiel found himself still on the same spot to which he had been transported by the Spirit of God (Eze. 3:14), shows that the new revelation, which he here still received, followed very *soon*, if not *immediately*, after his consecration to the office of prophet. Then, upon the occasion of this divine revelation, he is again, as at his consecration, transported into an ecstatic condition, as is clear not only from the formula, “the hand of the Lord came upon me,” which in our book always has this signification, but also most undoubtedly from this, that he again sees the glory of Jehovah in the same manner as he had seen it in Eze. 1 — viz. when in an ecstatic condition. But if this were an ecstatic vision, it is obvious that the acts also which the divine

appearance imposed upon him must be regarded as ecstatic occurrences; since the assertion that every significant act must be *performed*, in order that something may be *shown* to those who witness it, is fundamentally insufficient for the proof that this act must fall within the domain of the earthly world of sense, because the occurrences related in Eze. 8-11 are viewed even by Kliefoth himself as purely *internal* events. As decisive, however, for the purely internal character of the symbolical acts under consideration (Eze. 4 and 5), is the circumstance that the supposition of Ezekiel having, in his own house, actually lain 390 days upon his left, and then, again, 40 days upon his right side without turning, stands in irreconcilable contradiction with the fact that he, according to Eze. 8: 1ff., was carried away in ecstasy to Jerusalem, there to behold in the temple the monstrosities of Israel's idolatry and the destruction of Jerusalem. For the proof of this, see the introduction to Eze. 8.

*Eze. 5: 5-17.* The Divine Word which Explains the Symbolical Signs, in which the judgment that is announced is laid down as to its cause (5-9) and as to its nature (10-17). —

V. 5. *Thus says the Lord Jehovah: This Jerusalem have I placed in the midst of the nations, and raised about her the countries.* V. 6. *But in wickedness she resisted my laws more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries which are round about her, for they rejected my laws, and did not walk in my statutes.* V. 7. *Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah: Because ye have raged more than the nations round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, and have not obeyed my laws, and have not done even according to the laws of the nations which are round about you;* V. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Lo, I, even I, shall be against thee, and will perform judgments in thy midst before the eyes of the nations.* V. 9. *And I will do unto thee what I have never done, nor will again do in like manner, on account of all thine abominations.*

זאת ירושׁלם, not “this is Jerusalem,” i.e., this is the *destiny* of Jerusalem (Hävernick), but “this Jerusalem” (Hitzig); זאת is placed before the noun in the sense of *iste*, as in Exo. 32: 1; cf. Ewald, § 293*b*. To place the culpability of Jerusalem in its proper prominence, the censure of her sinful conduct opens with the mention of the exalted position which God had assigned her upon earth. Jerusalem is described in v. 5 as forming the central point of the earth: this is done, however, neither in an external, geographical (Hitzig), nor in a purely typical sense, as the city that is blessed more than any other (Calvin, Hävernick), but in a historical sense, in so far as “God’s people and city actually stand in the central point of the God-directed world-development and its movements” (Kliefoth); or, in relation to the history of salvation, as the city in which God hath set up His throne of grace, from which shall go forth the law and the statutes for all nations, in order that the salvation of the whole world may be accomplished (Isa. 2: 2ff.; Mic. 4: 1ff.). But instead of keeping the laws

and statutes of the Lord, Jerusalem has, on the contrary, turned to do wickedness more than the heathen nations in all the lands round about (הַמְרָה, *cum accusat. object.*, “to act rebelliously towards”). Here we may not quote Rom. 2:12, 14 against this, as if the heathen, who did not know the law of God, did not also transgress the same, but sinned *ἀνόμωος*; for the sinning *ἀνόμωος*, of which the apostle speaks, is really a transgression of the law written on the heart of the heathen. With לָכֵן, in v. 7, the penal threatening is introduced; but before the punishment is laid down, the correspondence between guilt and punishment is brought forward more prominently by repeatedly placing in juxtaposition the godless conduct of the rebellious city. הַמְנַבֵּם is infinitive, from הָמַן, a secondary form הַמֹּן, in the sense of הָמָה, “to rage,” i.e., to rebel against God; cf. *Psa.* 2: 1. The last clause of v. 7 contains a climax: “And ye have not even acted according to the laws of the heathen.” This is not in any real contradiction to *Eze.* 11:12 (where it is made a subject of reproach to the Israelites that they have acted according to the laws of the heathen), so that we would be obliged, with Ewald and Hitzig, to expunge the לָא in the verse before us, because wanting in the Peshito and several Hebrew manuscripts. Even in these latter, it has only been omitted to avoid the supposed contradiction with *Eze.* 11:12. The solution of the apparent contradiction lies in the double meaning of the מִשְׁפָּטֵי הַגּוֹיִם. The heathen had laws which were opposed to those of God, but also such as were rooted in the law of God written upon their hearts. Obedience to the latter was good and praiseworthy; to the former, wicked and objectionable. Israel, which hated the law of God, followed the wicked and sinful laws of the heathen, and neglected to observe their *good* laws. The passage before us is to be judged by *Jer.* 2:10, 11, to which Raschi had already made reference. <sup>110</sup>

In v. 8 the announcement of the punishment, interrupted by the repeated mention of the cause, is again resumed with the words לָכֵן כֹּה וְגוֹ. Since Jerusalem has acted worse than the heathen, God will execute His judgments upon her before the eyes of the heathen. עָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּטִים or עָשָׂה שְׁפָטִים (*vv.* 10, 15, *Eze.* 11: 9; 16:41, etc.), “to accomplish or execute judgments,” is used in *Exo.* 12:12 and *Num.* 33: 4 of the judgments which God suspended over Egypt. The punishment to be suspended shall be so great and heavy, that the like has never happened before, nor will ever happen again. These words do not require us either to refer the threatening, with Coccejus, to the last destruction of Jerusalem, which was marked by greater severity than the earlier one, or to suppose, with Hävernicks, that the prophet’s look is directed to both the periods of Israel’s punishment — the times of the Babylonian and Roman calamity together. Both suppositions are irreconcilable with the words, as these can only be referred to the first impending penal judgment of the destruction of

Jerusalem. This was, so far, more severe than any previous or subsequent one, inasmuch as by it the existence of the people of God was for a time suspended, while that Jerusalem and Israel, which were destroyed and annihilated by the Romans, were no longer the people of God, inasmuch as the latter consisted at that time of the Christian community, which was not affected by that catastrophe (Kliefoth).

*Eze. 5:10-17.* Further execution of this threat.

V. 10. *Therefore shall fathers devour their children in thy midst, and children shall devour their fathers: and I will exercise judgments upon thee, and disperse all thy remnant to the winds.* V. 11. *Therefore, as I live, is the declaration of the Lord Jehovah, Verily, because thou hast polluted my sanctuary with all thine abominations and all thy crimes, so shall I take away mine eye without mercy, and will not spare.* V. 12. *A third of thee shall die by the pestilence, and perish by hunger in thy midst, and the third part shall fall by the sword about thee; and the third part will I scatter to all the winds; and will draw out the sword after them.* V. 13. *And my anger shall be fulfilled, and I will cool my wrath against them, and will take vengeance. And they shall experience that I, Jehovah, have spoken in my zeal, when I accomplish my wrath upon them.* V. 14. *And I will make thee a desolation and a mockery among the nations which are round about thee, before the eyes of every passer-by.* V. 15. *And it shall be a mockery and a scorn, a warning and a terror for the nations round about thee, when I exercise my judgments upon thee in anger and wrath and in grievous visitations. I, Jehovah, have said it.* V. 16. *When I send against thee the evil arrows of hunger, which minister to destruction, which I shall send to destroy you; for hunger shall I heap upon you, and shall break to you the staff of bread.* V. 17. *And I shall send hunger upon you, and evil beasts, which shall make thee childless; and pestilence and blood shall pass over thee; and the sword will I bring upon thee. I, Jehovah, have spoken it.*

As a proof of the unheard-of severity of the judgment, there is immediately mentioned in v. 10 a most horrible circumstance, which had been already predicted by Moses (Lev. 26:29; Deu. 28:53) as that which should happen to the people when hard pressed by the enemy, viz., a famine so dreadful, during the siege of Jerusalem, that parents would eat their children, and children their parents; and after the capture of the city, the dispersion of those who remained “to all the winds, i.e., to all quarters of the world.” This is described more minutely, as an appendix to the symbolical act in vv. 1 and 2, in vv. 11 and 12, with a solemn oath, and with repeated and prominent mention of the sins which have drawn down such chastisements. As sin, is mentioned the pollution of the temple by idolatrous abominations, which are described in detail in Eze. 8. The **אָנְרַע**, which is variously understood by the old translators (for which some *Codices* offer the explanatory correction **אָנְדַע**), is to be explained, after Job. 36: 7, of the “turning away of the eye,” and the **עֵינַי** following as the object; while **וְלֹא־תַחֲסוּם**, “that it feel no compassion,” is interjected between

the verb and its object with the adverbial signification of “mercilessly.” For that the words **וְלֹא תַחֲסֹם** are adverbially subordinate to **אֲנִירַע**, distinctly appears from the correspondence — indicated by **וְגַם אֲנִי** — between **אֲנִירַע** and **לֹא אֲחַמּוֹל**. Moreover, the thought, “Jehovah will mercilessly withdraw His care for the people,” is not to be termed “feeble” in connection with what follows; nor is the contrast, which is indicated in the clause **וְגַם־אֲנִי**, lost, as Hävernicks supposes. **וְגַם־אֲנִי** does not require **נִרַע** to be understood of a positive act, which would correspond to the desecration of the sanctuary. This is shown by the last clause of the verse. The withdrawal without mercy of the divine providence is, besides, in reality, equivalent to complete devotion to destruction, as it is particularized in v. 12. For v. 12 see on vv. 1 and 2. By carrying out the threatened division of the people into three parts, the wrath of God is to be fulfilled, i.e., the full measure of the divine wrath upon the people is to be exhausted (cf. 7, 8), and God is to appear and “cool” His anger. **חָמָה הִנִּיחַ**, “*sedavit iram*,” occurs again in 16:42; 21:22; 24:13. **הִנְחַמְתִּי**, *Hithpael*, pausal form for **הִנְחַמְתִּי**, “*se consolari*,” “to procure satisfaction by revenge;” cf. Isa. 1:24, and for the thing, Deu. 28:63. In v. 14ff. the discourse turns again from the people to the city of Jerusalem. It is to become a wilderness, as was already threatened in Lev. 26:31 and 33 to the cities of Israel, and thereby a “mockery” to all nations, in the manner described in Deu. 29:23f. **וְהָיְתָה**, in v. 15, is not to be changed, after the LXX, Vulgate, and some MSS, into the second person; but Jerusalem is to be regarded as the subject which is to become the object of scorn and hatred, etc., when God accomplishes His judgments. **מוֹצֵר** is a warning-example. Among the judgments which are to overtake it, in v. 16, hunger is again made specially prominent (cf. Eze. 4:16) and first in v. 17 are wild beasts, pestilence, blood, and sword added, and a quartette of judgments announced as in Eze. 14:21. For pestilence and blood are comprehended together as a unity by means of the predicate. Their connection is to be understood according to Eze. 14:19, and the number four is significant, as in Eze. 14:21; Jer. 15: 3ff. For more minute details as to the meaning, see on Eze. 14:21. The evil arrows point back to Deu. 32:23; the evil beasts, to Lev. 24:22 and Deu. 32:24ff. To produce an impression, the prophet heaps his words together. *Unum ejus consilium fuit penetrare in animos populi quasi lapideos et ferreos. Haec igitur est ratio, cur hic tanta varietate utatur et exornet suam doctrinam variis figuris* (Calvin).

## **Ch. 6. The Judgment upon the Idolatrous Places, and on the Idol-Worshippers**

To God’s address in vv. 5-17, explaining the signs in Eze. 4: 1-5, are appended in Eze. 6 and 7 two additional oracles, which present a further development of

the contents of these signs, the judgment portrayed by them in its extent and greatness. In Eze. 6 there is announced, in the first section, to the idolatrous places, and on their account to the land, desolation, and to the idolaters, destruction (vv. 3-7); and to this is added the prospect of a remnant of the people, who are dispersed among the heathen, coming to be converted to the Lord (vv. 8-10). In the second section the necessity and terrible character of the impending judgment is repeatedly described at length as an appendix to vv. 12, 14 (vv. 11-14).

*Eze. 6: 1-7.* THE DESOLATION OF THE LAND, AND DESTRUCTION OF THE IDOLATERS. —

*V. 1. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: V. 2. Son of man, turn thy face towards the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them. V. 3. And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to the mountains, and to the hills, to the valleys, and to the low grounds, Behold, I bring the sword upon you, and destroy your high places. V. 4. Your altars shall be made desolate, and your sun-pillars shall be broken; and I shall make your slain fall in the presence of your idols. V. 5. And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and will scatter your bones round about your altars. V. 6. In all your dwellings shall the cities be made desolate, and the high places waste; that your altars may be desolate and waste, and your idols broken and destroyed, and your sun-pillars hewn down, and the works of your hands exterminated. V. 7. And the slain will fall in your midst; that you may know that I am Jehovah.*

With v. 1 cf. 3:16. The prophet is to prophesy against the mountains of Israel. That the mountains are mentioned (v. 2) as *pars pro toto*, is seen from v. 3, when to the mountains and hills are added also the valleys and low grounds, as the places where idolatry was specially practised; cf. Hos. 4:13; Jer. 2:20; 3: 6; see on Hos. *l.c.* and Deu. 12: 2. אֲפִיקִים, in the older writings, denotes the “river channels,” “the beds of the stream;” but Ezekiel uses the word as equivalent to valley, i.e., נַחַל, a valley with a brook or stream, like the Arabic wady. נִיא, properly “deepening,” “the deep ground,” “the deep valley;” on the form נִיאֵיזָה, cf. Ewald, § 186*da*. The juxtaposition of mountains and hills, of valleys and low grounds, occurs again in Eze. 36: 4, 6, and Eze. 35: 8; the opposition between mountains and valleys also, in Eze. 32: 5, 6, and Eze. 24:13. The valleys are to be conceived of as furnished with trees and groves, under the shadow of which the worship of Astarte especially was practised; see on v. 15. On the mountains and in the valleys were sanctuaries erected to Baal and Astarte. The announcement of their destruction is appended to the threatening in Lev. 26:30, which Ezekiel takes up and describes at greater length. Beside the בְּמוֹת, the places of sacrifice and worship, and the חֲמֻנִים, pillars or statues of Baal, dedicated to him as the sun-god, he names

also the altars, which, in Lev. *l.c.* and other places, are comprehended along with the **בַּמֹּזֹת**; see on Lev. 26:30 and 1Ki. 3: 3. With the destruction of the idol temples, altars, and statues, the idol-worshippers are also to be smitten, so as to fall down in the presence of their idols. The fundamental meaning of the word **גִּלּוּלִים**, “idols,” borrowed from Lev. *l.c.*, and frequently employed by Ezekiel, is uncertain; signifying either “logs of wood,” from **גָּלַל**, “to roll” (Ges.) or *stercorei*, from **גַּל**, “dung;” not “monuments of stone” (Hävernick). V. 5a is taken quite literally from Lev. 26:30b. The ignominy of the destruction is heightened by the bones of the slain idolaters being scattered round about the idol altars. In order that the idolatry may be entirely rooted out, the cities throughout the whole land, and all the high places, are to be devastated, v. 6. The forms **תִּישְׁמְנָה** and **אֲשַׁמוּ** are probably not to be derived from **שָׁמַם** (Ewald, § 138b), but to be referred back to a stem-form **שָׁם**, with the signification of **שָׁמַם**, the existence of which appears certain from the old name **שִׁימוֹן** in Psa. 68 and elsewhere. The **א** in **אֲשַׁמוּ** is certainly only *mater lectionis*. In v. 7, the singular **הָקָל** stands as indefinitely general. The thought, “slain will fall *in your midst*,” involves the idea that not all the people will fall, but that there will survive some who are saved, and prepares for what follows. The falling of the slain — the idolaters with their idols — leads to the recognition of Jehovah as the omnipotent God, and to conversion to Him.

**Eze. 6: 8-10.** The survivors shall go away into banishment amongst the heathen, and shall remember the word of the Lord that will have been fulfilled.

V. 8. *But I shall preserve a remnant, in that there shall be to you some who have escaped the sword among the nations, when he shall be dispersed among the lands.*

V. 9. *And those of you who have escaped, will make mention of me among the nations whither they are led captive, when I have broken to me their whorish heart, which had departed from me, and their eyes, which went a whoring after their idols: and they shall loathe themselves because of the evil which they have done in reference to all their abominations.* V. 10. *And ye shall know that I am Jehovah. Not in vain have I spoken this evil to you.*

**הוֹתִיר**, *superstites facere*, “to make or preserve survivors.” The connection with **בְּהִיּוֹת וְגוֹ** is analogous to the construction of **הוֹתִיר**, in the sense of “giving a superabundance,” with **בְּ** *rei*, Deu. 28:11 and 30: 9, and is not to be rejected, with Ewald and Hitzig, as inadmissible. For **בְּהִיּוֹת** is supported by the old versions, and the change of **וְהוֹתִירָתִי** into **וְדַבַּרְתִּי**, which would have to be referred to v. 7, is in opposition to the twofold repetition of the **כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה** **וְיָדַעְתֶּם** (**וְיָדַעוּ**), vv. 10 and 14, as this repetition shows that the thought in v. 7 is different from that in 17, 21, not “they shall know that Jehovah has

spoken,” but “they shall know that He who has done this is Jehovah, the God of Israel.” The preservation of a remnant will be shown in this, that they shall have some who have escaped the sword. הָזָרוּתֵיכֶם is *infin. Niph.* with a plural form of the suffix, as occurs elsewhere only with the plural ending וֹת of nouns, while Ezekiel has extended it to the וֹת of the infinitive of ל"ה verbs; cf. 16:31, and Ewald, § 259b. The remembrance of Jehovah (v. 9) is the commencement of conversion to Him. אֲשֶׁר before נִשְׁבַּרְתִּי is not to be connected as relative pronoun with לָבָם, but is a conjunction, though not used conditionally, “if,” as in Lev. 4:22, Deu. 11:27, and elsewhere, but of time, ὅτε, “when,” as Deu. 11: 6 and 2Ch. 35:20, and נִשְׁבַּרְתִּי in the signification of the *futur. exact.* The *Niph.* נִשְׁבַּר here is not to be taken as passive, but middle, *sibi frangere*, i.e., לָבָם, *poenitentiâ* conterere animum eorum ut ad ipsum (*Deum*) redeant (Maurer, Hävernick). Besides the heart, the eyes also are mentioned, which God is to smite, as the external senses which allure the heart to whoredom. וְנִקְטְמוּ corresponds to וְזָכְרוּ at the beginning of the verse. קוֹמ, “the later form for קוֹי, “to feel a loathing,” *Hiphil*, “to be filled with loathing;” cf. Job. 10: 1 with ב *object.*, “in (on) their פָּנִים, faces,” i.e., their persons or themselves: so also in Eze. 20:43; 36:31. אֵל הָרָעוֹת, in allusion to the evil things; לְבַלְתֹּעֵב, in reference to all their abominations. This fruit, which is produced by chastisement, namely, that he idolaters are inspired with loathing for themselves, and led to the knowledge of Jehovah, will furnish the proof that God has not spoken in vain.

*Eze. 6:11-14.* The punishment is just and well deserved.

V. 11. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Smite with thy hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Woe on all the wicked abominations of the house of Israel! that they must perish by sword, hunger, and pestilence.* V. 12. *He that is afar off will die by the pestilence; and he that is near at hand shall fall by the sword; and he who survives and is preserved will die of hunger: and I shall accomplish my wrath upon them.* V. 13. *And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when your slain lie in the midst of your idols round about your altars, on every high hill, upon all the summits of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick-leaved terebinth, on the places where they brought their pleasant incense to all their idols.* V. 14. *And I will stretch out my hand against them, and make the land waste and desolate more than the wilderness of Diblath, in all their dwellings: so shall ye know that I am Jehovah.*

Through clapping of the hands and stamping of the feet — the gestures which indicate violent excitement — the prophet is to make known to the displeasure of Jehovah at the horrible idolatry of the people, and thereby make manifest that the penal judgment is well deserved. הִבַּהּ בְּכַפָּי is in Eze. 21:19 expressed



more distinctly by **הִדְּ בַּיָּד אֶל בַּיָּד**, “to strike one hand against the other,” i.e., “to clap the hands;” cf. Num. 24:10. **אָח**, an exclamation of lamentation, occurring only here and in Eze. 21:20. **אֲשֶׁר**, v. 11, is a conjunction, “at.” Their abominations are so wicked, that they must be exterminated on account of them. This is specially mentioned in v. 12. No one will escape the judgment: he who is far removed from its scene as little as he who is close at hand; while he who escapes the pestilence and the sword is to perish of hunger. **נָצוּר**, *servatus*, preserved, as in Isa. 49: 6. The signification “besieged” (LXX, Vulgate, Targum, etc.), Hitzig can only maintain by arbitrarily expunging **הַנְּשָׂאָר** as a gloss. On v. 12*b*, cf. 5:13; on 13*a*, cf. v. 5; and on 13*b*, cf. v. 3, and Hos. 4:13; Jer. 2:20; 3: 6; Deu. 12: 2. **אֶל פְּלִגְבֹּ**, according to later usage, for **עַל פְּלִגְבֹּ**, **רִיחַ נִיחַח**, used in the Pentateuch of sacrifices pleasing to God, is here transferred to idol sacrifices; see on Lev. 1: 9 and Gen. 8:21. On account of the prevalence of idolatry in all parts, God will make the land entirely desolate. The union of **שְׂמֵמָה וּמְשֻׂמָה** serves to strengthen the idea; cf. Eze. 33: 8ff., 35: 3. The words **מִמְדַּבְּרַתְּהָ** are obscure, either “in the wilderness towards Diblath” (even to Diblath), or “more than the wilderness of Diblath” (מִן of comparison). There is no doubt that **דִּבְלַתְּהָ** is a *nom. prop.*; cf. the name of the city **דִּבְלַתִּים** in Jer. 48:22; Num. 33:46. The second acceptance of the words is more probable than the first. For, if **מִמְדַּבְּרַתְּהָ** is the *terminus a quo*, and **דִּבְלַתְּהָ** the *terminus ad quem* of the extent of the land, then must **מִמְדַּבְּרַתְּהָ** be punctuated not only as *status absolut.*, but it must also have the article; because a definite wilderness — that, namely, of Arabia — is meant. The omission of the article cannot be justified by reference to 21: 3 or to Psa. 75: 7 (Hitzig, Ewald), because both passages contain general designations of the quarters of the world, with which the article is always omitted. In the next place, no *Dibla* can be pointed out in the north; and the change of *Diblatha* into *Ribla*, already proposed by Jerome, and more recently brought forward again by J. D. Michaelis, has not only against it the authority of all the old versions, but also the circumstance that the *Ribla* mentioned in 2Ki. 23:33 did not form the northern boundary of Palestine, but lay on the other side of it, in the land of *Hamath*; while the **הַרְבֵּלָה**, named in Num. 34:11, is a place on the eastern boundary to the north of the Sea of Gennesareth, which would, moreover, be inappropriate as a designation of the northern boundary. Finally, the extent of the land from the south to the north is constantly expressed in a different way; cf. Num. 23:21 (Eze. 34: 8); Jos. 13: 5; 1Ki. 8:65; 2Ki. 14:65; Amo. 6:14; 1Ch. 13: 5; 2Ch. 7: 8; and even by Ezekiel himself (Eze. 48: 1) **לְבוֹא חֶמֶת** is named as the boundary on the north. The form **דִּבְלַתְּהָ** is similar to **תְּמִנְתָּהָ** for **תְּמִנָּה**, although the name is hardly to be explained, with

Hävernicks, as an appellation, after the Arabic *dibl*, *calamitas*, *exitium*. The wilderness of *Diblah* is unknown. With וַיְדַעְנוּ בִּי וְגוֹ' the discourse is rounded off in returning to the beginning of v. 13, while the thoughts in vv. 13 and 14 are only a variation of vv. 4-7.

## Ch. 7. The Overthrow of Israel

The second “word of God,” contained in this chapter, completes the announcement of judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah, by expanding the thought, that the end will come both quickly and inevitably upon the land and people. This word is divided into two unequal sections, by the repetition of the phrase, “Thus saith Adonai Jehovah” (vv. 2 and 5). In the first of these sections the theme is given in short, expressive, and monotonous clauses; namely, the end is drawing nigh, for God will judge Israel without mercy according to its abominations. The second section (vv. 5-27) is arranged in four strophes, and contains, in a form resembling the lamentation in Eze. 19, a more minute description of the end predicted.

### Eze. 7: 1-4. THE END COMETH. —

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me thus:* V. 2. *And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: An end to the land of Israel! the end cometh upon the four borders of the land.* V. 3. *Now (cometh) the end upon thee, and I shall send my wrath upon thee, and judge thee according to thy ways, and bring upon thee all thine abominations.* V. 4. *And my eye shall not look with pity upon thee, and I shall not spare, but bring thy ways upon thee; and thy abominations shall be in the midst of thee, that ye may know that I am Jehovah.*

וַיֵּשֶׁבֶת, with the copula, connects this word of God with the preceding one, and shows it to be a continuation. It commences with an emphatic utterance of the thought, that the end is coming to the land of Israel, i.e., to the kingdom of Judah, with its capital Jerusalem. Desecrated as it has been by the abominations of its inhabitants, it will cease to be the land of God’s people Israel. יֵשֶׁבֶת לְאֶרְצָתָא (to the land of Israel) is not to be taken with כֹּה אָמַר (thus saith the Lord) in opposition to the accents, but is connected with קֵץ (an end), as in the Targ. and Vulgate, and is placed first for the sake of greater emphasis. In the construction, compare Job. 6:14. אֶרְבַּאת בְּנִפּוֹת הָאָרֶץ is limited by the parallelism to the four extremities of the land of Israel. It is used elsewhere for the whole earth (Isa. 11:12). The *Chetib* אֶרְבַּאת is placed, in opposition to the ordinary rule, before a noun in the feminine gender. The *Keri* gives the regular construction (vid., Ewald, § 267c). In v. 3 the end is explained to be a wrathful judgment. “Give (נָתַתְּ) thine abominations upon thee;” i.e., send the consequences, inflict punishment for them. The same thought is expressed in the

phrase, “thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee;” in other words, they would discern them in the punishments which the abominations would bring in their train. For v. 4a compare Eze. 5:11.

*Eze. 7: 5-27.* The execution of the judgment announced in vv. 2-4, arranged in four strophes: vv. 5-9, 10-14, 15-22, 23-27. — The *first* strophe depicts the end as a terrible calamity, and as near at hand. Vv. 3 and 4 are repeated as a refrain in vv. 8 and 9, with slight modifications.

V. 5. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Misfortune, a singular misfortune, behold, it cometh.* V. 6. *End cometh: there cometh the end; it waketh upon thee; behold, it cometh.* V. 7. *The fate cometh upon thee, inhabitants of the land: the time cometh, the day is near; tumult and not joy upon the mountains.* V. 8. *Now speedily will I pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger on thee; and judge thee according to thy ways, and bring upon thee all thine abominations.* V. 9. *My eye shall not look with pity upon thee, and I shall not spare; according to thy ways will I bring it upon thee, and thy abominations shall be in the midst of thee, that ye may know that I, Jehovah, am smiting.*

Misfortune of a singular kind shall come. רָעָה is made more emphatic by רָעָה תָּתָה, in which תָּתָה is placed first for the sake of emphasis, in the sense of *unicus, singularis*; a calamity singular (unique) of its kind, such as never had occurred before (cf. Eze. 5: 9). In v. 6 the poetical הִקִּיץ, it (the end) waketh upon thee, is suggested by the paronomasia with הִקִּיץ. The force of the words is weakened by supplying Jehovah as the subject to הִקִּיץ, in opposition to the context. And it will not do to supply רָעָה (evil) from v. 5 as the subject to הִנֵּה בָּאָה (behold, it cometh). בָּאָה is construed impersonally: It cometh, namely, every dreadful thing which the end brings with it. The meaning of *tz<sup>e</sup>phirâh* is doubtful. The only other passage in which it occurs is Isa. 28: 5, where it is used in the sense of diadem or crown, which is altogether unsuitable here. Raschi has therefore had recourse to the Syriac and Chaldee צִפְרָא, *aurora, tempus matutinum*, and Hävernîck has explained it accordingly, “the dawn of an evil day.” But the dawn is never used as a symbol or omen of misfortune, not even in Joe. 2: 2, but solely as the sign of the bursting forth of light or of salvation. Abarbanel was on the right track when he started from the radical meaning of צִפְרָא, to twist, and taking *tz<sup>e</sup>phirâh* in the sense of *orbis, ordo*, or periodical return, understood it as probably denoting *rerum fatigue vicissitudinem in orbem redeuntem* (Ges. *Thes.* p. 1188). But it has been justly observed, that the rendering succession, or periodical return, can only give a forced sense in v. 10. Winer has given a better rendering, viz., *fatum, malum fatale*, fate or destiny, for which he refers to the Arabic *ṣabramun, intortum*, then *fatum haud mutandum inevitabile*. Different explanations have also been given of הִדְרָה. But the opinion that it is synonymous with הִדְרָה, the

joyous vintage cry (Jer. 25:30; Isa. 16:10), is a more probable one than that it is an unusual form of הוֹד, *splendor, gloria*. So much at any rate is obvious from the context, that the *hapax legomenon* הָדָה is the antithesis of מְהוּמָה, tumult, or the noise of war. The shouting of the mountains, is shouting, a rejoicing upon the mountains. מִקְרוֹב, from the immediate vicinity, in a temporal not a local sense, as in Deu. 32:17 (= immediately). For בְּלִי אֵיךְ, see Eze. 6:12. The remainder of the strophe (vv. 8b and 9) is a repetition of vv. 3 and 4; but מַכָּה is added in the last clause. They shall learn that it is Jehovah who smites. This thought is expanded in the following strophe.

*Eze. 7:10-14. Second strophe. —*

V. 10. *Behold the day, behold, it cometh; the fate springeth up; the rod sprouteth; the pride blossometh.* V. 11. *The violence riseth up as the rod of evil: nothing of them, nothing of their multitude, nothing of their crowd, and nothing glorious upon them.* V. 12. *The time cometh, the day approacheth: let not the buyer rejoice, and let not the seller trouble himself, for wrath cometh upon the whole multitude thereof.* V. 13. *For the seller will not return to that which was sold, even though his life were still among the living: for the prophecy against its whole multitude will not turn back; and no one will strengthen himself as to his life through his iniquity.* V. 14. *They blow the trumpet and make everything ready; but no one goeth into the battle: for my wrath cometh upon all their multitude. —*

The rod is already prepared; nothing will be left of the ungodly. This is the leading thought of the strophe. The three clauses of v. 10b are synonymous; but there is a gradation in the thought. The approaching fate springs up out of the earth (צָץ, applied to the springing up of plants, as in 1Ki. 5:13; Isa. 11: 1, etc.); it sprouts as a rod, and flowers as pride. *Matteh*, the rod as an instrument of chastisement (Isa. 10: 5). This rod is then called *zâdhôn*, pride, inasmuch as God makes use of a proud and violent people, namely the Chaldeans (Hab. 1: 6ff.; Jer. 50:31 *seq.*), to inflict the punishment. Sprouting and blossoming, which are generally used as figurative representations of fresh and joyous prosperity, denote here the vigorous growth of that power which is destined to inflict the punishment. Both *châmâs* (violence) and *zâdhôn* (pride) refer to the enemy who is to chastise Israel. The violence which he employs rises up into the chastening rod of “evil,” i.e., of ungodly Israel. In v. 11b the effect of the blow is described in short, broken sentences. The emotion apparent in the frequent repetition of לֹא is intensified by the omission of the verb, which gives to the several clauses the character of exclamations. So far as the meaning is concerned, we have to insert וְיָהִי in thought, and to take מִן in a partitive sense: there will not be anything of them, i.e., nothing will be left of them (the Israelites, or the inhabitants of the land). מֵהֶם (of them) is explained by the nouns which follow. הַמּוֹן and the ἄπ. λεγ. הַמְהוּמָה, plural of הֶם or הֵמָּה, both

derivatives of **הָמָה**, are so combined that **הַמִּוֶן** signifies the tumultuous multitude of people, **הָמָה** the multitude of possessions (like **הַמִּוֶן**, Isa. 60: 2; Psa. 37:16, etc.). The meaning which Hävernäck assigns to *hâmeḥ*, viz., anxiety or trouble, is unsupported and inappropriate. The **ἀπ. λεγ. נָה** is not to be derived from **נָה**, to lament, as the Rabbins affirm; or interpreted, as Kimchi — who adopts this derivation — maintains, on the ground of Jer. 16: 4ff., as signifying that, on account of the multitude of the dying, there will be no more lamentation for the dead. This leaves the *Mappik* in **ה** unexplained. **נָה** is a derivative of a root **נָה**; in Arabic, *nâha, elata fuit res, eminuit, magnificus fuit*; hence **נָה**, *res magnifica*. When everything disappears in such a way as this, the joy occasioned by the acquisition of property, and the sorrow caused by its loss, will also pass away (v. 12). The buyer will not rejoice in the property he has bought, for he will not be able to enjoy it; and the seller will not mourn that he has been obliged to part with his possession, for he would have lost it in any case. <sup>11</sup>

The wrath of God is kindled against their whole multitude; that is to say, the judgment falls equally upon them all. The suffix in **הַמִּוֶּנָה** refers, as Jerome has correctly shown, to the “land of Israel” (*admāth, Yisrâēl*) in v. 2, i.e., to the inhabitants of the land. The words, “the seller will not return to what he has sold,” are to be explained from the legal regulations concerning the year of Jubilee in Lev. 25, according to which all landed property that had been sold was to revert to its original owner (or his heir), without compensation, in the year of jubilee; so that he would then return to his *mimkâr* (Lev. 25:14, 27, 28). Henceforth, however, this will take place no more, even if **הַיָּתִים**, their (the sellers’) life, should be still alive (sc., at the time when the return to his property would take place, according to the regulations of the year of jubilee), because Israel will be banished from the land. The clause **וְעוֹד בְּחַיִּים ה'** is a conditional circumstantial clause. The seller will not return (**לֹא יָשׁוּב**) to his possession, because the prophecy concerning the whole multitude of the people will not return (**לֹא יָשׁוּב**), i.e., will not turn back (for this meaning of **יָשׁוּב**, compare Isa. 45:23; 55:11). As **לֹא יָשׁוּב** corresponds to the previous **יָשׁוּב לֹא**, so does **חַרוֹן אֶל־כָּל־הַמִּוֶּנָה** to **חַרוֹן אֶת־כָּל־הַמִּוֶּנָה** in v. 12. In the last clause of v. 13, **חַיָּתוֹ** is not to be taken with **בְּעוֹנוֹ** in the sense of “in the iniquity of his life,” which makes the suffix in **בְּעוֹנוֹ** superfluous, but with **יִתְחַזְּקוּ**, the *Hithpael* being construed with the accusative, “strengthen himself in his life.” Whether these words also refer to the year of jubilee, as Hävernäck supposes, inasmuch as the regulation that every one was to recover his property was founded upon the idea of the restitution and re-creation of the theocracy,

we may leave undecided; since the thought is evidently simply this: ungodly Israel shall be deprived of its possession, because the wicked shall not obtain the strengthening of his life through his sin. This thought leads on to v. 14, in which we have a description of the utter inability to offer any successful resistance to the enemy employed in executing the judgment. There is some difficulty connected with the word **בַּתְּקוֹאָה**, since the *infin. absolute*, which the form **תְּקוֹאָה** seems to indicate, cannot be construed with either a preposition or the article. Even if the expression **בַּתְּקוֹאָה תִּקְעוּ** in Jer. 6: 1 was floating before the mind of Ezekiel, and led to his employing the bold phrase **בַּתְּקוֹאָה**, this would not justify the use of the infinitive absolute with a preposition and the article. **תְּקוֹאָה** must be a substantive form, and denote not *clangour*, but the instrument used to sound an alarm, viz., the *shōphâr* (Eze. 33: 3). **הַכִּיָּן**, an unusual form of the *inf. abs.* (see Jos. 7: 7), used in the place of the finite tense, and signifying to equip for war, as in Nah. 2: 4. **הַכֹּל**, everything requisite for waging war. And no one goes into the battle, because the wrath of God turns against them (Lev. 26:17), and smites them with despair (Deu. 32:30).

*Eze. 7:15-22. Third strophe.* Thus will they fall into irresistible destruction; even their silver and gold they will not rescue, but will cast it away as useless, and leave it for the enemy. —

V. 15. *The sword without, and pestilence and famine within: he who is in the field will die by the sword; and famine and pestilence will devour him that is in the city.*  
 V. 16. *And if their escaped ones escape, they will be upon the mountains like the doves of the valleys, all moaning, every one for his iniquity.*  
 V. 17. *All hands will become feeble, and all knees flow with water.*  
 v. 18. *They will gird themselves with sackcloth, and terrors will cover them; on all faces there will be shame, and baldness on all their heads.*  
 V. 19. *They will throw their silver into the streets, and their gold will be as filth to them. Their silver and their gold will not be able to rescue them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; they will not satisfy their souls therewith, nor fill their stomachs thereby, for it was to them a stumbling-block to guilt.*  
 V. 20. *And His beautiful ornament, they used it for pride; and their abominable images, their abominations they made thereof: therefore I make it filth to them.*  
 V. 21. *And I shall give it into the hand of foreigners for prey, and to the wicked of the earth for spoil, that they may defile it.*  
 V. 22. *I shall turn my face from them, that they defile my treasure; and oppressors shall come upon it and defile it.* —

The chastisement of God penetrates everywhere (v. 15 compare with Eze. 5:12); even flight to the mountains, that are inaccessible to the foe (compare 1 Macc. 2:28; Mat. 24:16), will only bring misery. Those who have fled to the mountains will coo — i.e., mourn, moan — like the doves of the valleys, which (as Bochart has correctly interpreted the simile in his *Hieroz.* II. p. 546, ed. Ros.), “when alarmed by the bird-catcher or the hawk, are obliged to forsake their natural abode, and fly elsewhere to save their lives. The

mountain doves are contrasted with those of the valleys, as wild with tame.” In **בְּלִמְהֵרָה הָמוּתָם** the figure and the fact are fused together. The words actually relate to the men who have fled; whereas the gender of **הָמוּתָם** is made to agree with that of **בְּיוֹנֵי**. The cooing of doves was regarded by the ancients as a moan (*hâgâh*), a mournful note (for proofs, see Gesen. on Isa. 38:14); for which Ezekiel uses the still stronger expression *hâmâh fremere*, to howl or growl (cf. Isa. 59:11). The low moaning has reference to their iniquity, the punishment of which they are enduring. When the judgment bursts upon them, they will all (not merely those who have escaped, but the whole nation) be overwhelmed with terror, shame, and suffering. The words, “all knees flow with water” (for *hâlak* in this sense, compare Joe. 4:18), are a hyperbolic expression used to denote the entire loss of the strength of the knees (here, v. 17 and Eze. 21:12), like the heart melting and turning to water in Jos. 7: 5. With this utter despair there are associated grief and horror at the calamity that has fallen upon them, and shame and pain at the thought of the sins that have plunged them into such distress. For **בְּסִתְהָה פְּלִצוֹתָם**, compare Psa. 55: 6; for **אֶל־כָּל־פָּנִים בּוֹשָׁה**, Mic. 7:10, Jer. 51:51; and for **בְּכַל־רֹאשׁוֹ קָרְחָה**, Isa. 15: 2, Amo. 8:10. On the custom of shaving the head bald on account of great suffering or deep sorrow, see the comm. on Mic. 1:16.

In this state of anguish they will throw all their treasures away as sinful trash (v. 19ff.). By the silver and gold which they will throw away (v. 19), we are not to understand idolatrous images particularly, — these are first spoken of in v. 20, — but the treasures of precious metals on which they had hitherto set their hearts. They will not merely throw these away as worthless, but look upon them as *niddâh*, filth, an object of disgust, inasmuch as they have been the servants of their evil lust. The next clause, “silver and gold cannot rescue them,” are a reminiscence from Zep. 1:18. But Ezekiel gives greater force to the thought by adding, “they will not appease their hunger therewith,” — that is to say, they will not be able to protect their lives thereby, either from the sword of the enemy (see the comm. on Zep. 1:18) or from death by starvation, because there will be no more food to purchase within the besieged city. The clause **וְגוֹ** **כִּי מִכְשׁוֹל** assigns the reason for that which forms the leading thought of the verse, namely, the throwing away of the silver and gold as filth; **מִכְשׁוֹל עֹנָם**, a stumbling-block through which one falls into guilt and punishment; **צְבִי עֲדָיו**, the beauty of his ornament, i. e., his beautiful ornament. The allusion is to the silver and gold; and the singular suffix is to be explained from the fact that the prophet fixed his mind upon the people as a whole, and used the singular in a general and indefinite sense. The words are written absolutely at the commencement of the sentence; hence the suffix attached to **שְׂמָהוּ**, Jerome has

given the true meaning of the words: “what I (God) gave for an ornament of the possessors and for their wealth, they turned into pride.” And not merely to ostentatious show (in the manner depicted in Isa. 3:16ff.), but to abominable images, i.e., idols, did they apply the costly gifts of God (cf. Hos. 8: 4; 13: 2). **כְּעֵשֶׂה**, to make of (gold and silver); **כִּי** denoting the material with which one works and of which anything is made (as in Exo. 31: 4; 38: 8). God punishes this abuse by making it (gold and silver) into *niddâh* to them, i.e., according to v. 19, by placing them in such circumstances that they cast it away as filth, and (v. 21) by giving it as booty to the foe. The enemy is described as “the wicked of the earth” (cf. Psa. 75: 9), i.e., godless men, who not only seize upon the possession of Israel, but in the most wicked manner lay hands upon all that is holy, and defile it. The *Chetib* **חֲלִלָהּ** is to be retained, notwithstanding the fact that it was preceded by a masculine suffix. What is threatened will take place, because the Lord will turn away His face from His people (**מִפְנֵיהֶם**, from the Israelites), i.e., will withdraw His gracious protection from them, so that the enemy will be able to defile His treasure. *Tsâphûn*, that which is hidden, the treasure (Job. 20:26; Obad. 1: 6). *Ts'phûni* is generally supposed to refer to the temple, or the Most Holy Place in the temple. Jerome renders it *arcanum meum*, and gives this explanation: “signifying the Holy of Holies, which no one except the priests and the high priest dared to enter.” This interpretation was so commonly adopted by the Fathers, that even Theodoret explains the rendering given in the Septuagint, **τὴν ἐπισκοπήν μου**, as signifying the Most Holy Place in the temple. On the other hand, the Chaldee has **אַרְעָא בֵּית שְׁכִינְתִּי**, “the land of the house of my majesty;” and Calvin understands it as signifying “the land which was safe under His (i.e., God’s) protection.” But it is difficult to reconcile either explanation with the use of the word *tsâphûn*. The verb *tsâphan* signifies to hide, shelter, lay up in safety. These meanings do not befit either the Holy of Holies in the temple or the land of Israel. It is true that the Holy of Holies was unapproachable by the laity, and even by the ordinary priests, but it was not a secret, a hidden place; and still less was this the case with the land of Canaan. We therefore adhere to the meaning, which is so thoroughly sustained by Job. 20:26 and Oba. 1: 6, — namely, “treasure,” by which, no doubt, the temple-treasure is primarily intended. This rendering suits the context, as only treasures have been referred to before; and it may be made to harmonize with **בָּאוּ בָּהּ** which follows. **בָּאוּ** signifies not merely *intrare in locum*, but also *venire in* (e.g., 2Ki. 6:23; possibly Eze. 30: 4), and may therefore be very properly rendered, “to get possession of,” since it is only possible to obtain possession of a treasure by penetrating into the place where it is laid up or concealed. There is nothing at variance with this in the word **חָלַל**, *profanare*, since it has already occurred in v. 21 in connection with the defiling of treasures and jewels. Moreover, as Calvin has correctly observed, the word is employed



here to denote “an indiscriminate abuse, when, instead of considering to what purpose things have been entrusted to us, we squander them rashly and without selection, in contempt and even in scorn.”

*Eze. 7:23-27.* Fourth strophe. Still worse is coming, namely, the captivity of the people, and overthrow of the kingdom.

V. 23. *Make the chain, for the land is full of capital crime, and the city full of outrage.* V. 24. *I shall bring evil ones of the nations, that they may take possession of their houses; and I shall put an end to the pride of the strong, that their sanctuaries may be defiled.* V. 25. *Ruin has come; they seek salvation, but there is none.* V. 26. *Destruction upon destruction cometh, and report upon report ariseth; they seek visions from prophets, but the law will vanish away from the priest, and counsel from the elders.* V. 27. *The king will mourn, and the prince will clothe himself in horror, and the hands of the common people will tremble. I will deal with them according to their way, and according to their judgments will I judge them, that they may learn that I am Jehovah.*

Those who have escaped death by sword or famine at the conquest of Jerusalem have captivity and exile awaiting them. This is the meaning of the command to make the chain, i.e., the fetters needed to lead the people into exile. This punishment is necessary, because the land is full of *mishpat dānim*, judgment of blood. This cannot mean, there is a judgment upon the shedding of blood, i.e., upon murder, which is conducted by Jehovah, as Hävernick supposes. Such a thought is irreconcilable with מְלֹאָה, and with the parallel מִשְׁפַּט דָּמִים. מְלֹאָה חַמָּס is to be explained after the same manner as מוֹת מִשְׁפַּט (a matter for sentence of death, a capital crime) in Deu. 19: 6, 21, 22, as signifying a matter for sentence of bloodshed, i.e., a crime of blood, or capital crime, as the Chaldee has already rendered it. Because the land is filled with capital crime, the city (Jerusalem) with violence, the Lord will bring רָעֵי גוֹיִם, evil ones of the heathen, i.e., the worst of the heathen, to put an end to the pride of the Israelites. גָּאוֹן אֲזִים is not “pride of the insolents;” for אֲזִים does not stand for אֲזִי פְּנִים (Deu. 28:50, etc.). The expression is rather to be explained from גָּאוֹן עֹז, pride of strength, in Eze. 24:21; 30: 6, 18 (cf. Lev. 26:19), and embraces everything on which a man (or a nation) bases his power and rests his confidence. The Israelites are called אֲזִים, because they thought themselves strong, or, according to Eze. 24:21, based their strength upon the possession of the temple and the holy land. This is indicated by וְנָחְלוּ מִקְדְּשֵׁיהֶם which follows. נָחַל, *Niphal* of חָלַל and מִקְדְּשֵׁיהֶם, not a participle *Piel*, from מִקְדֵּשׁ, with the Dagesh dropped, but an unusual form, from מִקְדֵּשׁ for מִקְדְּשֵׁיהֶם (vid., Ew. § 215a). — The ἀπ. λεγ. קִפְדָּה, with the tone drawn back on account of the tone-syllable which follows (cf. Ges. §

29, 3. 6), signifies *excidium*, destruction (according to the Rabbins), from קָפַד, to shrink or roll up (Isa. 38:12). נִבְּא is a prophetic perfect. In v. 25 the ruin of the kingdom is declared to be certain, and in vv. 26 and 27 the occurrence of it is more minutely depicted. Stroke upon stroke does the ruin come; and it is intensified by reports, alarming accounts, which crowd together and increase the terror, and also by the desperation of the spiritual and temporal leaders of the nation, — the prophets, priests, and elders, — whom God deprives of revelation, knowledge, and counsel; so that all ranks (king and princes and the common people) sink into mourning, alarm, and horror. That it is to no purpose that visions or prophecies are sought from the prophets (v. 26), is evident from the antithetical statement concerning the priests and elders which immediately follows. The three statements serve as complements of one another. They seek for predictions from prophets, but the prophets receive no vision, no revelation. They seek instruction from priests, but instruction is withdrawn from the priests; and so forth. *Tōrah* signifies instruction out of the law, which the priests were to give to the people (Mal. 2: 7). In v. 27, the three classes into which the people were divided are mentioned — viz. king, prince (i.e., tribe-princes and heads of families), and, in contradistinction to both, אִם הָאָרֶץ, the common people, the people of the land, in distinction from the civil rulers, as in 2Ki. 21:24; 23:30. מִדְרָבָם, literally from their way, their mode of action, will I do to them: i.e., my action will be derived from theirs, and regulated accordingly. אֲנִי for אֲתָם, as in Eze. 3:22, etc. (See the comm. on Eze. 16:59.)

## Ch. 8-11. Vision of the Destruction of Jerusalem

A year and two months after his call, the glory of the Lord appeared to the prophet a second time, as he had seen it by the Chebar. He is transported in spirit to Jerusalem into the court of the temple (Eze. 8: 1-4), where the Lord causes him to see, first the idolatry of Israel (Eze. 8: 5-18), and secondly, the judgment why, on account of this idolatry, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem are smitten (Eze. 9), the city is burned with fire, and the sanctuary forsaken by God (Eze. 10). Lastly, after he has been charged to foretell to the representatives of the people more especially the coming judgment, and to those who are sent into exile a future salvation (Eze. 11: 1-21), he describes how the gracious presence of God forsakes the city before his own eyes (Eze. 11:22, 23). After this has taken place, Ezekiel is carried back in the vision to Chaldea once more; and there, after the vision has come to an end, he announces to the exiles what he has seen and heard (Eze. 11:24, 25).

*Eze. 8.* ABOMINATIONS OF THE IDOLATRY OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL. — Vv. 1-4. Time and place of the divine revelation. —

V. 1. *And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth (month), on the fifth (day) of the month, I was sitting in my house, and the elders of Judah were sitting before me; there fell upon me the hand of the Lord Jehovah there. V. 2. And I saw, and behold a figure like the look of fire, from the look of its loins downwards fire, and from its loins upwards like a look of brilliance, like the sight of red-hot brass. V. 3. And he stretched out the form of a hand, and took me by the locks of my head, and wind carried me away between earth and heaven, and brought me to Jerusalem in visions of God, to the entrance of the gate of the inner court, which faces towards the north, where the image of jealousy exciting jealousy had its stand. V. 4. And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision which I have seen in the valley.*

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The place where Ezekiel received this new theophany agrees with the statements in Eze. 3:24 and 4: 4, 6, that he was to shut himself up in his house, and lie 390 days upon the left side, and 40 days upon the right side — in all, 430 days. The use of the word יָשָׁב, “I sat,” is not at variance with this, as יָשָׁב does not of necessity signify sitting as contrasted with lying, but may also be used in the more general sense of staying, or living, in the house. Nor is the presence of the elders of Judah opposed to the command, in Eze. 3:24, to shut himself up in the house, as we have already observed in the notes on that passage. The new revelation is made to him in the presence of these elders, because it is of the greatest importance to them. They are to be witnesses of his ecstasy; and after this has left the prophet, are to hear from his lips the substance of the divine revelation (Eze. 11:25). It is otherwise with the time of the revelation. If we compare the date given in Eze. 8: 1 with those mentioned before, this new vision apparently falls within the period required for carrying out the symbolical actions of the previous vision. Between Eze. 1: 1, 2 (the fifth day of the fourth month in the fifth year) and Eze. 8: 1 (the fifth day of the sixth month in the sixth year) we have one year and two months, that is to say (reckoning the year as a lunar year at 354 days, and the two months at 59 days), 413 days; whereas the two events recorded in Eze. 1: 1-7:27 require at least 437 days, namely 7 days for Eze. 3:15, and  $390 + 40 = 430$  days for Eze. 4: 5, 6. Consequently the new theophany would fall within the 40 days, during which Ezekiel was to lie upon the right side for Judah. To get rid of this difficulty, Hitzig conjectures that the fifth year of Jehoiachin (Eze. 1: 2) was a leap year of 13 months or 385 days, by which he obtains an interval of 444 days after adding 59 for the two months, — a period sufficient not only to include the 7 days (Eze. 3:15) and  $390 + 40$  days (Eze. 4: 5, 6), but to leave 7 days for the time that elapsed between Eze. 7 and 8. But however attractive this reckoning may appear, the assumption that the fifth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin was a leap year is purely conjectural; and there is nothing whatever to give it probability. Consequently the only thing that could lead us to adopt such a solution, would be the impossibility of reconciling the conclusion to be drawn

from the chronological data, as to the time of the two theophanies, with the substance of these divine revelations.

If we assume that Ezekiel carried out the symbolical acts mentioned in Eze. 4 and 5 in all their entirety, we can hardly imagine that the vision described in the chapters before us, by which he was transported in spirit to Jerusalem, occurred within the period of forty days, during which he was to typify the siege of Jerusalem by lying upon his right side. Nevertheless, Kliefoth has decided in favour of this view, and argues in support of it, that the vision described in Eze. 8: 1ff. took place in the prophet's own house, that it is identical in substance with what is contained in Eze. 3:22-7:27, and that there is no discrepancy, because all that occurred here was purely internal, and the prophet himself was to address the words contained in Eze. 11: 4-12 and 11:14-21 to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in his state of ecstasy. Moreover, when it is stated in Eze. 11:25 that Ezekiel related to the exiles all that he had seen in the vision, it is perfectly open to us to assume that this took place at the same time as his report to them of the words of God in Eze. 6 and 7, and those which follow in Eze. 12. But, on the other hand, it may be replied that the impression produced by Eze. 11:25 is not that the prophet waited several weeks after his visionary transport to Jerusalem before communicating to the elders what he saw in the vision. And even if the possibility of this cannot be disputed, we cannot imagine any reason why the vision should be shown to the prophet four weeks before it was to be related to the exiles. Again, there is not sufficient identity between the substance of the vision in Eze. 8-11 and the revelation in Eze. 4-7, to suggest any motive for the two to coincide. It is true that the burning of Jerusalem, which Ezekiel sees in Eze. 8-11, is consequent upon the siege and conquest of that city, which he has already predicted in Eze. 4-7 both in figure and word; but they are not so closely connected, that it was necessary on account of this connection for it to be shown to him before the completion of the symbolical siege of Jerusalem. And, lastly, although the ecstasy as a purely internal process is so far reconcilable with the prophet's lying upon his right side, that this posture did not preclude a state of ecstasy or render it impossible, yet this collision would ensue, that while the prophet was engaged in carrying out the former word of God, a new theophany would be received by him, which must necessarily abstract his mind from the execution of the previous command of God, and place him in a condition in which it would be impossible for him to set his face firmly upon the siege of Jerusalem, as he had been commanded to do in Eze. 4: 7. On account of this collision, we cannot subscribe to the assumption, that it was during the time that Ezekiel was lying bound by God upon his right side to bear the sin of Jerusalem, that he was transported in spirit to the temple at Jerusalem. On the contrary, the fact that this transport occurred, according to Eze. 8: 1, at a time when he could not have ended the symbolical acts of Eze. 4,

if he had been required to carry them out in all their external reality, furnishes us with conclusive evidence of the correctness of the view we have already expressed, that the symbolical acts of Eze. 4 and 5 did not lie within the sphere of outward reality (see comm. on Eze. 5: 4). — And if Ezekiel did not really lie for 430 days, there was nothing to hinder his having a fresh vision 14 months after the theophany in Eze. 1 and Eze. 3:22ff. For תָּפַל עָלַי יָד יְיָ, see at Eze. 3:22 and 1: 3.

The figure which Ezekiel sees in the vision is described in v. 2 in precisely the same terms as the appearance of God in Eze. 1:27. The sameness of the two passages is a sufficient defence of the reading בְּמַרְאֵה אִישׁ against the arbitrary emendation כְּמַרְאֵה אִישׁ, after the Sept. rendering *ὁμοίωμα ἀνδρός*, in support of which Ewald and Hitzig appeal to Eze. 1:26, though without any reason, as the reading there is not אִישׁ, but אָדָם. It is not expressly stated here that the apparition was in human form — the fiery appearance is all that is mentioned; but this is taken for granted in the allusion to the מְתַנְנִים (the loins), either as self-evident, or as well known from Eze. 1. זָהָר is synonymous with נִגְהָה in Eze. 1: 4, 27. What is new in the present theophany is the stretching out of the hand, which grasps the prophet by the front hair of his head, whereupon he is carried by wind between heaven and earth, i.e., through the air, to Jerusalem, not in the body, but in visions of God (cf. Eze. 1: 1), that is to say, in spiritual ecstasy, and deposited at the entrance of the inner northern door of the temple. הַפְּנִימִית is not an adjective belonging to שַׁאֲרַי, for this is not a feminine noun, but is used as a substantive, as in Eze. 43: 5 (= הַחֲצַר הַפְּנִימִית): cf.

Eze. 40:40): gate of the inner court, i.e., the gate on the north side of the inner court which led into the outer court. We are not informed whether Ezekiel was placed on the inner or outer side of this gate, i.e., in the inner or outer court; but it is evident from v. 5 that he was placed in the inner court, as his position commanded a view of the image which stood at the entrance of the gate towards the north. The further statement, “where the standing place of the image of jealousy was,” anticipates what follows, and points out the reason why the prophet was placed just there. The expression “image of jealousy” is explained by הַמִּקְנָה, which excites the jealousy of Jehovah (see the comm. on Exo. 20: 5). Consequently, we have not to think of any image of Jehovah, but of an image of a heathen idol (cf. Deu. 32:21); probably of Baal or Asherah, whose image had already been placed in the temple by Manasseh (2Ki. 21: 7); certainly not the image of the corpse of Adonis moulded in wax or clay. This opinion, which Hävernäck advances, is connected with the erroneous assumption that all the idolatrous abominations mentioned in this chapter relate to the celebration of an Adonis-festival in the temple. There (v. 4) in the court of the temple Ezekiel saw once more the glory of the God of Israel, as he had

seen it in the valley (Eze. 3:22) by the Chaboras, i.e., the appearance of God upon the throne with the cherubim and wheels; whereas the divine figure, whose hand grasped him in his house, and transported him to the temple (v. 2), showed neither throne nor cherubim. The expression "God of Israel," instead of Jehovah (Eze. 3:23), is chosen as an antithesis to the strange god, the heathen idol, whose image stood in the temple. As the God of Israel, Jehovah cannot tolerate the image and worship of another god in *His* temple. To set up such an image in the temple of Jehovah was a practical renunciation of the covenant, a rejection of Jehovah on the part of Israel as its covenant God.

Here, in the temple, Jehovah shows to the prophet the various kinds of idolatry which Israel is practising both publicly and privately, not merely in the temple, but throughout the whole land. The arrangement of these different forms of idolatry in four groups of abomination scenes (vv. 5, 6, 7-12, 13-15, and 16-18), which the prophet sees both in and from the court of the temple, belong to the visionary drapery of this divine revelation. It is altogether erroneous to interpret the vision as signifying that all these forms of idolatry were practised in the temple itself; an assumption which cannot be carried out without doing violence to the description, more especially of the second abomination in vv. 7-12. Still more untenable is Hävernick's view, that the four pictures of idolatrous practices shown to the prophet are only intended to represent different scenes of a festival of Adonis held in the temple. The selection of the courts of the temple for depicting the idolatrous worship, arises from the fact that the temple was the place where Israel was called to worship the Lord its God. Consequently the apostasy of Israel from the Lord could not be depicted more clearly and strikingly than by the following series of pictures of idolatrous abominations practised in the temple under the eyes of God.

*Eze. 8: 5, 6. First abomination-picture. —*

*V. 5. And He said to me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now towards the north. And I lifted up my eyes towards the north, and, behold, to the north of the gate of the altar was this image of jealousy at the entrance. V. 6. And He said to me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? great abominations, which the house of Israel doeth here, that I may go far away from my sanctuary; and thou shalt yet again see greater abominations still. —*

As Ezekiel had taken his stand in the inner court at the entrance of the north gate, and when looking thence towards the north saw the image of jealousy to the north of the altar gate, the image must have stood on the outer side of the entrance, so that the prophet saw it as he looked through the open doorway. The altar gate is the same as the northern gate of the inner court mentioned in Eze. 3. But it is impossible to state with certainty how it came to be called the altar gate. Possibly from the circumstance that the sacrificial animals were taken

through this gate to the altar, to be slaughtered on the northern side of the altar, according to Lev. 1: 4; 5:11, etc. מִהֵם, contracted from מִהֵהֵם, like מִזֶּה from הֵּן מִהֵּן in Exo. 4: 2. The words “what they are doing here” do not force us to assume that at that very time they were worshipping the idol. They simply describe what was generally practised there. The setting up of the image involved the worship of it. The subject to לְרִחֹקָהּ is not the house of Israel, but Jehovah. They perform great abominations, so that Jehovah is compelled to go to a distance from His sanctuary, i.e., to forsake it (cf. Eze. 11:23), because they make it an idol-temple.

*Eze. 8: 7-12. Second abomination: Worship of beasts. —*

*V. 7. And He brought me to the entrance of the court, and I saw, and behold there was a hole in the wall. V. 8. And He said to me, Son of man, break through the wall: and I broke through the wall, and behold there was a door. V. 9. And He said to me, Come and see the wicked abominations which they are doing here. V. 10. And I came and saw, and behold there were all kinds of figures of reptiles, and beasts, abominations, and all kinds of idols of the house of Israel, drawn on the wall round about. V. 11. And seventy men of the leaders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing among them, stood in front, every man with his censer in his hand; and the smell of a cloud of incense arose. V. 12. And He said to me, Seest thou, son of man, what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every one in his image-chambers? For they say: Jehovah doth not see us; Jehovah hath forsaken the land.*

The entrance of the court to which Ezekiel was now transported cannot be the principal entrance to the outer court towards the east (Ewald). This would be at variance with the context, as we not only find the prophet at the northern entrance in vv. 3 and 5, but at v. 14 we find him there still. If he had been taken to the eastern gate in the meantime, this would certainly have been mentioned. As that is not the case, the reference must be to that entrance to the court which lay between the entrance-gate of the inner court (v. 3) and the northern entrance-gate to the house of Jehovah (v. 14), or northern gate of the outer court, in other words, the northern entrance into the outer court. Thus the prophet was conducted out of the inner court through its northern gate into the outer court, and placed in front of the northern gate, which led out into the open air. There he saw a hole in the wall, and on breaking through the wall, by the command of God, he saw a door, and having entered it, he saw all kinds of figures of animals engraved on the wall round about, in front of which seventy of the elders of Israel were standing and paying reverence to the images of beasts with burning incense. According to v. 12, the prophet was thereby shown what the elders of Israel did in the dark, every one in his image-chamber. From this explanation on the part of God concerning the picture shown to the prophet, it is very evident that it had no reference to any idolatrous worship

practised by the elders in one or more of the cells of the outer court of the temple. For even though the objection raised by Kliefoth to this view, namely, that it cannot be proved that there were halls with recesses in the outer court, is neither valid nor correct, since the existence of such halls is placed beyond the reach of doubt by Jer. 35: 4, 2Ki. 23:11, and 1Ch. 28:12; such a supposition is decidedly precluded by the fact, that the cells and recesses at the gates cannot have been large enough to allow of seventy-one men taking part in a festive idolatrous service. The supposition that the seventy-one men were distributed in different chambers is at variance with the distinct words of the text. The prophet not only sees the seventy elders standing along with Jaazaniah, but he could not look through one door into a number of chambers at once, and see the pictures draw all round upon their walls. The assembling of the seventy elders in a secret cell by the northern gate of the outer temple to worship the idolatrous images engraved on the walls of the cell, is one feature in the visionary form given to the revelation of what the elders of the people were doing secretly throughout the whole land. To bring out more strikingly the secrecy of this idolatrous worship, the cell is so completely hidden in the wall, that the prophet is obliged to enlarge the hole by breaking through the wall before he can see the door which leads to the cell and gain a view of them and of the things it contains, and the things that are done therein. <sup>f12</sup>

And the number of the persons assembled there suggests the idea of a symbolical representation, as well as the secrecy of the cell. The seventy elders represent the whole nation; and the number is taken from Exo. 24: 1ff. and Num. 11:16; 24:25, where Moses, by the command of God, chooses seventy of the elders to represent the whole congregation at the making of the covenant, and afterwards to support his authority. This representation of the congregation was not a permanent institution, as we may see from the fact that in Num. 11 seventy other men are said to have been chosen for the purpose named. The high council, consisting of seventy members, the so-called Sanhedrim, was formed after the captivity on the basis of these Mosaic types. In the midst of the seventy was Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, a different man therefore from the Jaazaniah mentioned in Eze. 11: 1. Shaphan is probably the person mentioned as a man of distinction in 2Ki. 22: 3ff.; Jer. 29: 3; 36:10; 39:14. It is impossible to decide on what ground Jaazaniah is specially mentioned by name; but it can hardly be on account of the meaning of the name he bore, "Jehovah heard," as Hävernicks supposes. It is probable that he held a prominent position among the elders of the nation, so that he is mentioned here by name as the leader of this national representation.

On the wall of the chamber round about there were drawn all kinds of figures of **רֶמֶשׂ וּבְהֵמָה**, reptiles and quadrupeds (see Gen. 1:24). **שָׁקֵץ** is in apposition



not only to **בְּהֵמָה**, but also to **רֶמֶשׂ**, and therefore, as belonging to both, is not to be connected with **בְּהֵמָה** in the construct state. The drawing of reptiles and quadrupeds became a *sheqetz*, or abomination, from the fact that the pictures had been drawn for the purpose of religious worship. The following clause, “and all the idols of the house of Israel,” is co-ordinate with **כָּל-תְּבֻנֹת וְגוֹי**. Besides the animals drawn on the walls, there were idols of other kinds in the chamber. The drawing of reptiles and quadrupeds naturally suggests the thought of the animal-worship of Egypt. We must not limit the words to this, however, since the worship of animals is met with in the nature-worship of other heathen nations, and the expression **כָּל-תְּבֻנֹת**, “all kinds of figures,” as well as the clause, “all kinds of idols of the house of Israel,” points to every possible form of idol-worship as spread abroad in Israel. **עֵתָר**, according to the Aramaean usage, signifies *suffimentum*, perfume, **בְּחֹשֶׁךְ**, in the dark, i.e., in secret, like **בְּסֹתֵר** in 2Sa. 12:12; not in the sacred darkness of the cloud of incense (Hävernick). **חֲדָרֵי מִשְׁבֵּית**, image-chambers, is the term applied to the rooms or closets in the dwelling-houses of the people in which idolatrous images were set up and secretly worshipped. **מִשְׁבֵּית** signifies idolatrous figures, as in Lev. 26: 1 and Num. 33:52. This idolatry was justified by the elders, under the delusion that “Jehovah seeth us not;” that is to say, not: “He does not trouble Himself about us,” but He does not see what we do, because He is not omniscient (cf. Isa. 29:15); and He has forsaken the land, withdrawn His presence and His help. Thus they deny both the omniscience and omnipresence of God (cf. Eze. 9: 9).

*Eze. 8:13-15. Third abomination: Worship of Thammuz. —*

*V. 13. And He said to me, Thou shalt yet again see still greater abominations which they do. V. 14. And He brought me to the entrance of the gate of the house of Jehovah, which is towards the north, and behold there sat the women, weeping for Thammuz. V. 15. And He said to me, Dost thou see it, O son of man? Thou shalt yet again see still greater abominations than these. —*

The prophet is taken from the entrance into the court to the entrance of the gate of the temple, to see the women sitting there weeping for Thammuz. The article in **הַנְּשִׂים** is used generically. Whilst the men of the nation, represented by the seventy elders, were secretly carrying on their idolatrous worship, the women were sitting at the temple gate, and indulging in public lamentation for Thammuz. Under the weeping for Thammuz, Jerome (with Melito of Sardis and all the Greek Fathers) has correctly recognised the worship of Adonis. “**תַּמּוּז**, **Θαμμουζ** or **Θαμμουζς**,” says Jerome, “whom we have interpreted as Adonis, is called *Thamuz* both in Hebrew and Syriac; and because, according to the heathen legend, this lover of Venus and most beautiful youth is said to have

been slain in the month of June and then restored to life again, they call this month of June by the same name, and keep an annual festival in his honour, at which he is lamented by women as though he were dead, and then afterwards celebrated in songs as having come to life again." This view has not been shaken even by the objections raised by Chwolson in his *Ssaabins* (II. 27. 202ff.), his relics of early Babylonian literature (p. 101), and his Tammuz and human-worship among the ancient Babylonians. For the myth of Thammuz, mentioned in the Nabataean writings as a man who was put to death by the king of Babylon, whom he had commanded to introduce the worship of the seven planets and the twelve signs of the zodiac, and who was exalted to a god after his death, and honoured with a mourning festival, is nothing more than a refined interpretation of the very ancient nature-worship which spread over the whole of Hither Asia, and in which the power of the sun over the vegetation of the year was celebrated. The etymology of the word *Tammuz* is doubtful. It is probably a contraction of תַּמְזוּז, from מְזוּז = מַסַּס, so that it denotes the decay of the force of nature, and corresponds to the Greek ἀφανισμὸς Ἀδώνιδος (see Hävernick *in loc.*).

*Eze. 8:16-18.* Fourth abomination: Worship of the sun by the priests. —

V. 16. *And He took me into the inner court of the house of Jehovah, and behold, at the entrance into the temple of Jehovah, between the porch and the altar, as it were five and twenty men, with their backs towards the temple of Jehovah and their faces towards the east; they were worshipping the sun towards the east.* V. 17. *And He said to me, Seest thou this, son of Man? Is it too little for the house of Judah to perform the abominations which they are performing here, that they also fill the land with violence, and provoke me to anger again and again? For behold they stretch out the vine-branch to their nose.* V. 18. *But I also will act in fury; my eye shall not look compassionately, and I will not spare; and if they cry with a loud voice in my ears, I will not hear them.*

After Ezekiel has seen the idolatrous abominations in the outer court, or place for the people, he is taken back into the inner court, or court of the priests, to see still greater abominations there. Between the porch of the temple and the altar of burnt-offering, the most sacred spot therefore in the inner court, which the priests alone were permitted to tread (Joe. 2:17), he sees as if twenty-five men, with their backs toward the temple, were worshipping the sun in the east. כּ before עֲשָׂרִים is not a preposition, *circa*, about, but a particle of comparison (an appearance): as if twenty-five men; after the analogy of כּ before an accusative (vid., Ewald, § 282d). For the number here is not an approximative one; but twenty-five is the exact number, namely, the twenty-four leaders of the classes of priests (1Ch. 24: 5ff.; 2Ch. 36:14; Ezr. 10: 5), with the high priest at the head (see Lightfoot's *Chronol. of O.T.*, Opp. I. 124). As the whole nation was seen in the seventy elders, so is the entire priesthood represented here in

the twenty-five leaders as deeply sunk in disgraceful idolatry. Their apostasy from the Lord is shown in the fact that they turn their back upon the temple, and therefore upon Jehovah, who was enthroned in the temple, and worship the sun, with their faces turned towards the east. The worship of the sun does not refer to the worship of Adonis, as Hävernick supposes, although Adonis was a sun-god; but generally to the worship of the heavenly bodies, against which Moses had warned the people (Deu. 4:19; 17: 3), and which found its way in the time of Manasseh into the courts of the temple, whence it was afterwards expelled by Josiah (2Ki. 23: 5, 11). The form **מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיָּתָם** must be a copyist's error for **מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיָּם**; as the supposition that it is an unusual form, with a play upon **הַשְּׁחִית**,<sup>113</sup> is precluded by the fact that it would in that case be a 2nd per. plur. perf., and such a construction is rendered impossible by the **הַמָּדָה** which immediately precedes it (cf. Ewald, § 118a).

To these idolatrous abominations Judah has added other sins, as if these abominations were not bad enough in themselves. This is the meaning of the question in v. 17, **הַנֶּקֶל וְגוֹ' : is it too little for the house of Judah, etc.?** **נֶקֶל** with **מִן**, as in Isa. 49: 6. To indicate the fulness of the measure of guilt, reference is again briefly made to the moral corruption of Judah. **הַמָּס** embraces all the injuries inflicted upon men; **תּוֹעֵבוֹת**, impiety towards God, i.e., idolatry. By violent deeds they provoke God repeatedly to anger (**שׁוֹב**, followed by an infinitive, expresses the repetition of an action). The last clause of v. 17 (**וְהָנֵם שְׁלָחִים**) is very obscure. The usual explanation, which has been adopted by J. D. Michaelis and Gesenius: "they hold the twig to their nose," namely, the sacred twig Barsom, which the Parsees held in their hands when praying (vid., Hyde, *de relig. vet. Pars.* p. 350, ed. 2; and Kleuker, *Zend-Avesta*, III. p. 204), suits neither the context nor the words. According to the position of the clause in the context, we do not expect an allusion to a new idolatrous rite, but an explanation of the way in which Judah had excited the wrath of God by its violent deeds. Moreover, **זְמֹרָה** is not a suitable word to apply to the Barsom, — *Z'mōrâh* is a shoot or tendril of the vine (cf. Eze. 15: 2; Isa. 17:10; Num. 13:23). The Barsom, on the other hand, consisted of bunches of twigs of the tree *Gez* or *Hom*, or of branches of the pomegranate, the tamarisk, or the date (cf. Kleuker *l.c.*, and Strabo, XV. 733), and was not held to the nose, but kept in front of the mouth as a magical mode of driving demons away (vid., Hyde, *l.c.*). Lastly, **שְׁלַח אֵל** does not mean to hold anything, but to stretch out towards, to prepare to strike, to use violence. Of the other explanations given, only two deserve any consideration, — namely, first, the supposition that it is a proverbial expression, "to apply the twig to anger," in the sense of adding fuel to the fire, which Doederlein (*ad Grotii adnott.*) applies in this way, "by these

things they supply food, as it were, to my wrath, which burns against themselves,” i.e., they bring fuel to the fire of my wrath. Lightfoot gives a similar explanation in his *Hor. hebr. ad Joh.* 15: 6. The second is that of Hitzig: “they apply the sickle to their nose,” i.e., by seeking to injure me, they injure themselves. In this case **זְמַרָה** must be taken in the sense of **מְזַמְרָה**, a sickle or pruning-knife, and pointed **זְמַרָה**. The saying does appear to be a proverbial one, but the origin and meaning of the proverb have not yet been satisfactorily explained. — V. 18. Therefore will the Lord punish unsparingly (cf. Eze. 7: 4, 9; 5:11). This judgment he shows to the prophet in the two following chapters.

*Eze. 9.* THE ANGELS WHICH SMITE JERUSALEM. — Vv. 1-3. At the call of Jehovah, His servants appear to execute the judgment. —

V. 1. *And He called in my ears with a loud voice, saying, Come hither, ye watchmen of the city, and every one his instrument of destruction in his hand.* V. 2. *And behold six men came by the way of the upper gate, which is directed toward the north, every one with his smashing-tool in his hand; and a man in the midst of them, clothed in white linen, and writing materials by his hip; and they came and stood near the brazen altar.* V. 8. *And the glory of the God of Israel rose up from the cherub, upon which it was, to the threshold of the house, and called to the man clothed in white linen, by whose hip the writing materials were.*

**פְּקֻדוֹת הָעִיר** does not mean the punishments of the city. This rendering does not suit the context, since it is not the punishments that are introduced, but the men who execute them; and it is not established by the usage of the language. **פְּקֻדָה** is frequently used, no doubt, in the sense of visitation or chastisement (e.g., Isa. 10: 3; Hos. 9: 7); but it is not met with in the plural in this sense. In the plural it only occurs in the sense of supervision or protectorate, in which sense it occurs not only in Jer. 52:11 and Eze. 44:11, but also (in the singular) in Isa. 60:17, and as early as Num. 3:38, where it relates to the presidency of the priests, and very frequently in the Chronicles. Consequently **פְּקֻדוֹת** are those whom God has appointed to watch over the city, the city-guard (2Ki. 11:18), — not earthly, but heavenly watchmen, — who are now to inflict punishment upon the ungodly, as the authorities appointed by God. **קָרְבוּ** is an imperative *Piel*, as in Isa. 41:21, and must not be altered into **קָרְבוּ** (*Kal*), as Hitzig proposes. The *Piel* is used in an intransitive sense, *festinanter appropinquavit*, as in Eze. 36: 8. The persons called come by the way of the upper northern gate of the temple, to take their stand before Jehovah, whose glory had appeared in the inner court. The upper gate is the gate leading from the outer court to the inner, or upper court, which stood on higher ground, — the gate mentioned in Eze. 8: 3 and 5. In the midst of the six men furnished with smashing-tools there was one clothed in white byssus, with writing materials at his side. The dress and equipment, as well as the instructions which he

afterwards receives and executes, show him to be the prince or leader of the others.

Kliefoth calls in question the opinion that these seven men are angels; but without any reason. Angels appearing in human form are frequently called **אֲשֵׁרִים** or **אֲשֵׁרִים**, according to their external *habitus*. But the number seven neither presupposes the dogma of the seven archangels, nor is copied from the seven Parsic *amschaspands*. The dress worn by the high priest, when presenting the sin-offering on the great day of atonement (Lev. 16: 4, 23), was made of **בָּצָל**, i.e., of white material woven from byssus thread (see the comm. on Exo. 28:42). It has been inferred from this, that the figure clothed in white linen was the angel of Jehovah, who appears as the heavenly high priest, to protect and care for his own. In support of this, the circumstance may be also adduced, that the man whom Daniel saw above the water of the Tigris, and whose appearance is described, in Dan. 10: 5, 6, in the same manner as that of Jehovah in Eze. 1: 4, 26, 27, and that of the risen Christ in Rev. 1:13-15, appears clothed in **בָּצָל** (Dan. 10: 5; 12: 6, 7).<sup>14</sup>

Nevertheless, we cannot regard this view as established. The shining white talar, which is evidently meant by the plural **בָּצָלִים**, occurring only here and in Daniel (*ut. sup.*), is not a dress peculiar to the angel of Jehovah or to Christ. The seven angels, with the vials of wrath, also appear in garments of shining white linen (**ενδεδυμένοι λίνον καθαρὸν λαμπρόν**, Rev. 15: 6); and the shining white colour, as a symbolical representation of divine holiness and glory (see comm. on Lev. 16: 4 and Rev. 19: 8), is the colour generally chosen for the clothing both of the heavenly spirits and of “just men made perfect” (Rev. 19: 8). Moreover, the angel with the writing materials here is described in a totally different manner from the appearance of Jehovah in Eze. 1 and Dan. 10, or that of Christ in Rev. 1; and there is nothing whatever to indicate a being equal with God. Again, the distinction between him and the other six men leads to no other conclusion, than that he stood in the same relation to them as the high priest to the Levites, or the chancellor to the other officials. This position is indicated by the writing materials on his hips, i.e., in the girdle on his hips, in which scribes in the East are accustomed to carry their writing materials (*vid.*, Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenland*, IV. p. 323). He is provided with these for the execution of the commission given to him in v. 4. In this way the description can be very simply explained, without the slightest necessity for our resorting to Babylonian representations of the god Nebo, i.e., Mercury, as the scribe of heaven. The seven men take their station by the altar of burnt-offering, because the glory of God, whose commands they were about to receive, had taken up its position there for the moment (Kliefoth); not because the apostate priesthood was stationed there (Hävernick). The glory of Jehovah, however, rose up from the

cherub to the threshold of the house. The meaning of this is not that it removed from the interior of the sanctuary to the outer threshold of the temple-building (Hävernick), for it was already stationed, according to Eze. 8:16, above the cherub, between the porch and the altar. It went back from thence to the threshold of the temple-porch, through which one entered the Holy Place, to give its orders there. The reason for leaving its place above the cherubim (the singular כְּרוּבִים is used collectively) to do this, was not that “God would have had to turn round in order to address the seven from the throne, since, according to Eze. 8: 4 and 16, He had gone from the north gate of the outer court into the inner court, and His servants had followed Him” (Hitzig); for the cherubim moved in all four directions, and therefore God, even from the throne, could turn without difficulty to every side. God left His throne, that He might issue His command for the judgment upon Israel from the threshold of the temple, and show Himself to be the judge who would forsake the throne which He had assumed in Israel. This command He issues from the temple court, because the temple was the place whence God attested Himself to His people, both by mercy and judgment.

*Eze. 9: 4-7.* The divine command. —

*V. 4. And Jehovah said to him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and mark a cross upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which take place in their midst. V. 5. And to those he said in my ears: Go through the city behind him, and smite. Let not your eye look compassionately, and do not spare. V. 6. Old men, young men, and maidens, and children, and women, slay to destruction: but ye shall not touch any one who has the cross upon him; and begin at my sanctuary. And they began with the old men, who were before the house. V. 7. And He said to them, defile the house, and fill the courts with slain; go ye out. And they went out, and smote in the city. —*

God commands the man provided with the writing materials to mark on the forehead with a cross all the persons in Jerusalem who mourn over the abominations of the nation, in order that they may be spared in the time of the judgment. תָּו, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, had the form of a cross in the earlier writing. הַתָּוָה תָּו, to mark a תָּו, is therefore the same as to make a mark in the form of a cross; although there was at first no other purpose in this sign than to enable the servants employed in inflicting the judgment of God to distinguish those who were so marked, so that they might do them no harm. V. 6. And this was the reason why the תָּו was to be marked upon the forehead, the most visible portion of the body; the early Christians, according to a statement in Origen, looked upon the sign itself as significant, and saw therein a prophetic allusion to the sign of the cross as the distinctive mark of Christians. A direct prophecy of the cross of Christ is certainly not to be found here, since the form of the letter *Tāv* was the one generally adopted as a sign, and, according to

Job. 31:35, might supply the place of a signature. Nevertheless, as Schmieder has correctly observed, there is something remarkable in this coincidence to the thoughtful observer of the ways of God, whose counsel has carefully considered all before hand, especially when we bear in mind that in the counterpart to this passage (Rev. 7: 3) the seal of the living God is stamped upon the foreheads of the servants of God, who are to be exempted from the judgment, and that according to Rev. 14: 1 they had the name of God written upon their foreheads. So much, at any rate, is perfectly obvious from this, namely, that the sign was not arbitrarily chosen, but was inwardly connected with the fact which it indicated; just as in the event upon which our vision is based (Exo. 12:13, 22ff.) the distinctive mark placed upon the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, in order that the destroying angel might pass them by, namely, the smearing of the doorposts with the blood of the paschal lamb that had been slain, was selected on account of its significance and its corresponding to the thing signified. The execution of this command is passed over as being self-evident; and it is not till v. 11 that it is even indirectly referred to again.

In vv. 5, 6 there follows, first of all, the command given to the other six men. They are to go through the city, behind the man clothed in white linen, and to smite without mercy all the inhabitants of whatever age or sex, with this exception, that they are not to touch those who are marked with the cross. The **אל** for **אל** before **תַּחֲוֹם** is either a slip of the pen, or, as the continued transmission of so striking an error is very improbable, is to be accounted for from the change of **אל** into **ע**, which is so common in Aramaean. The *Chetib* **עֵינֶיכֶם** is the unusual form grammatically considered, and the singular, which is more correct, has been substituted as *Keri*. **תִּהְרֹגוּ** is followed by **לְמַשְׁחִית**, to increase the force of the words and show the impossibility of any life being saved. They are to make a commencement at the sanctuary, because it has been desecrated by the worship of idols, and therefore has ceased to be the house of the Lord. To this command the execution is immediately appended; they began with the old men who were before the house, i.e., they began to slay them. **הָאֲנָשִׁים הַזְּקֵנִים** are neither the twenty-five priests (Eze. 8:16) nor the seventy elders (Eze. 8:11). The latter were not **לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת**, but in a chamber by the outer temple gate; whereas **לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת**, in front of the temple house, points to the inner court. This locality makes it natural to think of priests, and consequently the LXX rendered **מִמִּקְדָּשִׁי** by **ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων μου**. But the expression **אֲנָשִׁים זְקֵנִים** is an unsuitable one for the priests. We have therefore no doubt to think of men advanced in years, who had come into the court possibly to offer sacrifice, and thereby had become liable to the judgment. In v. 7 the command, which was interrupted in v. 6b, is once more resumed. They are to defile the house, i.e., the temple, namely, by filling the courts with slain.

It is in this way that we are to connect together, so far as the sense is concerned, the two clauses, “defile...and fill.” This is required by the facts of the case. For those slain “before the house” could only have been slain in the courts, as there was no space between the temple house and the courts in which men could have been found and slain. But **לְפָנַי הַבַּיִת** cannot be understood as signifying “in the neighbourhood of the temple,” as Kliefoth supposes, for the simple reason that the progressive order of events would thereby be completely destroyed. The angels who were standing before the altar of burnt-offering could not begin their work by going out of the court to smite the sinners who happened to be in the neighbourhood of the temple, and then returning to the court to do the same there, and then again going out into the city to finish their work there. They could only begin by slaying the sinners who happened to be in the courts, and after having defiled the temple by their corpses, by going out into the city to slay all the ungodly there, as is related in the second clause of the verse (v. 7b).

*Eze. 9: 8-11.* Intercession of the prophet, and the answer of the Lord. —

V. 8. *And it came to pass when they smote and I remained, I fell upon my face, and carried, and said: Alas! Lord Jehovah, wilt Thou destroy all the remnant of Israel, by pouring out Thy wrath upon Jerusalem? V. 9. And He said to me: The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is immeasurably great, and the land is full of blood-guiltiness, and the city full of perversion; for they say Jehovah hath forsaken the land, and Jehovah seeth not. V. 10. So also shall my eye not look with pity, and I will not spare; I will give their way upon their head. V. 11. And, behold, the man clothed in white linen, who had the writing materials on his hip, brought answer, and said: I have done as thou hast commanded me.*

The *Chetib* **נִשְׁאַר** is an incongruous form, composed of participle and imperfect fused into one, and is evidently a copyist’s error. It is not to be altered into **נִשְׁאַרְךָ**, however (the 1st pers. imperf. *Niph.*), but to be read as a participle **נִשְׁאַר**, and taken with **כְּהִכְנֹתָם** as a continuation of the circumstantial clause. For the words do not mean that Ezekiel alone was left, but that when the angels smote and he was left, i.e., was spared, was not smitten with the rest, he fell on his face, to entreat the Lord for mercy. These words and the prophet’s intercession both apparently presuppose that among the inhabitants of Jerusalem there was no one found who was marked with the sign of the cross, and therefore could be spared. But this is by no means to be regarded as established. For, in the first place, it is not stated that *all* had been smitten by the angels; and, secondly, the intercession of the prophet simply assumes that, in comparison with the multitude of the slain, the number of those who were marked with the sign of the cross and spared was so small that it escaped the prophet’s eye, and he was afraid that they might all be slain without exception, and the whole of the remnant of the covenant nation be destroyed.



The **שְׂאֲרִית** of Israel and Judah is the covenant nation in its existing state, when it had been so reduced by the previous judgments of God, that out of the whole of what was once so numerous a people, only a small portion remained in the land. Although God has previously promised that a remnant shall be preserved (Eze. 5: 3, 4), He does not renew this promise to the prophet, but begins by holding up the greatness of the iniquity of Israel, which admits of no sparing, but calls for the most merciless punishment, to show him that, according to the strict demand of justice, the whole nation has deserved destruction. **מִטָּה** (v. 9) is not equivalent to **מִזְמָה**, oppression (Isa. 58: 9), but signifies perversion of justice; although **מִשְׁפָּט** is not mentioned, since this is also omitted in Exo. 23: 2, where **הָטָה** occurs in the same sense. For v. 9b, vid., Eze. 8:12. For **יְרָכֶם בְּרֹאֲתֵי** (v. 10 and Eze. 11:21, 22, 31), vid., 1Ki. 8:32. While God is conversing with the prophet, the seven angels have performed their work; and in v. 11 their leader returns to Jehovah with the announcement that His orders have been executed. He does this, not in his own name only, but in that of all the rest. The first act of the judgment is thus shown to the prophet in a figurative representation. The second act follows in the next chapter.

**Eze. 10.** BURNING OF JERUSALEM, AND WITHDRAWAL OF THE GLORY OF JEHOVAH FROM THE SANCTUARY. — This chapter divides itself into two sections. In vv. 1-8 the prophet is shown how Jerusalem is to be burned with fire. In vv. 9-22 he is shown how Jehovah will forsake His temple.

**Eze. 10: 1-8.** The angel scatters coals of fire over Jerusalem. —

V. 1. *And I saw, and behold upon the firmament, which was above the cherubim, it was like sapphire-stone, to look at as the likeness of a throne; He appeared above them.* V. 2. *And He spake to the man clothed in white linen, and said: Come between the wheels below the cherubim, and fill thy hollow hands with fire-coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city: and he came before my eyes.* V. 3. *And the cherubim stood to the right of the house when the man came, and the cloud filled the inner court.* V. 4. *And the glory of Jehovah had lifted itself up from the cherubim to the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the splendour of the glory of Jehovah.* V. 5. *And the noise of the wings of the cherubim was heard to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when He speaketh.* V. 6. *And it came to pass, when He commanded the man clothed in white linen, and said, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubim, and he came and stood by the side of the wheel,* V. 7. *That the cherub stretched out his hand between the cherubim to the fire, which was between the cherubim, and lifted (some) off and gave it into the hands of the man clothed in white linen. And he took it, and went out.* V. 8. *And there appeared by the cherubim the likeness of a man's hand under their wings.*

V. 1 introduces the description of the second act of the judgment. According to Eze. 9: 3, Jehovah had come down from His throne above the cherubim to the

threshold of the temple to issue His orders thence for the judgment upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and according to Eze. 10: 4 He goes thither once more. Consequently He had resumed His seat above the cherubim in the meantime. This is expressed in v. 1, not indeed in so many words, but indirectly or by implication. Ezekiel sees the theophany; and on the firmament above the cherubim, like sapphire-stone to look at, he beholds the likeness of a throne on which Jehovah appeared. To avoid giving too great prominence in this appearance of Jehovah to the bodily or human form, Ezekiel does not speak even here of the form of Jehovah, but simply of His throne, which he describes in the same manner as in Eze. 1:26. **אֵל** stands for **אֱלֹהִים** according to the later usage of the language. It will never do to take **אֵל** in its literal sense, as Kliefoth does, and render the words: “Ezekiel saw it move away to the firmament;” for the object to **וַיֵּרָא וְהָיָה** is not **וְהָיָה** or **בְּכֹד וְהָיָה**, but the form of the throne sparkling in sapphire-stone; and this throne had not separated itself from the firmament above the cherubim, but Jehovah, or the glory of Jehovah, according to Eze. 9: 3, had risen up from the cherubim, and moved away to the temple threshold. The **כִּי** before **מֵרָאִה** is not to be erased, as Hitzig proposes after the LXX, on the ground that it is not found in Eze. 1:26; it is quite appropriate here. For the words do not affirm that Ezekiel saw the likeness of a throne like sapphire-stone; but that he saw something like sapphire-stone, like the appearance of the form of a throne. Ezekiel does not see Jehovah, or the glory of Jehovah, move away to the firmament, and then return to the throne. He simply sees once more the resemblance of a throne upon the firmament, and the Lord appearing thereon. The latter is indicated in **נִרְאָה עֲלֵיהֶם**. These words are not to be taken in connection with **בְּמֵרָאִה וְנֹרָא**, so as to form one sentence; but have been very properly separated by the *athnach* under **בְּסֵא**, and treated as an independent assertion. The subject to **נִרְאָה** might, indeed, be **דְּמוּת בְּסֵא**, “the likeness of a throne appeared above the cherubim;” but in that case the words would form a pure tautology, as the fact of the throne becoming visible has already been mentioned in the preceding clause. The subject must therefore be Jehovah, as in the case of **וַיֹּאמֶר** in v. 2, where there can be no doubt on the matter. Jehovah has resumed His throne, not “for the purpose of removing to a distance, because the courts of the temple have been defiled by dead bodies” (Hitzig), but because the object for which He left it has been attained.

He now commands the man clothed in white linen to go in between the wheels under the cherubim, and fill his hands with fire-coals from thence, and scatter them over the city (Jerusalem). This he did, so that Ezekiel could see it. According to this, it appears as if Jehovah had issued the command from His

throne; but if we compare what follows, it is evident from v. 4 that the glory of Jehovah had risen up again from the throne, and removed to the threshold of the temple, and that it was not till after the man in white linen had scattered the coals over the city that it left the threshold of the temple, and ascended once more up to the throne above the cherubim, so as to forsake the temple (v. 18ff.). Consequently we can only understand vv. 2-7 as implying that Jehovah issued the command in v. 2, not from His throne, but from the threshold of the temple, and that He had therefore returned to the threshold of the temple for this purpose, and for the very same reason as in Eze. 9: 3. The possibility of interpreting the verses in this way is apparent from the fact that v. 2 contains a summary of the whole of the contents of this section, and that vv. 3-7 simply furnish more minute explanations, or contain circumstantial clauses, which throw light upon the whole affair. This is obvious in the case of v. 3, from the form of the clause; and in vv. 4 and 5, from the fact that in vv. 6 and 7 the command (v. 2) is resumed, and the execution of it, which was already indicated in וַיָּבֵא לְעֵינַי (v. 2), more minutely described and carried forward in the closing words of the seventh verse, וַיִּקַּח וַיִּצֵא. הַגִּלְגָּל in v. 2 signifies the whirl or rotatory motion, i.e., the wheel-work, or the four *ophannim* under the cherubim regarded as moving. The angel was to go in between these, and take coals out of the fire there, and scatter them over the city. “In the fire of God, the fire of His wrath, will kindle the fire for consuming the city” (Kliefoth). To depict the scene more clearly, Ezekiel observes in v. 3, that at this moment the cherubim were standing to the right of the house, i.e., on the south or rather south-east of the temple house, on the south of the altar of burnt-offering. According to the Hebrew usage the right side as the southern side, and the prophet was in the inner court, whither, according to Eze. 8:16, the divine glory had taken him; and, according to Eze. 9: 2, the seven angels had gone to the front of the altar, to receive the commands of the Lord. Consequently we have to picture to ourselves the cherubim as appearing in the neighbourhood of the altar, and then taking up their position to the south thereof, when the Lord returned to the threshold of the temple. The reason for stating this is not to be sought, as Calvin supposes, in the desire to show “that the way was opened fore the angel to go straight to God, and that the cherubim were standing there ready, as it were, to contribute their labour.” The position in which the cherubim appeared is more probably given with prospective reference to the account which follows in vv. 9-22 of the departure of the glory of the Lord from the temple. As an indication of the significance of this act to Israel, the glory which issued from this manifestation of divine *doxa* is described in vv. 3b-5. The cloud, as the earthly vehicle of the divine *doxa*, filled the inner court; and when the glory of the Lord stood upon the threshold, it filled the temple also, while the court became full of the splendour of the divine glory. That is to

say, the brilliancy of the divine nature shone through the cloud, so that the court and the temple were lighted by the shining of the light-cloud. The brilliant splendour is a symbol of the light of the divine grace. The wings of the cherubim rustled, and at the movement of God (Eze. 1:24) were audible even in the outer court.

After this picture of the glorious manifestation of the divine *doxa*, the fetching of the fire-coals from the space between the wheels under the cherubim is more closely described in vv. 6 and 7. One of the cherub's hands took the coals out of the fire, and put them into the hands of the man clothed in white linen. To this a supplementary remark is added in v. 8, to the effect that the figure of a hand was visible by the side of the cherubim under their wings. The word **וַיֵּצֵא**, "and he went out," indicates that the man clothed in white linen scattered the coals over the city, to set it on fire and consume it.

*Eze. 10: 9-22.* The glory of the Lord forsakes the temple. —

V. 9. *And I saw, and behold four wheels by the side of the cherubim, one wheel by the side of every cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like the look of a chrysolith stone.* V. 10. *And as for their appearance, they had all four one form, as if one wheel were in the midst of the other.* V. 11. *When they went, they went to their four sides; they did not turn in going; for to the place to which the head was directed, to that they went; they did not turn in their going.* V. 12. *And their whole body, and their back, and their hands, and their wings, and wheels, were full of eyes round about: by all four their wheels.* V. 13. *To the wheels, to them was called, "whirl!" in my hearing.* V. 14. *And every one had four faces; the face of the first was the face of the cherub, the face of the second a man's face, and the third a lion's face, and the fourth an eagle's face.* V. 15. *And the cherubim ascended. This was the being which I saw by the river Chebar.* V. 16. *And when the cherubim went, the wheels went by them; and when the cherubim raised their wings to ascend from the earth, the wheels also did not turn from their side.* V. 17. *When those stood, they stood; and when those ascended, they ascended with them; for the spirit of the being was in them.* V. 18.; *And the glory of Jehovah went out from the threshold of the house, and stood above the cherubim.* V. 19. *And the cherubim raised their wings, and ascended from the earth before my eyes on their going out, and the wheels beside them; and they stopped at the entrance of the eastern gate of the house of Jehovah; and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.* V. 20. *This was the being which I saw under the God of Israel by the river Chebar, and I perceived that they were cherubim.* V. 21. *Every one had four faces, each and every one four wings, and something like a man's hands under their wings.* V. 22. *And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the faces which I had seen by the river Chebar, their appearance and they themselves. They went every one according to its face.*

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With the words "I saw, and behold," a new feature in the vision is introduced. The description of the appearance of the cherubim in these verses coincides for the most part *verbatim* with the account of the theophany in Eze. 1. It differs

from this, however, not only in the altered arrangement of the several features, and in the introduction of certain points which serve to complete the former account; but still more in the insertion of a number of narrative sentence, which show that we have not merely a repetition of the first chapter here. On the contrary, Ezekiel is now describing the moving of the appearance of the glory of Jehovah from the inner court or porch of the temple to the outer entrance of the eastern gate of the outer court; in other words, the departure of the gracious presence of the Lord from the temple: and in order to point out more distinctly the importance and meaning of this event, he depicts once more the leading features of the theophany itself. The narrative sentences are found in vv. 13, 15, 18, and 19. In v. 13 we have the exclamation addressed to the wheels by the side of the cherubim to set themselves in motion; in v. 15, the statement that the cherubim ascended; and in vv. 18 and 19, the account of the departure of the glory of the Lord from the inner portion of the temple. To this we may add the repeated remark, that the appearance was the same as that which the prophet had seen by the river Chebar (vv. 15, 20, 22). To bring clearly out to view both the independence of these divine manifestations and their significance to Israel, Ezekiel repeats the leading features of the former description; but while doing this, he either makes them subordinate to the thoughts expressed in the narrative sentences, or places them first as introductory to these, or lets them follow as explanatory. Thus, for example, the description of the wheels, and of the manner in which they moved (vv. 9-12), serves both to introduce and explain the call to the wheels to set themselves in motion. The description of the wheels in vv. 9-11 harmonizes with Eze. 1:16 and 17, with this exception, however, that certain points are given with greater exactness here; such, for example, as the statement that the movements of the wheels were so regulated, that in whichever direction the front one turned, the other did the same. **הָרִאשׁוֹן**, the head, is not the head-wheel, or the wheel which was always the first to move, but the front one, which originated the motion, drawing the others after it and determining their direction. For v. 12<sup>b</sup> and the fact that the wheels were covered with eyes, see Eze. 1:18. In v. 12<sup>a</sup> we have the important addition, that the whole of the body and back, as well as the hands and wings, of the cherubim were full of eyes. There is all the less reason to question this addition, or remove it (as Hitzig does) by an arbitrary erasure, inasmuch as the statement itself is apparently in perfect harmony with the whole procedure; and the significance possessed by the eyes in relation to the wheels was not only appropriate in the case of the cherubim, but necessarily to be assumed in such a connection. The fact that the suffixes in **בְּשָׂרָם**, **בְּבָהֶם**, etc., refer to the cherubim, is obvious enough, if we consider that the wheels to which immediate reference is made were by the side of the cherubim (v. 9), and that the cherubim formed the principal feature in the whole of the vision.

Ver. 13 does not point back to v. 2, and bring the description of the wheel-work to a close, as Hitzig supposes. This assumption, by which the meaning of the whole description has been obscured, is based upon the untenable rendering, “and the wheels they named before my ears whirl” (J. D. Mich., Ros., etc.). Hävernick has already pointed out the objection to this, namely, that with such a rendering **בְּאָזְנַי** forms an unmeaning addition; whereas it is precisely this addition which shows that **קָרָא** is used here in the sense of addressing, calling, and not of naming. One called to the wheels **הַגִּלְגָּל**, whirl; i.e., they were to verify their name *galgal*, viz., to revolve or whirl, to set themselves in motion by revolving. This is the explanation given by Theodoret: *ἀνακυκλείσθαι καὶ ἀνακινεῖσθαι προσετάχθησαν*. These words therefore gave the signal for their departure, and accordingly the rising up of the cherubim is related in v. 15. V. 14 prepares the way for their ascent by mentioning the four faces of each cherub; and this is still further expanded in vv. 16 and 17, by the statement that the wheels moved according to the movements of the cherubim. **לְאִשְׁתָּהּ** without an article is used distributively (every one), as in Eze. 1: 6 and 10. The fact that in the description which follows only one face of each of the four cherubs is given, is not at variance with Eze. 1:10, according to which every one of the cherubs had the four faces named. It was not Ezekiel’s intention to mention all the faces of each cherub here, as he had done before; but he regarded it as sufficient in the case of each cherub to mention simply the one face, which was turned toward him. The only striking feature which still remains is the statement that the face of the one, i.e., of the first, was the face of the cherub instead of the face of an ox (cf. Eze. 1:10), since the faces of the man, the lion, and the eagle were also cherubs’ faces. We may, no doubt, get rid of the difficulty by altering the text, but this will not solve it; for it would still remain inexplicable how **הַכְּרוּב** could have grown out of **שׁוּר** by a copyist’s error; and still more, how such an error, which might have been so easily seen and corrected, could have been not only perpetuated, but generally adopted. Moreover, we have the article in **הַכְּרוּב**, which would also be inexplicable if the word had originated in an oversight, and which gives us precisely the index required to the correct solution of the difficulty, showing as it does that it was not merely *a* cherub’s face, but the face of *the* cherub, so that the allusion is to one particular cherub, who was either well known from what had gone before, or occupied a more prominent position than the rest. Such a cherub is the one mentioned in v. 7, who had taken the coals from the fire between the wheels, and stood nearest to Ezekiel. There did not appear to be any necessity to describe his face more exactly, as it could be easily seen from a comparison with Eze. 1:10. — In v. 15, the fact that the cherubim arose to depart from their place is followed by the remark that the cherubic figure was the being (**הַחַיָּה**, singular, as in Eze. 1:22) which Ezekiel saw by the Chaboras, because it was a matter of importance that

the identity of the two theophanies should be established as a help to the correct understanding of their real signification. But before the departure of the theophany from the temple is related, there follows in vv. 16 and 17 a repetition of the circumstantial description of the harmonious movements of the wheels and the cherubim (cf. Eze. 1:19-21); and then, in v. 18, the statement which had such practical significance, that the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple, and resumed the throne above the cherubim; and lastly, the account in v. 19, that the glory of the God of Israel, seated upon this throne, took up its position at the entrance of the eastern gate of the temple. The entrance of this gate is not the gate of the temple, but the outer side of the eastern gate of the outer court, which formed the principal entrance to the whole of the temple-space. The expression "God of Israel" instead of "Jehovah" is significant, and is used to intimate that God, as the covenant God, withdrew His gracious presence from the people of Israel by this departure from the temple; not, indeed, from the whole of the covenant nation, but from the rebellious Israel which dwelt in Jerusalem and Judah; for the same glory of God which left the temple in the vision before the eyes of Ezekiel had appeared to the prophet by the river Chebar, and by calling him to be the prophet for Israel, had shown Himself to be the God who kept His covenant, and proved that, by the judgment upon the corrupt generation, He simply desired to exterminate its ungodly nature, and create for Himself a new and holy people. This is the meaning of the remark which is repeated in vv. 20-22, that the apparition which left the temple was the same being as Ezekiel had seen by the Chaboras, and that he recognised the beings under the throne as cherubim.

*Eze. 11.* THREATENING OF JUDGMENT AND PROMISE OF MERCY. CONCLUSION OF THE VISION. — This chapter contains the concluding portion of the vision; namely, *first*, the prediction of the destruction of the ungodly rulers (vv. 1-13); *secondly*, the consolatory and closing promise, that the Lord would gather to Himself a people out of those who had been carried away into exile, and would sanctify them by His Holy Spirit (vv. 14-21); and, *thirdly*, the withdrawal of the gracious presence of God from the city of Jerusalem, and the transportation of the prophet back to Chaldea with the termination of his ecstasy (vv. 22-25).

*Eze. 11: 1-13.* Judgment upon the rulers of the nation. —

V. 1. *And a wind lifted me up, and took me to the eastern gate of the house of Jehovah, which faces towards the east; and behold, at the entrance of the gate were five and twenty men, and I saw among them Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, the chiefs of the nation.* V. 2. *And he said to me: Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity, and counsel evil counsel in this city; V. 3. Who say, It is not near to build houses; it is the pot, and we are the flesh.* V. 4. *Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, son of man.*

Ezekiel is once more transported from the inner court (Eze. 8:16) to the outer entrance of the eastern gate of the temple (הַשַּׁאֲרֵי רֹחַ, as in Eze. 8: 3), to which, according to Eze. 10:19, the vision of God had removed. There he sees twenty-five men, and among them two of the princes of the nation, whose names are given. These twenty-five men are not identical with the twenty-five priests mentioned in Eze. 8:16, as Hävernicks supposes. This is evident, not only from the difference in the locality, the priests standing between the porch and the altar, whereas the men referred to here stood at the outer eastern entrance to the court of the temple, but from the fact that the two who are mentioned by name are called שְׂרֵי הָעָם (princes of the people), so that we may probably infer from this that all the twenty-five were secular chiefs. Hävernicks opinion, that שְׂרֵי הָעָם is a term that may also be applied to princes among the priests, is as erroneous as his assertion that the priest-princes are called “princes” in Eze. 8:20, Neh. 10: 1, and Jer. 35: 4, whereas it is only to national princes that these passages refer. Hävernicks is equally incorrect in supposing that these twenty-five men take the place of the seventy mentioned in Eze. 8:11; for those seventy represented the whole of the nation, whereas these twenty-five (according to v. 2) were simply the counsellors of the city — not, however, the twenty-four *duces* of twenty-four divisions of the city, with a prince of the house of Judah, as Prado maintains, on the strength of certain Rabbinical assertions; or twenty-four members of a Sanhedrim, with their president (Rosenmüller); but the twelve tribe-princes (princes of the nation) and the twelve royal officers, or military commanders (1Ch. 27), with the king himself, or possibly with the commander-in-chief of the army; so that these twenty-five men represent the civil government of Israel, just as the twenty-four priest-princes, together with the high priest, represent the spiritual authorities of the covenant nation. The reason why two are specially mentioned by name is involved in obscurity, as nothing further is known of either of these persons. The words of God to the prophet in v. 2 concerning them are perfectly applicable to representatives of the civil authorities or temporal rulers, namely, that they devise and give unwholesome and evil counsel. This counsel is described in v. 3 by the words placed in their mouths: “house-building is not near; it (the city) is the caldron, we are the flesh.”

These words are difficult, and different interpretations have consequently been given. The rendering, “it (the judgment) is not near, let us build houses,” is incorrect; for the infinitive construct בְּנוּת cannot stand for the imperative or the infinitive absolute, but must be the subject of the sentence. It is inadmissible also to take the sentence as a question, “Is not house-building near?” in the sense of “it is certainly near,” as Ewald does, after some of the ancient versions. For even if an interrogation is sometimes indicated simply by the tone in an



energetic address, as, for example, in 2Sa. 23: 5, this cannot be extended to cases in which the words of another are quoted. Still less can **לֹא בְקֶרֶב** mean *non est tempus*, it is not yet time, as Maurer supposes. The only way in which the words can be made to yield a sense in harmony with the context, is by taking them as a tacit allusion to Jer. 29: 5. Jeremiah had called upon those in exile to build themselves houses in their banishment, and prepare for a lengthened stay in Babylon, and not to allow themselves to be deceived by the words of false prophets, who predicted a speedy return; for severe judgments had yet to fall upon those who had remained behind in the land. This word of Jeremiah the authorities in Jerusalem ridiculed, saying “house-building is not near,” i.e., the house-building in exile is still a long way off; it will not come to this, that Jerusalem should fall either permanently or entirely into the hands of the king of Babylon. On the contrary, Jerusalem is the pot, and we, its inhabitants, are the flesh. The point of comparison is this: as the pot protects the flesh from burning, so does the city of Jerusalem protect us from destruction. <sup>115</sup>

On the other hand, there is no foundation for the assumption that the words also contain an allusion to other sayings of Jeremiah, namely, to Jer. 1:13, where the judgment about to burst in from the north is represented under the figure of a smoking pot; or to Jer. 19, where Jerusalem is depicted as a pot about to be broken in pieces by God; for the reference in Jer. 19 is simply to an earthen pitcher, not to a meat-caldron; and the words in the verse before us have nothing at all in common with the figure in Jer. 1:13. The correctness of our explanation is evident both from Eze. 24: 3, 6, where the figure of pot and flesh is met with again, though differently applied, and from the reply which Ezekiel makes to the saying of these men in the verses that follow (vv. 7-11). This saying expresses not only false confidence in the strength of Jerusalem, but also contempt and scorn of the predictions of the prophets sent by God. Ezekiel is therefore to prophesy, as he does in vv. 5-12, against this pernicious counsel, which is confirming the people in their sins.

### *Eze. 11: 5-12.*

*And the Spirit of Jehovah fell upon me, and said to me: Say, Thus saith Jehovah, So ye say, O house of Israel, and what riseth up in your spirit, that I know. V. 6. Ye have increased your slain in this city, and filled its streets with slain. V. 7.*

*Therefore, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Your slain, whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they are the flesh, and it is the pot; but men will lead you out of it. V. 8. The sword you fear; but the sword shall I bring upon you, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 9. I shall lead you out of it and give you into the hand of foreigners, and shall execute judgments upon you. V. 10. By the sword shall ye fall: on the frontier of Israel shall I judge you; and ye shall learn that I am Jehovah. V. 11. It shall not be as a pot to you, so that you should be flesh therein: on the frontier of Israel shall I judge. V. 12. And ye shall learn that I am Jehovah, in whose statutes*

*ye have not walked, and my judgments ye have not done, but have acted according to the judgments of the heathen who are round about you.*

For **תָּפַל עָלַי רוּחַ יי**, compare Eze. 8: 1. Instead of the “hand” (Eze. 8: 1), the Spirit of Jehovah is mentioned here; because what follows is simply a divine inspiration, and there is no action connected with it. The words of God are directed against the “house of Israel,” whose words and thoughts are discerned by God, because the twenty-five men are the leaders and counsellors of the nation. **מַעְלוֹת רוּחַ**, thoughts, suggestions of the mind, may be explained from the phrase **עָלָה אֵל לֵב**, to come into the mind. Their actions furnish the proof of the evil suggestions of their heart. They have filled the city with slain; not “turned the streets of the city into a battle-field,” however, by bringing about the capture of Jerusalem in the time of Jeconiah, as Hitzig would explain it. The words are to be understood in a much more general sense, as signifying murder, in both the coarser and the more refined signification of the word. <sup>f16</sup>

**מִלְאֵתֵיכֶם** is a copyist’s error for **מִלְאֵתֵיכֶם**. Those who have been murdered by you are the flesh in the caldron (v. 7). Ezekiel gives them back their own words, as words which contain an undoubted truth, but in a different sense from that in which they have used them. By their bloodshed they have made the city into a pot in which the flesh of the slain is pickled. Only in this sense is Jerusalem a pot for them; not a pot to protect the flesh from burning while cooking, but a pot into which the flesh of the slaughtered is thrown. Yet even in this sense will Jerusalem not serve as a pot to these worthless counsellors (v. 11). They will lead you out of the city (**הוֹצִיא**, in v. 7, is the 3rd pers. sing. with an indefinite subject). The sword which ye fear, and from which this city is to protect you, will come upon you, and cut you down — not in Jerusalem, but on the frontier of Israel. **אֶל-גְּבוּל**, in v. 10, cannot be taken in the sense of “away over the frontier,” as Kliefoth proposes; if only because of the synonym **אֶל-גְּבוּל** in v. 11. This threat was literally fulfilled in the bloody scenes at Riblah (Jer. 52:24-27). It is not therefore a *vaticinium ex eventu*, but contains the general thought, that the wicked who boasted of security in Jerusalem or in the land of Israel as a whole, but were to be led out of the land, and judged outside. This threat intensifies the punishment, as Calvin has already shown. <sup>f17</sup>

In v. 11 the negation (**לֹא**) of the first clause is to be supplied in the second, as, for example, in Deu. 33: 6. For v. 12, compare the remarks on Eze. 5: 7. The truth and the power of this word are demonstrated at once by what is related in the following verse.

*Eze. 11:13.*

*And it came to pass, as I was prophesying, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died: then I fell upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said: Alas! Lord Jehovah, dost Thou make an end of the remnant of Israel?*

The sudden death of one of the princes of the nation, while Ezekiel was prophesying, was intended to assure the house of Israel of the certain fulfilment of this word of God. So far, however, as the fact itself is concerned, we must bear in mind, that as it was only in spirit that Ezekiel was at Jerusalem, and prophesied to the men whom he saw in spirit there, so the death of Pelatiah was simply a part of the vision, and in all probability was actually realized by the sudden death of this prince during or immediately after the publication of the vision. But the occurrence, even when the prophet saw it in spirit, made such an impression upon his mind, that with trembling and despair he once more made an importunate appeal to God, as in Eze. 9: 8, and inquired whether He meant to destroy the whole of the remnant of Israel. עֲשֵׂה כָּלָה, to put an end to a thing, with אֵת before the object, as in Zep. 1:18 (see the comm. on Nah. 1: 8). The Lord then gives him the comforting assurance in vv. 14-21, that He will preserve a remnant among the exiles, and make them His people once more.

*Eze. 11:14-21.* Promise of the gathering of Israel out of the nations. —

*V. 14. And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 15. Son of man, thy brethren, thy brethren are the people of thy proxy, and the whole house of Israel, the whole of it, to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem say, Remain far away from Jehovah; to us the land is given for a possession. V. 16. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Ye, I have sent them far away, and have scattered them in the lands, but I have become to them a sanctuary for a little while in the lands whither they have come. V. 17. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, And I will gather you from the nations, and will collect you together from the lands in which ye are scattered, and will give you the land of Israel. V. 18. And they will come thither, and remove from it all its detestable things, and all its abominations. V. 19. And I will give them one heart, and give a new spirit within you; and will take the heart of stone out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh; V. 20. That they may walk in my statutes, and preserve my rights, and do them: and they will be my people, and I will be their God. V. 21. But those whose heart goeth to the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will give their way upon their head, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

The prophet had interceded, first of all for the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Eze. 9: 8), and then for the rulers of the nation, and had asked God whether He would entirely destroy the remnant of Israel. To this God replies that his brethren, in whom he is to interest himself, are not these inhabitants of Jerusalem and these rulers of the nation, but the Israelites carried into exile, who are regarded by these inhabitants at Jerusalem as cut off from the people of God. The nouns in v. 15a are not “accusatives, which are resumed in the suffix to הִרְמִיקְתֶּם in v. 16,” as Hitzig imagines, but form an independent clause, in

which אֲחֵיךָ is the subject, and אֲנֹשֵׁי גְאֻלְתֶּךָ as well as כָּל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל the predicates. The repetition of “thy brethren” serves to increase the force of the expression: thy true, real brethren; not in contrast to the priests, who were lineal relations (Hävernick), but in contrast to the Israelites, who had only the name of Israel, and denied its nature.

These brethren are to be the people of his proxy; and toward these he is to exercise גְּאֻלָּה גְּאֻלָּה is the business, or the duty and right, of the *Goël*. According to the law, the *Goël* was the brother, or the nearest relation, whose duty it was to come to the help of his impoverished brother, not only by redeeming (buying back) his possession, which poverty had compelled him to sell, but to redeem the man himself, if he had been sold to pay his debts (vid., Lev. 25:25, 48). The *Goël* therefore became the possessor of the property of which his brother had been unjustly deprived, if it were not restored till after his death (Num. 5: 8). Consequently he was not only the avenger of blood, but the natural supporter and agent of his brother; and גְּאֻלָּה signifies not merely redemption or kindred, but *proxy*, i.e., both the right and obligation to act as the legal representative, the avenger of blood, the heir, etc., of the brother. The words “and the whole of the house of Israel” are a second predicate to “thy brethren,” and affirm that the brethren, for whom Ezekiel can and is to intercede, form the whole of the house of Israel, the term “whole” being rendered more emphatic by the repetition of כָּל in כְּלָה. A contrast is drawn between this “whole house of Israel” and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who say to those brethren, “Remain far away from Jehovah, to us is the land given for a possession.” It follows from this, first of all, that the brethren of Ezekiel, towards whom he was to act as *Goël*, were those who had been taken away from the land, his companions in exile; and, secondly, that the exiles formed the whole of the house of Israel, that is to say, that they alone would be regarded by God as His people, and not the inhabitants of Jerusalem or those left in the land, who regarded the exiles as no longer a portion of the nation: simply because, in their estrangement from God, they looked upon the mere possession of Jerusalem as a pledge of participation in the grace of God. This shows the prophet where the remnant of the people of God is to be found. To this there is appended in v. 16ff. a promise of the way in which the Lord will make this remnant His true people. לָכֵן, therefore, viz., because the inhabitants of Jerusalem regard the exiles as rejected by the Lord, Ezekiel is to declare to them that Jehovah is their sanctuary even in their dispersion (v. 16); and because the others deny that they have any share in the possession of the land, the Lord will gather them together again, and give them the land of Israel (v. 17). The two לָכֵן are co-ordinate, and introduce the antithesis to the disparaging sentence pronounced by the inhabitants of Jerusalem upon those

who have been carried into exile. The כִּי before the two leading clauses in v. 16 does not mean “because,” serving to introduce a protasis, to which v. 17 would form the apodosis, as Ewald affirms; but it stands before the direct address in the sense of an assurance, which indicates that there is some truth at the bottom of the judgment pronounced by their opponents, the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The thought is this: the present position of affairs is unquestionably that Jehovah has scattered them (the house of Israel) among the Gentiles; but He has not therefore cast them off. He has become a sanctuary to them in the lands of their dispersion. *Migdâsh* does not mean either asylum or an object kept sacred (Hitzig), but a sanctuary, more especially the temple. They had, indeed, lost the outward temple (at Jerusalem); but the Lord Himself had become their temple. What made the temple into a sanctuary was the presence of Jehovah, the covenant God, therein. This even the exiles were to enjoy in their banishment, and in this they would possess a substitute for the outward temple. This thought is rendered still more precise by the word מִצְמָה, which may refer either to time or measure, and signify “for a short time,” or “in some measure.” It is difficult to decide between these two renderings. In support of the latter, which Kliefoth prefers (after the LXX and Vulgate), it may be argued that the manifestation of the Lord, both by the mission of prophets and by the outward deliverances and inward consolations which He bestowed upon the faithful, was but a partial substitute to the exile for His gracious presence in the temple and in the holy land. Nevertheless, the context, especially the promise in v. 17, that He will gather them again and lead them back into the land of Israel, appears to favour the former signification, namely, that this substitution was only a provisional one, and was only to last for a short time, although it also implies that this could not and was not meant to be a perfect substitute for the gracious presence of the Lord. For Israel, as the people of God, could not remain scattered abroad; it must possess the inheritance bestowed upon it by the Lord, and have its God in the midst of it in its own land, and that in a manner more real than could possibly be the case in captivity among the Gentiles. This will be fully realized in the heavenly Jerusalem, where the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb will be a temple to the redeemed (Rev. 21:22). Therefore will Jehovah gather together the dispersed once more, and lead them back into the land of Israel, i.e., into the land which He designed for Israel; whereas the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who boast of their possession of Canaan (v. 15), will lose what they now possess. Those who are restored will then remove all idolatrous abominations (v. 17), and receive from God a new and feeling heart (v. 19), so that they will walk in the ways of God, and be in truth the people of God (v. 20).

The fulfilment of this promise did, indeed, begin with the return of a portion of the exiles under Zerubbabel; but it was not completed under either Zerubbabel or Ezra, or even in the Maccabean times. Although Israel may have entirely

relinquished the practice of gross idolatry after the captivity, it did not then attain to that newness of heart which is predicted in vv. 19, 20. This only commenced with the Baptist's preaching of repentance, and with the coming of Christ; and it was realized in the children of Israel, who accepted Jesus in faith, and suffered Him to make them children of God. Yet even by Christ this prophecy has not yet been perfectly fulfilled in Israel, but only in part, since the greater portion of Israel has still in its hardness that stony heart which must be removed out of its flesh before it can attain to salvation. The promise in v. 19 has for its basis the prediction in Deu. 30: 6. "What the circumcision of the heart is there, viz., the removal of all uncleanness, of which outward circumcision was both the type and pledge, is represented here as the giving of a heart of flesh instead of one of stone" (Hengstenberg). I give them *one* heart. **לֵב אֶחָד**, which Hitzig is wrong in proposing to alter into **לֵב אֲחֵר**, *another* heart, after the LXX, is supported and explained by Jer. 32:39, "I give them *one* heart and *one* way to fear me continually" (cf. Zep. 3: 9 and Act. 4:32). *One* heart is not an upright, undivided heart (**לֵב שְׁלֵם**), but a harmonious, united heart, in contrast to the division or plurality of hearts which prevails in the natural state, in which every one follows his own heart and his own mind, turning "every one to his own way" (Isa. 53: 6). God gives *one* heart, when He causes all hearts and minds to become one. This can only be effected by His giving a "new spirit," taking away the stone-heart, and giving a heart of flesh instead. For the old spirit fosters nothing but egotism and discord. The heart of stone has no susceptibility to the impressions of the word of God and the drawing of divine grace. In the natural condition, the heart of man is as hard as stone. "The word of God, the external leadings of God, pass by and leave no trace behind. The latter may crush it, and yet not break it. Even the fragments continue hard; yea, the hardness goes on increasing" (Hengstenberg). The heart of flesh is a tender heart, susceptible to the drawing of divine grace (compare Eze. 36:26, where these figures, which are peculiar to Ezekiel, recur; and for the substance of the prophecy, Jer. 31:33). The fruit of this renewal of heart is walking in the commandments of the Lord; and the consequence of the latter is the perfect realization of the covenant relation, true fellowship with the Lord God. But judgment goes side by side with this renewal. Those who will not forsake their idols become victims to the judgment (v. 21). The first hemistich of v. 21 is a relative clause, in which **אֲשֶׁר** is to be supplied and connected with **לֵבָם**: "Whose heart walketh after the heart of their abominations." The heart, which is attributed to the abominations and detestations, i.e., to the idols, is the inclination to idolatry, the disposition and spirit which manifest themselves in the worship of idols. Walking after the heart of the idols forms the antithesis to walking after the heart of God (1Sa. 13:14). For **דַּרְכָּם וְגו'**, "I will give their way," see Eze. 9:10.

*Eze. 11:22-25.* The promise that the Lord would preserve to Himself a holy seed among those who had been carried away captive, brought to a close the announcement of the judgment that would fall upon the ancient Israel and apostate Jerusalem. All that is now wanting, as a conclusion to the whole vision, is the practical confirmation of the announcement of judgment. This is given in the two following verses.

*V. 22. And the cherubim raised their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was up above them. V. 23. And the glory of Jehovah ascended from the midst of the city, and took its stand upon the mountain which is to the east of the city. V. 24. And wind lifted me up, and brought me to Chaldea to the exiles, in the vision, in the Spirit of God; and the vision ascended away from me, which I had seen. V. 25. And I spoke to the exiles all the words of Jehovah, which He had shown to me. —*

The manifestation of the glory of the Lord had already left the temple, after the announcement of the burning of Jerusalem, and had taken its stand before the entrance of the eastern gate of the outer court, that is to say, in the city itself (*Eze. 10:19; 11: 1*). But now, after the announcement had been made to the representatives of the authorities of their removal from the city, the glory of the God of Israel forsook the devoted city also, as a sign that both temple and city had ceased to be the seats of the gracious presence of the Lord. The mountain on the east of the city is the Mount of Olives, which affords a lofty outlook over the city. There the glory of God remained, to execute the judgment upon Jerusalem. Thus, according to *Zec. 14: 4*, will Jehovah also appear at the last judgment on the Mount of Olives above Jerusalem, to fight thence against His foes, and prepare a way of escape for those who are to be saved. It was from the Mount of Olives also that the Son of God proclaimed to the degenerate city the second destruction (*Luk. 19:21; Mat. 24: 3*); and from the same mountain He made His visible ascension to heaven after His resurrection (*Luk. 24:50; cf. Act. 1:12*); and, as Grotius has observed, “thus did Christ ascend from this mountain into His kingdom, to execute judgment upon the Jews.”

After this vision of the judgments of God upon the ancient people of the covenant and the kingdom of God, Ezekiel was carried back in the spirit into Chaldea, to the river Chaboras. The vision then vanished; and he related to the exiles all that he had seen.

## **Ch. 12. Departure of the King and People; and Bread of Tears**

*Eze. 12.* The words of God which follow in *Eze. 12-19* do not contain any chronological data defining the exact period at which they were communicated to the prophet and reported by him. But so far as their contents are concerned, they are closely connected with the foregoing announcements of judgment; and this renders the assumption a very probable one, that they were not far removed

from them in time, but fell within the space of eleven months intervening between Eze. 8: 1 and 20: 1, and were designed to carry out still further the announcement of judgment in Eze. 8-11. This is done more especially in the light thrown upon all the circumstances, on which the impenitent people rested their hope of the preservation of the kingdom and Jerusalem, and of their speedy liberation from the Babylonian yoke. The purpose of the whole is to show the worthlessness of this false confidence, and to affirm the certainty and irresistibility of the predicted destruction of Judah and Jerusalem, in the hope of awakening the rebellious and hardened generation to that thorough repentance, without which it was impossible that peace and prosperity could ever be enjoyed. This definite purpose in the prophecies which follow is clearly indicated in the introductory remarks in Eze. 12: 2; 14: 1, and 20: 1. In the first of these passages the hardness of Israel is mentioned as the motive for the ensuing prophecy; whilst in the other two, the visit of certain elders of Israel to the prophet, to seek the Lord and to inquire through him, is given as the circumstance which occasioned the further prophetic declarations. It is evident from this that the previous words of God had already made some impression upon the hearers, but that their hard heart had not yet been broken by them.

In Eze. 12, Ezekiel receives instructions to depict, by means of a symbolical action, the departure of the king and people from Jerusalem (vv. 3-7), and to explain the action to the refractory generation (vv. 8-16). After this he is to exhibit, by another symbolical sign, the want and distress to which the people will be reduced (vv. 17-20). And lastly, he is to rebut the frivolous sayings of the people, to the effect that what is predicted will either never take place at all, or not till a very distant time (vv. 21-28).

### *Eze. 12: 1-7.* SYMBOL OF THE EMIGRATION.

*V. 1. And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, thou dwellest amidst the refractory generation, who have eyes to see, and see not; and have ears to hear, and hear not; for they are a refractory generation. V. 3. And thou, son of man, make thyself an outfit for exile, and depart by day before their eyes; and depart from thy place to another place before their eyes: perhaps they might see, for they are a refractory generation. V. 4. And carry out thy things like an outfit for exile by day before their eyes; but do thou go out in the evening before their eyes, as when going out to exile. V. 5. Before their eyes break through the wall, and carry it out there. V. 6. Before their eyes take it upon thy shoulder, carry it out in the darkness; cover thy face, and look not upon the land; for I have set thee as a sign to the house of Israel. V. 7. And I did so as I was commanded: I carried out my things like an outfit for exile by day, and in the evening I broke through the wall with my hand; I carried it out in the darkness; I took it upon my shoulder before their eyes.*

In v. 2 the reason is assigned for the command to perform the symbolical action, namely, the hard-heartedness of the people. Because the generation in



the midst of which Ezekiel dwelt was blind, with seeing eyes, and deaf, with hearing ears, the prophet was to depict before its eyes, by means of the sign that followed, the judgment which was approaching; in the hope, as is added in v. 3, that they might possibly observe and lay the sign to heart. The refractoriness (בֵּית מֶרֶי, as in Eze. 2: 5, 6; 3:26, etc.) is described as obduracy, viz., having eyes, and not seeing; having ears, and not hearing, after Deu. 29: 3 (cf. Jer. 5:21; Isa. 6: 9; Mat. 13:14, 15). The root of this mental blindness and deafness was to be found in obstinacy, i.e., in not willing; “in that presumptuous insolence,” as Michaelis says, “through which divine light can obtain no admission.” בְּלִי גִּלְהָה, the goods (or outfit) of exile, were a pilgrim’s staff and traveller’s wallet, with the provisions and utensils necessary for a journey. Ezekiel was to carry these out of the house into the street in the day-time, that the people might see them and have their attention called to them. Then in the evening, after dark, he was to go out himself, not by the door of the house, but through a hole which he had broken in the wall. He was also to take the travelling outfit upon his shoulder and carry it through the hole and out of the place, covering his face all the while, that he might not see the land to which he was going. “Thy place” is thy dwelling-place. בְּמִנְצְאֵי גִּלְהָה: as the departures of exiles generally take place, i.e., as exiles are accustomed to depart, not “at the usual time of departure into exile,” as Hävernäck proposes. For מִנְצְאֵי, see the comm. on Mic. 5: 1. בְּעֶלְמָה differs from בְּעֶרְבַּי, and signifies the darkness of the depth of night (cf. Gen. 15:17); not, however, “darkness artificially produced, equivalent to, with the eyes shut, or the face covered; so that the words which follow are simply explanatory of בְּעֶלְמָה,” as Schmieder imagines. Such an assumption would be at variance not only with v. 7, but also with v. 12, where the covering or concealing of the face is expressly distinguished from the carrying out “in the dark.” The order was to be as follows: In the day-time Ezekiel was to take the travelling outfit and carry it out into the road; then in the evening he was to go out himself, having first of all broken a hole through the wall as evening was coming on; and in the darkness of night he was to place upon his shoulders whatever he was about to carry with him, and take his departure. This he was to do, because God had made him a *mōphēth* for Israel: in other words, by doing this he was to show himself to be a marvellous sign to Israel. For *mōphēth*, see the comm. on Exo. 4:21. In v. 7, the execution of the command, which evidently took place in the strictness of the letter, is fully described. There was nothing impracticable in the action, for breaking through the wall did not preclude the use of a hammer or some other tool.

*Eze. 12: 8-16.* Explanation of the symbolical action. —

V. 8. *And the word of Jehovah came to me in the morning, saying, V. 9. Son of man, have they not said to thee, the house of Israel, the refractory generation, What art thou doing? V. 10. Say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, This burden applies to the prince in Jerusalem, and to all the house of Israel to whom they belong. V. 11. Say, I am your sign: as I have done, so shall it happen to them; into exile, into captivity, will they go. V. 12. And the prince who is in the midst of them he will lift it upon his shoulder in the dark, and will go out: they will break through the wall, and carry it out thereby: he will cover his face, that he may not see the land with eyes. V. 13. And I will spread my net over him, so that he will be caught in my snare: and I will take him to Babel, into the land of the Chaldeans; but he will not see it, and will die there. V. 14. And all that is about him, his help and all his troops, I will scatter into all winds, and draw out the sword behind them. V. 15. And they shall learn that I am Jehovah, when I scatter them among the nations, and winnow them in the lands. V. 16. Yet I will leave of them a small number of men from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may relate all their abominations among the nations whither they have come; and learn that I am Jehovah.*

As queries introduced with הלא have, as a rule, an affirmative sense, the words “have they not asked,” etc., imply that the Israelites had asked the prophet what he was doing, though not in a proper state of mind, not in a penitential manner, as the epithet בית המדרש plainly shows. The prophet is therefore to interpret the action which he had just been performing, and all its different stages. The words הנשיא המשא הזה, to which very different renderings have been given, are to be translated simply “the prince is this burden,” i.e., the object of this burden. *Hammassâ* does not mean the carrying, but the burden, i.e., the threatening prophecy, the prophetic action of the prophet, as in the headings to the oracles (see the comm. on Nah. 1: 1). The “prince” is the king, as in Eze. 21:30, though not Jehoiachin, who had been carried into exile, but Zedekiah. This is stated in the apposition “in Jerusalem,” which belongs to “the prince,” though it is not introduced till after the predicate, as in Gen. 24:24. To this there is appended the further definition, “the whole house of Israel,” which, being co-ordinated with הנשיא, affirms that all Israel (the covenant nation) will share the fate of the prince. In the last clause of v. 10 בתוכם does not stand for בתוכה, so that the suffix would refer to Jerusalem, “in the midst of which they (the house of Israel) are.” אשר cannot be a nominative, because in that case המה to be understood as referring to the persons addressed, i.e., to the Israelites in exile (Hitzig, Kliefoth): in the midst of whom they are, i.e., to whom they belong. The sentence explains the reason why the prophet was to announce to those in exile the fate of the prince and people in Jerusalem; namely, because the exiles formed a portion of the nation, and would be affected by the judgment which was about to burst upon the king and people in Jerusalem. In this sense Ezekiel was also able to say to the exiles (in v. 11), “I am *your* sign;” inasmuch as his sign was also of importance for them, as those who were

already banished would be so far affected by the departure of the king and people which Ezekiel depicted, that it would deprive them of all hope of a speedy return to their native land.

לְהֵם, in v. 11, refers to the king and the house of Israel in Jerusalem. בְּגִנְלָהּ is rendered more forcible by the addition of בְּשִׁבְיָהּ. The announcement that both king and people must go into exile, is carried out still further in vv. 12 and 13 with reference to the king, and in v. 14 with regard to the people. The king will experience all that Ezekiel has described. The literal occurrence of what is predicted here is related in Jer. 39: 1ff., 52: 4ff.; 2Ki. 25: 4ff. When the Chaldeans forced their way into the city after a two years' siege, Zedekiah and his men of war fled by night out of the city through the gate between the two walls. It is not expressly stated, indeed, in the historical accounts that a breach was made in the wall; but the expression "through the gate between the two walls" (Jer. 39: 4; 52: 7; 2Ki. 25: 4) renders this very probable, whether the gate had been walled up during the siege, or it was necessary to break through the wall at one particular spot in order to reach the gate. The king's attendants would naturally take care that a breach was made in the wall, to secure for him a way of escape; hence the expression, "they will break through." The covering of the face, also, is not mentioned in the historical accounts; but in itself it is by no means improbable, as a sign of the shame and grief with which Zedekiah left the city. The words, "that he may not see the land with eyes," do not appear to indicate anything more than the necessary consequence of covering the face, and refer primarily to the simple fact that the king fled in the deepest sorrow, and did not want to see the land; but, as v. 13 clearly intimates, they were fulfilled in another way, namely, by the fact that Zedekiah did not see with his eyes the land of the Chaldeans into which he was led, because he had been blinded at Riblah (Jer. 39: 5; 52:11, 2Ki. 25: 7). לְאֵינָן, by eye = with his eyes, is added to give prominence to the idea of seeing. For the same purpose, the subject, which is already implied in the verb, is rendered more emphatic by הוּא; and this הוּא is placed after the verb, so that it stands in contrast with הָאֶרֶץ. The capture of the king was not depicted by Ezekiel; so that in this respect the announcement (v. 13) goes further than the symbolical action, and removes all doubt as to the credibility of the prophet's word, by a distinct prediction of the fate awaiting him. At the same time, his not seeing the land of Babylon is left so indefinite, that it cannot be regarded as a *vaticinium post eventum*. Zedekiah died in prison at Babylon (Jer. 52:11). Along with the king, the whole of his military force will be scattered in all directions (v. 14). עֲזָרָה, his help, i.e., the troops that break through with him. כָּל-אֲנָפָיו, all his wings (the wings of his army), i.e., all the rest of his forces. The word is peculiar to Ezekiel, and is rendered "wings" by Jos. Kimchi, like *kēnāphaim* in Isa. 8: 8. For the rest of the

verse compare Eze. 5: 2; and for the fulfilment, Jer. 52: 8; 40: 7, 12. The greater part of the people will perish, and only a small number remain, that they may relate among the heathen, wherever they are led, all the abominations of Israel, in order that the heathen may learn that it is not from weakness, but simply to punish idolatry, that God has given up His people to them (cf. Jer. 22: 8).

**Eze. 12:17-20.** Sign Depicting the Terrors and Consequences of the Conquest of Jerusalem. —

V. 17. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 18. *Son of man, thou shalt eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and trouble;* V. 19. *And say to the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in the land of Israel, They will eat their bread in trouble, and drink their water in amazement, because her land is laid waste of all its fulness for the wickedness of all who dwell therein.* V. 20. *And the inhabited cities become desolate, and the land will be laid waste; that ye may learn that I am Jehovah.*

The carrying out of this sign is not mentioned; not that there is any doubt as to its having been done, but that it is simply taken for granted. The trouble and trembling could only be expressed by means of gesture. רָאָשׁ, generally an earthquake or violent convulsion; here, simply shaking, synonymous with רָגַדָה, trembling. “Bread and water” is the standing expression for food; so that even here the idea of scanty provisions is not to be sought therein. This idea is found merely in the signs of anxiety and trouble with which Ezekiel was to eat his food. אֶל-אֲדָמָה = אֶל-אֲדָר, “upon the land,” equivalent to “in the land.” This is appended to show that the prophecy does not refer to those who had already been carried into exile, but to the inhabitants of Jerusalem who were still in the land. For the subject-matter, compare Eze. 4:16, 17. לְמַעַן indicates not the intention, “in order that,” but the motive, “because.”

**Eze. 12:21-28.** Declarations to Remove all Doubt as to the Truth of the Threat. — The scepticism of the people as to the fulfilment of these threatening prophecies, which had been made still more emphatic by signs, manifested itself in two different ways. Some altogether denied that the prophecies would ever be fulfilled (v. 22); others, who did not go so far as this, thought that it would be a long time before they came to pass (v. 27). These doubts were fed by the lying statements of false prophets. For this reason the refutation of these sceptical opinions (vv. 21-28) is followed in the next chapter by a stern reproof of the false prophets and prophetesses who led the people astray. —

V. 21. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 22. *Son of man, what kind of proverb have ye in the land of Israel, that ye say, The days become long, and every prophecy comes to nothing?* V. 23. *Therefore say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will put an end to this saying, and they shall say it no more in Israel; but*

*say to them, The days are near, and the word of every prophecy. V. 24. For henceforth there shall be no vain prophecy and flattering soothsaying in the midst of the house of Israel. V. 25. For I am Jehovah; I speak; the word which I speak will come to pass, and no longer be postponed; for in your days, O refractory generation, I speak a word and do it, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. —*

*Māshāl*, a proverb, saying current among the people, and constantly repeated as a truth. “The days become long,” etc., i.e., the time is lengthening out, and yet the prophecy is not being fulfilled. אָבַד, *perire*, to come to nothing, to fail of fulfilment, is the opposite of בָּאוּ, to come, to be fulfilled. God will put an end to these sayings, by causing a very speedy fulfilment of the prophecy. The days are near, and every word of the prophecy, i.e., the days in which every word predicted shall come to pass. The reason for this is given in vv. 24 and 25, in two co-ordinate sentences, both of which are introduced with כִּי. First, every false prophecy shall henceforth cease in Israel (v. 24); secondly, God will bring about the fulfilment of His own word, and that without delay (v. 25). Different explanations have been given of the meaning of v. 24. Kliefoth proposes to take אָשׂוּא and מְקַסְמֵי חֲלָק as the predicate to חֲזוֹן: no prophecy in Israel shall be vain and flattering soothsaying, but all prophecy shall become true, i.e., be fulfilled. Such an explanation, however, is not only artificial and unnatural, since מְקַסְמֵי would be inserted as a predicate in a most unsuitable manner, but it contains this incongruity, that God would apply the term מְקַסְמֵי, soothsaying, to the predictions of prophets inspired by Himself. On the other hand, there is no force in the objection raised by Kliefoth to the ordinary rendering of the words, namely, that the statement that God was about to put an end to false prophecy in Israel would anticipate the substance of the sixth word of God (i.e., Eze. 13). It is impossible to see why a thought should not be expressed here, and then still further expanded in Eze. 13. חֲלָק, smooth, i.e., flattering (compare Hos. 10: 2; and for the prediction, Zec. 13: 4, 5). The same reply serves also to overthrow the sceptical objection raised by the frivolous despisers of the prophet’s words. Hence there is only a brief allusion made to them in vv. 26-28. — V. 26. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 27. Son of man, behold, the house of Israel saith, The vision that he seeth is for many days off, and he prophesies for distant times. V. 28. Therefore say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, All my words shall be no longer postponed: the word which I shall speak shall come to pass, saith the Lord Jehovah. —* The words are plain; and after what has already been said, they need no special explanation. V. 20 compare with v. 25.

### **Ch. 13. Against the False Prophets and Prophetesses**

The way was already prepared for the address in this chapter by the announcement in Eze. 12:24. It divides itself into two parts, viz., vv. 1-16, directed against the false prophets; and vv. 17-23, against the false prophetesses. In both parts their conduct is first described, and then the punishment foretold. Jeremiah, like Ezekiel, and sometimes still more strongly, denounces the conduct of the false prophets, who are therefore to be sought for not merely among the exiles, but principally among those who were left behind in the land (vid., Jer. 23: 9ff.). A lively intercourse was kept up between the two, so that the false prophets extended their operations from Canaan to the Chaboras, and *vice versa*.

**Eze. 13: 1-16.** AGAINST THE FALSE PROPHETS. — Vv. 1-7. Their conduct.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to the prophets out of their heart, Hear ye the word of Jehovah. V. 3. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Woe upon the foolish prophets, who go after their spirit, and that which they have not seen! V. 4. Like foxes in ruins have thy prophets become, O Israel. V. 5. Ye do not stand before the breaches, nor wall up the wall around the house of Israel to stand firm in the battle on the day of Jehovah. V. 6. They see vanity and lying soothsaying, who say, "Oracle of Jehovah;" and Jehovah hath not sent them; so that they might hope for the fulfilment of the word. V. 7. Do ye not see vain visions, and speak lying soothsaying, and say, Oracle of Jehovah; and I have not spoken? —*

The addition **הַנְּבִיאִים**, "who prophesy," is not superfluous. Ezekiel is not to direct his words against the prophets as a body, but against those who follow the vocation of prophet in Israel without being called to it by God on receiving a divine revelation, but simply prophesying out of their own heart, or according to their own subjective imagination. In the name of the Lord he is to threaten them with woes, as fools who follow their own spirit; in connection with which we must bear in mind that folly, according to the Hebrew idea, was not merely a moral failing, but actual godlessness (cf. Psa. 14: 1). The phrase "going after their spirit" is interpreted and rendered more emphatic by **לְבַלְתִּי רָאוּ**, which is to be taken as a relative clause, "that which they have not seen," i.e., whose prophesying does not rest upon intuition inspired by God. Consequently they cannot promote the welfare of the nation, but (v. 4) are like foxes in ruins or desolate places. The point of comparison is to be found in the undermining of the ground by foxes, *qui per cuniculos subjectam terram excavant et suffodiunt* (Bochart). For the thought is not exhausted by the circumstance that they withdraw to their holes instead of standing in front of the breach (Hitzig); and there is no force in the objection that, with this explanation, **בְּחָרְבוֹת** is passed over and becomes in fact tautological (Hävernick). The expression "in ruins" points to the fall of the theocracy, which the false prophets cannot prevent, but, on the contrary, accelerate by undermining the moral foundations of the state.

For (v. 5) they do not stand in the breaches, and do not build up the wall around the house of Israel (לֵאֵל belongs to both clauses). He who desires to keep off the enemy, and prevent his entering the fortress, will stand in the breach. For the same purpose are gaps and breaches in the fortifications carefully built up. The sins of the people had made gaps and breaches in the walls of Jerusalem; in other words, had caused the moral decay of the city. But they had not stood in the way of this decay and its causes, as the calling and duty of prophets demanded, by reproving the sins of the people, that they might rescue the people and kingdom from destruction by restoring its moral and religious life. לֵעֲמֹד בַּמַּלְחָמָה, to stand, or keep ground, i.e., so that ye might have kept your ground in the war. The subject is the false prophets, not Israel, as Hävernicks supposes. "In the day of Jehovah," i.e., in the judgment which Jehovah has decreed. Not to stand, does not mean merely to avert the threatening judgment, but not to survive the judgment itself, to be overthrown by it. This arises from the fact that their prophesying is a life; because Jehovah, whose name they have in their mouths, has not sent them (v. 6). וַיִּחְלוּ is dependent upon וְשִׁלְחָם: God has not sent them, so that they could hope for the fulfilment of the word which they speak. The rendering adopted by others, "and they cause to hope," is untenable; for יַחַל with לֵאֵל does not mean "to cause to hope," or give hope, but simply to hope for anything. This was really the case; and it is affirmed in the declaration, which is repeated in the form of a direct appeal in v. 7, to the effect that their visions were vain and lying soothsaying. For this they are threatened with the judgment described in the verses which follow.

### *Eze. 13: 8-16.* Punishment of the false prophets. —

V. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because ye speak vanity and prophesy lying, therefore, behold, I will deal with you, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.* V. 9. *And my hand shall be against the prophets who see vanity and divine lies: in the council of my people they shall not be, and in the register of the house of Israel they shall not be registered, and into the land of Israel shall they not come; and ye shall learn that I am the Lord Jehovah.* V. 10. *Because, yea because they lead my people astray, and say, "Peace," though there is no peace; and when it (my people) build a wall, behold, they plaster it with cement:* V. 11. *Say to the plasterers, that it will fall: there cometh a pouring rain; and ye hailstones fall, and thou stormy wind break loose!* V. 12. *And, behold, the wall falleth; will men not say to you, Where is the plaster with which ye have plastered it?* V. 13. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I cause a stormy wind to break forth in my wrath, and a pouring rain will come in my anger, and hailstones in wrath, for destruction.* V. 14. *And I demolish the wall which ye have plastered, and cast it to the ground, that its foundation may be exposed, and it shall fall, and ye shall perish in the midst of it, and shall learn that I am Jehovah.* V. 15. *And I will exhaust my wrath upon the wall, and upon those who plaster it; and will say to you, It is all over with the wall, and all over with those*

who plastered it; V. 16. With the prophets of Israel who prophesied to Jerusalem, and saw visions of peace for her, though there is no peace, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. —

In v. 8 the punishment which is to fall upon the false prophets is threatened in general terms; and in v. 9 it is more specifically described in the form of a climax, rising higher and higher in the severity of its announcements. (1) They are no longer to form part of the council of the people of God; that is to say, they will lose their influential position among the people. (סֹדֶר is the sphere of counsellors, not the social sphere.) (2) Their names shall not be registered in the book of the house of Israel. The book of the house of Israel is the register in which the citizens of the kingdom of God are entered. Any one whose name was not admitted into this book, or was struck out of it, was separated thereby from the citizenship of Israel, and lost all the privileges which citizenship conferred. The figure of the book of life is a similar one (cf. Exo. 32:32). For Israel is not referred to here with regard to its outward nationality, but as the people of God; so that exclusion from Israel was also exclusion from fellowship with God. The circumstance that it is not the erasure of their names from the book that is mentioned here, but their not being entered in the book at all, may be accounted for from the reference contained in the words to the founding of the new kingdom of God. The old theocracy was abolished, although Jerusalem was not yet destroyed. The covenant nation had fallen under the judgment; but out of that portion of Israel which was dispersed among the heathen, a remnant would be gathered together again, and having been brought back to its own land, would be made anew into a holy people of God (cf. Eze. 11:17ff.). But the false prophets are not to be received into the citizenship of the new kingdom. (3) They are not even to come into the land of Israel; i.e., they are not merely to remain in exile, but to lose all share in the privileges and blessings of the kingdom of God. This judgment will come upon them because they lead astray the people of God, by proclaiming peace where there is no peace; i.e., by raising and cherishing false hopes of prosperity and peace, by which they encourage the people in their sinful lives, and lead them to imagine that all is well, and there is no judgment to be feared (cf. Jer. 23:17 and Mic. 3: 5). The exposure of this offence is introduced by the solemn וְאֵן וְבִיָּאֵן, because and because (cf. Lev. 26:43); and the offence itself is exhibited by means of a figure.

When the people build a wall, the false prophets plaster the wall with lime. וְהָוֵא (v. 10) refers to אָמַי, and the clause is a circumstantial one. תִּפְל signifies the plaster coating or cement of a wall, probably from the primary meaning of תִּפַּל, to stick or plaster over (= מַפְל, *conglutinare*, to glue, or fasten together), from which the secondary meaning of weak, insipid, has sprung. The proper word for plaster or cement is מִיָּחָ (v. 12), and תִּפְל is probably chosen



with an allusion to the tropical signification of that which is silly or absurd (Jer. 23:13; Lam. 2:14). The meaning of the figure is intelligible enough. The people build up foolish hopes, and the prophets not only paint these hopes for them in splendid colours, but even predict their fulfilment, instead of denouncing their folly, pointing out to the people the perversity of their ways, and showing them that such sinful conduct must inevitably be followed by punishment and ruin. The plastering is therefore a figurative description of deceitful flattery or hypocrisy, i.e., the covering up of inward corruption by means of outward appearance (as in Mat. 23:27 and Act. 23: 3). This figure leads the prophet to describe the judgment which they are bringing upon the nation and themselves, as a tempest accompanied with hail and pouring rain, which throws down the wall that has been erected and plastered over; and in connection with this figure he opens out this double thought: (1) the conduct of the people, which is encouraged by the false prophets, cannot last (vv. 11 and 12); and (2) when this work of theirs is overthrown, the false prophets themselves will also meet with the fate they deserve (vv. 13-16). The threat of judgment commences with the short, energetic **וַיִּפֹּל**, let it (the wall) fall, or it shall fall, with *Vav* to indicate the train of thought (Ewald, § 347a). The subject is **תֵּפֵל**, to which **יִפֹּל** suggests a resemblance in sound. In v. 12 this is predicted as the fate awaiting the plastered wall. In the description of the bursting storm the account passes with **וְאַתְּנָהּ** (and ye) into a direct address; in other words, the description assumes the form of an appeal to the destructive forces of nature to burst forth with all their violence against the work plastered over by the prophets, and to destroy it. **גִּשְׁמֵם שׁוֹטֵף**, pouring rain; cf. Eze. 38:22. **אֲבָנֵי אֲלֻגָּבִישׁ** here and Eze. 38:22 are hailstones. The word **אֲלֻגָּבִישׁ**, which is peculiar to Ezekiel, is probably **גָּבִישׁ** (Job. 28:18), with the Arabic article **אל**; ice, then crystal. **רוּחַ סְעָרוֹת**, wind of storms, a hurricane or tempest. **תִּבְקַעַ** (v. 11) is used intransitively, to break loose; but in v. 13 it is transitive, to cause to break loose. The active rendering adopted by Kliefoth, “the storm will rend,” sc. the plaster of the wall, is inappropriate in v. 11; for a tempest does not rend either the plaster or the wall, but throws the wall down. The translation which Kliefoth gives in v. 13, “I will rend by tempest,” is at variance with both the language and the sense. Jehovah will cause this tempest to burst forth in His wrath and destroy the wall, and lay it level with the ground. The suffix in **בְּתוֹכָהּ** refers (*ad sensum*) to Jerusalem not to **קִיר** (the wall), which is masculine, and has no **תּוֹךְ** (midst). The words pass from the figure to the reality here; for the plastered wall is a symbol of Jerusalem, as the centre of the theocracy, which is to be destroyed, and to bury the lying prophets in its ruins. **וְכַלִּיתִי** (v. 15) contains a play upon the word **לְכַלֵּה** in v. 13. By a new turn given to **כָּלָה**, Ezekiel repeats the thought that the wrath of God is to

destroy the wall and its plasterers; and through this repetition he rounds off the threat with the express declaration, that the false prophets who are ever preaching peace are the plasterers to whom he refers.

*Eze. 13:17-23.* AGAINST THE FALSE PROPHETESSES. — As the Lord had not endowed men only with the gifts of prophecy, but sometimes women also, e.g., Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah; so women also rose up along with the false prophets, and prophesied out of their own hearts without being impelled by the Spirit of God. Vv. 17-19. Their conduct. —

V. 17. *And thou, son of man, direct thy face towards the daughters of thy people, who prophesy out of their heart and prophesy against them,* V. 18. *And say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Woe to those who sew coverings together over all the joints of my hands, and make caps for the head of every size, to catch souls! Ye catch the souls of my people, and keep your souls alive.* V. 19. *And ye profane me with my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay souls which should not die, and to keep alive which should not live, by your lying to my people who hearken to lying.* —

Like the prophets in v. 2, the prophetesses are here described as prophesying out of their own heart (v. 17); and in vv. 18 and 19 their offences are more particularly described. The meaning of these verses is entirely dependent upon the view to be taken of **יָדַי**, which the majority of expositors, following the lead of the LXX, the Syriac, and the Vulgate, have regarded as identical with **יָדַי** or **יָדַי**, and understood as referring to the hands of the women or prophetesses. But there is nothing to justify the assumption that **יָדַי** is an unusual form for **יָדַי**, which even Ewald takes it to be (*Lehrbuch*, § 177a). Still less can it stand for the singular **יָדַי**. And we have not sufficient ground for altering the text, as the expression **זָרַעְתִּיכֶם** in v. 20 (I will tear the **בְּסָתוֹת** from your arms) does not require the assumption that the prophetesses had hidden their arms in **בְּסָתוֹת**; and such a supposition is by no means obviously in harmony with the facts.

The word **בְּסָתוֹת**, from **בָּסַת**, with **ת** fem. treated as a radical letter (cf. Ewald, § 186e), means a covering or concealment = **בְּסוֹת**. The meaning “cushion” or “pillow” (LXX **προσκεφάλαια**, Vulg. *pulvilli*) is merely an inference drawn from this passage, and is decidedly erroneous; for the word **תָּפַר** (to sew together) is inapplicable to cushions, as well as the phrase **אֵל בָּל-אֲצִילֵי יָדַי**, inasmuch as cushions are not placed upon the joints of the hands, and still less are they sewed together upon them. The latter is also a decisive reason for rejecting the explanation given by Hävernich, namely, that the *k'sâthōth* were carpets, which were used as couches, and upon which these voluptuous women are represented as reclining. For cushions or couches are not placed upon, but

under, the arm-joints (or elbows) and the shoulders, which Hävernicks understands by אֲצִילֵי יָד. This also overthrows another explanation given of the words, namely, that they refer to carpets, which the prophetesses had sewed together for all their arm-joints, so as to form comfortable beds upon splendid carpets, that they may indulge in licentiousness thereon. The explanation given by Ephraem Syrus, and adopted by Hitzig, namely, that the *k'sâthôth* were amulets or straps, which they would round their arm-joints when they received or delivered their oracles, is equally untenable. For, as Kliefoth has observed, "it is evident that there is not a word in the text about adultery, or amulets, or straps used in prayer." And again, when we proceed to the next clause, the traditional rendering of מְסַפְחוֹת, as signifying either pillows (ὀπασθένια, Symm.; *cervicalia*, Vulg.) or broad cloaks = מְסַפְחוֹת (Hitzig, Hävernicks, etc.), is neither supported by the usage of the language, nor in harmony with רָאשׁ לְאֵל. *Mispâchôth*, from *sâphach*, to join, cannot have any other meaning in the present context than a cap fitting close to the head; and אֵל must denote the pattern which was followed, as in Psa. 110: 4, Est. 9:26: they make the caps after (answering to) the head of every stature. The words of both clauses are figurative, and have been correctly explained by Kliefoth as follows: "A double charge is brought against the prophetesses. In the first place, they sew coverings together to wrap round all the joints of the hand of God, so that He cannot touch them; i.e., they cover up and conceal the word of God by their prophesying, more especially its rebuking and threatening force, so that the threatening and judicial arm of God, which ought above all to become both manifest and effective through His prophetic word, does not become either one or the other. In the second place, they make coverings upon the heads of men, and construct them in such a form that they exactly fit the stature or size or every individual, so that the men neither hear nor see; i.e., by means of their flattering lies, which adapt themselves to the subjective inclinations of their hearers at the time, they cover up the senses of the men, so that they retain neither ear nor eye for the truth." They do both of these to catch souls. The inevitable consequence of their act is represented as having been intended by them; and this intention is then still further defined as being to catch the souls of the people of God; i.e., to allure them to destruction, and take care of their own souls. The clause הֲנִפְשׁוֹת הַצֹּדֵקִים is not to be taken as a question, "Will ye catch the souls?" implying a doubt whether they really thought that they could carry on such conduct as theirs with perfect impunity (Hävernicks). It contains a simple statement of what really took place in their catching of souls, namely, "they catch the souls of the people of God, and preserve their own souls;" i.e., they rob the people of God of their lives, and take care of their own (Kliefoth). לְאֵל is used instead of the genitive (*stat. constr.*) to show that the accent rests

upon אָמַי. And in the same way we have לְבִנָּה instead of the suffix. The construction is the same as in 1Sa. 14:16. V. 19 shows how great their sin had been. They profane God among His people; namely, by delivering the suggestions of their own heart to the people as divine revelations, for the purpose of getting their daily bread thereby (cf. Mic. 3: 5); by hurling into destruction, through their lies, those who are only too glad to listen to lying; by slaying the souls of the people which ought to live, and by preserving those which ought not to live, i.e., their own souls (Deu. 18:20). The punishment for this will not fail to come.

*Eze. 13:20-23.* Punishment of the false prophetesses. —

V. 20. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with your coverings with which ye catch, I will let the souls fly; and I will tear them away from your arms, and set the souls free, which ye catch, the souls to fly.* V. 21. *And I will tear your caps in pieces, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall no more become a prey in your hands; and ye shall learn that I am Jehovah.* V. 22. *Because ye grieve the heart of the righteous with lying, when I have not pained him; and strengthen the hands of the wicked, so that he does not turn from his evil way, to preserve his life.* V. 23. *Therefore ye shall no more see vanity, and no longer practise soothsaying: and I will deliver my people out of your hand; and ye shall learn that I am Jehovah.* —

The threat of judgment is closely connected with the reproof of their sins. Vv. 20 and 21 correspond to the reproof in v. 18, and vv. 22 and 23 to that in v. 19. In the first place, the Lord will tear in pieces the coverings and caps, i.e., the tissue of lies woven by the false prophetesses, and rescue the people from their snares (vv. 20 and 21); and, secondly, He will entirely put an end to the pernicious conduct of the persons addressed (vv. 22 and 23). The words from אֲשֶׁר אֶתְנֶה to לְפָרְחוֹת (v. 20a), when taken as one clause, as they generally are, offer insuperable difficulties, since it is impossible to get any satisfactory meaning from שָׁם, and לְפָרְחוֹת will not fit in. Whether we understand by *k<sup>e</sup>sâthōth* coverings or cushions, the connection of שָׁם with אֲשֶׁר (where ye catch the souls), which the majority of commentators prefer, is untenable; for coverings and cushions were not the places where the souls were caught, but could only be the means employed for catching them. Instead of שָׁם we should expect בָּם or בְּהֶם; and Hitzig proposes to amend it in this way. Still less admissible is the proposal to take שָׁם as referring to Jerusalem (“wherewith ye catch souls there”); as שָׁם would not only contain a perfectly superfluous definition of locality, but would introduce a limitation altogether at variance with the context. It is not affirmed either of the prophets or of the prophetesses that they lived and prophesied in Jerusalem alone. In vv. 2 and 17 reference is made in the most general terms to the prophets of Israel and the daughters of

thy people; and in v. 16 it is simply stated that the false prophets prophesied peace to Jerusalem when there was no peace at all. Consequently we must regard the attempt to find in שָׁם an allusion to Jerusalem (cf. v. 16) as a mere loophole, which betrays an utter inability to get any satisfactory sense for the word. Moreover, if we construe the words in this manner, לְפָרְחוֹת is also incomprehensible. Commentators have for the most part admitted that פָּרַח is used here in the Aramaean sense of *volare*, to fly. In the second half of the verse there is no doubt about its having this meaning. For שָׁלַח is used in Deu. 22: 7 for liberating a bird, or letting it fly; and the combination לְפָרְחוֹת שָׁלַח אֶת־הַנְּפֹשִׁי is supported by the expression שָׁלַח לְחַפְשֵׁי in Exo. 21:26, while the comparison of souls to birds is sustained by Psa. 11: 1 and 124: 7. Hence the true meaning of the whole passage אֶת־הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת ... לְפָרְחוֹת שָׁלַח אֶת־הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת is, I send away (set free) the souls, which ye have caught, as flying ones, i.e., so that they shall be able to fly away at liberty. And in the first half also we must not adopt a different rendering for לְפָרְחוֹת, since אֶת־הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת is also connected with it there.

But if the words in question are combined into one clause in the first hemistich, they will give us a sense which is obviously wrong, viz., “wherewith ye catch the souls to let them fly.” As the impossibility of adopting this rendering has been clearly seen, the attempt has been made to cloak over the difficulty by means of paraphrases. Ewald, for example, renders לְפָרְחוֹת in both cases “as if they were birds of passage;” but in the first instance he applies it to birds of passage, for which nets are spread for the purpose of catching them; and in the second, to birds of passage which are set at liberty. Thus, strictly speaking, he understands the first לְפָרְחוֹת as signifying the catching of birds; and the second, letting them fly: an explanation which refutes itself, as *pârach*, to fly, cannot mean “to catch” as well. The rendering adopted by Kimchi, Rosenmüller, and others, who translate לְפָרְחוֹת *ut advolent ad vos* in the first hemistich, and *ut avolent* in the second, is no better. And the difficulty is not removed by resorting to the dialects, as Hävernîck, for the purpose of forcing upon לְפָרְחוֹת the meaning dissoluteness of licentiousness, for which there is no authority in the Hebrew language itself. If, therefore, it is impossible to obtain any satisfactory meaning from the existing text, it cannot be correct; and no other course is open to us than to alter the unsuitable שָׁם into שָׁם, and divide the words from אֲשֶׁר אֶתְנָהּ to לְפָרְחוֹת into two clauses, as we have done in our translation above. There is no necessity to supply anything to the relative אֲשֶׁר, as צוּד is construed with a double accusative (e.g., Mic. 7: 2, צוּד חָרָם, to catch with a net), and the object to מְצַדְדוֹת, viz., the souls, can easily be

supplied from the next clause. שָׁם, as a participle, can either be connected with הִנְנִי, “behold, I make,” or taken as introducing an explanatory clause: “making the souls into flying ones,” i.e., so that they are able to fly (שׁוֹם לְ, Gen. 12: 2, etc.). The two clauses of the first hemistich would then exactly correspond to the two clauses of the second half of the verse. וְקָרַעְתִּי אֹתָם is explanatory of הִנְנִי אֶל כַּסְתֹת, I will tear off the coverings from their arms. These words do not require the assumption that the prophetesses wore the כַּסְתֹת on their arms, but may be fully explained from the supposition that the persons in question prepared them with their own hands. וְגִוַּר וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי וְגִוַּר corresponds to וְגִוַּר שָׁם אֶת־הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת; and לְפָרְחוֹת is governed by שִׁלַּחְתִּי. The insertion of אֶת־הַנְּפֹשִׁים is to be accounted for from the copious nature of Ezekiel’s style; at the same time, it is not merely a repetition of אֶת־הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת, which is separated from לְפָרְחוֹת by the relative clause אֲשֶׁר אֹתָם מֵצֵ, but as the unusual plural form נְפֹשִׁים shows, is intended as a practical explanation of the fact, that the souls, while compared to birds, are regarded as living beings, which is the meaning borne by נָפֶשׁ in other passages. The omission of the article after אֶת may be explained, however, from the fact that the souls had been more precisely defined just before; just as, for example, in 1Sa. 24: 6, 2Sa. 18:18, where the more precise definition follows immediately afterwards (cf. Ewald, § 277a, p. 683). — The same thing is said in v. 21, with regard to the caps, as has already been said of the coverings in v. 20. God will tear these in pieces also, to deliver His people from the power of the lying prophetesses. In what way God will do this is explained in vv. 22 and 23, namely, not only by putting their lying prophecies to shame through His judgment, but by putting an end to soothsaying altogether, and exterminating the false prophetesses by making them an object of ridicule and shame. The reason for this threat is given in v. 22, where a further description is given of the disgraceful conduct of these persons; and here the disgracefulness of their conduct is exhibited in literal terms and without any figure. They do harm to the righteous and good, and strengthen the hands of the wicked. הִכְאוֹת, *Hiphil* of כָּאָה, in Syriac, to use harshly or depress; so here in the *Hiphil*, connected with לֵב, to afflict the heart. שָׁקַר is used adverbially: with lying, or in a lying manner; namely, by predicting misfortune and divine punishments, with which they threatened the godly, who would not acquiesce in their conduct; whereas, on the contrary, they predicted prosperity and peace to the ungodly, who were willing to be ensnared by them, and thus strengthened them in their evil ways. For this God would put them to shame through His judgments, which would make their deceptions manifest, and their soothsaying loathsome.

## Ch. 14. Attitude of God towards the Worshippers of Idols, and Certainty of the Judgments

This chapter contains two words of God, which have obviously an internal connection with each other. The first (vv. 1-11) announces to the elders, who have come to the prophet to inquire of God, that the Lord will not allow idolaters to inquire of Him, but will answer all who do not turn from idolatry with severe judgments, and will even destroy the prophets who venture to give an answer to such inquirers. The second (vv. 12-23) denounces the false hope that God will avert the judgment and spare Jerusalem because of the righteousness of the godly men therein.

*Eze. 14: 1-11.* THE LORD GIVES NO ANSWER TO THE IDOLATERS. — V. 1 narrates the occasion for this and the following words of God: *There came to me men of the elders of Israel, and sat down before me.* These men were not deputies from the Israelites in Palestine, as Grotius and others suppose, but elders of the exiles among whom Ezekiel had been labouring. They came to visit the prophet (v. 3), evidently with the intention of obtaining, through him, a word of God concerning the future of Jerusalem, or the fate of the kingdom of Judah. But Hävernäck is wrong in supposing that we may infer, from either the first or second word of God in this chapter, that they had addressed to the prophet a distinct inquiry of this nature, to which the answer is given in vv. 12-23. For although their coming to the prophet showed that his prophecies had made an impression upon them, it is not stated in v. 1 that they had come to inquire of God, like the elders in Eze. 20: 1, and there is no allusion to any definite questions in the words of God themselves. The first (vv. 2-11) simply assumes that they have come with the intention of asking, and discloses the state of heart which keeps them from coming to inquire; and the second (vv. 12-23) points out the worthlessness of their false confidence in the righteousness of certain godly men.

### *Eze. 14: 2-5.*

*And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 3. Son of man, these men have let their idols rise up in their heart, and have set the stumbling-block to guilt before their face: shall I allow myself to be inquired of by them? V. 4. Therefore speak to them, and say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Every man of the house of Israel who lifteth up his idols in his heart, and setteth the stumbling-block to his sin before his face, and cometh to the prophet, to him do I, Jehovah, show myself, answering according thereto, according to the multitude of his idols; V. 5. To grasp the house of Israel by their heart, because they have turned away from me, all of them through their idols.*

We have not to picture these elders to ourselves as given up to gross idolatry. **הָעֵלָה אֶל לֵב** means, to allow anything to come into the mind, to permit it to rise up in the heart, to be mentally busy therewith. “To set before one’s face” is also to be understood, in a spiritual sense, as relating to a thing which a man will not put out of his mind. **מִכְשׁוֹל עֲוֹנִים**, stumbling-block to sin and guilt (cf. Eze. 7:19), i.e., the idols. Thus the two phrases simply denote the leaning of the heart and spirit towards false gods. God does not suffer those whose heart is attached to idols to seek and find Him. The interrogative clause **הֲאֶדְרֹשׁ וְגוֹ** contains a strong negation. The emphasis lies in the infinitive absolute **אֶדְרֹשׁ** placed before the verb, in which the **ה** is softened into **א**, to avoid writing **ה** twice. **נִדְרֹשׁ**, to allow oneself to be sought, involves the finding of God; hence in Isa. 65: 1 we have **נִדְרֹשׁ** as parallel to **נִמְצָא**. In vv. 4, 5, there follows a positive declaration of the attitude of God towards those who are devoted to idolatry in their heart. Every such Israelite will be answered by God according to the measure of the multitude of his idols. The *Niphal* **נִעֲנָה** has not the signification of the *Kal*, and does not mean “to be answerable,” as Ewald supposes, or to converse; but is generally used in a passive sense, “to be answered,” i.e., to find or obtain a hearing (Job. 11: 2; 19: 7). It is employed here in a reflective sense, to hold or show oneself answering. **בָּה**, according to the *Chetib* **בַּה**, for which the *Keri* suggests the softer gloss **בֵּא**, refers to **גֹּלְבָרִב** which follows; the nominative being anticipated, according to an idiom very common in Aramaean, by a previous pronoun. It is written here for the sake of emphasis, to bring the following object into more striking prominence. **כִּי** is used here in the sense of *secundum*, according to, not because, since this meaning is quite unsuitable for the **כִּי** in v. 7, where it occurs in the same connection (**כִּי**). The manner in which God will show Himself answering the idolatry according to their idols, is reserved till v. 8. Here, in v. 5, the design of this procedure on the part of God is given: viz., to grasp Israel by the heart; i.e., not merely to touch and to improve them, but to bring down their heart by judgments (cf. Lev. 26:41), and thus move them to give up idolatry and return to the living God. **נָזַרְוּ**, as in Isa. 1: 4, to recede, to draw away from God. **בְּלִמָּוֶה** is an emphatic repetition of the subject belonging to **נָזַרְוּ**.

*Eze. 14: 6-8.* In these verses the divine threat, and the summons to repent, are repeated, expanded, and uttered in the clearest words. —

V. 6. *Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Repent, and turn away from your idols; and turn away your face from all your abominations.*

V.7. *For every one of the house of Israel, and of the foreigners who sojourn in Israel, if he estrange himself from me, and let his idols rise up in his heart, and set*



*the stumbling-block to his sin before his face, and come to the prophet to seek me for himself; I will show myself to him, answering in my own way. V. 8. I will direct my face against that man, and will destroy him, for a sign and for proverbs, and will cut him off out of my people; and ye shall learn that I am Jehovah. —*

לְכַן in v. 6 is co-ordinate with the לְכַן in v. 4, so far as the thought is concerned, but it is directly attached to v. 5b: because they have estranged themselves from God, therefore God requires them to repent and turn. For God will answer with severe judgments every one who would seek God with idols in his heart, whether he be an Israelite, or a foreigner living in the midst of Israel. שׁוּבוּ, turn, be converted, is rendered still more emphatic by the addition of הָשִׁיבוּ ... פְּנֵיכֶם. This double call to repentance corresponds to the double reproof of their idolatry in v. 3, viz., שׁוּבוּ, to הִעֲלֵה גִלְ אֵל לָב; and פְּנֵיכֶם הָשִׁיבוּ, to their setting the idols נִכַּח פְּנֵיהֶם. הָשִׁיבוּ is not used intransitively, as it apparently is in Eze. 18:30, but is to be taken in connection with the object פְּנֵיכֶם, which follows at the end of the verse; and it is simply repeated before פְּנֵיכֶם for the sake of clearness and emphasis. The reason for the summons to repent and give up idolatry is explained in v. 7, in the threat that God will destroy every Israelite, and every foreigner in Israel, who draws away from God and attaches himself to idols. The phraseology of v. 7a is adopted almost *verbatim* from Lev. 17: 8, 10, 13. On the obligation of foreigners to avoid idolatry and all moral abominations, vid., Lev. 20: 2; 18:26; 17:10; Exo. 12:19, etc. The ו before נִזְר and יֵאל does not stand for the *Vav relat.*, but simply supposes a case: “should he separate himself from my followers, and let his idols rise up, etc.” לְדַרְשׁ-לוֹ בִּי does not mean, “to seek counsel of him (the prophet) from me,” for לוֹ cannot be taken as referring to the prophet, although דַּרְשׁ with לְ does sometimes mean to seek any one, and לְ may therefore indicate the person to whom one goes to make inquiry (cf. 2Ch. 15:13; 17: 4; 31:21), because it is Jehovah who is sought in this case; and Hävernicks remark, that “דַּרְשׁ with לְ merely indicates the external object sought by a man, and therefore in this instance the medium or organ through whom God speaks,” is proved to be erroneous by the passages just cited. לוֹ is reflective, or to be taken as a *dat. commodi*, denoting the inquirer or seeker. The person approached for the purpose of inquiring or seeking, i.e., God, is indicated by the preposition בְּ, as in 1Ch. 10:14 (דַּרְשׁ בִּיהוָה); and also frequently, in the case of idols, when either an oracle or help is sought from them (1Sa. 28: 7; 2Ki. 1: 2ff.). It is only in this way that לוֹ and בִּי can be made to correspond to the same words in the apodosis: Whosoever seeks counsel of God, to him will God show Himself answering בִּי, in Him, i.e., in accordance with His nature, in His own way, — namely, in the manner described in v. 8. The threat is

composed of passages in the law: **נִתְּתִי וְגו'** and **הִכְרַתִּי וְגו'**, after Lev. 20: 3, 5, 6; and **וְהַשְׁמוּתֵיהוּ וְגו'**, though somewhat freely, after Deu. 28:37 (**הָיָה לְשָׂמָה לְמִשָּׁל וְגו'**). There is no doubt, therefore, that **הַשְׁמוּתִי** is to be derived from **שָׂמַם**, and stands for **הַשְׁמוּתִי**, in accordance with the custom in later writings of resolving the *Dagesh forte* into a long vowel. The allusion to Deu. 28:37, compared with **הָיָה לְאוֹת** in v. 46 of the same chapter, is sufficient to set aside the assumption that **הַשְׁמוּתִי** is to be derived from **שָׂם**, and pointed accordingly; although the LXX, Targ., Syr., and Vulg. have all renderings of **שָׂם** (cf. Psa. 44:16). Moreover, **שָׂם** in the perfect never takes the *Hiphil* form; and in Eze. 20:26 we have **אֶשְׂמַם** in a similar connection. The expression is a pregnant one: I make him desolate, so that he becomes a sign and proverbs.

*Eze. 14: 9-11.* No prophet is to give any other answer. —

*V. 9. But if a prophet allow himself to be persuaded, and give a word, I have persuaded this prophet, and will stretch out my hand against him, and cut him off out of my people Israel. V. 10. They shall bear their guilt: as the guilt of the inquirer, so shall the guilt of the prophet be; V. 11. In order that the house of Israel may no more stray from me, and may no more defile itself with all its transgressions; but they may be my people, and I their God is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

The prophet who allows himself to be persuaded is not a prophet **מִלְבּוֹ** (Eze. 13: 2), but one who really thinks that he has a word of God. **פָּתָה**, to persuade, to entice by friendly words (in a good sense, Hos. 2:16); but generally *sensu malo*, to lead astray, or seduce to that which is unallowable or evil. “If he allow himself to be persuaded:” not necessarily “with the hope of payment from the hypocrites who consult him” (Michaelis). This weakens the thought. It might sometimes be done from unselfish good-nature. And “the word” itself need not have been a divine oracle of his own invention, or a false prophecy. The allusion is simply to a word of a different character from that contained in vv. 6-8, which either demands repentance or denounces judgment upon the impenitent: every word, therefore, which could by any possibility confirm the sinner in his security. — By **אֲנִי יְהוָה** (v. 9) the apodosis is introduced in an emphatic manner, as in vv. 4 and 7; but **פָּתִיתִי** cannot be taken in a future sense (“I will persuade”). It must be a perfect; since the persuading of the prophet would necessarily precede his allowing himself to be persuaded. The Fathers and earlier Lutheran theologians are wrong in their interpretation of **פָּתִיתִי**, which they understand in a permissive sense, meaning simply that God allowed it, and did not prevent their being seduced. Still more wrong are Storr and Schmieder, the former of whom regards it as simply declaratory, “I will declare

him to have gone astray from the worship of Jehovah;" the latter, "I will show him to be a fool, by punishing him for his disobedience." The words are rather to be understood in accordance with 1Ki. 22:20ff., where the persuading (*pittâh*) is done by a lying spirit, which inspires the prophets of Ahab to predict success to the king, in order that he may fall. As Jehovah sent the spirit in that case, and put it into the mouth of the prophets, so is the persuasion in this instance also effected by God: not merely divine permission, but divine ordination and arrangement; though this does not destroy human freedom, but, like all "persuading," presupposes the possibility of not allowing himself to be persuaded. See the discussion of this question in the commentary on 1Ki. 22:20ff. The remark of Calvin on the verse before us is correct: "it teaches that neither impostures nor frauds take place apart from the will of God" (*nisi Deo volente*). But this willing on the part of God, or the persuading of the prophets to the utterance of self-willed words, which have not been inspired by God, only takes place in persons who admit evil into themselves, and is designed to tempt them and lead them to decide whether they will endeavour to resist and conquer the sinful inclinations of their hearts, or will allow them to shape themselves into outward deeds, in which case they will become ripe for judgment. It is in this sense that God persuades such a prophet, in order that He may then cut him off out of His people. But this punishment will not fall upon the prophet only. It will reach the seeker or inquirer also, in order if possible to bring Israel back from its wandering astray, and make it into a people of God purified from sin (vv. 10 and 11). It was to this end that, in the last times of the kingdom of Judah, God allowed false prophecy to prevail so mightily, — namely, that it might accelerate the process of distinguishing between the righteous and the wicked; and then, by means of the judgment which destroyed the wicked, purify His nation and lead it on to the great end of its calling.

*Eze. 14:12-23.* The Righteousness of the Godly will not Avert the Judgment. — The threat contained in the preceding word of God, that if the idolaters did not repent, God would not answer them in any other way than with an exterminating judgment, left the possibility still open, that He would avert the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem for the sake of the righteous therein, as He had promised the patriarch Abraham that He would do in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:23ff.). This hope, which might be cherished by the people and by the elders who had come to the prophet, is now to be taken from the people by the word of God which follows, containing as it does the announcement, that if any land should sin so grievously against God by its apostasy, He would be driven to inflict upon it the punishments threatened by Moses against apostate Israel (Lev. 26:22, 25, 26, and elsewhere), namely, to destroy both man and beast, and make the land a desert; it would be of no advantage to such a land to have certain righteous men, such as Noah, Daniel,

and Job, living therein. For although these righteous men would be saved themselves, their righteousness could not possibly secure salvation for the sinners. The manner in which this thought is carried out in vv. 13-20 is, that four exterminating punishments are successively supposed to come upon the land and lay it waste; and in the case of every one, the words are repeated, that even righteous men, such as Noah, Daniel, and Job, would only save their own souls, and not one of the sinners. And thus, according to vv. 21-23, will the Lord act when He sends His judgments against Jerusalem; and He will execute them in such a manner that the necessity and righteousness of His acts shall be made manifest therein. — This word of God forms a supplementary side-piece to Jer. 15: 1-43, where the Lord replies to the intercession of the prophet, that even the intercession of a Moses and a Samuel on behalf of the people would not avert the judgments which were suspended over them.

*Eze. 14:12-20.*

V. 12. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 13. Son of man, if a land sin against me to act treacherously, and I stretch out my hand against it, and break in pieces for it the support of bread, and send famine into it, and cut off from it man and beast: V. 14. And there should be these three men therein, Noah, Daniel, and Job, they would through their righteousness deliver their soul, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 15. If I bring evil beasts into the land, so that they make it childless, and it become a desert, so that no one passeth through it because of the beasts: V. 16. These three men therein, as I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, would not deliver sons and daughters; they only would be delivered, but the land would become a desert. V. 17. Or I bring the sword into that land, and say, Let the sword go through the land; and I cut off from it man and beast: V. 18. These three men therein, as I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, would not deliver sons and daughters, but they only would be delivered. V. 19. Or I send pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast: V. 20. Verily, Noah, Daniel, and Job, in the midst of it, as I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would only deliver their own soul through their righteousness.*

אָרַץ in v. 13 is intentionally left indefinite, that the thought may be expressed in the most general manner. On the other hand, the sin is very plainly defined as **לְמַעַל-מַאֵל**, **מַאֵל**, literally, to cover, signifies to act in a secret or treacherous manner, especially towards Jehovah, either by apostasy from Him, in other words, by idolatry, or by withholding what is due to Him (see comm. on Lev. 5:15). In the passage before us it is the treachery of apostasy from Him by idolatry that is intended. As the epithet used to denote the sin is taken from Lev. 26:40 and Deu. 32:51, so the four punishments mentioned in the following verses, as well as in Eze. 5:17, are also taken from Lev. 26, — viz. the breaking up of the staff of bread, from v. 26; the evil beasts, from v. 22; and the sword and pestilence, from v. 25. The three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, are named as

examples of true righteousness of life, or צְדָקָה (vv. 14, 20); i.e., according to Calvin's correct explanation, *quicquid pertinet ad regulam sancte et juste vivendi*. Noah is so described in Gen. 6: 9; and Job, in the Book of Job. 1: 1; 12: 4, etc.; and Daniel, in like manner, is mentioned in Dan. 1: 8ff., 6:11ff., as faithfully confessing his faith in his life. The fact that Daniel is named before Job does not warrant the conjecture that some other older Daniel is meant, of whom nothing is said in the history, and whose existence is merely postulated. For the enumeration is not intended to be chronological, but is arranged according to the subject-matter; the order being determined by the nature of the deliverance experienced by these men for their righteousness in the midst of great judgments. Consequently, as Hävernick and Kliefoth have shown, we have a climax here: Noah saved his family along with himself; Daniel was able to save his friends (Dan. 2:17, 18); but Job, with his righteousness, was not even able to save his children. — The second judgment (v. 15) is introduced with לו, which, as a rule, supposes a case that is not expected to occur, or even regarded as possible; here, however, לו is used as perfectly synonymous with שְׂבִלְתָּהּ אִם. has no *Mappik*, because the tone is drawn back upon the penultima (see comm. on Amo. 1:11). In v. 19, the expression “to pour out my wrath in blood” is a pregnant one, for to pour out my wrath in such a manner that it is manifested in the shedding of blood or the destruction of life, for the life is in the blood. In this sense pestilence and blood were also associated in Eze. 5:17.

If we look closely at the four cases enumerated, we find the following difference in the statements concerning the deliverance of the righteous: that, in the first instance, it is simply stated that Noah, Daniel, and Job would save their soul, i.e., their life, by their righteousness; whereas, in the three others, it is declared that as truly as the Lord liveth they would not save either sons or daughters, but they alone would be delivered. The difference is not merely a rhetorical climax or progress in the address by means of asseveration and antithesis, but indicates a distinction in the thought. The first case is only intended to teach that in the approaching judgment the righteous would save their lives, i.e., that God would not sweep away the righteous with the ungodly. The three cases which follow are intended, on the other hand, to exemplify the truth that the righteousness of the righteous will be of no avail to the idolaters and apostates; since even such patterns of righteousness as Noah, Daniel, and Job would only save their own lives, and would not be able to save the lives of others also. This tallies with the omission of the asseveration in v. 14. The first declaration, that God would deliver the righteous in the coming judgments, needed no asseveration, inasmuch as this truth was not called in question; but it was required in the case of the declaration that the righteousness of the righteous would bring no deliverance to the sinful nation, since this was the hope which the ungodly cherished, and it was this hope which was to be taken

from them. The other differences which we find in the description given of the several cases are merely formal in their nature, and do not in any way affect the sense; e.g., the use of לָא, in v. 18, instead of the particle אִם, which is commonly employed in oaths, and which we find in vv. 16 and 20; the choice of the singular בֵּן and בַּת, in v. 20, in the place of the plural בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת, used in vv. 16 and 18; and the variation in the expressions, יִנְצְלוּ נַפְשָׁם (v. 14), נַפְשָׁם יִצִּילוּ (v. 20), and הִמָּה לְבָדָם יִנְצְלוּ (vv. 16 and 18), which Hitzig proposes to remove by altering the first two forms into the third, though without the slightest reason. For although the *Piel* occurs in Exo. 12:36 in the sense of taking away or spoiling, and is not met with anywhere else in the sense of delivering, it may just as well be used in this sense, as the *Hiphil* has both significations.

*Eze. 14:21-23.* The rule expounded in vv. 13-20 is here applied to Jerusalem.

V. 21. *For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, How much more when I send my four evil judgments, sword, and famine, and evil beasts, and pestilence, against Jerusalem, to cut off from it man and beast? V. 22. And, behold, there remain escaped ones in her who will be brought out, sons and daughters; behold, they will go out to you, that ye may see their walk and their works; and console yourselves concerning the evil which I have brought upon Jerusalem. V. 23. And they will console you, when ye see their walk and their works: and ye will see that I have not done without cause all that I have done to her, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

By כִּי in v. 21 the application of the general rule to Jerusalem is made in the form of a reason. The meaning, however, is not, that the reason why Jehovah was obliged to act in this unsparing manner was to be found in the corrupt condition of the nation, as Hävernäck supposes, — a thought quite foreign to the context; but כִּי indicates that the judgments upon Jerusalem will furnish a practical proof of the general truth expressed in vv. 13-20, and so confirm it. This כִּי is no more an emphatic yea than the following “אִךְ is a forcible introduction to the antithesis formed by the coming fact, to the merely imaginary cases mentioned above” (Hitzig). אִךְ has undoubtedly the force of a climax, but not of an asseveration, “verily” (Häv.); a meaning which this particle never has. It is used here, as in Job. 4:19, in the sense of אִךְ כִּי; and the כִּי which follows אִךְ in this case is a conditional particle of time, “when.”

Consequently כִּי ought properly to be written twice; but it is only used once, as in Eze. 15: 5; Job. 9:14, etc. The thought is this: how much more will this be the case, namely, that even a Noah, Daniel, and Job will not deliver either sons or daughters when I send my judgments upon Jerusalem. The perfect שְׁלָחְתִּי is used, and not the imperfect, as in v. 13, because God has actually resolved upon

sending it, and does not merely mention it as a possible case. The number four is significant, symbolizing the universality of the judgment, or the thought that it will fall on all sides, or upon the whole of Jerusalem; whereby it must also be borne in mind that Jerusalem as the capital represents the kingdom of Judah, or the whole of Israel, so far as it was still in Canaan. At the same time, by the fact that the Lord allows sons and daughters to escape death, and to be led away to Babylon, He forces the acknowledgment of the necessity and righteousness of His judgments among those who are in exile. This is in general terms the thought contained in vv. 22 and 23, to which very different meanings have been assigned by the latest expositors. Hävernick, for example, imagines that, in addition to the four ordinary judgments laid down in the law, v. 22 announces a new and extraordinary one; whereas Hitzig and Kliefoth have found in these two verses the consolatory assurance, that in the time of the judgments a few of the younger generation will be rescued and taken to those already in exile in Babylon, there to excite pity as well as to express it, and to give a visible proof of the magnitude of the judgment which has fallen upon Israel. They differ so far from each other, however, that Hitzig regards those of the younger generation who are saved as צַדִּיקִים, who have saved themselves through their innocence, but not their guilty parents, and who will excite the commiseration of those already in exile through their blameless conduct; whilst Kliefoth imagines that those who are rescued are simply less criminal than the rest, and when they come to Babylon will be pitied by those who have been longer in exile, and will pity them in return.

Neither of these views does justice to the words themselves or to the context. The meaning of v. 22a is clear enough; and in the main there has been no difference of opinion concerning it. When man and beast are cut off out of Jerusalem by the four judgments, all will not perish; but פְּלִיטָה, i.e., persons who have escaped destruction, will be left, and will be led out of the city. These are called sons and daughters, with an allusion to vv. 16, 18, and 20; and consequently we must not take these words as referring to the younger generation in contrast to the older. They will be led out of Jerusalem, not to remain in the land, but to come to “you,” i.e., those already in exile, that is to say, to go into exile to Babylon. This does not imply either a modification or a sharpening of the punishment; for the cutting off of man and beast from a town may be effected not only by slaying, but by leading away. The design of God in leaving some to escape, and carrying them to Babylon, is explained in the clauses which follow from וְרֵאִיתֶם onwards, the meaning of which depends partly upon the more precise definition of דְּרָכְכֶם and עֲלִילוֹתֶם, and partly upon the explanation to be given of וְנַחֲמוּ אֶתְכֶם אֶל-הָרָעָה and אֶתְכֶם. The ways and works are not to be taken without reserve as good and righteous

works, as Kliefoth has correctly shown in his reply to Hitzig. Still less can ways and works denote their experience or fate, which is the explanation given by Kliefoth of the words, when expounding the meaning and connection of vv. 21-23. The context certainly points to wicked ways and evil works. And it is only the sight of such works that could lead to the conviction that it was not **הַנֶּחֱמָה**, in vain, i.e., without cause, that God had inflicted such severe judgments upon Jerusalem. And in addition to this effect, which is mentioned in v. 23 as produced upon those who were already in exile, by the sight of the conduct of the **פְּלִיטָה** that came to Babylon, the immediate design of God is described in v. 22*b* as **וַיִּנְחַמְתֶּם אֶל-הָרָעָה וְגו'**. The verb **נָחַם** with **עַל** cannot be used here in the sense of to repent of, or be sorry for, a judgment which God has inflicted upon him, but only of evil which he himself has done; and **נָחַם** does not mean to pity a person, either when construed in the *Piel* with an accusative of the person, or in the *Niphal* c. **עַל**, *rei*. **נָחַמְתֶּם** is *Niphal*, and signifies here to console oneself, as in Gen. 38:12 with **אֵל**, concerning anything, as in 2Sa. 13:39, Jer. 31:15, etc.; and **נָחַמוּ** (v. 23), with the accusative of the person, to comfort any one, as in Gen. 51:21; Job. 2:11, etc. But the works and doings of those who came to Babylon could only produce this effect upon those who were already there, from the fact that they were of such a character as to demonstrate the necessity for the judgments which had fallen upon Jerusalem. A conviction of the necessity for the divine judgments would cause them to comfort themselves with regard to the evil inflicted by God; inasmuch as they would see, not only that the punishment endured was a chastisement well deserved, but that God in His righteousness would stay the punishment when it had fulfilled His purpose, and restore the penitent sinner to favour once more. But the consolation which those who were in exile would derive from a sight of the works of the sons and daughters who had escaped from death and come to Babylon, is attributed in v. 23 (**נָחַמוּ אֶתְכֶם**) to the persons themselves. It is in this sense that it is stated that “they will comfort you;” not by expressions of pity, but by the sight of their conduct. This is directly affirmed in the words, “when ye shall see their conduct and their works.” Consequently v. 23*a* does not contain a new thought, but simply the thought already expressed in v. 22*b*, which is repeated in a new form to make it the more emphatic. And the expression **אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר הִבֵּאתִי עֲלֵיךָ**, in v. 22, serves to increase the force; whilst **אֵת**, in the sense of *quoad*, serves to place the thought to be repeated in subordination to the whole clause (cf. Ewald, § 277*a*, p. 683).

## Ch. 15. Jerusalem, the Useless Wood of a Wild Vine

As certainly as God will not spare Jerusalem for the sake of the righteousness of the few righteous men therein, so certain is it that Israel has no superiority over



other nations, which could secure Jerusalem against destruction. As the previous word of God overthrows false confidence in the righteousness of the godly, what follows in this chapter is directed against the fancy that Israel cannot be rejected and punished by the overthrow of the kingdom, because of its election to be the people of God.

*Eze. 15: 1-8.*

*And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, what advantage has the wood of the vine over every wood, the vine-branch, which was among the trees of the forest? V. 3. Is wood taken from it to use for any work? or do men take a peg from it to hang all kinds of vessels upon? V. 4. Behold, it is given to the fire to consume. If the fire has consumed its two ends, and the middle of it is scorched, will it then be fit for any work? V. 5. Behold, when it is uninjured, it is not used for any work: how much less when the fire has consumed it and scorched it can it be still used for work? V. 6. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, As the wood of the vine among the wood of the forest, which I give to the fire to consume, so do I give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem, V. 7. And direct my face against them. They have gone out of the fire, and the fire will consume them; that ye may learn that I am Jehovah, when I set my face against them. V. 8. And I make the land a desert, because they committed treachery, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

Israel is like the wood of the wild vine, which is put into the fire to burn, because it is good for nothing. From Deu. 32:32, 33 onwards, Israel is frequently compared to a vine or a vineyard (cf. Ps. 80: 9ff.; Isa. 5; Hos. 10: 1; Jer. 2:21), and always, with the exception of Ps. 80, to point out its degeneracy. This comparison lies at the foundation of the figure employed, in vv. 2-5, of the wood of the wild vine. This wood has no superiority over any other kind of wood. It cannot be used, like other timber, for any useful purposes; but is only fit to be burned, so that it is really inferior to all other wood (vv. 2 and 3a). And if, in its perfect state, it cannot be used for anything, how much less when it is partially scorched and consumed (vv. 4 and 5)!

מֵהֵיחָהּ, followed by מִן, means, what is it above (מִן, comparative)? — i.e., what superiority has it to כָּל־עֵץ, all kinds of wood? i.e., any other wood. וְגוֹ' הַזְּמֵרָה אֲשֶׁר is in apposition to עֵץ הַגֶּפֶן, and is not to be connected with מִכָּל־עֵץ, as it has been by the LXX and Vulgate, — notwithstanding the Masoretic accentuation, — so as to mean every kind of fagot; for זְמֵרָה does not mean a fagot, but the tendril or branch of the vine (cf. Eze. 8:17), which is still further defined by the following relative clause: to be a wood-vine, i.e., a wild vine, which bears only sour, uneatable grapes. The preterite הָיָה (which was; not, “is”) may be explained from the idea that the vine had been fetched from the forest in order that its wood might be used. The answer given in v. 3 is, that this vine-wood cannot be used for any purpose whatever, not even as a peg for hanging any kind of domestic utensils upon (see comm. on Zec. 10: 4).

It is too weak even for this. The object has to be supplied to **לַעֲשׂוֹת לְמַלְאכָה**: to make, or apply *it*, for any work. Because it cannot be used as timber, it is burned. A fresh thought is introduced in v. 4b by the words **אֵת שְׁנֵי קִ**. The two clauses in v. 4b are to be connected together. The first supposes a case, from which the second is deduced as a conclusion. The question, “Is it fit for any work?” is determined in v. 5 in the negative. **אֵף בִּי**: as in Eze. 14:21. **נִחַר**: perfect; and **יִחַר**: imperfect, *Niphal*, of **חָרַר**, in the sense of, to be burned or scorched. The subject to **יִחַר** is no doubt the wood, to which the suffix in **אֲכַלְתֶּהוּ** refers. At the same time, the two clauses are to be understood, in accordance with v. 4b, as relating to the burning of the ends and the scorching of the middle. — Vv. 6-8. In the application of the parable, the only thing to which prominence is given, is the fact that God will deal with the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the same manner as with the vine-wood, which cannot be used for any kind of work. This implies that Israel resembles the wood of a forest-vine. As this possesses no superiority to other wood, but, on the contrary, is utterly useless, so Israel has no superiority to other nations, but is even worse than they, and therefore is given up to the fire. This is accounted for in v. 7: “They have come out of the fire, and the fire will consume them” (the inhabitants of Jerusalem). These words are not to be interpreted proverbially, as meaning, “he who escapes one judgment falls into another” (Hävernick), but show the application of vv. 4b and 5 to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Out of a fire one must come either burned or scorched. Israel has been in the fire already. It resembles a wild vine which has been consumed at both ends by the fire, while the middle has been scorched, and which is now about to be given up altogether to the fire. We must not restrict the fire, however, out of which it has come half consumed, to the capture of Jerusalem in the time of Jehoiachin, as Hitzig does, but must extend it to all the judgments which fell upon the covenant nation, from the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes to the catastrophe in the reign of Jehoiachin, and in consequence of which Israel now resembled a vine burned at both ends and scorched in the middle. The threat closes in the same manner as the previous one. Compare v. 7b with Eze. 14: 8b, and v. 8 with Eze. 14:15 and 13.

## **Ch. 16. Ingratitude and Unfaithfulness of Jerusalem. Its Punishment and Shame.**

The previous word of God represented Israel as a wild and useless vine, which had to be consumed. But as God had planted this vine in His vineyard, as He had adopted Israel as His own people, the rebellious nation, though met by these threatenings of divine judgment, might still plead that God would not reject Israel, on account of its election as the covenant nation. This proof of

false confidence in the divine covenant of grace is removed by the word of God in the present chapter, which shows that by nature Israel is no better than other nations; and that, in consequence of its shameful ingratitude towards the Lord, who saved it from destruction in the days of its youth, it has sinned so grievously against Him, and has sunk so low among the heathen through its excessive idolatry, that God is obliged to punish and judge it in the same manner as the others. At the same time, the Lord will continue mindful of His covenant; and on the restoration of Sodom and Samaria, He will also turn the captivity of Jerusalem, — to the deep humiliation and shame of Israel, — and will establish an everlasting covenant with it. — The contents of this word of God divide themselves, therefore, into three parts. In the *first*, we have the description of the nations's sin, through its falling away from its God into idolatry (vv. 2-34); in the *second*, the announcement of the punishment (vv. 35-52); and in the *third*, the restoration of Israel to favour (vv. 53-63). The past, present, and future of Israel are all embraced, from its first commencement to its ultimate consummation. — These copious contents are draped in an allegory, which is carried out on a magnificent scale. Starting from the representation of the covenant relation existing between the Lord and His people, under the figure of a marriage covenant, — which runs through the whole of the Scriptures, — Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom of God, as the representative of Israel, the covenant nation, is addressed as a wife; and the attitude of God to Israel, as well of that of Israel to its God, is depicted under this figure.

*Eze. 16: 1-14.* Israel, by nature unclean, miserable, and near to destruction (vv. 3-5), is adopted by the Lord and clothed in splendour (vv. 6-14). Vv. 1 and 2 form the introduction. —

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, show Jerusalem her abominations.*

The “abominations” of Jerusalem are the sins of the covenant nation, which were worse than the sinful abominations of Canaan and Sodom. The theme of this word of God is the declaration of these abominations. To this end the nation is first of all shown what it was by nature. —

V. 3. *And say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to Jerusalem, Thine origin and thy birth are from the land of the Canaanites; thy father was the Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite. V. 4. And as for thy birth, in the day of thy birth thy navel was not cut, and thou wast not bathed in water for cleansing; and not rubbed with salt, and not wrapped in bandages. V. 5. No eye looked upon thee with pity, to do one of these to thee in compassion; but thou wast cast into the field, in disgust at thy life, on the day of thy birth.*

According to the allegory, which runs through the whole chapter, the figure adopted to depict the origin of the Israelitish nation is that Jerusalem, the existing representative of the nation, is described as a child, born of Canaanitish parents, mercilessly exposed after its birth, and on the point of perishing. Hitzig and Kliefoth show that they have completely misunderstood the allegory, when they not only explain the statement concerning the descent of Jerusalem, in v. 3, as relating to the city of that name, but restrict it to the city alone, on the ground that "Israel as a whole was not of Canaanitish origin, whereas the city of Jerusalem was radically a Canaanitish, Amoritish, and Hittite city." But were not all the cities of Israel radically Canaanite? Or was Israel not altogether, but only half, of Aramaean descent? Regarded merely as a city, Jerusalem was neither of Amoritish nor Hittite origin, but simply a Jebusite city. And it is too obvious to need any proof, that the prophetic word does not refer to the city as a city, or to the mass of houses; but that Jerusalem, as the capital of the kingdom of Judah at that time, so far as its inhabitants were concerned, represents the people of Israel, or the covenant nation. It was not the mass of houses, but the population, — which was the foundling, — that excited Jehovah's compassion, and which He multiplied into myriads (v. 7), clothed in splendour, and chose as the bride with whom He concluded a marriage covenant. The descent and birth referred to are not physical, but spiritual descent. Spiritually, Israel sprang from the land of the Canaanites; and its father was the Amorite and its mother a Hittite, in the same sense in which Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil" (Joh. 8:44). The land of the Canaanites is mentioned as the land of the worst heathen abominations; and from among the Canaanitish tribes, the Amorites and Hittites are mentioned as father and mother, not because the Jebusites are placed between the two, in Num. 13:29, as Hitzig supposes, but because they were recognised as the leaders in Canaanitish ungodliness. The iniquity of the Amorites (אֲמֹרִי) was great even in Abraham's time, though not yet full or ripe for destruction (Gen. 15:16); and the daughters of Heth, whom Esau married, caused Rebekah great bitterness of spirit (Gen. 27:46). These facts furnish the substratum for our description. And they also help to explain the occurrence of אֲמֹרִי with the article, and חֲתִית without it. The plurals מְכֹרֶתֶיךָ and מְלֹדֶתֶיךָ also point to spiritual descent; for physical generation and birth are both acts that take place once for all. מְכֹרָה or מְכוּרָה (Eze. 21:35; 29:14) is not the place of begetting, but generation itself, from כּוּר = כָּרָה, to dig = to beget (cf. Isa. 51: 1). It is not equivalent to מְקוּרָה, or a plural corresponding to the Latin *natales, origines*. מְלֹדֶת: birth.

Vv. 4 and 5 describe the circumstances connected with the birth. וּמְלֹדֶתֶיךָ (v. 4) stands at the head as an absolute noun. At the birth of the child it did not

receive the cleansing and care which were necessary for the preservation and strengthening of its life, but was exposed without pity. The construction אֶתֶּךָ הַיְלֵדָה (the passive, with an accusative of the object) is the same as in Gen. 40:20, and many other passages of the earlier writings. כָּרַת: for כָּרַת (Jud. 6:28), *Pual* of כָּרַת; and שָׂרַד: from שָׂר, with the reduplication of the ר, which is very rare in Hebrew (vid., Ewald, § 71). By cutting the navel-string, the child is liberated after birth from the blood of the mother, with which it was nourished in the womb. If the cutting be neglected, as well as the tying of the navel-string, which takes place at the same time, the child must perish when the decomposition of the *placenta* begins. The new-born child is then bathed, to cleanse it from the impurities attaching to it. מִשְׁעִי cannot be derived from שָׁעָה = שָׁעָה; because neither the meaning to see, to look (שָׁעָה), nor the other meaning to smear (שָׁעָה), yields a suitable sense. Jos. Kimchi is evidently right in deriving it from מִשְׁעָה, in Arabic *māṣ*<sup>c</sup>, 2 and 4, to wipe off, cleanse. The termination י is the Aramaean form of the absolute state, for the Hebrew מִשְׁעִית, cleansing (cf. Ewald, § 165a). After the washing, the body was rubbed with salt, according to a custom very widely spread in ancient times, and still met with here and there in the East (vid., *Hieron. ad h. l. Galen, de Sanit.* i. 7; *Troilo Reisebeschr.* p. 721); and that not merely for the purpose of making the skin drier and firmer, or of cleansing it more thoroughly, but probably from a regard to the virtue of salt as a protection from putrefaction, “to express in a symbolical manner a hope and desire for the vigorous health of the child” (Hitzig and Hävernich). And, finally, it was bound round with swaddling-clothes. Not one of these things, so indispensable to the preservation and strengthening of the child, was performed in the case of Israel at the time of its birth from any feeling of compassionate love (לְחַמֵּלָה, infinitive, to show pity or compassion towards it); but it was cast into the field, i.e., exposed, in order that it might perish בְּגֹאֵל נִפְשֶׁךָ in disgust at thy life (compare נָאַל, to thrust away, reject, despise, Lev. 26:11; 15:30). The day of the birth of Jerusalem, i.e., of Israel, was the period of its sojourn in Egypt, where Israel as a nation was born, — the sons of Jacob who went down to Egypt having multiplied into a nation. The different traits in this picture are not to be interpreted as referring to historical peculiarities, but have their explanation in the totality of the figure. At the same time, they express much more than “that Israel not only stood upon a level with all other nations, so far as its origin and its nature were concerned, but was more helpless and neglected as to both its nature and its natural advantages, possessing a less gifted nature than other nations, and therefore inferior to the rest” (Kliefoth). The smaller gifts, or humbler natural advantages, are thoughts quite foreign to the words of the figure as well as to the context. Both the Canaanitish descent and the merciless exposure of the child point to a

totally different point of view, as indicated by the allegory. The Canaanitish descent points to the moral depravity of the nature of Israel; and the neglected condition of the child is intended to show how little there was in the heathen surroundings of the youthful Israel in Canaan and Egypt that was adapted to foster its life and health, or to educate Israel and fit it for its future destination. To the Egyptians the Israelites were an abomination, as a race of shepherds; and not long after the death of Joseph, the Pharaohs began to oppress the growing nation.

*Eze. 16: 6-14.* Israel therefore owes its preservation and exaltation to honour and glory to the Lord its God alone. —

*V. 6. Then I passed by thee, and saw thee stamping in thy blood, and said to thee, In thy blood live! and said to thee, In thy blood live! V. 7. I made thee into myriads as the growth of the field, and thou grewest and becamest tall, and camest to ornament of cheeks. The breasts expanded, and thy hair grew, whereas thou wast naked and bare. V. 8. And I passed by thee, and saw thee, and, behold, it was thy time, the time of love; and I spread my wing over thee, and covered thy nakedness; and I swore to thee, and entered into covenant with thee, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, and thou becamest mine. V. 9. And I bathed thee in water, and rinsed thy blood from thee, and anointed thee with oil. V. 10. And I clothed thee with embroidered work, and shod thee with morocco, and wrapped thee round with byssus, and covered thee with silk. V. 11. I adorned thee with ornaments, and put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain around thy neck. V. 12. And I gave thee a ring in thy nose, and earrings in thine ears, and a splendid crown upon thy head. V. 13. And thou didst adorn thyself with gold and silver; and thy clothing was byssus, and silk, and embroidery. Wheaten-flour, and honey, and oil thou didst eat, and thou wast very beautiful; and didst thrive to regal dignity. V. 14. Thy name went forth among the nations on account of thy beauty; for it was perfect through my glory, which I put upon thee, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. —*

The description of what the Lord did for Israel in His compassionate love is divided into two sections by the repetition of the phrase “I passed by thee” (vv. 6 and 8). The first embraces what God had done for the preservation and increase of the nation; the second, what He had done for the glorification of Israel, by adopting it as the people of His possession. When Israel was lying in the field as a neglected new-born child, the Lord passed by and adopted it, promising it life, and giving it strength to live. To bring out the magnitude of the compassion of God, the fact that the child was lying in its blood is mentioned again and again. The explanation to be given of מְתַבְּסֵט (the *Hithpolel* of בָּסַט, to trample upon, tread under foot) is doubtful, arising from the difficulty of deciding whether the *Hithpolel* is to be taken in a passive or a reflective sense. The passive rendering, “trampled upon” (Umbreit), or *ad conculcandum projectus*, thrown down, to be trodden under foot (Gesenius, etc.), is open to the objection that the *Hophal* is used for this. We therefore

prefer the reflective meaning, treading oneself, or stamping; as the objection offered to this, namely, that a new-born child thrown into a field would not be found stamping with the feet, has no force in an allegorical description. In the clause v. 6*b*, which is written twice, the question arises whether **בְּדַמְיָךְ** is to be taken with **חַיִּי** or with **אָמַר לְךָ**: I said to thee, “In thy blood live;” or, “I said to thee in thy blood, ‘Live.’” We prefer the former, because it gives a more emphatic sense. **בְּדַמְיָךְ** is a concise expression; for although lying in thy blood, in which thou wouldst inevitably bleed to death, yet thou shalt live. Hitzig’s proposal to connect **בְּדַמְיָךְ** in the first clause with **חַיִּי**, and in the second with **אָמַר**, can hardly be entertained. A double construction of this kind is not required either by the repetition of **אָמַר לְךָ**, or by the uniform position of **בְּדַמְיָךְ** before **חַיִּי** in both clauses, as compared with 1Ki. 20:18 and Isa. 27: 5.

In v. 7*a* the description of the real fact breaks through the allegory. The word of God **חַיִּי**, live, was visibly fulfilled in the innumerable multiplication of Israel. But the allegory is resumed immediately. The child grew (**רָבָה**, as in Gen. 21:20; Deu. 30:16), and came into ornament of cheeks (**בּוֹא** with **ב**, to enter into a thing, as in v. 8; not to proceed in, as Hitzig supposes). **עֲדִים** **עֲדִי**, not most beautiful ornament, or highest charms, for **עֲדִים** is not the plural of **עֲדִי**; but according to the *Chetib* and most of the editions, with the tone upon the penultima, is equivalent to **עֲדָיִם**, a dual form; so that **עֲדִי** cannot mean ornament in this case, but, as in Psa. 39: 9 and 103: 5, “the cheek,” which is the traditional meaning (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 993). Ornament of cheeks is youthful freshness and beauty of face. The clauses which follow describe the arrival of puberty. **נִכְוֶן**, when applied to the breasts, means to expand, lit., to raise oneself up. **שָׁאֵר הַגְּלִים = שְׂעָר**, *pubes*. The description given in these verses refers to the preservation and marvellous multiplication of Israel in Egypt, where the sons of Israel grew into a nation under the divine blessing. Still it was quite naked and bare (**עָרִים** and **עֲרִיָה** are substantives in the abstract sense of nakedness and bareness, used in the place of adjective to give greater emphasis). Naked and bare are figurative expressions for still destitute of either clothing or ornaments. This implies something more than “the poverty of the people in the wilderness attached to Egypt” (Hitzig). Nakedness represents deprivation of all the blessings of salvation with which the Lord endowed Israel and made it glorious, after He had adopted it as the people of His possession. In Egypt, Israel was living in a state of nature, destitute of the gracious revelations of God.

*Eze. 16: 8.* The Lord then went past again, and chose for His bride the virgin, who had already grown up to womanhood, and with whom He contracted

marriage by the conclusion of the covenant at Sinai. **עֵתְךָ**, thy time, is more precisely defined as **עַת הַדִּים**, the time of conjugal love. I spread my wing over thee, i.e., the lappet of my garment, which also served as a counterpane; in other words, I married thee (cf. Ruth 3: 9), and thereby covered thy nakedness. "I swore to thee," sc. love and fidelity (cf. Hos. 2:21, 22), and entered into a covenant with thee, i.e., into that gracious connection formed by the adoption of Israel as the possession of Jehovah, which is represented as a marriage covenant (compare Exo. 24: 8 and 19: 5, 6, and Deu. 5: 2: — **אִתְּךָ** for **אִתְּךָ**). Vv. 9ff. describe how Jehovah provided for the purification, clothing, adorning, and maintenance of His wife. As the bride prepares herself for the wedding by washing and anointing, so did the Lord cleanse Israel from the blemishes and impurities which adhered to it from its birth. The rinsing from the blood must not be understood as specially referring either to the laws of purification given to the nation (Hitzig), or as relating solely to the purification effected by the covenant sacrifice (Hävernick). It embraces all that the Lord did for the purifying of the people from the pollution of sin, i.e., for its sanctification. The anointing with oil indicates the powers of the Spirit of God, which flowed to Israel from the divine covenant of grace. The clothing with costly garments, and adorning with all the jewellery of a wealthy lady or princess, points to the equipment of Israel with all the gifts that promote the beauty and glory of life. The clothing is described as made of the costliest materials with which queens were accustomed to clothe themselves. **רִקְמָה**, embroidered cloth (Psa. 45:15). **תַּחַשׁ**, probably the sea-cow, *Manati* (see the comm. on Exo. 25: 5). The word is used here for a fine description of leather of which ornamental sandals were made; a kind of morocco. "I bound thee round with byssus:" this refers to the headband; for **חֲבַשׁ** is the technical expression for the binding or winding round of the turban-like headdress (cf. Eze. 24:17; Exo. 29: 9; Lev. 8:13), and is applied by the Targum to the headdress of the priests. Consequently covering with **מַשִּׁי**, as distinguished from clothing, can only refer to covering with the veil, one of the principal articles of a woman's toilet. The **ἀπ. λεγ. מַשִּׁי** (vv. 10 and 13) is explained by the Rabbins as signifying silk. The LXX render it **τρίχαπτον**. According to Jerome, this is a word formed by the LXX: *quod tantae subtilitatis fuerit vestimentum, ut pilorum et capillorum tenuitatem habere credatur*. The jewellery included not only armlets, nose-rings, and ear-rings, which the daughters of Israel were generally accustomed to wear, but also necklaces and a crown, as ornaments worn by princesses and queens. For **רִבִּיד**, see comm. on Gen. 41:42. V. 13 sums up the contents of vv. 9-12. **שֵׁשׁ** is made to conform to **מַשִּׁי**; the food is referred to once more; and the result of the whole is said to have been, that Jerusalem became exceedingly beautiful, and flourished even to royal dignity. The latter cannot be taken as referring



simply to the establishment of the monarchy under David, any more than merely to the spiritual sovereignty for which Israel was chosen from the very beginning (Exo. 19: 5, 6). The expression includes both, viz., the call of Israel to be a kingdom of priests, and the historical realization of this call through the Davidic sovereignty. The beauty, i.e., glory, of Israel became so great, that the name of fame of Israel sounded abroad in consequence among the nations. It was perfect, because the Lord had put His glory upon His Church. This, too, we must not restrict (as Hävernick does) to the far-sounding fame of Israel on its departure from Egypt (Exo. 15:14ff.); it refers pre-eminently to the glory of the theocracy under David and Solomon, the fame of which spread into all lands. — Thus had Israel been glorified by its God above all the nations, but it did not continue in fellowship with its God.

*Eze. 16:15-34.* The apostasy of Israel. Its origin and nature, vv. 15-22; its magnitude and extent, vv. 23-34. In close connection with what precedes, this apostasy is described as whoredom and adultery. —

*V. 15. But thou didst trust in thy beauty, and didst commit fornication upon thy name, and didst pour out thy fornication over every one who passed by: his it became. V. 16. Thou didst take off thy clothes, and didst make to thyself spotted heights, and didst commit fornication upon them: things which should not come, and that which should not take place. V. 17. And thou didst take jewellery of thine ornament of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and didst make thyself male images, and didst commit fornication with them; V. 18. And thou didst take thy embroidered clothes, and didst cover them therewith: and my oil and my incense thou didst set before them. V. 19. And my bread, which I gave to thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou didst set before them for a pleasant odour: this came to pass, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 20. And thou didst take thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou barest to me, and didst sacrifice them to them to devour. Was thy fornication too little? V. 21. Thou didst slay my sons, and didst give them up, devoting them to them. V. 22. And in all thine abominations and thy fornication thou didst not remember the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and layest stamping in thy blood.*

The beauty, i.e., the glory, of Israel led to its fall, because it made it the ground of its confidence; that is to say, it looked upon the gifts and possessions conferred upon it as its desert; and forgetting the giver, began to traffic with the heathen nations, and allowed itself to be seduced to heathen ways. For the fact, compare Deu. 32:15 and Hos. 13: 6. “We are inflamed with pride and arrogance, and consequently profane the gifts of God, in which His glory ought to be resplendent” (Calvin). תִּזְנֶה אֶל שְׁמִי does not mean either “thou didst commit fornication notwithstanding thy name” (Winer and Ges. *Thes.* p. 422), or “against thy name” (Hävernick); for אֶל connected with זְנָה has neither of these meanings, even in Jud. 19: 2. It means, “thou didst commit fornication upon thy name, i.e., in reliance upon thy name” (Hitzig and Maurer); only we

must not understand שֵׁם as referring to the name of the city of God, but must explain it, in accordance with v. 14, as denoting the name, i.e., the renown, which Israel had acquired among the heathen on account of its beauty. In the closing words, לוֹ לֹא יְהִי, לוֹ refers to בְּלִ-עֹזֵבֶר, and יְהִי stands for וַיְהִי, the copula having been dropped from וַיְהִי because לוֹ ought to stand first, and only יְהִי remaining (compare יָךְ, Hos. 6: 1). The subject to יְהִי is יָפִי; the beauty became his (cf. Psa. 45:12). This fornication is depicted in concrete terms in vv. 16-22; and with the marriage relation described in vv. 8-13 still in view, Israel is represented as giving up to idolatry all that it had received from its God. — V. 16. With the clothes it made spotted heights for itself. בְּמֹתָם stands for בְּמֹתָם בְּתֵי, temples of heights, small temples erected upon heights by the side of the altars (1Ki. 13:32; 2Ki. 17:29; for the fact, see the comm. on 1Ki. 3: 2), which may probably have consisted simply of tents furnished with carpets. Compare 2Ki. 23: 7, where the women are described as weaving tents for Astarte, also the tent-like temples of the Slavonian tribes in Germany, which consisted of variegated carpets and curtains (see Mohne on Creuzer's *Symbolik*, V. p. 176). These *bamoth* Ezekiel calls מְטֵלְאוֹת, not variegated, but spotted or speckled (cf. Gen. 30:32), possibly with the subordinate idea of patched (מְמֵטֵלָא, Jos. 9: 5), because they used for the carpets not merely whole garments, but pieces of cloth as well; the word being introduced here for the purpose of indicating contemptuously the worthlessness of such conduct. "Thou didst commit whoredom upon them," i.e., upon the carpets in the tent-temples. The words לֹא בְּאוֹת וְגוֹ are no doubt relative clauses; but the usual explanation, "which has not occurred, and will not be," after Exo. 10:14, cannot be vindicated, as it is impossible to prove either the use of בּוֹא in the sense of occurring or happening (= הִיָּה), or the use of the participle instead of the preterite in connection with the future. The participle בְּאוֹת in this connection can only supply one of the many senses of the imperfect (Ewald, § 168c), and, like יְהִיָּה, express that which ought to be. The participial form בְּאוֹת is evidently chosen for the sake of obtaining a *paronomasia* with בְּמֹתָם: the heights which should not come (i.e., should not be erected); while לֹא יְהִיָּה points back to וְהָיָה: "what should not happen."

*Eze. 16:17.* The jewellery of gold and silver was used by Israel for זָכָר צְלָמִי, idols of the male sex, to commit fornication with them. Ewald thinks that the allusion is to Penates (*teraphim*), which were set up in the house, with ornaments suspended upon them, and worshipped with *lectisternia*. But there is no more allusion to *lectisternia* here than in Eze. 23:41. And there is still less ground for thinking, as Vatke, Movers, and Hävernick do, of Lingam- or

Phallus-worship, of which it is impossible to find the slightest trace among the Israelites. The arguments used by Hävernick have been already proved by Hitzig to have no force whatever. The context does not point to idols of any particular kind, but to the many varieties of Baal-worship; whilst the worship of Moloch is specially mentioned in vv. 20ff. as being the greatest abomination of the whole. The fact that **נָתַן לְפָנֵיהֶם**, to set before them (the idols), does not refer to *lectisternia*, but to sacrifices offered as food for the gods, is indisputably evident from the words **לְרִיחַ נִיחַח**, the technical expression for the sacrificial odour ascending to God (cf. Lev. 1: 9, 13, etc.). **וַיְהִי** (v. 19), and it came to pass (sc., this abomination), merely serves to give emphatic expression to the disgust which it occasioned (Hitzig). — Vv. 20, 21. And not even content with this, the adulteress sacrificed the children which God had given her to idols. The revulsion of feeling produced by the abominations of the Moloch-worship is shown in the expression **לְאָכֹל**, thou didst sacrifice thy children to idols, that they might devour them; and still more in the reproachful question **הֲמֵאֵת מֵתִי מִן**, “was there too little in thy whoredom?” **מִן** before **תְּזַנּוּתֶיךָ** is used in a comparative sense, though not to signify “was this a smaller thing than thy whoredom?” which would mean far too little in this connection. The **מִן** is rather used, as in Eze. 8:17 and Isa. 49: 6, in the sense of *too*: was thy whoredom, already described in vv. 16-19, too little, that thou didst also slaughter thy children to idols? The *Chetib* **תְּזַנּוּתֶיךָ** (vv. 20 and 25) is a singular, as in vv. 25 and 29; whereas the *Keri* has treated it as a plural, as in vv. 15, 22, and 33, but without any satisfactory ground. The indignation comes out still more strongly in the description given of these abominations in v. 21: “thou didst slay *my* sons” (whereas in v. 20 we have simply “thy sons, whom thou hast born to me”), “and didst give them up to them, **בַּהֲעָבִיר**, by making them pass through,” sc. the fire. **הַעָבִיר** is used here not merely or lustration or februation by fire, but for the actual burning of the children slain as sacrifices, so that it is equivalent to **הַעָבִיר בָּאֵשׁ לְמֹלֶךְ** (2Ki. 23:10). By the process of burning, the sacrifices were given to Moloch to devour. Ezekiel has the Moloch-worship in his eye in the form which it had assumed from the times of Ahaz downwards, when the people began to burn their children to Moloch (cf. 2Ki. 16: 3; 21: 6; 23:10), whereas all that can be proved to have been practised in earlier times by the Israelites was the passing of children through fire without either slaying or burning; a februation by fire (compare the remarks on this subject in the comm. on Lev. 18:21). — Amidst all these abominations Israel did not remember its youth, or how the Lord had adopted it out of the deepest wretchedness to be His people, and had made it glorious through the abundance of His gifts. This base ingratitude shows the depth of its fall, and magnifies its guilt. For v. 22b compare vv. 7 and 6.

*Eze. 16:23-34.* Extent and magnitude of the idolatry. —

V. 23. *And it came to pass after all thy wickedness — Woe, woe to thee! is the saying of the Lord Jehovah* — V. 24. *Thou didst build thyself arches, and didst make thyself high places in all the streets.* V. 25. *Thou didst build thy high places at every cross road, and didst disgrace thy beauty, and stretch open thy feet for every one that passed by, and didst increase thy whoredom.* V. 26. *Thou didst commit fornication with the sons of Egypt thy neighbours, great in flesh, and didst increase thy whoredom to provoke me.* V. 27. *And, behold, I stretched out my hand against thee, and diminished thine allowance, and gave thee up to the desire of those who hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines, who are ashamed of thy lewd way.* V. 28. *And thou didst commit fornication with the sons of Asshur, because thou art never satisfied; and didst commit fornication with them, and wast also not satisfied.* V. 29. *And thou didst increase thy whoredom to Canaan's land, Chaldaea, and even thereby wast not satisfied.* V. 30. *How languishing is thy heart! is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, that thou doest all this, the doings of a dissolute prostitute.* V. 31. *When thou buildest thy arches at every cross road, and madest thy high places in every road, thou wast not like the harlot, since thou despisedst payment.* V. 32. *The adulterous wife taketh strangers instead of her husband.* V. 33. *Men give presents to all prostitutes; but thou gavest thy presents to all thy suitors, and didst reward them for coming to thee from all sides, for fornication with thee.* V. 34. *And there was in thee the very opposite of the women in thy whoredom, that men did not go whoring after thee. In that thou givest payment, and payment was not given to thee, thou wast the very opposite.*

By **אָחֲרַי כָּל-רָעָתְךָ**, the picture of the wide spread of idolatry, commenced in v. 22, is placed in the relation of chronological sequence to the description already given of the idolatry itself. For all sin, all evil, must first exist before it can spread. The spreading of idolatry was at the same time an increase of apostasy from God. This is not to be sought, however, in the face that Israel forsook the sanctuary, which God had appointed for it as the scene of His gracious presence, and built itself idol-temples (Kliefoth). It consisted rather in this, that it erected idolatrous altars and little temples at all street-corners and cross-roads (vv. 24, 25), and committed adultery with all heathen nations (vv. 26, 28, 29), and could not be induced to relinquish idolatry either by the chastisements of God (v. 27), or by the uselessness of such conduct (vv. 32-34). **כָּל-רָעָתְךָ** is the whole of the apostasy from the Lord depicted in vv. 15-22, which prevailed more and more as idolatry spread. The picture of this extension of idolatry is introduced with woe! woe! to indicate at the outset the fearful judgment which Jerusalem was bringing upon itself thereby. The exclamation of woe is inserted parenthetically; for **וַתִּבְנִי** (v. 24) forms the apodosis to **וַיְהִי** in v. 23. **גַּב** and **רָמָה** are to be taken as general terms; but, as the singular **גִּבְךָ** with the plural **רָמֹתֶיךָ** in v. 39 plainly shows, **גַּב** is a collective word. Hävernicks has very properly called attention to the analogy between **גַּב** and **קָבָה** in Num. 25: 8, which is used there to denote an

apartment furnished or used for the service of Baal-Peor. As **קִבְּהָ**, from **קִבֵּב**, signifies literally that which is arched, a vault; so **גִּב**, from **גִּבַּב**, is literally that which is curved or arched, a hump or back, and hence is used here for buildings erected for idolatrous purposes, small temples built on heights, which were probably so called to distinguish them as chapels for fornication. The ancient translations suggest this, viz.: LXX οἶκημα πορνικόν and ἕκθεμα, which Polychron. explains thus: προαγωγήιον, ἔνθα τὰς πόρννας τρέφειν εἶωθασι; Vulg.: *lupanar* and *prostibulum*. **רָמָה** signifies artificial heights, i.e., altars built upon eminences, commonly called *bâmôth*. The word *râmâh* is probably chosen here with an allusion to the primary signification, height, as Jerome has said: *quod excelsus sit ut volentibus fornicari procul appareat fornicationis locus et non necesse sit quaeri*.

The increase of the whoredom, i.e., of the idolatry and illicit intercourse with heathenish ways, is individualized in vv. 26-29 by a specification of historical facts. We cannot agree with Hitzig in restricting the illicit intercourse with Egypt (v. 26), Asshur (v. 28), and Chaldaea (v. 29) to political apostasy, as distinguished from the religious apostasy already depicted. There is nothing to indicate any such distinction. Under the figure of whoredom, both in what precedes and what follows, the inclination of Israel to heathen ways in all its extent, both religious and political, is embraced. Egypt stands first; for the apostasy of Israel from the Lord commenced with the worship of the golden calf, and the longing in the wilderness for the fleshpots of Egypt. From time immemorial Egypt was most deeply sunken in the heathenish worship of nature. The sons of Egypt as therefore described, in accordance with the allegory, as **גִּדְלֵי בָשָׂר**, *magni carne* (*bâzâr*, a euphemism; cf. Eze. 23:20), i.e., according to the correct explanation of Theodoret: μεθ' ὑπερβολῆς τῆ τῶν εἰδώλων θεραπεία προστετηκότας, οὗτοι γὰρ καὶ τράγους καὶ βόας καὶ πρόβατα, κύνας τε καὶ πιθήκους καὶ κροκοδείλους καὶ ἴβεις καὶ ἱέρακας προσεκύνησαν. The way in which God punished this erring conduct was, that, like a husband who endeavours by means of chastisement to induce his faithless wife to return, He diminished the supply of food, clothing, etc. (*chōg*, as in Pro. 30: 8), intended for the wife (for the fact compare Hos. 2: 9, 10); this He did by “not allowing Israel to attain to the glory and power which would otherwise have been conferred upon it; that is to say, by not permitting it to acquire the undisturbed and undivided possession of Canaan, but giving it up to the power and scorn of the princes of the Philistines” (Kliefoth). **נָתַן בְּנַפְשׁוֹ**, to give any one up to the desire of another. The daughters of the Philistines are the Philistian states, corresponding to the representation of Israel as an adulterous wife. The Philistines are mentioned as the principal foes, because Israel fell completely into their power at the end of the period of the Judges (cf. Jud. 13-16; 1Sa. 4);

and they are referred to here, for the deeper humiliation of Israel, as having been ashamed of the licentious conduct of the Israelites, because they adhered to their gods, and did not exchange them for others as Israel had done (compare Jer. 2:10, 11). **זִמְמָה** (v. 27) is in apposition to **דֶּרֶבְךָ**: thy way, which is *zimmâh*. *Zimmâh* is applied to the sin of profligacy, as in Lev. 18:17. — But Israel was not improved by this chastisement. It committed adultery with Asshur also from the times of Ahaz, who sought help from the Assyrians (2Ki. 16: 7ff.); and even with this it was not satisfied; that is to say, the serious consequences brought upon the kingdom of Judah by seeking the friendship of Assyria did not sober it, so as to lead it to give up seeking for help from the heathen and their gods. In v. 28, **לִפְנֵי אֵל** is distinguished from **פְּזוּנִים** (**נָדָה**, with accus.). The former denotes the immoral pursuit of a person for the purpose of procuring his favour; the latter, adulterous intercourse with him, when his favour has been secured. The thought of the verse is this: Israel sought the favour of Assyria, because it was not satisfied with illicit intercourse with Egypt, and continued to cultivate it; yet it did not find satisfaction or sufficiency even in this, but increased its adultery **בְּשַׂדֵּימָה**, to the Canaan's-land Chaldaea. **אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן** is not the proper name of the land of Canaan here, but an appellative designation applied to Chaldaea (*Kasdim*) or Babylonia, as in Eze. 17: 4 (Raschi). The explanation of the words, as signifying the land of Canaan, is precluded by the fact that an allusion to Canaanitish idolatry and intercourse after the mention of Asshur would be out of place, and would not coincide with the historical order of things; since it cannot be shown that “a more general diffusion of the religious customs of Canaan took place after the Assyrian era.” And it is still more decidedly precluded by the introduction of the word **בְּשַׂדֵּימָה**, which cannot possibly mean as far as, or unto, Chaldaea, and can only be a more precise definition of **אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן**. The only thing about which a question can be raised, is the reason why the epithet **כְּנַעַן** should have been applied to Chaldaea; whether it merely related to the commercial spirit, in which Babylon was by no means behind the Canaanitish Tyre and Sidon, or whether allusion was also made to the idolatry and immorality of Canaan. The former is by no means to be excluded, as we find that in Eze. 17: 4 “the land of Canaan” is designated “a city of merchants” (*rōkh<sup>e</sup>lim*). But we must not exclude the latter either, inasmuch as in the Belus- and Mylitta-worship of Babylon the voluptuous character of the Baal- and Astarte-worship of Canaan had degenerated into shameless unchastity (cf. Herodotus, i. 199).

In v. 30, the contents of vv. 16-29 are summed up in the verdict which the Lord pronounces upon the harlot and adulteress: “yet how languishing is thy heart!” **אִמְלָה** (as a participle *Kal* ἄπ. λεγ.; since the verb only occurs elsewhere in the *Pual*, and that in the sense of faded or pining away) can only signify a morbid

pining or languishing, or the craving of immodest desire, which has grown into a disease. The form **לָבָה** is also **ὄπι λειγ.**; but it is analogous to the plural **לְבוֹת**.<sup>18</sup> **שְׁלֹמֹת**, powerful, commanding; as an epithet applied to *zōnâh*, one who knows no limit to her actions, unrestrained; hence in Arabic, insolent, shameless. V. 31 contains an independent sentence, which facilitates the transition to the thought expanded in vv. 32-34, namely, that Jerusalem had surpassed all other harlots in her whoredoms. If we take v. 31 as dependent upon the protasis in v. 30, we not only get a very dragging style of expression, but the new thought expressed in v. 31<sup>b</sup> is reduced to a merely secondary idea; whereas the expansion of it in vv. 32ff. shows that it introduces a new feature into the address. And if this is the case, **וְלֹא־הָיִיתִי** cannot be taken as coordinate with **עָשִׂיתִי**, but must be construed as the apodosis: “in thy building of rooms...thou wast not like the (ordinary) harlot, since thou disdainest payment.” For the plural suffix attached to **בְּבִנוֹתֶיךָ**, see the commentary on Eze. 6: 8. The infinitive **לְקַלֵּם** answers to the Latin gerund in *ndo* (vid., Ewald, § 237<sup>c</sup> and 280<sup>d</sup>), indicating wherein, or in what respect, the harlot Jerusalem differed from an ordinary prostitute; namely, in the fact that she disdained to receive payment for her prostitution. That this is the meaning of the words, is rendered indisputable by vv. 32-34. But the majority of expositors have taken **אֲתָנָן לְקַלֵּם** as indicating the point of comparison between Israel and other harlots, i.e., as defining in what respect Israel resembled other prostitutes; and then, as this thought is at variance with what follows, have attempted to remove the discrepancy by various untenable explanations. Most of them resort to the explanation: thou wast not like the other prostitutes, who disdain to receive their payment offered for their prostitution, in the hope of thereby obtaining still more,<sup>19</sup> — an explanation which imports into the words a thought that has no existence in them at all. Hävernîck seeks to fix upon **קַלֵּם**, by means of the Aramaean, the meaning to cry out (crying out payment), in opposition to the ordinary meaning of **קַלֵּם**, to disdain, or ridicule, in which sense Ezekiel also uses the noun **קַלְסָה** in Eze. 22: 4. Hitzig falls back upon the handy method of altering the text; and finally, Kliefoth gives to **לְ** the imaginary meaning “so far as,” i.e., “to such a degree that,” which cannot be defended either through Exo. 39:19 or from Deu. 24: 5.

With the loose way in which the infinitive construct with **לְ** is used, we grant that the words are ambiguous, and might have the meaning which the majority of the commentators have discovered in them; but this view is by no means necessary, inasmuch as the subordinate idea introduced by **אֲתָנָן לְקַלֵּם** may refer quite as well to the subject of the sentence, “*thou*,” as to the *zōnâh* with whom the subject is compared. Only in the latter case the **קַלֵּם אֲתָנָן** would

apply to other harlots as well as to Israel; whereas in the former it applies to Israel alone, and shows in what it was that Israel did not resemble ordinary prostitutes. But the explanation which followed was a sufficient safeguard against mistake. In this explanation adulteresses are mentioned first (v. 32), and then common prostitutes (vv. 33, 34). V. 32 must not be taken, as it has been by the majority of commentators, as an exclamation, or a reproof addressed to the adulteress Jerusalem: O thou adulterous wife, that taketh strangers instead of her husband! Such an exclamation as this does not suit the connection at all. But the verse is not to be struck out on that account, as Hitzig proposes. It has simply to be construed in another way, and taken as a statement of what adulteresses do (Kliefoth). They take strangers instead of their husband, and seek their recompense in the simple change, and the pleasure of being with other men. **תַּחַת אִשָּׁה**, lit., under her husband, i.e., as a wife subject to her husband, as in the connection with **נָהָה** in Eze. 23: 5 and Hos. 4:12 (see the comm. on Num. 5:19). — Vv. 33, 34. Common prostitutes give themselves up for presents; but Israel, on the contrary, gave presents to its lovers, so that it did the very opposite to all other harlots, and the practice of ordinary prostitutes was left far behind by that of Israel. The change of forms **נָהָה** and **נָהָה** (a present) is probably to be explained simply on the ground that the form **נָהָה** was lengthened into **נָהָה** with a consonant as the termination, because the suffix could be attached more easily to the other. **הִפְךָ**, the reverse, the opposite, i.e., with the present context, something unheard of, which never occurred in the case of any other harlot. — Ezekiel has thus fulfilled the task appointed him in v. 2, to charge Jerusalem with her abominations. The address now turns to an announcement of the punishment.

**Eze. 16:35-52.** As Israel has been worse than all the heathen, Jehovah will punish it notwithstanding its election, so that its shame shall be uncovered before all the nations (vv. 36-42), and the justice of the judgment to be inflicted upon it shall be made manifest (vv. 43-52). According to these points of view, the threat of punishment divides itself into two parts in the following manner: — In the first (vv. 35-42) we have, first of all (in v. 36), a recapitulation of the guilty conduct described in vv. 16-34; and secondly, an announcement of the punishment corresponding to the guilt, as the punishment of adultery and murder (vv. 37 and 48), and a picture of its infliction, as retribution for the enormities committed (vv. 39-42). In the second part (vv. 43-52) there follows a proof of the justice of this judgment.

**Eze. 16:35-42.** The punishment will correspond to the sin. —

*V. 35. Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of Jehovah! V. 36. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thy brass has been lavished, and thy shame exposed in thy*



*whoredom with thy lovers, and because of all the idols of thine abominations, and according to the blood of thy sons, which thou hast given them; V. 37. Therefore, behold, I will gather together all thy lovers, whom thou hast pleased, and all whom thou hast loved, together with all whom thou hast hated, and will gather them against thee from round about, and will expose thy shame to them, that they may see all thy shame. V. 38. I will judge thee according to the judgment of adulteresses and murderesses, and make thee into blood of wrath and jealousy. V. 39. And I will give thee into their hand, that they may destroy thy arches, and pull down thy heights; that they may strip thy clothes off thee, and take thy splendid jewellery, and leave thee naked and bare. V. 40. And they shall bring up a company against thee, and stone thee, and cut thee in pieces with their swords. V. 41. And they shall burn thy houses with fire, and execute judgment upon thee before the eyes of many women. Thus do I put an end to thy whoredom.; and thou wilt also give payment no more. V. 42. And I quiet my fury toward thee, and will turn away my jealousy from thee, that I may repose and vex myself no more. —*

In the brief summary of the guilt of the whore, the following objects are singled out, as those for which she is to be punished: (1) the pouring out of her brass and the exposure of her shame; (2) the idols of her abominations (with **לִשְׁ** before the noun, corresponding to **לְשׁוֹ** before the infinitive); (3) the blood of her sons, with the preposition **כִּי**, according to, to indicate the measure of her punishment. Two things are mentioned as constituting the first ground of punishment. The first is, “because thy brass has been poured out.” Most of the commentators have explained this correctly, as referring to the fact that Israel had squandered the possessions received from the Lord, viz., gold, silver, jewellery, clothing, and food (vv. 10-13 and 16-19), upon idolatry. The only difficulty connected with this is the use of the word *n<sup>c</sup>hōsheth*, brass or copper, in the general sense of money or metal, as there are no other passages to support this use of the word. At the same time, the objection raised to this, namely, that *n<sup>c</sup>hōsheth* cannot signify money, because the Hebrews had no copper coin, is an assertion without proof, since all that can be affirmed with certainty is, that the use of copper or brass as money is not mentioned anywhere in the Old Testament, with the exception of the passage before us. But we cannot infer with certainty from this that it was not then in use. As soon as the Hebrews began to stamp coins, bronze or copper coins were stamped as well as the silver shekels, and specimens of these are still in existence from the time of the Maccabees, with the inscription “Simon, prince of Israel” (cf. Cavedoni, *Bibl. Numismatik*, transl. by Werlhof, p. 20ff.). Judging from their size, these coins were in all probability worth a whole, a half, and a quarter *gerah* (Caved. pp. 50, 51). If, then, the silver shekel of the value of 21 grains contained twenty *gerahs* in Moses’ time, and they had already silver pieces of the weight of a shekel and half shekel, whilst quarter shekels are also mentioned in the time of Samuel, there would certainly be metal coins in use of the value of a *gerah* for the purposes of trade and commerce, and these would in all probability be made

of brass, copper, or bronze, as silver coins of the value of a penny would have been found too small. Consequently it cannot be positively denied that brass or copper may have been used as coin for the payment of a *gerah*, and therefore that the word *n<sup>c</sup>hōsheth* may have been applied to money. We therefore adhere to the explanation that brass stands for money, which has been already adopted by the LXX and Jerome; and we do so all the more, because every attempt that has been made to fasten another meaning upon *n<sup>c</sup>hōsheth*, whether by allegorical interpretation (Rabb.), or from the Arabic, or by altering the text, is not only arbitrary, but does not even yield a meaning that suits the context.

**הִשָּׁפַךְ**, to be poured out = squandered or lavished. To the squandering of the possessions bestowed by the Lord upon His congregation, there was added the exposure of its shame, i.e., the disgraceful sacrifice of the honour and dignity of the people of God, of which Israel had made itself guilty by its whoredom with idols, i.e., by falling into idolatry, and adopting heathen ways. **אֶל־מַאֲהָבֶיךָ**, to (towards), i.e., with thy lovers (**אֵל** standing for **אֵל**, according to later usage: vid., Ewald, § 217*i*, p. 561), is to be explained after the analogy of **זָנָה אֵל**, as signifying to commit adultery towards a person, i.e., with him. But it was not enough to sacrifice the gifts of the Lord, i.e., His possessions and His glory, to the heathen and their idols; Israel also made for itself **כָּל־גִּלּוּלֵי תוֹעֵבוֹת**, all kinds of logs of abominations, i.e., of idols, upon which it hung its ornaments, and before which it set oil and incense, meal and honey (vv. 18 and 19). And it was not even satisfied with this, but gave to its idols the blood of its sons, by slaying its children to Moloch (v. 20). Therefore (vv. 37ff.) the Lord will uncover the shame of His people before all the nations. He will gather them together, both friend and foe, against Jerusalem, and let them execute the judgment. The punishment will correspond to the sin. Because Israel has cultivated friendship with the heathen, it shall now be given up altogether into their power. On the uncovering of the nakedness as a punishment, compare Hos. 2:12. The explanation of the figure follows in v. 38. The heathen nations shall inflict upon Jerusalem the punishment due to adultery and bloodshed. Jerusalem (i.e., Israel) had committed this twofold crime. It had committed adultery, by falling away from Jehovah into idolatry; and bloodshed, by the sacrifices offered to Moloch. The punishment for adultery was death by stoning (see the comm. on v. 40); and blood demanded blood (Gen. 9: 6; Exo. 21:12). **וְנָתַתִּיךָ דָם וְגֵרִי** does not mean, “I will put blood in thee” (Ros.), or “I will cause thy blood to be shed in anger” (De Wette, Maurer, etc.); but I make thee into blood; which we must not soften down, as Hitzig proposes, into cause thee to bleed. The thought is rather the following: thou shalt be turned into blood, so that nothing but blood may be left of thee, and that the blood of fury and jealousy, as the working of the wrath and jealousy of God (compare v. 42). To

this end the heathen will destroy all the objects of idolatry (נִב and רְמוֹת, v. 39, as in vv. 24, 25), then take from the harlot both clothes and jewellery, and leave her naked, i.e., plunder Jerusalem and lay it waste, and, lastly, execute upon her the punishment of death by stoning and by sword; in other words, destroy both city and kingdom. The words הֶעֱלוּ וְגוֹ', they bring (up) against thee an assembly, may be explained from the ancient mode of administering justice, according to which the popular assembly (*qâhâl*, cf. Pro. 5:14) sat in judgment on cases of adultery and capital crimes, and executed the sentence, as the law for stoning expressly enjoins (Lev. 20: 2; Num. 15:36; Deu. 22:21; compare my *Bibl. Archäol.* II. p. 257). But they are also applicable to the foes, who would march against Jerusalem (for *qâhâl* in this sense, compare Eze. 17:17). The punishment of adultery (according to Lev. 20:10) was death by stoning, as we may see from Lev. 20: 2-27 and Deu. 20:24 compared with Joh. 8: 5. This was the usual mode of capital punishment under the Mosaic law, when judicial sentence of death was pronounced upon individuals (see my *Archäol.* II. p. 264). The other form of punishment, slaying by the sword, was adopted when there were many criminals to be put to death, and was not decapitation, but cutting down or stabbing (*bâthaq*, to hew in pieces) with the sword (see my *Archäol. l.c.*). The punishment of death was rendered more severe by the burning of the corpse (Lev. 20:14; 21: 9). Consequently the burning of the houses in v. 41 is also to be regarded as intensifying the punishment; and it is in the same light that the threat is to be regarded, that the judgment would be executed "before the eyes of many women." The many women are the many heathen nations, according to the description of Jerusalem or Israel as an unfaithful wife. "As it is the greatest punishment to an adulterous woman to be exposed in her sin before the eyes of other women; so will the severest portion of Israel's punishment be, that it will stand exposed in its sin before the eyes of all other nations" (Kliefoth). This is the way in which God will put an end to the fornication, and appease His wrath and jealousy upon the harlot (vv. 41*b* and 42). הַשְּׁבִית, with מִן, to cause a person to cease to be or do anything. For v. 42, compare Eze. 5:13. By the execution of the judgment the jealousy (קִנְיָה) of the injured husband is appeased.

*Eze. 16:43-52.* This judgment is perfectly just; for Israel has not only forgotten the grace of its God manifested towards it in its election, but has even surpassed both Samaria and Sodom in its abominations. —

V. 43. *Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, and hast raged against me in all this; behold, I also give thy way upon thy head, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, that I may not do that which is wrong above all thine abominations.*

V. 44. *Behold, every one that useth proverbs will use this proverb concerning thee: as the mother, so the daughter.* V. 45. *Thou art the daughter of thy mother, who casteth off her husband and her children; and thou art the sister of thy sisters, who*

cast off their husbands and their children. Your mother is a Hittite, and your father an Amorite. V. 46. And thy great sister is Samaria with her daughters, who dwelleth at thy left; and thy sister, who is smaller than thou, who dwelleth at thy right, is Sodom with her daughters. V. 47. But thou hast not walked in their ways and done according to their abominations a little only; thou didst act more corruptly than they in all thy ways. V. 48. As I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, Sodom thy sister, she with her daughters hath not done as thou hast done with thy daughters. V. 49. Behold, this was the sin of Sodom, thy sister: pride, superabundance of food, and rest undisturbed had she with her daughters, and the hand of the poor and needy she did not hold. V. 50. They were haughty, and did abominations before me; and I swept them away when I saw it. V. 51. And Samaria, she hath not sinned to the half of thy sins; thou hast increased thine abominations more than they, and hast made thy sisters righteous by all thine abominations which thou hast done. V. 52. Bear, then, also thy shame, which thou hast adjudged to thy sisters. Through thy sins, which thou hast committed more abominably than they, they become more righteous than thou. Be thou, then, also put to shame, and bear thy disgrace, as thou hast justified thy sisters. —

יֵאֵן אֲשֶׁר, which corresponds to יֵאֵן in v. 36, introduces a new train of thought. Most of the commentators take v. 43 in connection with what precedes, and place the pause at v. 44. But the perfect נִתְתִּי shows that this is wrong. If v. 43 simply contained a recapitulation, or a concluding summary, of the threat of judgment in vv. 35-42, the punishment would be announced in the future tense, as it is in v. 37. By the perfect נִתְתִּי, on the contrary, the punishment is exhibited as a completed fact, and further reasons are then assigned in vindication of the justice of the divine procedure, which we find in vv. 44ff. To this end the guilt of Jerusalem is mentioned once more: “thou didst not remember the days of thy youth,” i.e., what thou didst experience in thy youth; the misery in which thou didst find thyself, and out of which I rescued thee and exalted thee to glory (vv. 4-14). To this there was added rage against Jehovah, which manifested itself in idolatrous acts. רָגַז לְ, to be excited upon or against any person, to rage; thus in *Hithpael* with אָל in 2Ki. 19:27, 28. For נִתְּן דֶּרֶךְ בְּרֹאשׁ, compare Eze. 9:10. The last clause of v. 43, עֲשִׂיתִי וְגוֹ, וְלֹא, has been misinterpreted in many ways. According to the Masoretic pointing, עֲשִׂיתִי is the second person; but this does not yield a suitable meaning. For עָשָׂה זְמָה is not used in the sense adopted by the Targum, upon which the Masoretic pointing is undoubtedly based, and which Raschi, Kimchi, and Rosenmüller retain, viz., *cogitationem facere*: “thou hast not take any thought concerning all thy abominations,” i.e., has not felt any remorse. The true meaning is to commit a crime, a wrong, and is used for the most part of unnatural offences (cf. Jud. 20: 6; Hos. 6: 9). There is all the more reason for retaining this meaning, that זְמָה (apart from the plural זְמוּהוֹת = מְזֻמוֹת) only occurs *sensu malo*, and for the most part in the sense of an immoral action

(vid., Job. 31:11). Consequently we should have to adopt the rendering: and thou no longer committest this immorality above all thine abominations. But in that case not only would עֹד have to be supplied, but a distinction would be drawn between the abominations committed by Israel and the sin of lewdness, i.e., adultery, which is quite foreign to the connection and to the contents of the entire chapter; for, according to these, the abominations of Israel consisted in adultery or the sin of lewdness. We must therefore take עֲשִׂיתִי as the first person, as Symm. and Jerome have done, and explain the words from Lev. 19:29, where the toleration by a father of the whoredom of a daughter is designated as *zimmâh*. If we adopt this interpretation, Jehovah says that He has punished the spiritual whoredom of Israel, in order that He may not add another act of wrong to the abominations of Israel by allowing such immorality to go on unpunished. If He did not punish, He would commit a *zimmâh* Himself, — in other words, would make Himself accessory to the sins of Israel.

The concluding characteristic of the moral degradation of Israel fits in very appropriately here in vv. 44ff., in which Jerusalem is compared to Samaria and Sodom, both of which had been punished long ago with destruction on account of their sins. This characteristic is expressed in the form of proverbial sayings. Every one who speaks in proverbs (*mōshēl*, as in Num. 21:27) will then say over thee: as the mother, so her daughter. Her abominable life is so conspicuous, that it strikes every one, and furnishes occasion for proverbial sayings. אִמָּה may be a feminine form of אִם, as לְבָה is of לֵב (v. 30); or it may also be a *Raphe* form for אִמָּה: as her (the daughter's) mother, so her (the mother's) daughter (cf. Ewald, § 174e, note, with § 21, 22<SUP>3</SUP>). The daughter is of course Jerusalem, as the representative of Israel. The mother is the Canaanitish race of Hittites and Amorites, whose immoral nature had been adopted by Israel (cf. vv. 3 and 45b). In v. 45 the sisterly relation is added to the maternal, to carry out the thought still further. Some difficulty arises here from the statement, that the mothers and the sisters despise their husbands and their children, or put them away. For it is unquestionable that the participle נִשְׁלַת belongs to אִמָּה, and not to בַּת, from the parallel relative clause נִשְׁלַת אִשְׁרָה, which applies to the sisters. The husband of the wife Jerusalem is Jehovah, as the matrimonial head of the covenant nation or congregation of Israel. The children of the wives, viz., the mother, her daughter, and her sisters, are the children offered in sacrifice to Moloch. The worship of Moloch was found among the early Canaanites, and is here attributed to Samaria and Sodom also, though we have no other proofs of its existence there than the references made to it in the Old Testament. The husband, whom the mother and sisters have put away, cannot therefore be any other than Jehovah; from which it is

evident that Ezekiel regarded idolatry generally as apostasy from Jehovah, and Jehovah as the God not only of the Israelites, but of the heathen also. <sup>20</sup>

אֲחֵי־יְרוּשָׁלַם (v. 45) is a plural noun, as the relative clause which follows and v. 46 clearly show, and therefore is a contracted form of אֲחֵי־יְרוּשָׁלַם (v. 51) or אֲחֵי־יְרוּשָׁלַם (v. 52; vid., Ewald, § 212*b*, p. 538). Samaria and Sodom are called sisters of Jerusalem, not because both cities belonged to the same mother-land of Canaan, for the origin of the cities does not come into consideration here at all, and the cities represent the kingdoms, as the additional words “her daughters,” that is to say, the cities of a land or kingdom dependent upon the capital, clearly prove. Samaria and Sodom, with the daughter cities belonging to them, are sisters of Jerusalem in a spiritual sense, as animated by the same spirit of idolatry. Samaria is called the great (greater) sister of Jerusalem, and Sodom the smaller sister. This is not equivalent to the older and the younger, for Samaria was not more deeply sunk in idolatry than Sodom, nor was her idolatry more ancient than that of Sodom (Theodoret and Grotius); and Hävernicks explanation, that “the finer form of idolatry, the mixture of the worship of Jehovah with that of nature, as represented by Samaria, was the first to find an entrance into Judah, and this was afterwards followed by the coarser abominations of heathenism,” is unsatisfactory, for the simple reason that, according to the historical books of the Old Testament, the coarser forms of idolatry forced their way into Judah at quite as early a period as the more refined. The idolatry of the time of Rehoboam and Abijam was not merely a mixture of Jehovah-worship with the worship of nature, but the introduction of heathen idols into Judah, along with which there is no doubt that the syncretistic worship of the high places was also practised. גָּדוֹל and קָטָן do not generally mean old and young, but great and small. The transferred meaning old and young can only apply to men and animals, when greatness and littleness are really signs of a difference in age; but it is altogether inapplicable to kingdoms or cities, the size of which is by no means dependent upon their age. Consequently the expressions great and small simply refer to the extent of the kingdoms or states here named, and correspond to the description given of their situation: “at the left hand,” i.e., to the north, and “at the right hand,” i.e., to the south of Jerusalem and Judah.

Jerusalem had not only equalled these sisters in sins and abominations, but had acted more corruptly than they (v. 47). The first hemistich of this verse, “thou walkest not in their ways,” etc., is more precisely defined by וַתֵּשֶׁתִּי מֵהֶן in the second half. The link of connection between the two statements is formed by כִּי־בִמְאֵד קָטָן. This is generally rendered, “soon was there disgust,” i.e., thou didst soon feel disgust at walking in their ways, and didst act still worse. But apart from the fact that while disgust at the way of the sisters might very well constitute a motive for forsaking those ways, i.e., relinquishing their

abominations, it could not furnish a motive for surpassing those abominations. This explanation is exposed to the philological difficulty, that קָטַם by itself cannot signify *taeduit te*, and the impersonal use of קוֹיֵם would at all events require לָךְ, which could not be omitted, even if קָטַם were intended for a substantive. These difficulties fall away if we interpret קָטַם from the Arabic *qatt, omnino, tantum*, as Alb. Schultens has done, and connect the definition “a little only” with the preceding clause. We then obtain this very appropriate thought: thou didst walk in the ways of thy sisters; and that not a little only, but thou didst act still more corruptly than they. This is proved in vv. 48ff. by an enumeration of the sins of Sodom. They were pride, satiety, — i.e., superabundance of bread (vid., Pro. 30: 9), — and careless rest or security, which produce haughtiness and harshness, or uncharitableness, towards the poor and wretched. In this way Sodom and her daughters (Gomorrhah, Admah, and Zeboim) became proud and haughty, and committed abominations לְפָנַי, i.e., before Jehovah (alluding to Gen. 18:21); and God destroyed them when He saw this. The sins of Samaria (v. 51) are not specially mentioned, because the principal sin of this kingdom, namely, image-worship, was well known. It is simply stated, therefore, that she did not sin half so much as Jerusalem; and in fact, if we except the times of Ahab and his dynasty, pure heathenish idolatry did not exist in the kingdom of the ten tribes, so that Samaria seemed really a righteous city in comparison with the idolatry of Jerusalem and Judah, more especially from the time of Ahaz onward (vid., Jer. 3:11). The punishment of Samaria by the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes is also passed over as being well known to every Israelite; and in v. 52 the application is directly made to Jerusalem, i.e., to Judah: “Thou also, bear thy shame, thou who hast adjudged to thy sisters,” — *sc.* by pronouncing an uncharitable judgment upon them, thinking thyself better than they, whereas thou hast sinned more abominably, so that they appear more righteous than thou. צַדִּיק, to be righteous, and צַדִּיק, to justify, are used in a comparative sense. In comparison with the abominations of Jerusalem, the sins of Sodom and Samaria appeared perfectly trivial. After וְגַם אֵתָּה, the announcement of punishment is repeated for the sake of emphasis, and that in the form of a consequence resulting from the sentence with regard to the nature of the sin: therefore be thou also put to shame, and bear thy disgrace.

*Eze. 16:53-63.* But this disgrace will not be the conclusion. Because of the covenant which the Lord concluded with Israel, Jerusalem will not continue in misery, but will attain to the glory promised to the people of God; — and that in such a way that all boasting will be excluded, and Judah, with the deepest shame, will attain to a knowledge of the true compassion of God. — Yet, in order that all false confidence in the gracious promises of God may be

prevented, and the sinful nation be thoroughly humbled, this last section of our word of God announces the restoration of Sodom and Samaria as well as that of Jerusalem, so that all boasting on the part of Israel is precluded. —

V. 53. *And I will turn their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, and the captivity of thy captivity in the midst of them:* V. 54. *That thou mayest bear thy shame, and be ashamed of all that thou hast done, in comforting them.* V. 55. *And thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, will return to their first estate; and Samaria and her daughters will return to their first estate; and thou and thy daughters will return to your first estate.* V. 56. *And Sodom thy sister was not a discourse in thy mouth in the day of thy haughtinesses,* V. 57. *Before thy wickedness was disclosed, as at the time of the disgrace of the daughters of Aram and all its surroundings, the daughters of the Philistines, who despised thee round about.* V. 58. *Thy wrong-doing and all thy abominations, thou bearest them, is the saying of Jehovah.* V. 59. *For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, And I do with thee as thou hast done, who hast despised oath to break covenant.* V. 60. *And I shall remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and shall establish an everlasting covenant with thee.* V. 62. *And thou wilt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou receivest thy sisters, those greater than thou to those smaller than thou; and I give them to thee for daughters, although they are not of thy covenant.* V. 62. *And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou wilt perceive that I am Jehovah;* V. 63. *That thou mayest remember, and be ashamed, and there may no longer remain to thee an opening of the mouth because of thy disgrace, when I forgive thee all that thou hast done, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

The promise commences with an announcement of the restoration, not of Jerusalem, but of Sodom and Samaria. The two kingdoms, or peoples, upon which judgment first fell, shall also be the first to receive mercy; and it will not be till after then that Jerusalem, with the other cities of Judah, will also be restored to favour, in order that she may bear her disgrace, and be ashamed of her sins (v. 54); that is to say, not because Sodom and Samaria have borne their punishment for a longer time, but to the deeper shaming, the more complete humiliation of Jerusalem. **שׁוּב שְׁבוּת**, to turn the captivity, not “to bring back the captives” (see the comm. on Deu. 30: 3), is here used in a figurative sense for *restitutio in statum integritatis*, according to the explanation given of the expression in v. 55. No carrying away, or captivity, took place in the case of Sodom. The form **שְׁבִית**, which the *Chetib* has adopted several times here, has just the same meaning as **שְׁבִית שְׁבוּתֶיךָ**. **שְׁבוּת** does not mean the captives of thy captivity, since the same word cannot be used first as a concrete and then as an abstract noun; nor does the combination serve to give greater emphasis, in the sense of a superlative, — viz. “the captivity of thy captivities, equivalent to thy severest or most fearful captivity,” — as Stark and Hävernick suppose. The genitive must be taken as explanatory, as already proposed by Hengstenberg and Kliefoth: “captivity, which is thy captivity;” and the pleonastic mode of



expression is chosen to give greater prominence to the thought, “thine own captivity,” than would have been given to it by a suffix attached to the simple noun. **בְּתוֹכָהֶנָּה**, in their midst, does not imply, that just as Judah was situated now in the very midst between Sodom and Samaria, so its captives would return home occupying the centre between those two (Hitzig); the reference is rather to fellowship in captivity, to the fact that Jerusalem would share the same fate, and endure the same punishment, as Samaria and Sodom (Hengst., Klief.). The concluding words of v. 54, “in that thou comfortest them,” do not refer to the sins already committed by Israel (as Kliefoth, who adopts the rendering, “didst comfort them,” imagines), but to the bearing of such disgrace as makes Jerusalem ashamed of its sins. By bearing disgrace, i.e., by its endurance of well-merited and disgraceful punishment, Jerusalem consoles her sisters Samaria and Sodom; and that not merely by fellowship in misfortune, — *solamen miseris, etc.* (Calvin, Hitzig, etc.), — but by the fact that from the punishment endured by Jerusalem, both Samaria and Sodom can discern the righteousness of the ways of God, and find therein a foundation for their hope, that the righteous God will bring to an end the merited punishment as soon as its object has been attained (see the comm. on Eze. 14:22, 23). The turning of the captivity, according to v. 55, will consist in the fact that Sodom, Samaria, and Jerusalem return **לְקִדְמָתָן**, to their original state. **קִדְמָה** does not mean the former or earlier state, but the original state (**ὡς ἦσαν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς**, LXX), as in Isa. 23: 7. Kliefoth is wrong, however, in explaining this as meaning: “as they were, when they came in Adam from the creative hand of God.” The original state is the *status integritatis*, not as a state of sinlessness or original righteousness and holiness, — for neither Jerusalem on the one hand, nor Samaria and Sodom on the other, had ever been in such a state as this, — but as an original state of glory, in which they were before they had fallen and sunk into ungodly ways.

But how could a restoration of Sodom and her daughters (Gomorrhah, etc.) be predicted, when the destruction of these cities was accompanied by the sweeping away of all their inhabitants from off the face of the earth? Many of the commentators have attempted to remove the difficulty by assuming that Sodom here stands for the Moabites and Ammonites, who were descendants of Lot, who escaped from Sodom. But the untenableness of such an explanation is obvious, from the simple fact that the Ammonites and Moabites were no more Sodomites than Lot himself. And the view expressed by Origen and Jerome, and lately revived by Hävernick, that Sodom is a typical name denoting heathenism generally, is also unsatisfactory. The way in which Sodom is classed with Samaria and Jerusalem, and the special reference to the judgment that fell upon Sodom (vv. 49, 50), point undeniably to the real Sodom. The heathen world comes into consideration only so far as this, that the pardon of a heathen

city, so deeply degraded as Sodom, carries with it the assurance that mercy will be extended to all heathen nations. We must therefore take the words as referring to the literal Sodom. Yet we certainly cannot for a moment think of any earthly restoration of Sodom. For even if we could conceive of a restoration of the cities that were destroyed by fire, and sunk into the depths of the Dead Sea, it is impossible to form any conception of an earthly and corporeal restoration of the inhabitants of those cities, who ere destroyed at the same time; and in this connection it is chiefly to them that the words refer. This does not by any means prove that the thing itself is impossible, but simply that the realization of the prophecy must be sought for beyond the present order of things, in one that extends into the life everlasting.

As v. 55 elucidates the contents of v. 53, so the thought of v. 54 is explained and still further expanded in vv. 56 and 57. The meaning of v. 56a is a subject of dispute; but so much is indisputable, that the attempt to Kliefoth to explain vv. 56 and 57 as referring to the future, and signifying that in the coming day of its glory Israel will no longer carry Sodom as a legend in its mouth as it does now, does violence to the grammar, and is quite a mistake. It is no more allowable to take **וְלֹא הִיְתָה** as a future, in the sense of “and will not be,” than to render **בְּמוֹ עַת הַרְפָּת** (v. 57), “it will be like the time of scorn.” Moreover, the application of **בְּיוֹם גְּאוּנֵיךָ** to the day of future glory is precluded by the fact that in v. 49 the word **גְּאוּן** is used to denote the pride which was the chief sin of Sodom; and the reference to this verse very naturally suggests itself. The meaning of v. 56 depends upon the rendering to be given to **לְשִׁמוּעָה**. The explanation given by Rosenmüller and Maurer, after Jerome, — viz. *non erat in auditione*, i.e., *non audiebatur*, thou didst not think at all of Sodom, didst not take its name into thy mouth, — is by no means satisfactory. **שְׁמוּעָה** means proclamation, discourse, and also report. If we adopt the last, we must take the sentence as interrogatory (**לֹא** for **הֲלֹא**), as Hengstenberg and Hitzig have done. Although this is certainly admissible, there are no clear indexes here to warrant our assumption of an interrogation, which is only hinted at by the tone. We therefore prefer the meaning “discourse:” thy sister Sodom was not a discourse in thy mouth in the day of thy haughtinesses, that thou didst talk of the fate of Sodom and lay it to heart when thou wast in prosperity. The plural **גְּאוּנֵיךָ** is more emphatic than the singular. The day of the haughtinesses is defined in v. 57 as the period before the wickedness of Judah had been disclosed. This was effected by means of the judgment, which burst upon Jerusalem on the part of Babylon. Through this judgment Jerusalem is said to have been covered with disgrace, as at the time when the daughters of Aram, i.e., the cities of Syria, and those of the Philistines (Aram on the east, and the Philistines on the west, Isa. 9;11), scorned and maltreated it round about. This

refers primarily to the times of Ahaz, when the Syrians and Philistines pressed hard upon Judah (2Ki. 15:37; 16: 6; and 2Ch. 28:18, 19). It must not be restricted to this, however; but was repeated in the reign of Jehoiachin, when Jehovah sent troops of the Chaldaeans, *Aramaeans*, Ammonites, and Moabites against him, to destroy Judah (2Ki. 24: 2). It is true, the Philistines are not mentioned here; but from the threat in Eze. 25:15, we may infer that they also attempted at the same time to bring disgrace upon Judah. שׁוֹטֵם = שׁוֹטֵם, according to Aramaean usage, to treat contemptuously, or with repudiation (cf. Eze. 28:24, 26). Jerusalem will have to atone for this pride, and to bear its wrong-doing and its abominations (v. 58). For *zimmâh*, see the comm. on v. 43. The perfect נִשְׁאַתִּים indicates that the certainty of the punishment is just as great as if it had already commenced. The reason assigned for this thought in v. 59 forms a transition to the further expansion of the promise in vv. 60ff. וְעֵשִׂיתָ (v. 59) has been correctly pointed by the Masoretes as the 1st person. The ו is copulative, and shows that what follows forms the concluding summary of all that precedes. אֶתְּךָ for אֶתְּךָ, as in vv. 60, etc., to deal with any one. The construction of עָשָׂה, with an accusative of the person, to treat any one, cannot be sustained either from Eze. 17:17 and 23:25, or from Jer. 33: 9; and Gesenius is wrong in assuming that we meet with it in Isa. 42:16.

Despising the oath (אֲלָהָה) points back to Deu. 29:11, 12, where the renewal of the covenant concluded at Sinai is described as an entrance into the covenant and oath which the Lord then made with His people. — But even if Israel has faithlessly broken the covenant, and must bear the consequence punishment, the unfaithfulness of man can never alter the faithfulness of God. This is the link of connection between the resumption and further expansion of the promise in v. 60 and the closing words of v. 59. The remembrance of His covenant is mentioned in Lev. 26:42 and 45 as the only motive that will induce God to restore Israel to favour again, when the humiliation effected by the endurance of punishment has brought it to a confession of its sins. The covenant which God concluded with Israel in the day of its youth, i.e., when He led it out of Egypt, He will establish as an everlasting covenant. Consequently it is not an entirely new covenant, but simply the perfecting of the old one for everlasting duration. For the fact itself, compare Isa. 55: 3, where the making of the everlasting covenant is described as granting the steadfast mercies of David, i.e., as the fulfilment of the promise given to David (2Sa. 7). This promise is called by David himself an everlasting covenant which God had made with him (2Sa. 23: 5). And the assurance of its everlasting duration was to be found in the fact that this covenant did not rest upon the fulfilment of the law, but simply upon the forgiving grace of God (compare v. 63 with Jer. 31:31-34). — The bestowal of this grace will put Israel in remembrance of its ways, and fill it with

shame. In this sense, **וִּזְכַּרְתִּי** (and thou shalt remember), in v. 61, is placed side by side with **יִזְכְּרֵנִי** (I will remember) in v. 60. This shame will seize upon Israel when the establishment of an everlasting covenant is followed by the greater and smaller nations being associated with it in glory, and incorporated into it as children, though they are not of its covenant. The greater and smaller sisters are the greater and smaller nations, as members of the universal family of man, who are to be exalted to the glory of one large family of God. The restoration, which is promised in vv. 53 and 55 to Sodom and Samaria alone, is expanded here into a prophecy of the reception of all the greater and smaller nations into fellowship in the glory of the people of God. We may see from this that Sodom and Samaria represent the heathen nations generally, as standing outside the Old Testament dispensation: Sodom representing those that were sunk in the deepest moral degradation, and Samaria those that had fallen from the state of grace. The attitude in which these nations stand towards Israel in the everlasting covenant of grace, is defined as the relation of daughters to a mother. If, therefore, Israel, which has been thrust out among the heathen on account of its deep fall, is not to return to its first estate till after the return of Sodom, which has been destroyed, and Samaria, which has been condemned, the election of Israel before all the nations of the earth to be the first-born son of Jehovah will continue unchanged, and Israel will form the stem of the new kingdom of God, into which the heathen nations will be incorporated. The words, “and not of thy covenant,” have been taken by most of the commentators in the sense of, “not because thou hast kept the covenant;” but this is certainly incorrect. For even if “thy covenant” really formed an antithesis to “my covenant” (vv. 60 and 62), “thy covenant” could not possibly signify the fulfilment of thy covenant obligations. The words belong to *bânōth* (daughters), who are thereby designated as extra-testamental, — i.e., as not included in the covenant which God made with Israel, and consequently as having no claim by virtue of that covenant to participate in the glory of the everlasting covenant which is hereafter to be established. — When this covenant has been established, Israel will know that God is Jehovah, the unchangeably true (for the meaning of the name *Jehovah*, see the commentary on Gen. 2: 4); that it may call to mind, sc. both its sinful abominations and the compassionate grace of God, and be so filled with shame and penitence that it will no more venture to open its mouth, either for the purpose of finding excuses for its previous fall, or to murmur against God and His judgments, — namely, when the Lord forgives all its sins by establishing the everlasting covenant, the kernel and essence of which consists in the forgiveness of sins (cf. Jer. 31:34). Thus will the experience of forgiving grace complete what judgment has already begun, viz., the transformation of proud and haughty sinners into meek and humble children of God, for whom the kingdom has been prepared from the beginning.

This thought brings the entire prophecy to a close, — a prophecy which embraces the whole of the world's history and the New Testament, the parallel to which is contained in the apostle's words, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all" (Rom. 11:32). — As the punishment threatened to the adulteress, i.e., to the nation of Israel that had despised its God and King, had been fulfilled upon Jerusalem and the Jews, and is in process of fulfilment still, so has the promise also been already fulfilled, so far as its commencement is concerned, though the complete and ultimate fulfilment is only to be expected in time to come. The turning of the captivity, both of Jerusalem and her daughters, and of Samaria and her daughters, commenced with the establishment of the everlasting covenant, i.e., of the covenant made through Christ, and with the reception of the believing portion of Israel in Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee (Act. 8: 5ff., 25, 9:31). And the turning of the captivity of Sodom commenced with the spread of the gospel among the heathen, and their entrance into the kingdom of Christ, inasmuch as Sodom with her daughters represents the morally degraded heathen world. Their reception into the kingdom of heaven, founded by Christ on earth, forms the commencement of the return of the forgiven to their first estate on the "restitution of all things," i.e., the restoration of all moral relations to their original normal constitution (compare Act. 3:21 and Meyer's comm. thereon with Mat. 17:11), which will attain its perfection in the *παλιγγενεσία*, the general restoration of the world to its original glory (compare Mat. 19:28 with Rom. 8:18ff. and 2Pe. 3:13). The prophecy before us in v. 55 clearly points to this final goal. It is true that one might understand the return of Jerusalem and Samaria to their original state, which is predicted here as simply relating to the pardon of the covenant nation, whose apostasy had led to the rejection of both its parts; and this pardon might be sought in its reception into the kingdom of Christ and its restoration as the people of God. In that case the complete fulfilment of our prophecy would take place during the present aeon in the spread of the gospel among all nations, and the conversion of that portion of Israel which still remained hardened after the entrance of the full number of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God. But this limitation would be out of harmony with the equality of position assigned to Sodom and her daughters on the one hand, and Samaria and Jerusalem on the other. Though Sodom is not merely a type of the heathen world, the restoration of Sodom and her daughters cannot consist in the reception of the descendants of the cities on which the judgment fell into the kingdom of God or the Christian Church, since the peculiar manner in which those cities were destroyed prevented the possibility of any of the inhabitants remaining alive whose descendants could be converted to Christ and blessed in Him during the present period of the world. On the other hand, the opinion expressed by C. a Lapide, that the restoration of Sodom is to be referred and restricted to the conversion of the descendants of the inhabitants of

Zoar, which was spared for Lot's sake, when the other cities of the plain were destroyed, is too much at variance with the words of the passage to allow of our accepting such a solution as this. The turning of the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, i.e., the forgiveness of the inhabitants of Sodom and the other cities of the plain, points beyond the present aeon, and the realization can only take place on the great day of the resurrection of the dead in the persons of the former inhabitants of Sodom and the neighbouring cities. And in the same way the restoration of Samaria and Jerusalem will not be completely fulfilled till after the perfecting of the kingdom of Christ in glory at the last day.

Consequently the prophecy before us goes beyond Rom. 11:25ff., inasmuch as it presents, not to the covenant nation only, but, in Samaria and Sodom, to all the larger and smaller heathen nations also, the prospect of being eventually received into the everlasting kingdom of God; although, in accordance with the main purpose of this prophetic word, namely, to bring the pride of Israel completely down, this is simply hinted at, and no precise intimation is given of the manner in which the predicted *apokatastasis* will occur. But notwithstanding this indefiniteness, we must not explain away the fact itself by arbitrary expositions, since it is placed beyond all possible doubt by other passages of Scriptures. The words of our Lord in Mat. 10:15 and 11:24, to the effect that it will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom than for Capernaum and every other city that shall have rejected the preaching of the gospel, teach most indisputably that the way of mercy stands open still even for Sodom itself, and that the judgment which has fallen upon it does not carry with it the final decision with regard to its inhabitants. For Sodom did not put away the perfect revelation of mercy and salvation. If the mighty works which were done in Capernaum had been done in Sodom, it would have stood to the present day (Mat. 11:23). And from this it clearly follows that all the judgments which fell before the time of Christ, instead of carrying with them the final decision, and involving eternal damnation, leave the possibility of eventual pardon open still. The last judgment, which is decisive for eternity, does not take place till after the full revelation of grace and truth in Christ. Not only will the gospel be preached to all nations before the end comes (Mat. 24:14), but even to the dead; to the spirits in prison, who did not believe at the time of Noah, it has been already preached, at the time when Christ went to them in spirit, in order that, although judged according to man's way in the flesh, they might live according to God's way in the spirit (1Pe. 3:19; 4: 6). What the apostle teaches in the first of these passages concerning the unbelievers before the flood, and affirms in the second concerning the dead in general, is equally applicable according to our prophecy to the Sodomites who were judged after man's way in the flesh, and indeed generally to all heathen nations who either lived before Christ or departed from this earthly life without having heard the

gospel preached. — It is according to these distinct utterances of the New Testament that the prophecy before us respecting the *apokatastasis* of Sodom, Samaria, and Jerusalem is to be interpreted; and this is not to be confounded with the heretical doctrine of the restoration, i.e., the ultimate salvation of all the ungodly, and even of the devil himself. If the preaching of the gospel precedes the last judgment, the final sentence in the judgment will be regulated by the attitude assumed towards the gospel by both the living and the dead. All souls that obstinately reject it and harden themselves in unbelief, will be given up to everlasting damnation. The reason why the conversion of Sodom and Samaria is not expressly mentioned, is to be found in the general tendency of the promise, in which the simple fact is announced without the intermediate circumstances, for the purpose of humbling Jerusalem. The conversion of Jerusalem also is not definitely stated to be the condition of pardon, but this is assumed as well known from the words of Lev. 26, and is simply implied in the repeated assertion that Jerusalem will be seized with the deepest shame on account of the pardon which she receives.

## **Ch. 17. Humiliation and Exaltation of the Davidic Family**

The contents of this chapter are introduced as a riddle and a parable, and are divided into three sections. Vv. 1-10 contain the parable; vv. 11-21, the interpretation and application of it to King Zedekiah; and vv. 22-24, the promise of the Messianic kingdom.

### *Eze. 17: 1-10.* THE PARABLE. —

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, give a riddle, and relate a parable to the house of Israel; V. 3. And say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, A great eagle, with great wings and long pinions, full of feathers of variegated colours, came to Lebanon and took the top of the cedar: V. 4. He plucked off the topmost of its shoots, and brought it into Canaan's land; in a merchant-city he set it. V. 5. And he took of the seed of the land, and put it into seed-land; took it away to many waters, set it as a willow. V. 6. And it grew, and became an overhanging vine of low stature, that its branches might turn towards him, and its roots might be under him; and it became a vine, and produced shoots, and sent out foliage. V. 7. There was another great eagle with great wings and many feathers; and, behold, this vine stretched its roots languishingly towards him, and extended its branches towards him, that he might water it from the beds of its planting. V. 8. It was planted in a good field by many waters, to send out roots and bear fruit, to become a glorious vine. V. 9. Say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Will it thrive? will they not pull up its roots, and cut off its fruit, so that it withereth? all the fresh leaves of its sprouting will wither, and not with strong arm and with much people will it be possible to raise it up from its roots. V. 10. And, behold, although it is planted, will it thrive? will it not wither when the east wind touches it? upon the beds in which it grew it will wither.*

The parable (*māshāl*, corresponding exactly to the New Testament παραβολή) is called *chīdhāh*, a riddle, because of the deeper meaning lying beneath the parabolic shell. The symbolism of this parable has been traced by many commentators to Babylonian influences working upon the prophet's mind; but without any tenable ground. The figure of the eagle, or bird of prey, applied to a conqueror making a rapid descent upon a country, has as little in it of a specifically Babylonian character as the comparison of the royal family to a cedar or a vine. Not only is Nebuchadnezzar compared to an eagle in Jer. 48:40; 49:22, as Cyrus is to a bird of prey in Isa. 46:11; but even Moses has described the paternal watchfulness of God over His own people as bearing them upon eagle's wings (Exo. 19: 4; Deu. 32:11). The cedar of Lebanon and the vine are genuine Israelitish figures. The great eagle in v. 3 is the great King Nebuchadnezzar (compare v. 12). The article is simply used to indicate the species, for which we should use the indefinite article. In v. 7, instead of the article, we have אַחֵר in the sense of "another." This first eagle has large wings and long pinions; he has already flown victoriously over wide-spread countries. אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ הִרְקָמָה, literally, which is to him the variegated ornament, i.e., which he has as such an ornament. The feathers of variegated ornamental colours point to the many peoples, differing in language, manners, and customs, which were united under the sceptre of Nebuchadnezzar (Hitzig, etc.); not to the wealth and splendour of the conqueror, as such an allusion is altogether remote from the tendency of the parable. He came to Lebanon. This is not a symbol of the Israelitish land, or of the kingdom of Judah; but, as in Jer. 22:23, of Jerusalem, or Mount Zion, with its royal palace so rich in cedar wood (see the comm. on Hab. 2:17 and Zec. 11: 1), as being the place where the cedar was planted (compare the remarks on v. 12). The cedar is the royal house of David, and the top of it is King Jehoiachin. The word *tzammereth* is only met with in Ezekiel, and there only for the top of a cedar (compare Eze. 31: 3ff.). The primary meaning is doubtful. Some derive it from the curly, or, as it were, woolly top of the older cedars, in which the small twigs that constitute their foliage are only found at the top of the tree. Others suppose it to be connected with the Arabic *ḍmr*, to conceal, and understand it as an epithet applied to the foliage, as the veil or covering of the tree. In v. 4, *tzammereth* is explained to be רֹאשׁ יְנִיקוֹתָיו, the topmost of its shoots. This the eagle plucked off and carried אֶל-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, an epithet applied to Babylonia here and in Eze. 16:29, as being a land whose trading spirit had turned it into a Canaan. This is evident from the parallel עִיר רְכָלִים, city of traders, i.e., Babylon (compare v. 12). The seed of the land, according to v. 13, is King Zedekiah, because he was of the land, the native king, in contrast to a foreign, Babylonian governor.



קָה, for לָקַח, after the analogy of קָהָם in Hos. 11: 3, and pointed with Kametz to distinguish it from the imperative. לָקַח אֵל is used as in Num. 23:27. The ἄπ. λεγ. צִפְצָפָה signifies, in Arabic and the Talmud, the willow, probably so called because it grows in well-watered places; according to Gesenius, it is derived from צוּרַף, to overflow, literally, the inundated tree. This meaning is perfectly appropriate here. “He set it as a willow” means he treated it as one, inasmuch as he took it to many waters, set it in a well-watered soil, i.e., in a suitable place. The cutting grew into an overhanging vine, i.e., to a vine spreading out its branches in all directions, though not growing very high, as the following expression שִׁפְלַת קִנְמָה more clearly shows. The object of this growth was, that its branches might turn to him (the eagle), and its roots might be under him (the eagle). The suffixes attached to אֵלָיו and תַּחְתָּיו refer to נִשְׂר. This allusion is required not only by the explanation in v. 14 (? vv. 14, 15), but also by v. 7, where the roots and branches of the vine stretch to the (other) eagle. In v. 6b, what has already been affirmed concerning the growth is briefly summed up again. The form פְּאֲרָה is peculiar to Ezekiel. Isaiah has פְּאֲרָה = פְּאֲרָה in Isa. 10:33. The word signifies branch and foliage, or a branch covered with foliage, as the ornament of a tree. — The other eagle mentioned in v. 7 is the king of Egypt, according to v. 15. He had also large wings and many feathers, i.e., a widely spread and powerful kingdom; but there is nothing said about pinions and variegated colours, for Pharaoh had not spread out his kingdom over many countries and peoples, or subjugated a variegated medley of peoples and tribes. בָּפַן, as a verb ἄπ. λεγ., signifies to yearn or pine after a thing; in Chaldee, to hunger. לְהִשְׁקוֹת, that he (the eagle-Pharaoh) might give it to drink, or water it. The words מִעֲרֵגוֹת מִטְעָה are not connected with לְהִשְׁקוֹת, but with שִׁלְחָה and בְּפִנָּה, form the beds of its planting, i.e., in which it was planted; it stretched out roots and branches to the other eagle, that he might give it to drink. The interpretation is given in v. 15. The words לְהִשְׁקוֹת אֲזַתָּה, which are added by way of explanation, do not interrupt the train of thought; nor are they superfluous, as Hitzig supposes, because the vine had water enough already (vv. 5 and 8). For this is precisely what the passage is intended to show, namely, that there was no occasion for this pining and stretching out of the branches towards the other eagle, inasmuch as it could thrive very well in the place where it was planted. The latter is expressly stated once more in v. 8, the meaning of which is perfectly clear, — namely, that if Zedekiah had remained quiet under Nebuchadnezzar, as a hanging vine, his government might have continued and prospered. But, asks Ezekiel in the name of the Lord, will it prosper? הֲתִצְלַח is a question, and the third person, neuter gender. This question is answered in the negative by the

following question, which is introduced with an affirmative הֲלוֹא. The subject to יִנְתַק and יִקְוֶס is not the first eagle (Nebuchadnezzar), but the indefinite “one” (*man*, they). In the last clause of v. 9 מִשְׁאוֹת is a substantive formation, used instead of the simple form of the infinitive, after the form מִשְׁאֵ in 2Ch. 19: 7, with the termination וֹת, borrowed from the verb לִיה (compare Ewald, § 160*b* and 239*a*), and the construction is the same as in Amo. 6:10: it will not be to raise up = it will not be possible to raise it up (compare Ges. § 132, 3, Anm. 1). To raise it up from its root does not mean to tear it up by the root (Hävernick), but to rear the withered vine from its roots again, to cause it to sprout again. This rendering of the words corresponds to the interpretation given in v. 17. — In v. 10 the leading thought is repeated with emphasis, and rounded off. The east wind is peculiarly dangerous to plants on account of its dryness (compare Gen. 41: 6, and Wetstein on Job. 27:21 in Delitzsch’s *Commentary*); and it is used very appropriately here, as the Chaldeans came from the east.

*Eze. 17:11-21.* Interpretation of the riddle. —

V. 11. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 12. Say to the refractory race: Do ye not know what this is? Say, Behold, the king of Babel came to Jerusalem and took its king and its princes, and brought them to himself to Babel. V. 13. And he took of the royal seed, and made a covenant with him, and caused him to enter into an oath; and he took the strong ones of the land: V. 14. That it might be a lowly kingdom, not to lift itself up, that he might keep his covenant, that it might stand. V. 15. But he rebelled against him by sending his messengers to Egypt, that it might give him horses and much people. Will he prosper? will he that hath done this escape? He has broken the covenant, and should he escape? V. 16. As I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, surely in the place of the king, who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he broke with him, in Babel he will die. V. 17. And not with great army and much people will Pharaoh act with him in the war, when they cast up a rampart and build siege-towers, to cut off many souls. V. 18. He has despised an oath to break the covenant, and, behold, he has given his hand and done all this; he will not escape. V. 19. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, As I live, surely my oath which he has despised, and my covenant which he has broken, I will give upon his head. V. 20. I will spread out my net over him, so that he will be taken in my snare, and will bring him to Babel, and contend with him there on account of his treachery which he has been guilty of towards me. V. 21. And all his fugitives in all his regiments, by the sword will they fall, and those who remain will be scattered to all winds; and ye shall see that I Jehovah have spoken it.*

In vv. 12-17 the parable in vv. 2-10 is interpreted; and in vv. 19-21 the threat contained in the parable is confirmed and still further expanded. We have an account of the carrying away of the king, i.e., Jehoiachin, and his princes to Babel in 2Ki. 24:11ff., Jer. 24: 1, and 29: 2. The king’s seed (זֶרַע הַמְּלוּכָה), v. 13, as in Jer. 41: 1 = זֶרַע הַמֶּלֶךְ, 1Ki. 11:14) is Jehoiachin’s uncle Mattaniah,

whom Nebuchadnezzar made king under the name of Zedekiah (2Ki. 24:17), and from whom he took an oath of fealty (2Ch. 36:13). The strong of the land (אֲלֵי = אֲוֵלִי, 2Ki. 24:15), whom Nebuchadnezzar took (לָקַח), i.e., took away to Babel, are not the heads of tribes and families (2Ki. 24:15); but the expression is used in a wide sense for the several classes of men of wealth, who are grouped together in 2Ki. 24:14 under the one term חֵיל כָּל-גְּבוּרֵי חֵיל אֲנָשִׁי, 2Ki. 24:16), including masons, smiths, and carpenters (2Ki. 24:14 and 16), whereas the heads of tribes and families are classed with the court officials (סָרִיסִים, 2Ki. 24:15) under the title שָׂרֵיָה (princes) in v. 12. The design of these measures was to make a lowly kingdom, which could not raise itself, i.e., could not revolt, and to deprive the vassal king of the means of breaking of the covenant. the suffix attached to לְעִמְדָהּ is probably to be taken as referring to מִמְלָכָה rather than בְּרִיתִי, although both are admissible, and would yield precisely the same sense, inasmuch as the stability of the kingdom was dependent upon the stability of the covenant. But Zedekiah rebelled (2Ki. 24:20). The Egyptian king who was to give Zedekiah horses and much people, in other words, to come to his assistance with a powerful army of cavalry and fighting men, was Hophrah, the Apries of the Greeks, according to Jer. 44:30 (see the comm. on 2Ki. 24:19, 20). הַיְצֻלָּה points back to תְּצַלָּה in v. 9; but here it is applied to the rebellious king, and is explained in the clause הַיְמַלֵּט וְגוֹ'. The answer is given in v. 16 as a word of God confirmed by a solemn oath: he shall die in Babel, the capital of the king, who placed him on the throne, and Pharaoh will not render him any effectual help (v. 17). אוֹתוֹ עֲשֵׂה, as in Eze. 15:59, to act with him, that is to say, assist him, come to his help. אוֹתוֹ refers to Zedekiah, not to Pharaoh, as Ewald assumes in an inexplicable manner. For שִׁפְךָ סִלָּלָה וְגוֹ', compare Eze. 4: 2; and for the fact itself, Jer. 34:21, 22, and 37: 5, according to which, although an Egyptian army came to the rescue of Jerusalem at the time when it was besieged by the Chaldeans, it was repulsed by the Chaldeans who marched to meet it, without having rendered any permanent assistance to the besieged.

In v. 18, the main thought that breach of faith can bring no deliverance is repeated for the sake of appending the further expansion contained in vv. 19-21. נָתַן יָדוֹ, he gave his hand, i.e., as a pledge of fidelity. The oath which Zedekiah swore to the king of Babel is designated in v. 19 as Jehovah's oath (אֲלֵתִי), and the covenant made with him as Jehovah's covenant, because the oath had been sworn by Jehovah, and the covenant of fidelity towards Nebuchadnezzar had thereby been made *implicite* with Jehovah Himself; so that the breaking of the oath and covenant became a breach of faith towards Jehovah. Consequently the very same expressions are used in vv. 16, 18, and

19, to designate this breach of oath, which are applied in Eze. 16:59 to the treacherous apostasy of Jerusalem (Israel) from Jehovah, the covenant God. And the same expressions are used to describe the punishment as in Eze. 12:13, 14. **נִשְׁפַּט אֹתוֹ** is construed with the accusative of the thing respecting which he was to be judged, as in 1Sa. 12: 7. Jehovah regards the treacherous revolt from Nebuchadnezzar as treachery against Himself (**מֵאֵל בֵּי**); not only because Zedekiah had sworn the oath of fidelity by Jehovah, but also from the fact that Jehovah had delivered up His people and kingdom into the power of Nebuchadnezzar, so that revolt from him really became rebellion against God. **אֵת** before **כָּל-מְבַרְחָו** is *nota accus.*, and is used in the sense of *quod adinet ad*, as, for example, in 2Ki. 6: 5. **מְבַרְחָו**, his fugitives, is rendered both by the Chaldee and Syriac “his brave men,” or “heroes,” and is therefore identified with **מְבַרְחָו** (his chosen ones), which is the reading in some manuscripts. But neither these renderings nor the parallel passage in Eze. 12:14, where **סְבִיבֹתָיו** apparently corresponds to it, will warrant our adopting this explanation, or making any alteration in the text. The Greek versions have **πάσας φυγαδείας αὐτοῦ**; Theodoret: **ἐν πάσαις ταῖς φυγαδείαις αὐτοῦ**; the Vulgate: *omnes profugi ejus*; and therefore they all had the reading **מְבַרְחָו**, which also yields a very suitable meaning. The mention of some who remain, and who are to be scattered toward all the winds, is not at variance with the statement that all the fugitives in the wings of the army are to fall by the sword. The latter threat simply declares that no one will escape death by flight. But there is no necessity to take those who remain as being simply fighting men; and the word “all” must not be taken too literally.

**Eze. 17:22-24.** The planting of the true twig of the stem of David. —

V. 22. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, And I will take from the top of the high cedar, and will set it; from the topmost of its shoots will I pluck off a tender one, and will plant it upon a high and exalted mountain.* V. 23. *On the high mountain of Israel will I plant it, and it will put forth branches, and bear fruit, and become a splendid cedar, so that all the birds of every plumage will dwell under it. In the shade of its branches will they dwell.* V. 24. *And all the trees of the field will learn that I Jehovah have lowered the lofty tree, lifted up the low tree, made the green tree wither, and the withered tree become green. I Jehovah have said it, and have done it.* —

Although the sprout of David, whom Nebuchadnezzar had made king, would lose the sovereignty because of his breach of faith, and bring about the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, the Lord would not let His kingdom be destroyed, but would fulfil the promise which He had given to the seed of David. The announcement of this fulfilment takes its form from the preceding parable. As Nebuchadnezzar broke off a twig from the top of the cedar and

brought it to Babel (v. 13), so will Jehovah Himself also pluck off a shoot from the top of the high cedar, and plant it upon a high mountain. The *Vav* before **לְקַחְתִּי** is the *Vav consec.*, and **וְ** is appended to the verb for the sake of emphasis; but in antithesis to the acting of the eagle, as described in v. 3, it is placed after it. The cedar, which it designated by the epithet *râmâh*, as rising above the other trees, is the royal house of David, and the tender shoot which Jehovah breaks off and plants is not the Messianic kingdom or sovereignty, so that Zerubbabel could be included, but the Messiah Himself as “a distinct historical personage” (Hävernick). The predicate **רַךְ**, tender, refers to Him; also the word **יִזְבֵּק**, a sprout (Isa. 53: 2), which indicates not so much the youthful age of the Messiah (Hitzig) as the lowliness of His origin (compare Isa. 11: 1; 53: 2); and even when applied to David and Solomon, in 2Sa. 3:39, 1Ch. 22: 5; 29: 1, expresses not their youthfulness, but their want of strength for the proper administration of such a government. The high mountain, described in v. 23 as the high mountain of Israel, is Zion, regarded as the seat and centre of the kingdom of God, which is to be exalted by the Messiah above all the mountains of the earth (Isa. 2: 2, etc.). The twig planted by the Lord will grow there into a glorious cedar, under which all birds will dwell. The Messiah grows into a cedar in the kingdom founded by Him, in which all the inhabitants of the earth will find both food (from the fruits of the tree) and protection (under its shadow). For this figure, compare Dan. 4: 8, 9. **צִפּוֹר כָּל־כְּנָף**, birds of every kind of plumage (cf. Eze. 39: 4, 17), is derived from Gen. 7:14, where birds of every kind find shelter in Noah’s ark. The allusion is to men from every kind of people and tribe. By this will all the trees of the field learn that God lowers the lofty and lifts up the lowly. As the cedar represents the royal house of David, the trees of the field can only be the other kings or royal families of the earth, not the nations outside the limits of the covenant. At the same time, the nations are not to be entirely excluded because the figure of the cedars embraces the idea of the kingdom, so that the trees of the field denote the kingdoms of the earth together with their kings. The clauses, “I bring down the high tree,” contain a purely general thought, as in 1Sa. 2: 7, 8, and the perfects are not to be taken as preterites, but as statements of practical truths. It is true that the thought of the royal house of David in its previous greatness naturally suggests itself in connection with the high and green tree, and that of Jehoiachin in connection with the dry tree (compare Jer. 22:30); and these are not to be absolutely set aside. At the same time, the omission of the article from **עֵץ גְּבוּהָ** and the objects which follow, is sufficient to show that the words are not to be restricted to these particular persons, but are applicable to every high and green, or withered and lowly tree; i.e., not merely to kings alone, but to all men in common, and furnish a parallel to 1Sa. 2: 4-9, “The bows of the mighty men are broken; and they that stumbled are girded with strength,” etc.

## Ch. 18. The Retributive Justice of God

*Eze. 18.* In the word of God contained in this chapter, the delusion that God visits the sins of fathers upon innocent children is overthrown, and the truth is clearly set forth that every man bears the guilt and punishment of his own sins (vv. 1-4). The righteous lives through his righteousness (vv. 5-9), but cannot save his wicked son thereby (vv. 10-13); whilst the son who avoids the sins and wickedness of his father, will live through his own righteousness (vv. 14-20). The man who repents and avoids sin is not even charged with his own sin; and, on the other hand, the man who forsakes the way of righteousness, and gives himself up to unrighteousness, will not be protected from death even by his own former righteousness (vv. 21-29). Thus will God judge every man according to his way; and it is only by repentance that Israel itself can live (vv. 30-32). The exposition of these truths is closely connected with the substance and design of the preceding and following prophecies. In the earlier words of God, Ezekiel had taken from rebellious Israel every support of false confidence in the preservation of the kingdom from destruction. But as an impenitent sinner, even when he can no longer evade the punishment of his sins, endeavours as much as possible to transfer the guilt from himself to others, and comforts himself with the thought that he has to suffer for sins that other shave committed, and hardens himself against the chastisement of God through such false consolation as this; so even among the people of Israel, when the divine judgments burst upon them, the delusion arose that the existing generation had to suffer for the fathers' sins. If, then, the judgment were ever to bear the fruit of Israel's conversion and renovation, which God designed, the impenitent generation must be deprived even of this pretext for covering over its sins and quieting its conscience, by the demonstration of the justice which characterized the government of God in His kingdom.

*Eze. 18: 1-4.* THE PROVERB AND THE WORD OF GOD. —

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 2. *Why do you use this proverb in the land of Israel, saying, Fathers eat sour grapes, and the sons' teeth are set on edge.* V. 3. *As I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, this proverb shall not be used any more in Israel.* V. 4. *Behold, all souls are mine; as the father's soul, so also the soul of the son, — they are mine; the soul which sinneth, it shall die.*

On v. 2a compare Eze. 12:22. מַה־לָּכֶם, what is to you, what are you thinking of, that...? is a question of amazement. אֶל־אֲדָמָה, in the land of Israel (Eze. 12:22), not “concerning the land of Israel,” as Hävernicks assumes. The proverb was not, “The fathers have eaten sour grapes,” for we have not אָכְלוּ, as in Jer. 31:29, but אֹכְלוּ, they eat, are accustomed to eat, and אֲבוֹת has no article, because it applies to all who eat sour grapes. *Bōsēr*, unripe, sour grapes,

like *bēsēr* in Job. 16:33 (see the comm. *in loc.*). The meaning of the proverb is self-evident. The sour grapes which the fathers eat are the sins which they commit; the setting of the children's teeth on edge is the consequence thereof, i.e., the suffering which the children have to endure. The same proverb is quoted in Jer. 31:29, 30, and there also it is condemned as an error. The origin of such a proverb is easily to be accounted for from the inclination of the natural man to transfer to others the guilt which has brought suffering upon himself, more especially as the law teaches that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children (Exo. 20: 5), and the prophets announce that the Lord would put away Judah from before His face on account of the sins of Manasseh (2Ki. 24: 3; Jer. 15: 4), while Jeremiah complains in Lam. 5: 7 that the people are bearing the fathers' sins. Nevertheless the proverb contained a most dangerous and fatal error, for which the teaching of the law concerning the visitation of the sins of the fathers, etc., was not accountable, and which Jeremiah, who expressly mentions the doctrine of the law (Jer. 32:18), condemns as strongly as Ezekiel. God will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children who hate Him, and who also walk in the footsteps of their fathers' sins; but to those who love Him, and keep His commandments, He will show mercy to the thousandth generation. The proverb, on the other hand, teaches that the children would have to atone for their fathers' sins without any culpability of their own. How remote such a perversion of the truth as to the transmission of sins and their consequences, viz., their punishment, was from the law of Moses, is evident from the express command in Deu. 24:16, that the children were not to be put to death with the fathers for the sins which the latter had committed, but that every one was to die for his own sin. What God here enjoins upon the judicial authorities must apply to the infliction of his own judgments. Consequently what Ezekiel says in the following verses in opposition to the delusion, which this proverb helped to spread abroad, is simply a commentary upon the words, "every one shall die for his own sin," and not a correction of the law, which is the interpretation that many have put upon these prophetic utterances of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In v. 3, the Lord declares with an oath that this proverb shall not be used any more. The apodosis to אִם יִדְבַּר וְגוֹ', which is not expressed, would be an imprecation, so that the oath contains a solemn prohibition. God will take care that this proverb shall not be used any more in Israel, not so much by the fact that He will not give them any further occasion to make use of it, as by the way in which He will convince them, through the judgments which He sends, of the justice of His ways. The following is Calvin's admirable paraphrase: "I will soon deprive you of this boasting of yours; for your iniquity shall be made manifest, so that all the world may see that you are but enduring just punishment, which you yourselves have deserved, and that you cannot cast it upon your fathers, as you have hitherto attempted to do." At the same time, this only gives one side; we must also add the other, which is

brought out so prominently in Jer. 31:29ff., namely, that after the judgment God will manifest His grace so gloriously in the forgiveness of sins, that those who are forgiven will fully recognise the justice of the judgments inflicted. Experience of the love and compassion of the Lord, manifesting itself in the forgiveness of sin, bows down the heart so deeply that the pardoned sinner has no longer any doubt of the justice of the judgments of God. “*In Israel*” is added, to show that such a proverb is opposed to the dignity of Israel. In v. 4, the reason assigned fore the declaration thus solemnly confirmed by an oath commences with a general thought which contains the thesis for further discussion. All souls are mine, the soul of the father as well as that of the son, saith the Lord. In these words, as Calvin has well said, “God does not merely vindicate His government or His authority, but shows that He is moved with paternal affection towards the whole of the human race which He created and formed.” There is no necessity for God to punish the one for the other, the son for the father, say because of the possibility that the guilty person might evade Him; and as the Father of all, He cannot treat the one in a different manner from the other, but can only punish the one by whom punishment has been deserved. The soul that sinneth shall die. **אָדָם** is used here, as in many other passages, for “man,” and **מָוֶת** is equivalent to suffering death as a punishment. “Death” is used to denote the complete destruction with which transgressors are threatened by the law, as in Deu. 30:15 (compare Jer. 21: 8; Pro. 11:10). This sentence is explained in the verses which follow (vv. 5-20).

*Eze. 18: 5-9.* The righteous man shall not die. —

*V. 5. If a man is righteous, and doeth right and righteousness, V. 6. And doth not eat upon the mountains, and doth not lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and doth not defile his neighbour's wife, and doth not approach his wife in her uncleanness, V. 7. Oppresseth no one, restoreth his security (lit., debt-pledge), committeth no robbery, giveth his bread to the hungry, and covereth the naked with clothes, V. 8. Doth not give upon usury, and taketh not interest, withholdeth his hand from wrong, executeth judgment of truth between one and another, V. 9. Walketh in my statutes, and keepeth my rights to execute truth; he is righteous, he shall live, is the saying of the Lord “Jehovah.”*

The exposition of the assertion, that God only punishes the sinner, not the innocent, commences with a picture of the righteousness which has the promise of life. The righteousness consists in the fulfilment of the commandments of the law: viz., (1) those relating to religious duties, such as the avoidance of idolatry, whether of the grosser kind, such as eating upon the mountains, i.e., observing sacrificial festivals, and therefore sacrificing to idols (cf. Deu. 12: 2ff.), or of a more refined description, e.g., lifting up the eyes to idols, to look to them, or make them the object of trust, and offer supplication to them (cf. Ps. 121: 1; Deu. 4:19), as Israel had done, and was doing still (cf. Eze. 6:13); and (2) those



relating to moral obligations, such as the avoidance of adultery (compare Exo. 20:14; Lev. 20:10; Deu. 22:22; and for **טַמֵּא**, Gen. 34: 5), and of conjugal intercourse with a wife during menstruation, which was a defilement of the marriage relation (cf. Lev. 18:19; 20:18). All these sins were forbidden in the law on pain of death. To these there are appended duties to a neighbour (vv. 7ff.), viz., to abstain from oppressing any one (Exo. 22:28; Lev. 15:14, 17), to restore the pledge to a debtor (Exo. 22:25; Deu. 24: 6, 10ff.). **חֹב** is hardly to be taken in any other sense than as in apposition to **חֶבְלָתוֹ**, “his pledge, which is debt,” equivalent to his debt-pledge or security, like **בְּרֵבֶךְ זָמָה** in Eze. 16:27. The supposition of Hitzig, that **חֹב** is a participle, like **קוֹם** in 2Ki. 16: 7, in the sense of debtor, is a far less natural one, and has no valid support in the free rendering of the LXX, *ἔνεχυρασμὸν ὀφείλοντος*. The further duties are to avoid taking unlawful possession of the property of another (cf. Lev. 5:23); to feed the hungry, clothe the naked (cf. Isa. 58: 5; Mat. 25:26; Jam. 2:15, 16); to abstain from practising usury (Deu. 23:20; cf. Exo. 22:24) and taking interest (Lev. 25:36, 37); in judicial sentences, to draw back the hand from wrong, and promote judgment of truth, — a sentence in accordance with the true nature of the case (see the comm. on Zec. 7: 9); and, lastly, to walk in the statutes and rights of the Lord, — an expression which embraces, in conclusion, all that is essential to the righteousness required by the law. — This definition of the idea of true righteousness, which preserves from death and destruction, and ensures life to the possessor, is followed in vv. 10ff. by a discussion of the attitude which God sustains towards the sons.

**Eze. 18:10-13.** The righteousness of the father does not protect the wicked, unrighteous son from death.

V. 10. *If, however, he begetteth a violent son, who sheddeth blood, and doeth only one of these things, V. 11. But he himself hath not done all this, — if he even eateth upon the mountains, and defileth his neighbour's wife, V. 12. Oppresseth the suffering and poor, committeth robbery, doth not restore a pledge, lifteth up his eyes to idols, committeth abomination, V. 13. Giveth upon usury, and taketh interest: should he live? He shall not live! He hath done all these abominations; he shall be put to death; his blood shall be upon him. —*

The subject to **וְהוֹלִיד**, in v. 10, is the righteous man described in the preceding verses. **פְּרִיץ**, violent, literally, breaking in or through, is rendered more emphatic by the words “shedding blood” (cf. Hos. 4: 2). We regard **אִשׁ** in the next clause as simply a dialectically different form of writing and pronouncing, for **אִשׁ**, “only,” and he doeth only one of these, the sins previously mentioned (vv. 6ff.). **מֵאֲחָד**, with a partitive **מִן**, as in Lev. 4: 2, where it is used in a similar connection; the form **מֵאֲחָד** is also met with in Deu. 15: 7. The

explanation given by the Targum, “and doeth one of these to his brother,” is neither warranted by the language nor commended by the sense. עָשָׂה is never construed with the accusative of the person to whom anything is done; and the limitation of the words to sins against a brother is unsuitable in this connection. The next clause, לֹא עָשָׂה ... וְהוּא בִּי, which has also been variously rendered, we regard as an adversative circumstantial clause, and agree with Kliefoth in referring it to the begetter (father): “and he (the father) has not committed any of these sins.” For it yields no intelligible sense to refer this clause also to the son, since כֹּל-אֲלֵהּ cannot possibly refer to different things from the preceding מֵאֵלֶּה, and a man cannot at the same time both do and not do the same thing. The כִּי which follows signifies “if,” as is frequently the case in the enumeration of particular precepts or cases; compare, for example, Exo. 21: 1, 7, 17, etc., where it is construed with the imperfect, because the allusion is to things that may occur. Here, on the contrary, it is followed by the perfect, because the sins enumerated are regarded as committed. The emphatic אֲנִי (even) forms an antithesis to אֵל מֵאֵלֶּה (אֵל), or rather an *epanorthosis* of it, inasmuch as אֲנִי כִּי resumes and carries out still further the description of the conduct of the wicked son, which was interrupted by the circumstantial clause; and that not only in a different form, but with a gradation in the thought. The thought, for instance, is as follows: the violent son of a righteous father, even if he has committed only one of the sins which the father has not committed, shall die. And if he has committed even the gross sins named, viz., idolatry, adultery, violent oppression of the poor, robbery, etc., should he then continue to live? The ו in וְהוּא introduces the apodosis, which contains a question, that is simply indicated by the tone, and is immediately denied. The antique form וְהוּא for וְהוּא, 3rd pers. perf., is taken from the Pentateuch (cf. Gen. 3:22 and Num. 21: 8). The formulae מוֹת יוֹמֵת and דָּמְיוֹ בּוֹ are also derived from the language of the law (cf. Lev. 20: 9, 11, 13, etc.).

*Eze. 18:14-20.* The son who avoids his father’s sin will live; but the father will die for his own sins. —

*V. 14. And behold, he begetteth a son, who seeth all his father’s sins which he doeth; he seeth them, and doeth not such things. V. 15. He eateth not upon the mountains, and lifteth not up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel; he defileth not his neighbour’s wife, V. 16. And oppresseseth no one; he doth not withhold a pledge, and committeth not robbery; giveth his bread to the hungry, and covereth the naked with clothes. V. 17. He holdeth back his hand from the distressed one, taketh not usury and interest, doeth my rights, walketh in my statutes; he will not die for the sin of his father; he shall live. V. 18. His father, because he hath practised oppression, committed robbery upon his brother, and hath done that which is not good in the midst of his people; behold, he shall die for his sin. V. 19. And do ye say, Why doth*

*the son not help to bear the father's sin? But the son hath done right and righteousness, hath kept all my statutes, and done them; he shall live. V. 20. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. A son shall not help to bear the father's sin, and a father shall not help to bear the sin of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*

The case supposed in these verses forms the antithesis to the preceding one; the father is the transgressor in this instance, and the son a keeper of the law. The subject to **הוֹלִיד** in v. 14 is not the righteous man described in v. 15, but a man who is described immediately afterwards as a transgressor of the commandments of God. The *Chetib* **וירא** in the last clause of v. 14 is not to be read **וירא**, **καὶ φοβηθή**, *et timuerit*, as it has been by the translators of the Septuagint and Vulgate; nor is it to be altered into **ויראה**, as it has been by the Masorettes, to make it accord with v. 28; but it is the apocopated form **וירא**, as in the preceding clause, and the object is to be repeated from what precedes, as in the similar case which we find in Exo. 20:15, (18). Ewald and Hitzig propose to alter **מעני** in v. 17 into **מעול** after v. 8, but without the slightest necessity. The LXX are not to be taken as an authority for this, since the Chaldee and Syriac have both read and rendered **עני**; and Ezekiel, when repeating the same sentences, is accustomed to make variations in particular words. Holding back the hand from the distressed, is equivalent to abstaining from seizing upon him for the purpose of crushing him (compare v. 12); **בתוך אָמוֹ**, in the midst of his countrymen = **בתוך אָמוֹ**, is adopted from the language of the Pentateuch. **מת** after **הנה** is a participle. The question, “Why does the son not help to bear?” is not a direct objection on the part of the people, but is to be taken as a pretext, which the people might offer on the ground of the law, that God would visit the sin of the fathers upon the sons in justification of their proverb. Ezekiel cites this pretext for the purpose of meeting it by stating the reason why this does not occur. **בְּנִשָּׂא בְּ**, to carry, near or with, to join in carrying, or help to carry (cf. Num. 11:17). This proved the proverb to be false, and confirmed the assertion made in v. 4b, to which the address therefore returns (v. 20). The righteousness of the righteous man will come upon him, i.e., upon the righteous man, namely, in its consequences. The righteous man will receive the blessing of righteousness, but the unrighteous man the curse of his wickedness. There is no necessity for the article, which the *Keri* proposes to insert before **רָשָׁע**.

**Eze. 18:21-26.** Turning to good leads to life; turning to evil is followed by death.

V. 21. *But if the wicked man turneth from all his sins which he hath committed, and keepeth all my statutes, and doeth right and righteousness, he shall live, and not die.*  
V. 22. *All his transgressions which he hath committed, shall not be remembered to*

*him: for the sake of the righteousness which he hath done he will live. V. 23. Have I then pleasure in the death of the wicked? is the saying of Jehovah: and not rather that he turn from his ways, and live? V. 24. But if the righteous man turn from his righteousness, and doeth wickedness, and acteth according to all the abominations which the ungodly man hath done, should he live? All the righteousness that he hath done shall not be remembered: for his unfaithfulness that he hath committed, and for his sin that he hath sinned, for these he shall die. V. 25. And ye say, "The way of the Lord is not right." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not right? Is it not your ways that are not right? V. 26. If a righteous man turneth from his righteousness, and doeth wickedness, and dieth in consequence, he dieth for his wickedness that he hath done.*

The proof that every one must bear his sin did not contain an exhaustive reply to the question, in what relation the righteousness of God stood to the sin of men? For the cases supposed in vv. 5-20 took for granted that there was a constant persistence in the course once taken, and overlooked the instances, which are by no means rare, when a man's course of life is entirely changed. It still remained, therefore, to take notice of such cases as these, and they are handled in vv. 21-26. The ungodly man, who repents and turns, shall live; and the righteous man, who turns to the way of sin, shall die. "As the righteous man, who was formerly a sinner, is not crushed down by his past sins; so the sinner, who was once a righteous man, is not supported by his early righteousness. Every one will be judged in that state in which he is found" (Jerome). The motive for the pardon of the repenting sinner is given in v. 23, in the declaration that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked man, but desires his conversion, that he may live. God is therefore not only just, but merciful and gracious, and punishes none with death but those who either will not desist from evil, or will not persevere in the way of His commandments. Consequently the complaint, that the way of the Lord, i.e., His conduct toward men, is not weighed (יָתִיבֵךְ), see comm. on 1Sa. 2: 3), i.e., not just and right, is altogether unfounded, and recoils upon those who make it. It is not God's ways, but the sinner's, that are wrong (v. 25). The proof of this, which Hitzig overlooks, is contained in the declarations made in vv. 23 and 26, — viz. in the fact that God does not desire the death of the sinner, and in His mercy forgives the penitent all his former sins, and does not lay them to his charge; and also in the fact that He punishes the man who turns from the way of righteousness and gives himself up to wickedness, on account of the sin which he commits; so that He simply judges him according to his deeds. — In v. 24, וְעָשָׂה is the continuation of the infinitive שׁוּב, and וְהִי is interrogatory, as in v. 13.

*Eze. 18:27-32.* The vindication of the ways of God might have formed a fitting close to this divine oracle. But as the prophet was not merely concerned with the correction of the error contained in the proverb which was current

among the people, but still more with the rescue of the people themselves from destruction, he follows up the refutation with another earnest call to repentance.

V. 27. *If a wicked man turneth from his wickedness which he hath done, and doeth right and righteousness, he will keep his soul alive.* V. 28. *If he seeth and turneth from all his transgressions which he hath committed, he shall live and not die.* V. 29. *And the house of Israel saith, The way of the Lord is not right. Are may ways not right, O house of Israel? Is it not rather your ways that are not right?* V. 30. *Therefore, every one according to his ways, will I judge you, O house of Israel, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. Turn and repent of all your transgressions, that it may not become to you a stumbling-block to guilt.* V. 31. *Cast from you all your transgressions which ye have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! And why will ye die, O house of Israel?* V. 32. *For I have no pleasure in the death of the dying, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. Therefore repent, that ye may live.* —

For the purpose of securing an entrance into their hearts for the call to repentance, the prophet not only repeats, in vv. 27 and 28, the truth declared in vv. 21 and 22, that he who turns from his sin finds life, but refutes once more in v. 29, as he has already done in v. 25, the charge that God's ways are not right. The fact that the singular **יִתְכֵן** is connected with the plural **דְּרַכֵיכֶם**, does not warrant our altering the plural into **דְּרַכְכֶם**, but may be explained in a very simple manner, by assuming that the ways of the people are all summed up in one, and that the meaning is this: what you say of my way applies to your own ways, — namely, “it is not right; there is just measure therein.” **לָכֵן**, “therefore, etc.,” because my way, and not yours, is right, I will judge you, every one according to his way. Repent, therefore, if ye would escape from death and destruction. **שׁוּבוּ** is rendered more emphatic by **הֲשִׁיבוּ**, sc. **פְּנֵיכֶם**, as in Eze. 14: 6. In the last clause of v. 30, **עֵוֹן** is not to be taken as the subject of the sentence according to the accents, but is a genitive dependent upon **מִכְשׁוֹל**, as in Eze. 7:19 and 14: 3; and the subject is to be found in the preceding clause: that it (the sinning) may not become to you a stumbling-block of iniquity, i.e., a stumbling-block through which ye fall into guilt and punishment. — The appeal in v. 31 points back to the promise in Eze. 11:18, 19. **הִשְׁלִיךְ**, to cast away. The application of this word to transgressions may be explained from the fact that they consisted for the most part of idols and idolatrous images, which they had made. — “*Make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit:*” a man cannot, indeed, create either of these by his own power; God alone can give them (Eze. 11:19). But a man both can and should come to God to receive them: in other words, he can turn to God, and let both heart and spirit be renewed by the Spirit of God. And this God is willing to do; for He has no pleasure **הִמַּת** **בְּמוֹת**, in the death of the dying one. In the repetition of the assurance given in v. 23, **הִמַּת** is very appropriately substituted for **רָשַׁע**, to indicate to the people

that while in sin they are lying in death, and that it is only by conversion and renewal that they can recover life again.

## Ch. 19. Lamentation for the Princes of Israel

Israel, the lioness, brought up young lions in the midst of lions. But when they showed their leonine nature, they were taken captive by the nations and led away, one to Egypt, the other to Babylon (vv. 1-9). The mother herself, once a vine planted by the water with vigorous branches, is torn from the soil, so that her strong tendrils wither, and is transplanted into a dry land. Fire, emanating from a rod of the branches, has devoured the fruit of the vine, so that not a cane is left to form a ruler's sceptre (vv. 10-14). — This lamentation, which bewails the overthrow of the royal house and the banishment of Israel into exile, forms a finale to the preceding prophecies of the overthrow of Judah, and was well adapted to annihilate every hope that things might not come to the worst after all.

### *Eze. 19: 1-9.* CAPTURE AND EXILE OF THE PRINCES.

V. 1. *And do thou raise a lamentation for the princes of Israel,* V. 2. *And say, Why did thy mother, a lioness, lie down among lionesses; bring up her whelps among young lions?* V. 3. *And she brought up one of her whelps: it became a young lion, and he learned to take prey; he devoured man.* V. 4. *And nations heard of him; he was caught in their pit, and they brought him with nose-rings into the land of Egypt.* V. 5. *And when she saw that her hope was exhausted, overthrown, she took one of her whelps, made it a young lion.* V. 6. *And he walked among lionesses, he became a young lion, and learned to take prey. He devoured man.* V. 7. *He knew its widows, and laid waste their cities; and the land and its fulness became waste, at the voice of his roaring.* V. 8. *Then nations round about from the provinces set up against him, and spread over him their net: he was caught in their pit.* V. 9. *And they put him in the cage with nose-rings, and brought him to the king of Babylon: brought him into a fortress, that his voice might not be heard any more on the mountains of Israel.*

The princes of Israel, to whom the lamentation applies, are the king (נְשִׂיאַ, as in Eze. 12:10), two of whom are so clearly pointed out in vv. 4 and 9, that there is no mistaking Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin. This fact alone is sufficient to protect the plural נְשִׂיאַ against the arbitrary alteration into the singular נְשִׂיאַ, proposed by Houbigant and Hitzig, after the reading of the LXX. The lamentation is not addressed to one particular prince, either Zedekiah (Hitzig) or Jehoiachin (Ros., Maurer), but to Israel as a nation; and the mother (v. 2) is the national community, the theocracy, out of which the kings were born, as is indisputably evident from v. 10. The words from מָה אִמֶּךָ to רִבְצָה form one sentence. It yields no good sense to separate מָה אִמֶּךָ from רִבְצָה, whether we adopt the rendering, “what is thy mother?” or take מָה with לְבִיאַ and render it, “how is thy mother a lioness?” unless, indeed, we supply the arbitrary clause “now, in

comparison with what she was before,” or change the interrogative into a preterite: “how has thy mother become a lioness?” The lionesses, among which Israel lay down, are the other kingdoms, the Gentile nations. The words have no connection with Gen. 49: 9, where Judah is depicted as a warlike lion. The figure is a different one here. It is not so much the strength and courage of the lion as its wildness and ferocity that are the points of resemblance in the passage before us. The mother brings up her young ones among young lions, so that they learn to take prey and devour men. גִּוֹר is the lion’s whelp, *catulus*; בְּפִיר, the young lion, which is old enough to go out in search of prey. הִתְאַל is a *Hiphil*, in the tropical sense, to cause to spring up, or grow up, i.e., to bring up. The thought is the following: Why has Israel entered into fellowship with the heathen nations? Why, then, has it put itself upon a level with the heathen nations, and adopted the rapacious and tyrannical nature of the powers of the world? The question “why then?” when taken with what follows, involves the reproof that Israel has struck out a course opposed to its divine calling, and will now have to taste the bitter fruits of this assumption of heathen ways. The heathen nations have taken captive its king, and led him away into heathen lands. וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֵלָיו, they heard of him (עָלָיו for אֵלָיו). The fate of Jehoahaz, to which v. 4 refers, is related in 2Ki. 23:31ff. — Vv. 5-7 refer to Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim, and not to Zedekiah, as Hitzig imagines. For the fact that Jehoiachin went out of his own accord to the king of Babylon (2Ki. 24:12), is not at variance with the figure contained in v. 8, according to which he was taken (as a lion) in a net. He simply gave himself up to the king of Babylon because he was unable to escape from the besieged city. Moreover, Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin are simply mentioned as examples, because they both fell into the hands of the world-powers, and their fate showed clearly enough “what the end must inevitably be, when Israelitish kings became ambitious of being lions, like the kings of the nations of the world” (Kliefoth). Jehoiakim was not so suitable an example as the others, because he died in Jerusalem. נוֹחַלָה, which has been explained in different ways, we agree with Ewald in regarding as the *Niphal* of יָחַל = חוּל, in the sense of feeling vexed, being exhausted or deceived, like the Syriac *‘wahel, viribus defecit, desperavit*. For even in Gen. 8:12, נוֹחַל simply means to wait; and this is inapplicable here, as waiting is not equivalent to waiting in vain. The change from חוּל to יָחַל is established by Jud. 3:25, where חוּל or חִיל occurs in the sense of יָחַל. In v. 7, the figurative language passes into a literal description of the ungodly course pursued by the king. He knew, i.e., dishonoured, its (Israel’s, the nation’s) widows. The Targum reads וַיִּרַע here instead of וַיִּדַע, and renders it accordingly, “he destroyed its palaces;” and Ewald has adopted the same rendering. But רָעַע, to break, or smash in pieces, e.g., a vessel (Psa. 2: 9), is

never used for the destruction of buildings; and אֱלִמְנוֹת does not mean palaces (אֲרָמֹנוֹת), but windows. There is nothing in the use of the word in Isa. 13:22 to support the meaning “palaces,” because the palaces are simply called *‘almânōth* (widows) there, with a sarcastic side glance at their desolate and widowed condition. Other conjectures are still more inadmissible. The thought is as follows: Jehoiachin went much further than Jehoahaz. He not only devoured men, but laid hands on defenceless widows, and laid the cities waste to such an extent that the land with its inhabitants became perfectly desolate through his rapacity. The description is no doubt equally applicable to his father Jehoiakim, in whose footsteps Jehoiachin walked, since Jehoiakim is described in Jer. 22:13ff. as a grievous despot and tyrant. In v. 8 the object רְשָׁתָם also belongs to יָתְנוּ: they set up and spread out their net. The plural מְצֻדוֹת is used in a general and indefinite manner: in lofty castles, mountain-fortresses, i.e., in one of them (cf. Jud. 12: 7).

*Eze. 19:10-14.* Destruction of the Kingdom, and Banishment of the People.

V. 10. *Thy mother was like a vine, planted by the water in thy repose; it became a fruitful and rich in tendrils from many waters.* V. 11. *And it had strong shoots for rulers' sceptres; and its growth ascended among the clouds, and was visible in its height in the multitude of its branches.* V. 12. *Then it was torn up in fury, cast to the ground, and the east wind dried up its fruit; its strong shoots were broken off, and withered; fire devoured them.* V. 13. *And now it is planted in the desert, in a dry and thirsty land.* V. 14. *There goeth out fire from the shoot of its branches, devoureth its fruit, so that there is no more a strong shoot upon it, a sceptre for ruling. — A lamentation it is, and it will be for lamentation.* —

From the lamentable fate of the princes transported to Egypt and Babylon, the ode passes to a description of the fate, which the lion-like rapacity of the princes is preparing for the kingdom and people. Israel resembled a vine planted by the water. The difficult word בְּדָמָי we agree with Hävernack and Kliefoth in tracing to the verb דָּמָה, to rest (Jer. 14:17), and regard it as synonymous with בְּדָמִי in Isa. 38:10: “in thy repose,” i.e., in the time of peaceful, undisturbed prosperity. For neither of the other renderings, “in thy blood” and “in thy likeness,” yields a suitable meaning. The latter explanation, which originated with Raschi and Kimchi, is precluded by the fact that Ezekiel always uses the word דְּמוּת to express the idea of resemblance. — For the figure of the vine, compare Psa. 80: 9ff. This vine sent out strong shoots for rulers’ sceptres; that is to say, it brought forth powerful kings, and grew up to a great height, even into the clouds. עֲבֹתִים signifies “cloud,” lit., thicket of clouds, not only here, but in Eze. 31: 3, 10, 14. The rendering “branches” or “thicket of foliage” is not suitable in any of these passages. The form of the word is not to



be taken as that of a new plural of עֲבוֹת, the plural of עֵב, which occurs in 2Sa. 23: 4 and Psa. 77:18; but is the plural of עֲבוֹת, an interlacing or thicket of foliage, and is simply transferred to the interlacing or piling up of the clouds. The clause וַיֵּרָא וְגו', and it appeared, was seen, or became visible, simply serves to depict still further the glorious and vigorous growth, and needs no such alteration as Hitzig proposes. This picture is followed in v. 12ff., without any particle of transition, by a description of the destruction of this vine. It was torn up in fury by the wrath of God, cast down to the ground, so that its fruit withered (compare the similar figures in Eze. 17:10). מִטְהָ עֵנָה is used collectively, as equivalent to מִטְהוֹת עֵז (v. 11); and the suffix in אֶכְלֶתְהוּ is written in the singular on account of this collective use of מִטְהָ. The uprooting ends in the transplanting of the vine into a waste, dry, unwatered land, — in other words, in the transplanting of the people, Israel, into exile. The dry land is Babylon, so described as being a barren soil in which the kingdom of God could not flourish. According to v. 14, this catastrophe is occasioned by the princes. The fire, which devours the fruit of the vine so that it cannot send out any more branches, emanates מִמִּטְהָ בְדִיָּה, from the shoot of its branches, i.e., from its branches, which are so prolific in shoots. מִטְהָ is the shoot which grew into rulers' sceptres, i.e., the royal family of the nation. The reference is to Zedekiah, whose treacherous breach of covenant (Eze. 17:15) led to the overthrow of the kingdom and of the earthly monarchy. The picture from v. 12 onwards is prophetic. The tearing up of the vine, and its transplantation into a dry land, had already commenced with the carrying away of Jeconiah; but it was not completed till the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of Zedekiah, which were still in the future at the time when these words were uttered. — The clause קִנְיָהּ הִיא וְגו' does not contain a concluding historical notice, as Hävernicks supposes, but simply the *finale* of the lamentation, indicating the credibility of the prediction which it contains. וַתֵּהִי is prophetic, like the perfects from וַתֵּשֶׁבֶט in v. 12 onwards; and the meaning is this: A lamentation forms the substance of the whole chapter; and it will lead to lamentation, when it is fulfilled.

## Ch. 20. The Past, Present, and Future of Israel

*Eze. 20.* The date given in Eze. 20: 1 applies not only to Eze. 20, but also to Eze. 20-23 (compare Eze. 24: 1); the prophetic utterances in these four chapters being bound together into a group of connected words of God, both by their contents and by the threefold repetition of the expression, “wilt thou judge?” (vid., Eze. 20: 4; 22: 2, and 23:36). The formula הֲתִשְׁפּוֹט, which is only omitted from the threat of punishment contained in Eze. 21, indicates at

the same time both the nature and design of these words of God. The prophet is to judge, i.e., to hold up before the people once more their sinful abominations, and to predict the consequent punishment. The circumstance which occasioned this is narrated in Eze. 20: 1-3. Men of the elders of Israel came to the prophet to inquire of the Lord. The occasion is therefore a similar one to that described in the previous group; for we have already been informed, in Eze. 14: 1, that elders had come to the prophet to hear God's word from him; but they had not gone so far as to inquire. Here, however (Eze. 20), they evidently address a question to the prophet, and through him to the Lord; though the nature of their inquiry is not given, and can only be gathered from the answer, which was given to them by the Lord through the prophet. The ground for the following words of God is therefore essentially the same as for those contained in Eze. 14-19; and this serves to explain the relation in which the two groups stand to each other, namely, that Eze. 20-24 simply contain a further expansion of the reproachful and threatening addresses of Eze. 14-19.

In Eze. 20 the prophet points out to the elders, in the form of a historical survey, how rebellious Israel had been towards the Lord from the very first, even in Egypt (vv. 5-9) and the desert (vv. 10-17 and 18-26), both the older and the later generations, how they had sinned against the Lord their God through their idolatry, and how it was only for His own name's sake that the Lord had not destroyed them in His anger (vv. 27-31). And as Israel hath not given up idolatry even in Canaan, the Lord would not suffer Himself to be inquired of by the idolatrous generation, but would refine it by severe judgments among the nations (vv. 32-38), and sanctify it thereby into a people well-pleasing to Him, and would then gather it again out of the dispersion, and bring it into the land promised to the fathers, where it would serve Him with sacrifices and gifts upon His holy mountain (vv. 39-44). This word of God is therefore a more literal repetition of the allegorical description contained in Eze. 16.

*Eze. 20: 1-4.* Date, occasion, and theme of the discourse which follows.

*V. 1. And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth (moon), on the tenth of the moon, there came men of the elders of Israel, to inquire of Jehovah, and sat down before me. V. 2. Then the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 3. Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Have ye come to inquire of me? As I live, if I suffer myself to be inquired of by you, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 4. Wilt thou judge them? Wilt thou judge, O son of man? Make known the abominations of their fathers to them.*

If we compare the date given in v. 1 with Eze. 8: 1, we shall find that this word of God was uttered only eleven months and five days after the one in Eze. 8; two years, one month, and five days after the call of Ezekiel to be a prophet

(Eze. 1: 2); and two years and five months before the blockading of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (Eze. 24: 1). Consequently it falls almost in the middle of the first section of Ezekiel's prophetic work. **דָּרַשׁ אֶת יְהוָה**, to seek Jehovah, i.e., to ask a revelation from Him. The Lord's answer in v. 3 is similar to that in Eze. 14: 3. Instead of giving a revelation concerning the future, especially with regard to the speedy termination of the penal sufferings, which the elders had, no doubt, come to solicit, the prophet is to judge them, i.e., as the following clause explains, not only in the passage before us, but also in Eze. 22: 3 and 23:36, to hold up before them the sins and abominations of Israel. It is in anticipation of the following picture of the apostasy of the nation from time immemorial that the sins of the fathers are mentioned here. "No reply is given to the sinners, but chiding for their sins; and He adds the oath, 'as I live,' that the sentence of refusal may be all the stronger" (Jerome). The question **הֲתִשְׁפּוּט**, which is repeated with emotion, "gives expression to an impatient wish, that the thing could have been done already" (Hitzig). The interrogative form of address is therefore adopted simply as a more earnest mode of giving expression to the command to go and do the thing. Hence the literal explanation of the word **הֲתִשְׁפּוּט** is also appended in the form of an imperative (**הוֹדִיעֵם**). — The prophet is to revert to the sins of the fathers, not merely for the purpose of exhibiting the magnitude of the people's guilt, but also to hold up before the sinners themselves, the patience and long-suffering which have hitherto been displayed by the Lord.

**Eze. 20: 5-9.** Election of Israel in Egypt. Its resistance to the commandments of God. —

V. 5. *And say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, In the day that I chose Israel, and lifted my hand to the seed of Jacob, and made myself known to them in the land of Egypt, and lifted my hand to them, saying, I am Jehovah, your God: V. 6. In that day I lifted my hand to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt into the land which I sought out for them, which floweth with milk and honey — it is an ornament of all lands: V. 7. And said to them, Cast away every man the abominations of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am Jehovah, your God. V. 8. But they were rebellious against me, and would not hearken to me. Not one of them threw away the abominations of his eyes, and they did not forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I thought to pour out my wrath upon them, to accomplish my anger upon them in the midst of the land of Egypt. V. 9. But I did it for my name's sake, that it might not be profaned before the eyes of the nations, in the midst of which they were, before whose eyes I had made myself known to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt.*

Vv. 5 and 6 form one period. **בְּיוֹם בָּחַרִי** (v. 5) is resumed in **בְּיוֹם הָהוּא** (v. 6), and the sentence continued. With **וְאָשָׂא** the construction with the infinitive passes over into the finite verb. Lifting the hand, sc. to heaven, is a gesture

employed in taking an oath (see the comm. on Exo. 6: 8). The substance of the oath is introduced by the word **לֵאמֹר** at the close of v. 5; but the clause **וַגִּידֵנָה** (and made myself known) is previously inserted, and then the lifting of the hand mentioned again to indicate the importance of this act of divine grace. The contents of vv. 5 and 6 rest upon Exo. 6: 2ff., where the Lord makes Himself known to Moses, and through him to the children of Israel, according to the nature involved in the name Jehovah, in which He had not yet revealed Himself to the patriarchs (Exo. 6: 3). Both **נִשְׂאתִי יָדַי** (I lifted my hand) and **אֲנִי יְהוָה** are taken from Exo. 6: 8. The word **תִּפְתֹּחַ**, from **פָּתַח**, to seek out, explore, also belongs to the Pentateuch (compare Deu. 1:33); and the same may be said of the description given of Canaan as “a land flowing with milk and honey” (vid., Exo. 3: 8, etc.). But **צִבִּי**, ornament, as an epithet applied to the land of Israel, is first employed by the prophets of the time of the captivity — namely, in vv. 6 and 15 of this chapter, in Jer. 3:19, and in Dan. 8: 9; 11:16, 41. The election of the Israelites to be the people of Jehovah, contained *eo ipso* the command to give up the idols of Egypt, although it was at Sinai that the worship of other gods was for the first time expressly prohibited (Exo. 20: 3), and Egyptian idolatry is only mentioned in Lev. 17: 7 (cf. Jos. 24:14). Ezekiel calls the idols “abominations of their eyes,” because, “although they were abominable and execrable things, they were looked upon with delight by them” (Rosenmüller). It is true that there is nothing expressly stated in the Pentateuch as to the refusal of the Israelites to obey the command of God, or their unwillingness to give up idolatry in Egypt; but it may be inferred from the statements contained in Exo. 6: 9 and 12, to the effect that the Israelites did not hearken to Moses when he communicated to them the determination of God to lead them out of Egypt, and still more plainly from their relapse into Egyptian idolatry, from the worship of the golden calf at Sinai (Exo. 32), and from their repeated desire to return to Egypt while wandering in the desert. <sup>121</sup>

Nor is there anything said in the Pentateuch concerning the determination of God to pour out His wrath upon the idolatrous people in Egypt. We need not indeed assume on this account that Ezekiel derived his information from some special traditional source, as Vitranga has done *Observv. ss. I. 263*), or regard the statement as a revelation made by God to Ezekiel, and through him to us. The words do not disclose to us either a particular fact or a definite decree of God; they simply contain a description of the attitude which God, from His inmost nature, assumes towards sinners who rebel against His holy commandments, and which He displayed both in the declaration made concerning Himself as a zealous, or jealous God, who visits iniquities (Exo. 20: 5), and also in the words addressed to Moses when the people fell into idolatry at Sinai, “Let me alone, that my wrath may wax not against them,

and that I may consume them” (Exo. 32:10). All that God expresses here, His heart must have felt in Egypt towards the people who would not desist from idolatry. For the words themselves, compare Eze. 7: 8; 6:12; 5:13. וַאֲנִי (v. 9), “but I did it for my name’s sake.” The missing object explaining what He did, namely, abstain from pouring out His wrath, is to be gathered from what follows: “that I might not profane my name.” This would have taken place if God had destroyed Israel by pouring out His wrath; in other words, have allowed them to be destroyed by the Egyptians. The heathen might then have said that Jehovah had been unable to liberate His people from their hand and power (cf. Num. 14:16 and Exo. 32:12). הָחֵל is an *infin. Niphal* of הָחֵל for הָחֵל (cf. Lev. 21: 4).

### *Eze. 20:10-17.* Behaviour of Israel in the desert.

V. 10. *And I led them out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the desert; V. 11. And gave them my statutes, and my rights I made known to them, which man is to do that he may live through them. V. 12. I also gave them my Sabbaths, that they might be for a sign between me and them, that they might now that I Jehovah sanctify them. V. 13. But the house of Israel was rebellious against me in the desert: they did not walk in my statutes, and my rights they rejected, which man is to do, that he may live through them, and my Sabbaths they greatly profaned: Then I thought to pour out my wrath upon them in the desert to destroy them. V. 14. But I did it for my name’s sake, that it might not be profaned before the eyes of the nations, before whose eyes I had led them out. V. 15. I also lifted my hand to them in the desert, not to bring them into the land which I had given (them), which floweth with milk and honey; it is an ornament of all lands, V. 16. Because they rejected my rights, did not walk in my statutes, and profaned my Sabbaths, for their heart went after their idols. V. 17. But my eye looked with pity upon them, so that I did not destroy them, and make an end of them in the desert. —*

God gave laws at Sinai to the people whom He had brought out of Egypt, through which they were to be sanctified as His own people, that they might live before God. On v. 11 compare Deu. 30:16 and 19. V. 12 is taken almost word for word from Exo. 31:13, where God concludes the directions for His worship by urging upon the people in the most solemn manner the observance of His Sabbaths, and thereby pronounces the keeping of the Sabbath the kernel of all divine worship. And as in that passage we are to understand by the Sabbaths the actual weekly Sabbaths, and not the institutions of worship as a whole, so here we must retain the literal signification of the word. It is only of the Sabbath recurring every week, and not of all the fasts, that it could be said it was a sign between Jehovah and Israel. It was a sign, not as a token, that they who observed it were Israelites, as Hitzig supposes, but to know (that they might know) that Jehovah was sanctifying them, namely, by the Sabbath rest — as a refreshing and elevation of the mind, in which Israel was to have a foretaste of that blessed resting from all works to which the people of God was

ultimately to attain (see the comm. on Exo. 20:11). It is from this deeper signification of the Sabbath that the prominence given to the Sabbaths here is to be explained, and not from the outward circumstance that in exile, when the sacrificial worship was necessarily suspended, the keeping of the Sabbath as the only bond which united the Israelites, so far as the worship of God was concerned (Hitzig). Historical examples of the rebellion of Israel against the commandments of God in the desert are given in Exo. 32: 1-6 and Num. 25: 1-3; and of the desecration of the Sabbath, in Exo. 16:27 and Num. 15:32. For the threat referred to in v. 13*b*, compare Exo. 32:10; Num. 14:11, 12. — Vv. 15 and 16 are not a repetition of v. 13 (Hitzig); nor do they introduce a limitation of v. 14 (Kliefoth). They simply relate what else God did to put bounds to the rebellion after He had revoked the decree to cut Israel off, at the intercession of Moses (Num. 14:11-19). He lifted His hand to the oath (Num. 14:21ff.), that the generation which had come out of Egypt should not come into the land of Canaan, but should die in the wilderness. Therewith He looked with pity upon the people, so that He did not make an end of them by following up the threat with a promise that the children should enter the land. **עֲשֵׂה כְּלָה**, as in Eze. 11:13.

*Eze. 20:18-26.* The generation that grew up in the desert. —

*V. 18. And I spake to their sons in the desert, Walk not in the statutes of your fathers, and keep not their rights, and do not defile yourselves with their idols. V. 19. I am Jehovah your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my rights, and do them, V. 20. And sanctify my Sabbaths, that they may be for a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am Jehovah your God. V. 21. But the sons were rebellious against me; they walked not in my statutes, and did not keep my rights, to do them, which man should do that he may live through them; they profaned my Sabbaths. Then I thought to pour out my wrath upon them, to accomplish my anger upon them in the desert. V. 22. But I turned back my hand and did it for my name's sake, that it might not be profaned before the eyes of the nations, before whose eyes I had them out. V. 23. I also lifted my hand to them in the desert, to scatter them among the nations, and to disperse them in the lands; V. 24. Because they did not my rights, and despised my statutes, profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after the idols of their fathers. V. 25. And I also gave them statutes, which were not good, and rights, through which they did not live; V. 26. And defiled them in their sacrificial gifts, in that they caused all that openeth the womb to pass through, that I might fill them with horror, that they might know that I am Jehovah.*

The sons acted like their fathers in the wilderness. Historical proofs of this are furnished by the accounts of the Sabbath-breaker (Num. 15:32ff.), of the rebellion of the company of Korah, and of the murmuring of the whole congregation against Moses and Aaron after the destruction of Korah's company (Num. 16 and 17). In the last two cases God threatened that He would destroy the whole congregation (cf. Num. 16:21 and 17: 9, 10); and on

both occasions the Lord drew back His hand at the intercession of Moses, and his actual intervention (Num. 16:22 and 17:11ff.), and did not destroy the whole nation for His name's sake. The statements in vv. 21b and 22 rest upon these facts. The words of v. 23 concerning the oath of God, that He would scatter the transgressors among the heathen, are also founded upon the Pentateuch, and not upon an independent tradition, or any special revelation from God. Dispersion among the heathen is threatened in Lev. 26:33 and Deu. 28:64, and there is no force in Kliefoth's argument that "these threats do not refer to the generation in the wilderness, but to a later age." For in both chapters the blessings and curses of the law are set before the people who were then in the desert; and there is not a single word to intimate that either blessing or curse would only be fulfilled upon the generations of later times.

On the contrary, when Moses addressed to the people assembled before him his last discourse concerning the renewal of the covenant (Deu. 29 and 30), he called upon them to enter into the covenant, "which Jehovah maketh with thee *this day*" (Deu. 29:12), and to keep all the words of this covenant and do them. It is upon this same discourse, in which Moses calls the threatenings of the law אֲלֵהָ, an oath (Deu. 29:13), that "the lifting of the hand of God to swear," mentioned in v. 23 of this chapter, is also founded. Moreover, it is not stated in this verse that God lifted His hand to scatter among the heathen the generation which had grown up in the wilderness, and to disperse them in the lands before their entrance into the land promised to the fathers; but simply that He had lifted His hand in the wilderness to threaten the people with dispersion among the heathen, without in any way defining the period of dispersion. In the blessings and threatenings of the law contained in Lev. 26 and Deu. 28-30, the nation is regarded as a united whole; so that no distinction is made between the successive generations, for the purpose of announcing this particular blessing or punishment to either one or the other. And Ezekiel acts in precisely the same way. It is true that he distinguishes the generation which came out of Egypt and was sentenced by God to die in the wilderness from the sons, i.e., the generation which grew up in the wilderness; but the latter, or the sons of those who had fallen, the generation which was brought into the land of Canaan, he regards as one with all the successive generations, and embraces the whole under the common name of "fathers" to the generation living in his day ("your fathers" v. 27), as we may clearly see from the turn given to the sentence which describes the apostasy of those who came into the land of Canaan (זֹאת וגו' עוֹד). In thus embracing the generation which grew up in the wilderness and was led into Canaan, along with the generations which followed and lived in Canaan, Ezekiel adheres very closely to the view prevailing in the Pentateuch, where the nation in all its successive generations is regarded as one united whole. The threat of dispersion among the heathen, which the Lord uttered in

the wilderness to the sons of those who were not to see the land, is also not mentioned by Ezekiel as one which God designed to execute upon the people who were wandering in the desert at the time. For if he had understood it in this sense, he would have mentioned its non-fulfilment also, and would have added a **וְאֵשׁ לְמַאֲן שְׁמִי וְגו'**, as he has done in the case of the previous threats (cf. vv. 22, 14, and 9). But we do not find this either in v. 24 or v. 26. The omission of this turn clearly shows that v. 23 does not refer to a punishment which God designed to inflict, but did not execute for His name's sake; but that the dispersion among the heathen, with which the transgressors of His commandments were threatened by God when in the wilderness, is simply mentioned as a proof that even in the wilderness the people, whom God had determined to lead into Canaan, were threatened with that very punishment which had now actually commenced, because rebellious Israel had obstinately resisted the commandments and rights of its God.

These remarks are equally applicable to vv. 25 and 26. These verses are not to be restricted to the generation which was born in the wilderness and gathered to its fathers not long after its entrance into Canaan, but refer to their descendants also, that is to say, to the fathers of our prophet's contemporaries, who were born and had died in Canaan. God gave them statutes which were not good, and rights which did not bring them life. It is perfectly self-evident that we are not to understand by these statutes and rights, which were not good, either the Mosaic commandments of the ceremonial law, as some of the Fathers and earlier Protestant commentators supposed, or the threatenings contained in the law; so that this needs no elaborate proof. The ceremonial commandments given by God were good, and had the promise attached to them, that obedience to them would give life; whilst the threats of punishment contained in the law are never called **חֻקִּים** and **מִשְׁפָּטִים**. Those statutes only are called "not good" the fulfilment of which did not bring life or blessings and salvation. The second clause serves as an explanation of the first. The examples quoted in v. 26 show what the words really mean. The defiling in their sacrificial gifts (v. 26), for example, consisted in their causing that which opened the womb to pass through, i.e., in the sacrifice of the first-born. **הָעֵבִיר כֹּל-פֶּטֶר רַחֵם** points back to Exo. 13:12; only **לִיהוָה**, which occurs in that passage, is omitted, because the allusion is not to the commandment given there, but to its perversion into idolatry. This formula is used in the book of Exodus (*l.c.*) to denote the dedication of the first-born to Jehovah; but in v. 13 this limitation is introduced, that the first-born of man is to be redeemed. **הָעֵבִיר** signifies a dedication through fire (= **הָעֵבִיר בְּאֵשׁ**, v. 31), and is adopted in the book of Exodus, where it is joined to **לִיהוָה**, in marked opposition to the Canaanitish custom of dedicating children of Moloch by februation in fire (see the comm. on



Exo. 13:12). The prophet refers to this Canaanitish custom, and cites it as a striking example of the defilement of the Israelites in their sacrificial gifts (נִמְמָ, to make unclean, not to declare unclean, or treat as unclean). That this custom also made its way among the Israelites, is evident from the repeated prohibition against offering children through the fire to Moloch (Lev. 18:21 and Deu. 18:10). When, therefore, it is affirmed with regard to a statute so sternly prohibited in the law of God, that Jehovah gave it to the Israelites in the wilderness, the word נָתַן (give) can only be used in the sense of a judicial sentence, and must not be taken merely as indicating divine permission; in other words, it is to be understood, like 2 Thess. 2:11 (“God sends them strong delusion”) and Act. 7:42 (“God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven”), in the sense of hardening, whereby whoever will not renounce idolatry is so given up to its power, that it draws him deeper and deeper in. This is in perfect keeping with the statement in v. 26 as the design of God in doing this: “that I might fill them with horror;” i.e., might excite such horror and amazement in their minds, that if possible they might be brought to reflect and to return to Jehovah their God.

*Eze. 20:27-31.* Israel committed these sins in Canaan also, and to this day has not given them up; therefore God will not allow the idolatrous generation to inquire of Him. —

*V. 27. Therefore speak to the house of Israel, O son of man, and say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Still further have your fathers blasphemed me in this, with the faithlessness which they have shown toward me. V. 28. When I had brought them into the land, which I had lifted my hand to give them, then they looked out every high hill and every thickly covered tree, and offered their sacrifices there, and gave their irritating gifts there, and presented the fragrance of their pleasant odour there, and poured out their drink-offerings there. V. 29. And I said to them, What height is that to which ye go? And its name is called Height to this day. V. 30. Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, What? Do ye defile yourselves in the way of your fathers; and go whoring after their abominations; V. 31. And defile yourselves in all your idols to this day, by lifting up your gifts, and causing your sons to pass through the fire; and should I let myself be inquired of by you? As I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, I will not let myself be inquired of by you.*

The לָכֵן in v. 27 is resumed in v. 30; and there the answer given by God to the elders, who had come to inquire of Him, is first communicated, after an express declaration of the fact that Israel had continued its idolatry in the most daring manner, even after its entrance into Canaan. But the form in which this is done — עוֹד זֹאת, “still further in this” — is to be understood as intimating that the conduct of the fathers of the existing generation, and therefore not merely of those who grew up in the wilderness, but also of those who had lived in Canaan, has already been described in general terms in the preceding verses,

and that what follows simply adds another novel feature. But this can only be the case if vv. 23-26 are taken in the sense given above. **זאת** is an accusative; and **גִּדְרֵי** is construed with the accusative both of the person and thing. The more precise definition of **זאת** is not given in **בַּמַּעֲלָם בִּי** at the end of the verse, but in the idolatry depicted in v. 28. **מַאֲל** refers to the faithlessness involved in the breach of the covenant and in idolatry. This is the general description; whilst the idolatry mentioned in v. 28b constituted one particular feature, in which the faithlessness appeared in the form of blasphemy. For the fact itself, namely, the worship on high places, which was practised on every hand, see Eze. 6:13; 16:24, 25; 1Ki. 14:23; 2Ki. 17:10.

In the enumeration of the offerings, there is something striking in the position in which **בַּאֵם קָרְבָּנָם** stands, namely, between the slaughtered sacrifices (**זִבְחִים**) and the increase- and drink-offerings; and this is no doubt the reason why the clause **וַיִּתְּנוּ שָׁם וּגְוֹ** is omitted from the *Cod. Vat.* and *Alex.* of the LXX; and even Hitzig proposes to strike it out. But Theodoret found this reading in the *Alex. Version*; and Hitzig is wrong in affirming that **קָרְבָּן** is used in connection with sacrifices, meat-offerings, and drink-offerings. The meat-offerings are not expressly named, for **רִיחַ נִיחֹחַ** does not signify meat-offerings, but is used in the law for the odour of all the offerings, both slaughtered sacrifices and meat-offerings, even though in Eze. 16:19 it is applied to the odour of the bloodless offerings alone. And in the same way does **קָרְבָּן** embrace all the offerings, even the slain offerings, in Eze. 40:43, in harmony with Lev. 1:2; 2:1, and other passages. That it is used in this general signification here, is evident from the introduction of the word **בַּאֵם**, irritation or provocation of their gifts, i.e., their gifts which provoked irritation on the part of God, because they were offered to idols. As this sentence applies to all the sacrifices (bloody and bloodless), so also does the clause which follows, **וַיִּשְׂימוּ שָׁם וּגְוֹ**, refer to all the offerings which were burned upon the altar, without regard to the material employed. Consequently Ezekiel mentions only slain offerings and drink-offerings, and, by the two clauses inserted between, describes the offering of the slaughtered sacrifices as a gift of irritation to God, and of pleasant fragrance to the idolatrous worshippers who presented them. He does not mention the meat-offerings separately, because they generally formed an accompaniment to the slain offerings, and therefore were included in these. But although God had called the people to account for this worship on high places, they had not relinquished it even “to this day.” This is no doubt the meaning of v. 29, which has been interpreted in very different ways. The context shows, in the most conclusive manner, that **הַבְּמָה** is to be taken collectively, and that the use of the singular is to be explained from the antithesis to the one divinely appointed

Holy Place in the temple, and not, as Kimchi and Hävernäck suppose, from any allusion to one particular *bâmâh* of peculiar distinction, viz., “the great high place at Gibeon.” The question **הַמָּוֹת הַבְּמִתָּה** is not expressive of contempt (Hitzig), but “is founded upon the assumption that they would have to give an account of their doings; and merely asks, What kind of heights are those to which you are going? Who has directed you to go thither with your worship?” (Kliefoth). There is no need to refute the trivial fancy of J. D. Michaelis, which has been repeated by Hitzig, namely, that Ezekiel has taken **הַמָּוֹת** as a derivative from **מָה** and **בָּא**. Again, the question does not presuppose a word addressed by God to Israel, which Ezekiel only has handed down to us; but is simply a rhetorical mode of presenting the condemnation by God of the worship of the high places, to which both the law and the earlier prophets had given utterance. The next clause, “and their name was called Height” (high place), is not to be regarded as containing merely a historical notice of the name given to these idolatrous places of worship; but the giving of the name is a proof of the continued existence of the thing; so that the words affirm, that notwithstanding the condemnation on the part of God, Israel had retained these high places, — had not abolished them to this day. — Vv. 30 and 31 facilitate the transition from the first part of this word of God to the second. What has already been said in vv. 5-29 concerning the idolatry of the people, from the time of its election onwards, is here expressly applied to the existing generation, and carries with it the declaration to them, that inasmuch as they are defiling themselves by idolatry, as their fathers did, Jehovah cannot permit Himself to be inquired of by them. The thought is couched in the form of a question, to express astonishment that those who denied the Lord, and dishonoured Him by their idolatry, should nevertheless imagine that they could obtain revelations from Him. The lifting up (**רָאָה**, from **רָאָה**) of gifts signifies the offering of sacrifices upon the altars of the high places. For v. 31b, compare v. 3. — With this declaration God assigns the reason for the refusal to listen to idolaters, which had already been given in v. 3. But it does not rest with this refusal. God now proceeds to disclose to them the thoughts of their own hearts, and announces to them that He will refine them by severe judgments, and bring them thereby to repentance of their sins, that He may then gather them out of the dispersion, and make them partakers of the promised salvation as a people willingly serving Him. — In this way do vv. 32-44 cast a prophetic glance over the whole of the future history of Israel.

**Eze. 20:32-38.** The judgment awaiting Israel of purification among the heathen.

*V. 32. And that which riseth up in your mind shall not come to pass, in that ye say, We will be like the heathen, like the families of the lands, to serve wood and stone.*

V. 33. *As I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, with strong hand and with outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I rule over you.* V. 34. *And I will bring you out of the nations, and gather you out of the lands in which ye have been scattered, with strong hand and with outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out,* V. 35. *And will bring you into the desert of the nations, and contend with you there face to face.* V. 36. *As I contended with your fathers in the desert of the land of Egypt, so will I contend with you, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.* V. 37. *And I will cause you to pass through under the rod, and bring you into the bond of the covenant.* V. 38. *And I will separate from you the rebellious, and those who are apostates from me; out of the land of their sojourning will I lead them out, but into the land of Israel shall they not come; that ye may know that I am Jehovah.*

**הַעֲלָה אֶל רוּחַ**, that which rises up in the spirit, is the thought that springs up in the mind. What this thought was is shown in v. 32b, viz., we will be like the heathen in the lands of the earth, to serve wood and stone; that is to say, we will become idolaters like the heathen, pass into heathenism. This shall not take place; on the contrary, God will rule over them as King with strong arm and fury. The words, “with strong hand and stretched-out arm,” are a standing expression in the Pentateuch for the mighty acts by which Jehovah liberated His people from the power of the Egyptians, and led them out of Egypt (cf. Exo. 6: 1, 6 with **וּבְמִשְׁפָּטִים גְּדוּלִים**). Here, on the contrary, they are connected with **בְּחֵמָה שְׂפוּכָה**, and are used in v. 33 with reference to the government of God over Israel, whilst in v. 34 they are applied to the bringing out of Israel from the midst of the heathen. By the introduction of the clause “with fury poured out,” the manifestation of the omnipotence of God which Israel experience in its dispersion, and which it was still to experience among the heathen, is described as an emanation of the divine wrath, a severe and wrathful judgment. The leading and gathering of Israel out of the nations (v. 34) is neither their restoration from the existing captivity in Babylon, nor their future restoration to Canaan on the conversion of the people who were still hardened, and therefore rejected by God. The former assumption would be decidedly at variance with both **מִן הָאֲמִים** and **מִן הָאֲרָצוֹת**, since Israel was dispersed only throughout one land and among one people at the time of the Babylonian captivity. Moreover, neither of the assumptions is reconcilable with the context, more especially with v. 35. According to the context, this leading out is an act of divine anger, which Israel is to feel in connection therewith; and this cannot be affirmed of either the redemption of the people out of the captivity in Babylon, or the future gathering of Israel from its dispersion. According to v. 35, God will conduct those who are brought out from the nations and gathered together out of the lands into the desert of the nations, and contend with them there. The “desert of the nations” is not the desert lying between Babylonia and Palestine, on the coastlands of the Mediterranean, through which the Israelites would have to pass on their way home from

Babylon (Rosenmüller, Hitzig, and others). For there is no imaginable reason why this should be called the desert of the nations in distinction from the desert of Arabia, which also touched the borders of several nations. The expression is doubtless a typical one, the future guidance of Israel being depicted as a repetition of the earlier guidance of the people from Egypt to Canaan; as it also is in Hos. 2:16. All the separate features in the description indicate this, more especially vv. 36 and 37, where it is impossible to overlook the allusion to the guidance of Israel in the time of Moses.

The more precise explanation of the words must depend, however, upon the sense in which we are to understand the expression, “desert of the land of Egypt.” Here also the supposition that the Arabian desert is referred to, because it touched the border of Egypt, does not furnish a sufficient explanation. It touched the border of Canaan as well. Why then did not Ezekiel name it after the land of Canaan? Evidently for no other reason than that the time spent by the Israelites in the Arabian desert resembled their sojourn in Egypt much more closely than their settlement in Canaan, because, while there, they were still receiving their training for their entrance into Canaan, and their possession and enjoyment of its benefits, just as much as in the land of Egypt. And in a manner corresponding to this, the “desert of the nations” is a figurative expression applied to the world of nations, from whom they were indeed spiritually distinct, whilst outwardly they were still in the midst of them, and had to suffer from their oppression. Consequently the leading of Israel out of the nations (v. 34) is not a local and corporeal deliverance out of heathen lands, but a spiritual severance from the heathen world, in order that they might not be absorbed into it or become inseparably blended with the heathen. God will accomplish this by means of severe chastisements, by contending with them as He formerly contended with their fathers in the Arabian desert. God contends with His people when He charges them with their sin and guilt, not merely in words, but also with deeds, i.e., through chastening and punishments. The words “face to face” point back to Deu. 5: 4: “Jehovah talked with you face to face in the mount, out of the midst of the fire.” Just as at Sinai the Lord talked directly with Israel, and made known to it the devouring fire of His own holy nature, in so terrible a manner that all the people trembled and entreated Moses to act the part of a mediator between them, promising at the same time obedience to him (Exo. 20:19); so will the Lord make Himself known to Israel in the desert of the world of nations with the burning zeal of His anger, that it may learn to fear Him. This contending is more precisely defined in vv. 37 and 38. I will cause you to pass through under the (shepherd’s) rod. A shepherd lets his sheep pass through under his rod for the purpose of counting them, and seeing whether they are in good condition or not (vid., Jer. 33:13). The figure is here applied to God. Like a shepherd, He will cause His flock, the Israelites, to pass through

under His rod, i.e., take them into His special care, and bring them “into the bond of the covenant” (מִסְרָתָהּ, not from מִסֵּר [Raschi], but from אָסַר, for מֵאֲסָרָהּ, a fetter); that is to say, not “I will bind myself to you and you to me by a new covenant” (Bochart, *Hieroz.* I. p. 508), for this is opposed to the context, but, as the Syriac version has rendered it, *b-mardûtâ (in disciplina)*, “the discipline of the covenant.” By this we are not merely to understand the covenant punishments, with which transgressors of the law are threatened, as Hävernick does, but the covenant promises must also be included. For not only the threats of the covenant, but the promises of the covenant, are *bonds* by which God trains His people; and אָסַר is not only applied to burdensome and crushing fetters, but to the bonds of love as well (vid., Son. 7: 6). Kliefoth understands by the fetter of the covenant the Mosaic law, as being the means employed by God to preserve the Israelites from mixing with the nations while placed in the midst of them, and to keep them to Himself, and adds the following explanation, — ”this law, through which they should have been able to live, they have now to wear as a fetter, and to feel the chastisement thereof.” But however correct the latter thought may be in itself, it is hardly contained in the words, “lead them into the fetter (band) of the law.” Moreover, although the law did indeed preserve Israel from becoming absorbed into the world of nations, the fact that the Jews were bound to the law did not bring them to the knowledge of the truth, or bring to pass the purging of the rebellious from among the people, to which v. 38 refers. All that the law accomplished in this respect in the case of those who lived among the heathen was effected by its threatenings and its promises, and not by its statutes and their faithful observance. This discipline will secure the purification of the people, by severing from the nation the rebellious and apostate. God will bring them forth out of the land of this pilgrimage, but will not bring them into the land of Israel. אֶרֶץ מְגוּרִים is the standing epithet applied in the Pentateuch to the land of Canaan, in which the patriarchs lived as pilgrims, without coming into actual possession of the land (cf. Gen. 17: 8; 28: 4; 36: 7; Exo. 6: 4). This epithet Ezekiel has transferred to the lands of Israel’s exile, in which it was to lead a pilgrim-life until it was ripe for entering Canaan. הוֹצִיא, to lead out, is used here for clearing out by extermination, as the following clause, “into the land of Israel shall they not come,” plainly shows. The singular יָבוֹא is used distributively: not one of the rebels will enter.

**Eze. 20:39-44.** The ultimate gathering of Israel, and its conversion to the Lord.

V. 39. *Ye then, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Go ye, serve every one his idols! but afterwards — truly ye will hearken to me, and no longer desecrate my holy name with your sacrificial gifts and your idols, V. 40. But upon my holy*

mountain, upon the high mountain of Israel, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, there will all the house of Israel serve me, the whole of it in the land; there will I accept them gladly, there will I ask for your heave-offerings and the first-fruits of your gifts in all that ye make holy. V. 41. As a pleasant odour will I accept you gladly, when I bring you out from the nations, and gather you out of the lands, in which you have been scattered, and sanctify myself in you before the eyes of the heathen nations. V. 42. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the land which I lifted up my hand to give to your fathers; V. 43. And there ye will think of your ways and your deeds, with which ye have defiled yourselves, and will loathe yourselves (lit., experience loathing before yourselves) on account of all your evil deeds, which ye have performed; V. 44. And ye will know that I am Jehovah, when I deal with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways and according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, is the saying of Jehovah.

After the Lord has declared to the people that He will prevent its being absorbed into the heathen world, and will exterminate the ungodly by severe judgments, the address passes on, with the direction henceforth to serve idols only, to a prediction of the eventual conversion, and the restoration to Canaan of the purified nation. The direction, “Go ye, serve every one his idols,” contains, after what precedes it, a powerful appeal to repent. God thereby gives up the impenitent to do whatever they will, having first of all told them that not one of them will come into the land of Canaan. Their opposition will not frustrate His plan of salvation. The words which follow from **וְאַחֵר** onwards have been interpreted in different ways. It is opposed to the usage of the language to connect **וְאַחֵר** with **עֲבֹדוּ**, serve ye hereafter also (De Wette, etc.), for **וְ** has not the force of the Latin *et = etiam*, and still less does it signify “afterwards just as before.” Nor is it allowable to connect **וְאַחֵר** closely with what follows, in the sense of “and hereafter also, if ye will hearken to me, profane ye my name no more” (Rosenmüller, Maurer). For if **תִּחְלְלוּ** were used as an imperative, either it would have to stand at the beginning of the sentence, or it would be preceded by **אַל** instead of **לֹא**. Moreover, the antithesis between not being willing to hear and not profaning the name of God, is imported arbitrarily into the text. The name of the Lord is profaned not only by sacrifices offered in external form to Jehovah and in the heart to idols, but also by disobedience to the word and commandments of God. It is much better to take **וְאַחֵר** by itself, and to render the following particle, **אִם**, as the ordinary sign of an oath: “but afterwards (i.e., in the future)...verily, ye will hearken to me;” that is to say, ye will have been converted from your idolatry through the severe judgments that have fallen upon you. The ground for this thought is introduced in v. 40 by a reference to the fact that all Israel will then serve the Lord upon His holy mountain. **כִּי** is not “used emphatically before a direct address” (Hitzig), but has a causal signification. For **הָרַם מְרוֹם יְשׁוּ**, see the comm. on Eze. 17:23. In the expression “all Israel,” which is rendered more emphatic by

the addition of בְּלֶה, there is an allusion to the eventual termination of the severance of the people of God (compare Eze. 37:22). Then will the Lord accept with delight both them and their sacrificial gifts. תְּרוּמוֹת, heave-offerings (see the comm. on ex. 25: 2 and Lev. 2: 9), used here in the broader sense of all the sacrificial gifts, along with which the gifts of first-fruits are specially named. מִשְׁאֹרֹת, as applied to holy offerings in the sense of ἀναθήματα, belongs to the later usage of the language. בְּכָל־קִדְשֵׁיכֶם, consisting of all your consecrated gifts. קִדְשִׁים, as in Lev. 22:15. This promise includes *implicite* the bringing back of Israel from its banishment. This is expressly mentioned in v. 41; but even there it is only introduced as self-evident in the subordinate clause, whereas the cheerful acceptance of Israel on the part of God constitutes the leading thought.

בְּרִיחַ נִיחַח, as an odour of delight (ב, the so-called *Beth essentiae*), will God accept His people. רִיחַ נִיחַח, odour of satisfaction, is the technical expression for the cheerful (well-pleased) acceptance of the sacrifice, or rather of the feelings of the worshipper presenting the sacrifice, which ascend to God in the sacrificial odour (see the comm. on Gen. 8:21). The thought therefore is the following: When God shall eventually gather His people out of their dispersion, He will accept them as a sacrifice well-pleasing to Him, and direct all His good pleasure towards them. וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי בְכֶם does not mean, I shall be sanctified through you, and is not to be explained in the same sense as Lev. 22:32 (Rosenmüller), for ב is not equivalent to בְּתוֹךְ; but it signifies “I will sanctify myself on you,” as in Num. 20:13, Lev. 10: 3, and other passages, where נִקְדַּשׁ is construed with ב *pers.* (cf. Eze. 28:25; 36:23; 38:16; 39:27), in the sense of proving oneself holy, mostly by judgment, but here through having made Israel into a holy nation by the refining judgment, and one to which He can therefore grant the promised inheritance. — Vv. 42ff. Then will Israel also recognise its God in His grace, and be ashamed of its former sins. For v. 43, compare Eze. 6: 9 and 16:61. — With regard to the fulfilment, as Kliefoth has correctly observed, “in the prediction contained in vv. 32-38, the whole of the searching judgments, by which God would lead Israel to conversion, are summed up in one, which includes not only the Babylonian captivity, the nearest and the first, but the still more remote judgment, namely, the present dispersion; for it is only in the present dispersion of Israel that God has really taken it into the wilderness of the nations, just as it was only in the rejection of Christ that its rebellious attitude was fully manifested. And as the prophecy of the state of punishment combines in this way both the nearer and more remote; so are both the nearer and more distant combined in what vv. 40 to 44 affirm with regard to the ultimate fate of Israel.” The gathering of Israel from among the heathen will



be fulfilled in its conversion to Christ, and hitherto it has only taken place in very small beginnings. The principal fulfilment is still to come, when Israel, as a nation, shall be converted to Christ. With regard to the bringing back of the people into “the land of Israel,” see the comm. on Eze. 37, where this promise is more fully expanded.

## **Ch. 20:45 to Ch. 21:32 (Heb. Ch. 21).** <sup>122</sup>

### **PROPHECY OF THE BURNING FOREST AND THE SWORD OF THE LORD**

*Eze. 20:45-21:32.* A fire kindled by the Lord will burn the forest of the south (Eze. 20:45-48). This figurative announcement is explained in what follows, in order that the divine threat may make an impression upon the people (v. 49). The Lord will draw His sword from its scabbard, and cut off from Jerusalem and the land of Israel both righteous and wicked (Eze. 21: 1-17); that is to say, the king of Babylon will draw his sword against Jerusalem and the sons of Ammon, and will, first of all, put an end to the kingdom of Judah, and then destroy the Ammonites (vv. 18-32). The prophecy divides itself accordingly into three parts: viz., (1) the prediction of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah; (2) the explanation of this prediction by the threat that the sword of the Lord will smite all the inhabitants of Judah, which threat is divisible into three sections, Eze. 21: 1-7, 8-13, and 14-17; (3) the application of what is said with regard to the sword to Nebuchadnezzar’s expedition against Jerusalem and the Ammonites, which may also be divided into three sections, — viz. (*a*) the general announcement of Nebuchadnezzar’s design (vv. 18-23) and its execution; (*b*) by his expedition against Jerusalem, to destroy the kingdom of Judah (vv. 24-27); and (*c*) by his expedition against the Ammonites (vv. 28-32). — The first four or five verses are taken by many in connection with Eze. 20; and Kliefoth still maintains that they should be separated from what follows, and attached to that chapter as a second word of God. But neither Eze. 20:49 nor the formula in Eze. 21: 1, “the word of Jehovah came to me,” warrants our separating the parabolic prediction in Eze. 20:45-48 from the interpretation in vv. 1-17. And the third part is also connected with what precedes, so as to form one single discourse, by the allusion to the sword in vv. 19 and 28, and by the fact that the figure of the fire is resumed in vv. 21 and 32. And there is all the less ground for taking the formula, “and the word of Jehovah came to me,” as determining the division of the several portions in this particular instance, from the circumstance that the section (vv. 1-17) in which it occurs both at the commencement and in the middle (vv. 1 and 8), is obviously divided into the minor sections or turns by the threefold occurrence of the verb **וַיְהַבֵּא** (“and prophesy”: vv. 2, 9, and 14).

*Eze. 20:45-49.* The burning forest.

V. 45. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 46. *Son of man, direct thy face toward the south, and trickle down towards the south, and prophesy concerning the forest of the field in the south land;* V. 47. *And say to the forest of the south land, Hear the word of Jehovah; Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I kindle a fire in thee, which will consume in thee every green tree, and every dry tree: the blazing flame will not be extinguished, and all faces from the south to the north will be burned thereby.* V. 48. *And all flesh shall see that I, Jehovah, have kindled it: it shall not be extinguished.* V. 49. *And I said, Ah, Lord Jehovah! they say of me, Does he not speak in parables?*

The prophet is to turn his face toward the south, and prophesy concerning the forest of the field there. **הַמִּזְרָח** is used for prophesying, as in Amos 7:16 and Mic. 2:6, 11. The distinction between the three epithets applied to the south is the following: **תִּמְנָן** is literally that which lies on the right hand, hence the south is a particular quarter of the heavens; **דְּרוֹם**, which only occurs in Ezekiel and Ecclesiastes, with the exception of Deu. 33:23 and Job. 37:17, is derived from **דָּרַר**, to shine or emit streams of light, and probably signifies the brilliant quarter; **נֹגֵב**, the dry, parched land, is a standing epithet for the southern district of Palestine and the land of Judah (see the comm. on Jos. 15:21). — The forest of the field in the south is a figure denoting the kingdom of Judah (**נֹגֵב** is in apposition to **הַשָּׂדֶה**, and is appended to it as a more precise definition). **שָׂדֶה** is not used here for a field, as distinguished from a city or a garden; but for the fields in the sense of country or territory, as in Gen. 14:7 and 32:3. In v. 47, **יֵאֵר הַנֹּגֵב**, forest of the south land, is the expression applied to the same object (**הַנֹּגֵב**, with the article, is a geographical term for the southern portion of Palestine). The forest is a figure signifying the population, or the mass of people. Individual men are trees. The green tree is a figurative representation of the righteous man, and the dry tree of the ungodly (v. 3, compare Luk. 23:31). The fire which Jehovah kindles is the fire of war. The combination of the synonyms **לְהַבַּת שְׂלֵהֶבֶת**, flame of the flaming brightness, serves to strengthen the expression, and is equivalent to the strongest possible flame, the blazing fire. **בְּכָל-פָּנִים**, all faces are not human faces or persons, in which case the prophet would have dropped the figure; but *pānim* denotes generally the outside of things, which is the first to feel the force of the flame. “All the faces” of the forest are every single thing in the forest, which is caught at once by the flame. In v. 4, *kōl-pānim* (all faces) is interpreted by *kōl-bāsar* (all flesh). From south to north, i.e., through the whole length of the land. From the terrible fierceness of the fire, which cannot be extinguished, every one will know that God has kindled it, that it has been sent in judgment. The words of the prophet himself, in Eze. 20:49, presuppose that he has uttered these parabolic words in the

hearing of the people, and that they have ridiculed them as obscure (*māshâl* is used here in the sense of obscure language, words difficult to understand, as *παράβολή* also is in Mat. 13:10). At the same time, it contains within itself request that they may be explained. This request is granted; and the simile is first of all interpreted in Eze. 21: 1-7, and then still further expanded in vv. 8ff.

*Eze. 21: 1-7.* The sword of the Lord and its disastrous effects. —

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 2. *Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and trickle over the holy places, and prophesy over the land of Israel,* V. 3. *And say to the land of Israel, Thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with thee, and will draw my sword out of its scabbard, and cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* V. 4. *Because I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword go forth from its scabbard against all flesh from south to north.* V. 5. *And all flesh shall know that I, Jehovah, have drawn my sword out of its scabbard: it shall not return again.* V. 6. *And thou, son of man, sigh! so that the hips break, and with bitter pain sigh before their eyes!* V. 7. *And when they say to thee, Wherefore dost thou sigh? say, Because of a report that it is coming; and every heart will sink, and all hands become powerless, and every spirit will become dull, and all knees turn into water: Behold, it cometh, and will happen, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

In the preceding parable, the expression “forest of the field in the south,” or “forest of the south-land,” was enigmatical. This is explained to signify Jerusalem with its holy places (*מִקְדָּשִׁים*, see comm. on Eze. 7:24), and the land of Israel, i.e., the kingdom of Judah. In accordance with this, the fire kindled by the Lord is interpreted as being the sword of the Lord. It is true that this is a figurative expression; but it is commonly used for war, which brings with it devastation and death, and would be generally intelligible. The sword will cut off both righteous and wicked. This applies to the outer side of the judgment, inasmuch as both good and bad fall in war. This is the only aspect brought into prominence here, since the great purpose was to alarm the sinners, who were boasting of their security; but the distinction between the two, as described in Eze. 9: 4ff., is not therefore to be regarded as no longer existing. This sword will not return, sc. into the scabbard, till it has accomplished the result predicted in v. 3 (cf. 2Sa. 1:22; Isa. 55:11). As Tremellius has aptly observed upon this passage, “the last slaughter is contrasted with the former ones, in which, after the people had been chastened fore a time, the sword was returned to its scabbard again.” In order to depict the terrors of this judgment before the eyes of the people, the prophet is commanded to groan before their eyes in the most painful way possible (vv. 6ff.). *בְּשִׁבְרוֹן מְתָנִים*, with breaking of the hips, i.e., with pain sufficient to break the hips, the seat of strength in man (compare Nah. 2:11; Isa. 21: 3). *מְרִירוֹת*, bitterness, i.e., bitter anguish. The reason which he is to assign to the questioners for this sighing is “on account of the

report that is coming,” — an *antiphrasis* for “on account of the coming report” (cf. Gen. 1: 4, etc.). the report comes when the substance of it is realized. The reference is to the report of the sword of the Lord, — that is to say, of the approach of the Chaldeans to destroy Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah. The impression which this disclosure will make upon the hearers will be perfectly paralyzing (v. 7b). All courage and strength for offering resistance will be crippled and broken. נִמְסַם בְּלִלְבָב (cf. Nah. 2:11) is strengthened by כָּל־רוּחַ בְּהִתָּה, every spirit will become dull, so that no one will know what counsel to give. כָּל־בְּרָפִים תִּלְכְּנָה וְגוֹ' corresponds to רָפוּ כָּל־יָדַיִם (cf. Eze. 7:17). The threat is strengthened by the words, “behold, it cometh, and will take place.” The subject is שְׂמוּעָה, the report, i.e., the substance of the report. — This threat is more fully expanded in vv. 8-17; vv. 8-13 corresponding to vv. 1-5, and vv. 14-17 to vv. 6, 7.

*Eze. 21: 8-17.* The sword is sharpened for slaying.

V. 8. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 9. Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith Jehovah, A sword, a sword sharpened and also polished: V. 10. That it may effect a slaughter is it sharpened; that it may flash is it polished: or shall we rejoice (saying), the sceptre of my son despiseth all wood? V. 11. But it has been given to be polished, to take it in the hand; it is sharpened, the sword, and it is polished, to give it into the hand of the slayer. V. 12. Cry and howl, son of man, for it goeth over my people, it goeth over all the princes of Israel: they have fallen by the sword along with my people: therefore smite upon the thigh. V. 13. For the trial is made, and what if the despising sceptre shall not come? is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 14. And thou, son of man, prophesy and smite the hands together, and the sword shall double itself into threefold, the sword of the pierced: it is the sword of a pierced one, of the great one, which encircles them. V. 15. That the heart may be dissolved, and stumbling-blocks may be multiplied, I have set the drawing of the sword against all their gates: Alas! it is made into flashing, drawn for slaying. V. 16. Gather thyself up to the right hand, turn to the left, whithersoever thine edge is intended. V. 17. And I also will smite my hands together, and quiet my wrath: I, Jehovah, have spoken it. —*

The description of the sword is thrown into a lyrical form (vv. 8-13), — a kind of sword-song, commemorating the terrible devastation to be effected by the sword of the Lord. The repetition of חָרַב in v. 9 is emphatic. הוֹחֲדָה is the perfect *Hophal* of חָדַד, to sharpen. מְרוֹטָה is the passive participle of מָרַט, to polish; מְרָטָה (v. 10), the participle *Pual*, with מ dropped, and *Dagesh euphon.* הִיָּה, a rare form of the infinitive for הֵיֹת. The polishing gives to the sword a flashing brilliancy, which renders the sharpness of its edge still more terrible. The very obscure words, אִוֵּי נְשִׂישׁ וְגוֹ, I agree with Schmieider and Kliefoth in regarding as a protest, interposed by the prophet in the name of the people against the divine threat of the sword of vengeance, on the ground of the

promises which had been given to the tribe of Judah. **או**, or perhaps; introducing an opposite case, or an exception to what has been said. The words **שָׁבַט בְּנֵי וְגו'** are to be taken as an objection, so that **לֵאמֹר** is to be supplied in thought. The objection is taken from the promise given in Jacob's blessing to the tribe of Judah: "the sceptre will not depart from Judah" (Gen. 49:10). **בְּנֵי שָׁבַט** points unquestionably to this. **בְּנֵי** is taken from v. 9, where the patriarch addresses Judah, whom he compares to a young lion, as **בְּנֵי**. Consequently the sceptre of my son is the command which the patriarch holds out to view before the tribe of Judah. This sceptre despises all wood, i.e., every other ruler's staff, as bad wood. This view is not rendered a doubtful one by the fact that **שָׁבַט** is construed as a feminine here, whereas it is construed as a masculine in every other case; for this construction is unquestionable in v. 7 (12), and has many analogies in its favour. All the other explanations that have been proposed are hardly worth mentioning, to say nothing of refuting, as they amount to nothing more than arbitrary conjectures; whereas the assumption that the words are to be explained from Gen. 49:10 is naturally suggested by the unquestionable allusion to the prophecy in that passage, which we find in v. 27 of the present chapter. **וַיִּתֵּן** in v. 11 is to be taken adversatively, "but he gave it (the sword) to be sharpened." The subject to **וַיִּתֵּן** is not Jehovah, but is indefinite, "one" (*man*, Angl. they), although it is actually God who has prepared the sword for the slaughter of Israel. The train of thought is the following: Do not think we have no reason to fear the sharply-ground sword of Jehovah, because Judah has received the promise that the sceptre shall not depart from it; and this promise will certainly be fulfilled, and Judah be victorious over every hostile power. The promise will not help you in this instance. The sword is given to be ground, not that it may be put into the scabbard, but that it may be taken in the hand by a slayer, and smite all the people and all its princes. In the phrase **הַיּוֹתֵדָה חֶרֶב הִיא** **הִיא חֶרֶב** is in apposition to the subject **הִיא**, and is introduced to give emphasis to the words. It is not till v. 19 that it is stated who the slayer is; but the hearers of the prophecy could be in no doubt. Consequently — this is the connection with v. 12 — there is no ground for rejoicing from a felling of security and pride, but rather an occasion for painful lamentation.

This is the meaning contained in the command to the prophet to cry and howl. For the sword will come upon the nation and its princes. It is the simplest rendering to take **הִיא** as referring to **הָיָה בְּ, הָרָב**, to be at a person, to fasten to him, to come upon him, as in 1Sa. 24:14; 2Sa. 24:17. **מִגּוֹרֵי**, not from **גּוֹר**, but the passive participle of **מָנַר** in the *Pual*, to overthrow, cast down (Psa. 89:45): "fallen by the sword have they (the princes) become, along with my people." The perfects are prophetic, representing that which will speedily

take place as having already occurred. — Smiting upon the thigh is a sign of alarm and horror (Jer. 31:19). **בַּחַן**, perfect *Pual*, is used impersonally: the trial is made. The words allude to the victories gained already by Nebuchadnezzar, which have furnished tests of the sharpness of his sword. The question which follows **וְיָמָה** contains an *aposiopesis*: and what? Even if the despising sceptre shall not come, what will be the case then? **שֵׁבֶט מְאֹסָת**, according to v. 10, is the sceptre of Judah, which despises all other sceptres as bad wood. **יִהְיֶה**, in this instance, is not “to be,” in the sense of to remain, but to become, to happen, to come (come to pass), to enter. The meaning is, if the sceptre of Judah shall not display, or prove itself to possess, the strength expected of it. — With v. 14 the address takes a new start, for the purpose of depicting still further the operations of the sword. Smiting the hands together (smiting hand in hand) is a gesture expressive of violent emotion (cf. Eze. 6:11; Num. 24:10). The sword is to double, i.e., multiply itself, into threefold (**שְׁלִישָׁתָהּ**, adverbial), namely, in its strength, or its edge. Of course this is not to be taken arithmetically, as it has been by Hitzig, but is a bold paradoxical statement concerning the terrible effect produced by the sword. It is not even to be understood as referring to three attacks made at different times by the Chaldeans upon Jerusalem, as many of the commentators suppose. The sword is called **חֶרֶב חֲלָלִים**, sword of pierced ones, because it produces the pierced or slain. The following words are rendered by Hitzig and Kliefoth: the great sword of the slain. But apart from the tautology which this occasions, the rendering can hardly be defended on grammatical grounds. For, in the first place, we cannot see why the singular **חֲלָל** should have been chosen, when the expression was repeated, instead of the plural **חֲלָלִים**; and secondly, **הַגָּדוֹל** cannot be an adjective agreeing with **חֶרֶב**, for **חֶרֶב** is a noun of the feminine gender, and is construed here as a feminine, as **הַחֲדָרָת** clearly shows. **הַגָּדוֹל** is in apposition to **חֲלָל**, “sword of a pierced man, the great one;” and the great man pierced is the king, as Ewald admits, in agreement with Hengstenberg and Hävernick. The words therefore affirm that the sword will not only slay the mass of the people, but pierce the king himself. (See also the comm. on v. 25.) — V. 15a is not dependent upon what precedes, but introduces a new thought, viz., for what purpose the sword is sharpened. God has placed the flashing sword before all the gates of the Israelites, in order that (**לְמַאֲן לְ**, pleonastic for **לְמַאֲן**) the heart may dissolve, the inhabitants may lose all their courage for defence, and to multiply *offendicula*, i.e., occasions to fall by the sword. The **ἀπ. λεγ. אֲבָחָת** signifies the rapid motion or turning about of the sword (cf. Gen. 3:24); **אֲבָחָת**, related to **הַפָּךְ**, in the *Mishna* **אֲפָךְ**. The **ἀπ. λεγ. מְעֵטָה**, fem. of **מְעֵט**, does not mean smooth, i.e., sharpened, synonymous with **מְרַט**, but, according to the Arabic

*m'ṭ, eduxit e vagina gladium*, drawn (from the scabbard). In v. 16 the sword is addressed, and commanded to smite right and left. **הִתְאַחֵד**, gather thyself up, i.e., turn with all thy might toward the right (Tanchum). To the verb **הִשְׁמִילוּ** it is easy to supply **פְּנֵיךְ**, from the context, “direct thine edge toward the left.” **הֲאֵנָה**, whither, without an interrogative, as in Jos. 2: 5 and Neh. 2:16. **מְעֻדוֹת**, from **אָדָּה**, intended, ordered; not, directed, turned. The feminine form may be accounted for from a construction *ad sensum*, the gender regulating itself according to the **הָרֵב** addressed in **פְּנֵיךְ**. The command to the sword is strengthened by the explanation given by Jehovah in v. 17, that He also (like the prophet, v. 14) will smite His hands together and cool His wrath upon them (cf. Eze. 5:13).

**Eze. 21:18-22.** The sword of the king of Babylon will smite Jerusalem, and then the Ammonites also. —

V. 18. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 19. *And thou, son of man, make to thyself two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come by them; out of one land shall they both come forth, and draw a hand, at the cross road of the city do thou draw it.* v. 20. *Make a way that the sword may come to Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, and to Judah into fortified Jerusalem.* V. 21. *For the king of Babylon is stopping at the cross road, at the parting of the two ways, to practise divination. He is shaking the arrows, inquiring of the teraphim, looking at the liver.* V. 22. *The divination falls to his right: Jerusalem, to set battering-rams, to open the mouth with a death-cry, to lift up the voice with a war-cry, to set battering-rams at the gates, to heap up a rampart, to build siege towers.*

After the picture of the terrible devastation which the sword of the Lord will produce, the last word of God in this prophecy answers the questions, in whose hand Jehovah will place His sword, and whom it will smite. The slayer into whose hand the sharpened sword is given (v. 11) is the king of Babylon, and it will smite not only Judah, but the Ammonites also. Jerusalem and Judah will be the first to fall, and then the arch-enemy of the covenant nation, namely Ammon, will succumb to the strokes of the sword of Jehovah, in order that the embittered enemies of the Lord and His people may learn that the fall of Jerusalem is not, as they fancy, a proof of the impotence, but rather of the omnipotence, of its God. In this way does our prophecy expand into a prediction of the judgment which will fall upon the whole of the world in hostility to God. For it is only as the arch-enemies of the kingdom of God that the Ammonites come into consideration here. The parallel between Israel and the sons of Ammon is carried out in such a way as to give constant prominence to the distinction between them. Jerusalem will fall, the ancient theocracy will be destroyed till he shall come who will restore the right (vv. 26 and 27). Ammon, on the other hand, will perish, and not a trace be left (vv. 31, 32).

This prediction is exhibited to the eye by means of a sign. The prophet is to make two ways, i.e., to prepare a sketch representing a road leading from a country, viz., Babylon, and dividing at a certain spot into two roads, one of which leads to Rabbath-Ammon, the capital of the kingdom of the Ammonites, the other to Judah, into Jerusalem. He is to draw the ways for the coming (לבווא) of the sword of the king of Babylon. At the fork of the road he is to engrave a hand, יד, i.e., an index. בָּרָא signifies in the *Piel* to cut away (Jos. 17:15, 18), to dig or hew (Eze. 23:47), here to engrave written characters in hard material. The selection of this word shows that Ezekiel was to sketch the ways upon some hard material, probably a brick or tile (cf. Eze. 4: 1). יד does not mean *locus spatium*, but a hand, i.e., an index. רֵאשׁ דֶּרֶךְ, the beginning of the road, i.e., the fork of the road (Eze. 16:25), is explained in v. 21, where it is called אִם הַדֶּרֶךְ, mother of the road, inasmuch as the roads start from the point of separation, and רֵאשׁ שְׁנֵי הַדֶּרֶכִּים, beginning of the two roads. דֶּרֶךְ עִיר, the road to a city. For *Rabbath-Ammon*, which is preserved in the ruins of *Ammân*, on the Upper Jabbok (*Nahr Ammân*), see the comm. on Deu. 3:11. The road to Judah is still more precisely defined by בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם בְּצוּרָה, into fortified Jerusalem, because the conquest of Jerusalem was the purpose of Nebuchadnezzar's expedition. The omission of the article before בְּצוּרָה may be explained from the nature of the participle, in which, even in prose, the article may be left out after a definite noun (cf. Ewald, § 335a). The drawing is explained in vv. 21 and 22. The king of Babylon is halting (עָמַד, to stand still, stop) to consult his oracles, and inquire which of the two roads he is to take. קָסַם קָסַם, to take in hand, or practise divination. In order that he may proceed safely, he avails himself of all the means of divination at his command. He shakes the arrows (more strictly, the quiver with the arrows). On the practice itself Jerome writes as follows: "He consults the oracle according to the custom of his nation, putting his arrows into a quiver, and mixing them together, with the names of individuals inscribed or stamped upon them, to see whose arrow will come out, and which state shall be first attacked." <sup>123</sup>

He consults the *Teraphim*, or Penates, worshipped as oracular deities and gods of good fortune (see the comm. on Gen. 31:19 and my *Biblical Archaeology*, § 90). Nothing is known concerning the way in which these deities were consulted and gave their oracles. He examines the liver. The practice of *ἥπατοσκοπία*, *extispicium*, in which signs of good or bad luck, of the success or failure of any enterprise, were obtained from the peculiar condition of the liver of the sacrificial animals, was a species of divination to which great importance was attached by both the Babylonians (vid., Diod. Sic. ii. 29) and the Romans



(Cicero, *de divin.* vi. 13), and of which traces were found, according to *Barhebr. Chron.* p. 125, as late as the eighth century of the Christian era among the Ssabians of Haran.

The divination resulted in a decision for Jerusalem. **בְּיָמֵינוּ הָיָה** is not to be translated “in his right hand was,” but “into his right hand there came.” **הָיָה**: **ἔγενετο** (LXX), **נָפִיל** (Chald.), **קָסַם** does not mean lot (Ges.), but soothsaying, divination. **יְרוּשָׁלַיִם** is connected with this in the form of a noun in apposition: the divination which indicated Jerusalem. The right hand is the more important of the two. The meaning of the words cannot be more precisely defined, because we are not acquainted with the king of divination referred to; even if we were to take the words as simply relating to the arrow in this sense, that an arrow with the inscription “Jerusalem” came into his right hand, and thus furnished the decision, which was afterwards confirmed by consulting the Teraphim and examining the liver. But the circumstance itself, that is to say, the fact that the divination coincided with the purpose of God, must not be taken, as Hävernick supposes, as suggesting a point of contact between Hebraism and the soothsaying of heathenism, which was peculiar to Ezekiel or to the time of the captivity. All that is proved by this fact is, that even heathenism is subject to the rule and guidance of Almighty God, and is made subservient to the accomplishment of the plans of both His kingdom and His salvation. In the words, to set bettering rams, etc., the substance of the oracle obtained by Nebuchadnezzar is more minutely given. It is a double one, showing what he is to do: viz., (1) to set bettering rams, i.e., to proceed to the siege of Jerusalem, as still further described in the last portion of the verse (Eze. 4: 2); and (2) to raise the war-cry for storming the city, that is to say, to take it by storm. The two clauses **לְפִתַּח וְגוֹ** and **לְהָרִים וְגוֹ** are synonymous; they are not “pure tautology,” however, as Hitzig affirms, but are chosen for the purpose of giving greater emphasis to the thought. The expression **בְּרָצָה** creates some difficulty, inasmuch as the phrase “*ut aperiat os in caede*” (Vulg.), to open the mouth in murder or ruin, i.e., to put to death or lay in ruins, is a very striking one, and could hardly be justified as an “energetic expression for the battle-cry” (Hävernick). **ב** does not mean “to,” and cannot indicate the intention, all the less because **בְּרָצָה** is parallel to **בְּתְרוּעָה**, where **תְרוּעָה** is that in which the raising of the voice expresses itself. There is nothing left then but to take **רָצָה** in the sense of field- or war-cry, and to derive this meaning either from **רָצָה** or, *per metathesin*, from **צָרַח**.

*Eze. 21:23-27.* This announcement will appear to the Judaeans, indeed, to be a deceptive divination, but nevertheless it will be verified. —

V. 23. *And it is like deceptive divination in their eyes; sacred oaths are theirs* (lit., to them); *but he brings the iniquity to remembrance, that they may be taken.* V. 24. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because ye bring your iniquity to remembrance, in that your offences are made manifest, so that your sins appear in all your deeds, because ye are remembered ye shall be taken with the hand.* V. 25. *And thou pierced one, sinner, prince of Israel, whose day is come at the time of the final transgression,* V. 26. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, The turban will be removed, the crown taken off. This is not this; the low will be lifted up, and the lofty lowered.* V. 27. *Overthrown, overthrown, overthrown will I make it; even this shall not be, till He cometh, to whom is the right, to Him do I give it.* —

In v. 23 (28), לָהֶם, which is more precisely defined by בְּעֵינֵיהֶם, refers to the Israelites, i.e., the Judaeans. This also applies to the following לָהֶם, which cannot possibly be taken as referring to a different subject, say, for example, the Chaldeans. It is evident, therefore, that it is impossible to sustain the rendering given in Gesenius' *Thesaurus* (s.v.) to the obscure words שְׁבַעֵי שְׁבַעוֹת, viz., *qui juramenta jurarunt eis* (sc., Chaldaeis), which Maurer has modified and expounded thus: "they will not fear these auguries; they will swear oaths to them (the Chaldeans), that is to say, according to their usual custom, these truce-breakers will take fresh oaths, hoping that the Chaldeans will be conciliated thereby." Moreover, the thought itself is an unsuitable one, inasmuch as "the defiant attitude of confidence with which they looked such awfully threatening danger in the face must have had some other ground than a reliance upon false oaths and Chaldean credulity" (Hävernick). The common explanation, which Rosenmüller and Kliefoth uphold, is, "because the Chaldeans are sworn allies, sworn confederates of theirs;" or as Kliefoth explains it, "on account of the oath of fealty or vassalage sworn by Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar, they have sworn confederates in the Chaldeans, and relying upon this, they are confident that they have no hostile attack to fear from them." But this is altogether untenable, not only because it is perfectly arbitrary to supply "the Chaldeans," but still more for the reason adduced by Maurer. "How," he justly asks, "could the Judaeans despise these auguries *because* the Chaldeans were bound to them by an oath when they themselves had broken faith? When a treaty has been violated by one party, is not the other released from his oath?" We therefore adopt the same explanation as Hävernick: "oaths of oaths are theirs (to them), i.e., the most sacred oaths are (made) to them, namely, by God." They rely upon that which God has solemnly sworn to them, without considering upon what this promise was conditional, namely, upon a faithful observance on their part of the commandments of God. For the fact itself, compare Eze. 20:42, and such passages as Psa. 105: 9ff., etc. The form שְׁבַעֵי by the side of שְׁבַעוֹת may be explained in a very simple way from the relation of the construct state, i.e., from the endeavour to secure an obvious form for the construct state, and cannot in any case furnish a well-founded

argument against the correctness of our explanation. As Ezekiel uses נִפְשִׁים for נִפְשׁוֹת in Eze. 13:20, he may also have formed שְׁבַעִים (שְׁבַעִים) by the side of שְׁבַעוֹת. — As they rely upon the promises of God without reflecting upon their own breach of covenant, God will bring their sin to remembrance through His judgment. יְהוָה is Jehovah, upon whose oaths they rely. עֲוֹן must not be restricted to Zedekiah's breach of covenant, since v. 24 clearly shows that it is the wrong-doing of Judah generally. לְהַתְּפֹשׂ in v. 24 (29) is also to be understood of the whole nation, which is to be taken and punished by the king of Babylon. For v. 24 (29) introduces the reason for the statement made in the last clause of v. 23 (28). God must put the people in remembrance of their iniquity by inflicting punishment, because they have called it to remembrance by sins committed without any shame, and thereby have, so to speak, compelled God to remember them, and to cause the sinners to be grasped by the hand of the slayer. הַזְּכוּר עֲוֹן is used in v. 24 (29) in a different sense from v. 23 (28), and is therefore explained by בְּכַף. בְּכַף, which is indefinite in itself, points back to יַד הַזְּרוּגָה in v. 11 (16), and receives from that its more exact definition.

With v. 25 the address turns to the chief sinner, the godless King Zedekiah, who was bringing the judgment of destruction upon the kingdom by his faithless breach of oath. The words חָלַל, רָשַׁע, and נִשְׂיָא יֵשׁ are *asyndeta*, co-ordinate to one another. חָלַל does not mean profane or infamous (βέβηλε, LXX), but simply pierced, slain. This meaning is to be retained here. This is demanded not only by the fixed usage of the language, but also by the relation in which חָלַל stands both to v. 14 and to חָלְלֵי רַשְׁעִים in v. 29 (34). It is true that Zedekiah was not pierced by the sword either at that time or afterwards, but was simply blinded and led in captivity to Babylon, where he died. But all that follows from this is, that חָלַל is used here in a figurative sense, given up to the sword, i.e., to death; and Zedekiah is so designated for the purpose of announcing in a more energetic manner the certainty of his fate. The selection of the term חָלַל is the more natural, because throughout the whole prophecy the description of the judgment takes its character from the figure of the sword of Jehovah. As God does not literally wield a sword, so חָלַל is no proof of actual slaying with the sword. יוֹמוֹ, his day, is the day of his destruction (cf. 1Sa. 26:10), or of the judgment upon him. The time of the final transgression is not the time when the transgression reaches its end, i.e., its completion, but the time when the wickedness brings the end, i.e., destruction (cf. Eze. 35: 5, and for קָץ in this sense, Eze. 7: 2, 3). The fact that the end, the destruction, is come, i.e., is close at hand, is announced in v. 26 to the prince, and in his person to the whole

nation. If we understand the connection in this way, which is naturally suggested by v. 25*b*, we get rid of the objection, which led Kliefoth to question the fact that it is the king who is addressed in v. 25*a*, and to take the words as collective, “ye slaughtered sinners, princes of Israel,” and to understand them as referring to the entire body of rulers, including the priests, — an explanation that is completely upset by the words אָתָּה ... נְשִׂיא (thou...prince), which are so entirely opposed to the collective view. Again, the remark that “what follows in v. 26, viz., the statement to be made to the נְשִׂיא, has really nothing to do with him, since the sweeping away of the priesthood did not affect Zedekiah personally” (Kliefoth), is neither correct nor conclusive. For v. 26 contains an announcement not only of the abrogation of the priesthood, but also of the destruction of the kingdom, which did affect Zedekiah both directly and personally. Moreover, we must not isolate the king addressed, even as an individual, from the position which he occupied, or, at any rate, which he ought to have occupied as a theocratic monarch, so as to be able to say that the abrogation of the priesthood did not affect him. The priesthood was one of the fundamental pillars of the theocracy, the removal of which would necessarily be followed by the collapse of the divine state, and therefore by the destruction of the monarchy. Hence it is that the abolition of the priesthood is mentioned first. The infinitives absolute (not imperatives) הָסִיר and הָרִים are selected for the purpose of expressing the truth in the most emphatic manner; and the verbs are synonymous. הָרִים, to lift up, i.e., not to elevate, but to take away, to abolish, as in Isa. 57:14; Dan. 8:11. מִצְנֶפֶת does not mean the royal diadem, like צְנוּף in Isa. 62: 3, but the tiara of the high priest, as it does in every instance in the Pentateuch, from which Ezekiel has taken the word. הַעֲמֹדָה, the king’s crown. The diadem of the priest and the regal crown are the insignia of the offices of high priest and king; and consequently their removal is the abolition of both high-priesthood and monarchy. These words contain the sentence of death upon the theocracy, of which the Aaronic priesthood and the Davidic monarchy constituted the foundations.

They predict not merely a temporary, but a complete abolition of both offices and dignities; and their fulfilment took place when the kingdom of Judah was destroyed by the king of Babylon. The earthly sovereignty of the house of David was not restored again after the captivity; and the high-priesthood of the restoration, like the second temple, was only a shadowy outline of the glory and essential features of the high-priesthood of Aaron. As the ark with the Shechinah, or the gracious presence of God, was wanting in the temple of Zerubbabel; so were the Urim and Thummim wanting to the high-priesthood, and these were the only means by which the high priest could really carry out the mediation between the Lord and the people. זֹאת לֹא זֹאת (this is not this)

does not refer to the tiara (mitre) and crown. זֹאת is neuter, and therefore construed with the masculine הַהֵיאָה. This (mitre and crown) will not be this (הַהֵיאָה is prophetic), i.e., it will not continue, it will be all over with it (Hävernick, Maurer, and Kliefoth). To this there is appended the further thought, that a general inversion of things will take place. This is the meaning of the words — the low will be lifted up, and the lofty lowered. הַשְּׁפִיל and הַגְּבִיחַ are infinitives, and are chosen in the same sense as in the first hemistich. The form הַשְּׁפִילָה, with הַ without the tone, is masculine; the הַ—ָ probably serving merely to give greater fulness to the form, and to make it correspond more nearly to הַגְּבִיחַ. <sup>124</sup>

— This general thought is expressed still more definitely in v. 27a. אָנָה, which is repeated twice to give greater emphasis to the thought, is a noun derived from עָנָה, inversion, overthrow; and the suffix in אֲשִׁימְנָה points back to זֹאת in v. 26 (31). This, the existing state, the high-priesthood and the monarch, will I make into destruction, or utterly overthrow. But the following זֹאת cannot also refer to the tiara and crown, as Kliefoth supposes, on account of the גַּם which precedes it. This shows that זֹאת relates to the thing last mentioned. Even this, the overthrow, shall have no durability; or, as Tanch. has correctly expressed it, *neque haec conditio erit durabilis*. The following אֲדַבֵּא attaches itself not so much to this last clause as to the main thought: overthrow upon overthrow will ensue. The thought is this: “nowhere is there rest, nowhere security; all things are in a state of flux till the coming of the great Restorer and Prince of peace” (Hengstenberg). It is generally acknowledged that the words כִּי יָבוֹא שִׁילָה, אֲדַבֵּא אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ הַמְּשָׁפֵט אֲדַ; and it is only by a false interpretation of the preceding clauses, wrung from the words by an arbitrary alteration of the text, that Hitzig is able to set this connection aside. At the same time, אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ הַמְּשָׁפֵט is of course not to be taken as a philological explanation of the word שִׁילָה, but is simply a theological interpretation of the patriarchal prophecy, with direct reference to the predicted destruction of the existing relations in consequence of the ungodliness and unrighteousness of the leaders of the theocracy up to that time. הַמְּשָׁפֵט is not the rightful claim to the mitre and crown, but right in an objective sense, as belonging to God (Deu. 1:17), and entrusted by God to the earthly government as His representative. He then, to whom this right belongs, and to whom God will give it, is the Messiah, of whom the prophets from the time of David onwards have prophesied as the founder and restorer of perfect right on earth (cf. Psa. 72; Isa. 9: 6; 42: 1; Jer. 23: 5; 33:17). The suffix attached to נִתְּתִיו is not a dative, but an accusative, referring to מְשָׁפֵט (cf.

Psa. 72: 1). There was no necessity to mention the person again to whom God would give the right, as He had already been designated in the previous expression **אֲשֶׁר לוֹ**.

*Eze. 21:28-32.* Overthrow of the Ammonites. —

V. 28. *And thou, son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, concerning the sons of Ammon, and concerning their scorn, sword, sword, drawn to slay, polished, that it may devour, that it may flash!* V. 29. *While they prophesy deceit to thee, while they divine lying to thee, it shall lay thee by the necks of the sinners slain, whose day cometh at the time of the final transgression.* V. 30. *Put it in its scabbard again. At the place where thou wast created, in the land of thy birth will I judge thee,* V. 31. *And pour out my anger upon thee, kindle the fire of my wrath against thee, and give thee into the hand of foolish men, of smiths of destruction.* V. 32. *Thou shalt be for the fire to devour; thy blood shall remain in the midst of the land; thou shalt be remembered no more; for I Jehovah have spoken it.*

As Judah in Jerusalem will fall by the sword of the king of Babylon, contrary to all expectation; so will the Ammonites be punished for their scorn with utter extermination. **חָרַפָּה** is scorn at the overthrow of Israel (cf. Eze. 25: 3, 6, and Zep. 2: 8). The sword is already drawn against them. **פְּתוּחָה**, taken out of the scabbard, as in Psa. 37:14. **לְמַטְבָּח** is to be connected with **פְּתוּחָה**, notwithstanding the accents, and **לְהַכִּיל** with **מְרוֹטָהּ**. This is required by the correspondence of the clauses. **הַכִּיל** is regarded as a derivative of **כּוּל** by Ewald and others, in the sense of *ad sustinendum*, according to capacity, i.e., as much as possible. But the adverbial rendering it opposed to the context, and cannot be sustained from Eze. 23:32. Moreover, **כּוּל**, to contain, is applicable enough to goblets and other vessels, but not to a sword. Hitzig therefore explains it from the Arabic *kill*, to blunt (sc., the eyes), i.e., to blind. But this is open to the objection that the form **הַכִּיל** points to the verb **כּוּל** rather than **כָּלַל**; and also to a still greater one, — namely, that there is nothing in the Hebrew usage to suggest the use of **כָּלַל** in such a sense as this, and even if it were used in the sense of blunting, it would be perfectly arbitrary to supply **עֵינַיִם**; and lastly, that even the flashing of the sword does not suggest the idea of blinding, but is intended to heighten the terror occasioned by the sharpness of the sword. We therefore adhere to the derivation of **הַכִּיל** from **אָכַל**, and regard it as a defective form for **הָאָכִיל**, like **תָּאמְרוּ** for **תֹּאמְרוּ** in 2Sa. 19:14, **יָהֵל** as syncopated form for **יֹאחֵל** (Isa. 13:20), and **וַתֹּחֲזוּ** for **וַתֹּאחֲזוּ** in 2Sa. 20: 9; literally, to cause it to eat or devour, i.e., to make it fit for the work of devouring. **לְמַאֲן בְּרָק**, literally, for the sake of the lightning (flash) that shall issue therefrom (cf. v. 10). — In v. 29 (34), **לָתֵת** (to lay, or place) is also dependent upon **חָרַב פְּתוּחָהּ**, drawn to lay thee; so that the first half of the

verse is inserted as a parenthesis, either to indicate the occasion for bringing the sword into the land (Hitzig), or to introduce an attendant circumstance, according to the sense in which the **ב** in **בְּחַזוֹת** is taken. The parenthetical clause is understood by most of the commentators as referring to deceptive oracles of Ammonitish soothsayers, which either determined the policy of Ammon, as Hitzig supposes (cf. Jer. 27: 9, 10), or inspired the Ammonites with confidence, that they had nothing to fear from the Chaldeans. Kliefoth, on the other hand, refers the words to the oracles consulted by Nebuchadnezzar, according to v. 23. "These oracles, which directed the king not to march against the Ammonites, but against Jerusalem, proved themselves, according to v. 29, to be deceptive prophesying to the Ammonites, inasmuch as they also afterwards fell by the sword; just as, according to v. 23, they proved themselves to be genuine so far as the Israelites were concerned, inasmuch as they were really the first to be smitten." This view is a very plausible one, if it only answered in any degree to the words. But it is hard to believe that the words, "while it (one) prophesies falsehood to thee," are meant to be equivalent to "while its prophecy proves itself to be false to thee." Moreover, Nebuchadnezzar did not give the Ammonites any oracle, either false or true, by the circumstance that his divination at the cross-road led him to decide in favour of the march to Jerusalem; for all that he did in consequence was to postpone his designs upon the Ammonites, but not to relinquish them. We cannot understand the words in any other sense, therefore, than as relating to oracles, which the Ammonites received from soothsayers of their own.

Hitzig takes offence at the expression, "that it (the sword) may lay thee by (to) the necks of the sinners slain," because *colla* cannot stand for *corpora decollata*, and consequently proposes to alter **אֶתְּךָ** into **אֶתְּהָ**, to put it (the sword) to the necks. But by this conjecture he gets the not less striking thought, that the sword was to be put to the necks of those already slain; a thing which would be perfectly unmeaning, and is therefore not generally done. The sinners slain are the Judaeans who have fallen. The words point back to v. 25, the second half of which is repeated here, and predict the same fate to the Ammonites. It is easy to supply **חָרַב** to **אֶל-תַּעֲרָה** **הָשֵׁב**: put the sword into its scabbard again. These words can only be addressed to the Ammonites; not to the Chaldeans, as Kliefoth imagines, for the latter does not harmonize in any way with what follows, viz., in the place of thy birth will I judge thee. God does not execute the judgment independently of the Chaldeans, but through the medium of their sword. The difficulties occasioned by taking the words as referring to the Ammonites are not so great as to necessitate an alteration of the text (Hitzig), or to call for the arbitrary explanation: put it now or for the present into the scabbard (Kliefoth). The use of the masculine **הָשֵׁב** (with

*Patach* for **הִשָּׁב**, as in Isa. 42:22), if Ammon is addressed by the side of the feminine **אֲנֹתֶךָ**, may be explained in a very simple way, from the fact that the sword is carried by men, so that here the thought of the people, the warriors, is predominant, and the representation of the kingdom of the Ammonites as a woman falls into the background. The objection that the suffix in **תַּעֲרֶהָ** can only refer to the sword (of the Chaldean) mentioned in v. 28, is more plausible than conclusive. For inasmuch as the scabbard presupposes a sword, and every sword has a scabbard, the suffix may be fully accounted for from the thing itself, as the words, “put the sword into its scabbard,” would lead any hearer to think at once of the sword of the person addressed, without considering whether that particular sword had been mentioned before or not. The meaning of the words is this: every attempt to defend thyself with the sword and avert destruction will be in vain. In thine own land will God judge thee. For **מְכַרְוֹתֶיךָ**, see the comm. on Eze. 16: 3. This judgment is still further explained in v. 31, where the figure of the sword is dropped, and that of the fire of the wrath of God introduced in its place. **בְּאֵשׁ ... אֲפִיחַ**, we render: “the fire of my wrath I blow (kindle) against thee,” after Isa. 54:16, and not “with the fire...do I blow, or snort, against thee,” as others have done; because blowing with the fire is an unnatural figure, and the interpretation of the words in accordance with Isa. *l.c.* is all the more natural, that in the closing words of the verse, **מִשְׁחִית** **הָרְשִׁי**, the allusion to that passage is indisputable, and it is only from this that the combination of the two words can be accounted for. — Different explanations have been given of **בְּעָרִים**. Some render it *ardentes*, and in accordance with Isa. 30:27: burning with wrath. But **בְּאֵר** is never used in this sense. Nor can the rendering “scorching men” (Kliefoth) be sustained, for **בְּאֵר**, to burn, only occurs in connection with things which are combustible, e.g., fire, pitch, coals, etc. The word must be explained from Psa. 92: 7, “brutish,” foolish, always bearing in mind that the Hebrew associated the idea of godlessness with folly, and that cruelty naturally follows in its train. — V. 32. Thus will Ammon perish through fire and sword, and even the memory of it be obliterated. For v. 32*a* compare Eze. 15: 4. The words, “thy blood will be **בְּתוֹךְ הָאָרֶץ** in the midst of the land,” can hardly be understood in any other sense than “thy blood will flow over all the land.” For the rendering proposed by Ewald, “remain in the midst of the earth, without thy being mentioned,” like that given by Kliefoth, “thy blood will the earth drink,” does not harmonize with Eze. 24: 7, where **דָּמָה בְּתוֹכָהּ הָיָה** is affirmed of blood, which cannot penetrate into the earth, or be covered with dust. For **תִּזְכְּרִי**, see Eze. 25:10. Ammon as the enemy of the kingdom of God will utterly perish, leaving no trace behind, and without any such hope of restoration as that held out in v. 27 to the kingdom of Judah or the people of Israel.



## Ch. 22. The Sins of Jerusalem and Israel

*Eze. 22.* To the prediction of the judgment in Eze. 21 there is appended another description of the sins of Jerusalem and Israel, by which this judgment is occasioned. The chapter contains three words of God, which are connected together both in substance and design, viz.

- (1) The blood-guiltiness and idolatry of Jerusalem accelerate the coming of the days when the city will be an object of scorn to all the world (vv. 1-16);
- (2) The house of Israel has become dross, and is to be melted in the fire of tribulation (vv. 17-22);
- (3) All ranks of the kingdom — prophets, priests, princes, and people — are thoroughly corrupt, therefore has the judgment burst upon them (vv. 23-31).

*Eze. 22: 1-16.* Blood-guiltiness of Jerusalem and the burden of its sins. Vv. 1-5 contain the principal accusation relating to bloodshed and idolatry; and vv. 6-16 a further account of the sins of the people and their rulers, with a brief threatening of punishment.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. And thou, son of man, wilt thou judge? wilt thou judge the city of blood-guiltiness? then show it all its abominations, V. 3. And say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, City, which sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols within itself for defilement. V. 4. Through thy blood which thou hast shed hast thou made thyself guilty, and through thine idols which thou hast made hast thou defiled thyself, and hast drawn thy days near, and hast come to thy years; therefore I make thee a scorn to the nations, and ridicule to all lands. V. 5. Those near and those far off from thee shall ridicule thee as defiled in name, rich in confusion.*

The expression **הַתְּשֻׁפֵּט וְגו'** proves this address to be a continuation of the reproof of Israel's sins, which commenced in Eze. 20: 4. The epithet city of blood-guiltiness, as in Eze. 24: 6, 9 (compare Nah. 3: 1), is explained in v. 3. The apodosis commences with **וְהוֹדַעְתָּהּ**, and is continued in v. 3 (**וְאָמַרְתָּ**). **לְבוֹא עֲתָהּ**, that her time, i.e., her time of punishment, may come: **עֲתָהּ**, like **יָמוֹ** in Eze. 21:30. **וְעָשְׂתָהּ** is not a continuation of the infinitive **לְבוֹא**, but of the participle **שֹׁפֵטת**. **עָלֶיהָ**, of which different renderings have been given, does not mean "over itself," i.e., as a burden with which it has laden itself (Hävernick); still less "for itself" (Hitzig), a meaning which **אֵל** never has, but literally "upon," i.e., in itself, covering the city with it, as it were. **וַתִּקְרְבִי**, thou hast brought near, brought on thy days, that is to say, the days of judgment, and hast come to, arrived at thy years, sc. the years of visitation and punishment (cf. Jer. 11:23). This meaning is readily supplied by the context. **טִמְאַת הַשֵּׁם**, defiled, unclean with regard to the name, i.e., having forfeited the name of a holy city through capital crimes and other sinful abominations.

מְהוּמָה is internal confusion, both moral and religious, as in Amo. 3: 9 (cf. Psa. 55:10-12).

In vv. 6-12 there follows an enumeration of a multitude of sins which had been committed in Jerusalem. —

*V. 6. Behold, the princes of Israel are every one, according to his arm, in thee to shed blood. V. 7. Father and mother they despise in thee; toward the foreigner they act violently in the midst of thee; orphans and widows they oppress in thee. V. 8. Thou despisest my holy things, and desecratest my Sabbaths. V. 9. Slanderers are in thee to shed blood, and they eat upon the mountains in thee; they practise lewdness in thee. V. 10. They uncover the father's nakedness in thee; they ravish the defiled in her uncleanness in thee. V. 11. They take gifts in thee to shed blood; interest and usury thou takest, and overreaches thy neighbours with violence, and thou forgettest me, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. —*

By the repetition of the refrain, to shed blood (vv. 6, 9, and 12), the enumeration is divided into three groups of sins, which are placed in the category of blood-guiltiness by the fact that they are preceded by this sentence and the repetition of it after the form of a refrain. the first group (vv. 6-8) embraces sins which are committed in daring opposition to all the laws of morality. By the princes of Israel we are to understand primarily the profligate kings, who caused innocent persons to be put to death, such, for example, as Jehoiakim (2Ki. 24: 4), Manasseh (2Ki. 21:16), and others. The words **הָיָו אִישׁ לְזַרְעוֹ** are rendered by Hitzig and Kliefoth, they were ready to help one another; and in support of the rendering they appeal to Psa. 83: 9. But in that case **אִישׁ לְזַרְעוֹ** would stand for **לְזָרָא אִישׁ**, or rather for **אִישׁ זָרָא לְאִישׁ**, — a substitution which cannot be sustained. Nor can they be taken in the sense proposed by Hävernick, every one relying upon his arm, i.e., looking to physical force alone, but simply every one according to his arm, i.e., according to his strength or violence, are they in thee. In this case **הָיָו** does not require anything to be supplied, any more than in the similar combination in v. 9. Followed by **לְמַאן** with an infinitive, it means to be there with the intention of doing anything, or making an attempt, i.e., to direct his efforts to a certain end. In v. 7 it is not the princes who are the subject, but the ungodly in general. **הַקְלִי** is the opposite of **כִּבְד** (Exo. 20:12). In the reproofs which follow, compare Exo. 22:20ff.; Lev. 19:13; Deu. 24:14ff. With insolence and violence toward men there is associated contempt of all that is holy. For v. 8b, see Eze. 20:13. — In the second group, vv. 9-11, in addition to slander and idolatry, the crimes of lewdness and incest are the principal sins for which the people are reproved; and here the allusion to Lev. 18 and 19 is very obvious. The reproof of slander also points back to the prohibition in Lev. 19:16. Slander to shed blood, refers to malicious charges and false testimony in a court of justice (vid., 1Ki. 21:10,

11). For eating upon the mountains, see Eze. 18: 6. The practice of *zimmâh* is more specifically described in vv. 10 and 11. For the thing itself, compare Lev. 18: 7, 8; 19:15 and 9. The threefold אִישׁ אִישׁ in v. 11 does not mean every one, but one, another, and the third, as the correlative רַעְהוּ shows. — The third group, v. 12, is composed of sins of covetousness. For the first clause, compare the prohibition in Exo. 23: 2; for the second, Eze. 18: 8, 13. The reproof finishes with forgetfulness of God, which is closely allied to covetousness.

**Eze. 22:13-16.** The Lord is enraged at such abominable doings. He will interfere, and put an end to them by scattering Judah among the heathen. —

V. 13. *And, behold, I smite my hand because of thy gain which thou hast made, and over thy bloodguiltiness which is in the midst of thee.* V. 14. *Will thy heart indeed stand firm, or will thy hands be strong for the day when I shall deal with thee? I Jehovah have spoken it, and also do it.* V. 15. *I will scatter thee among the nations, and disperse thee in the lands, and will utterly remove thine uncleanness from thee.* V. 16. *And thou wilt be desecrated through thyself before the eyes of the nations, and know that I am Jehovah.* —

V. 13 is closely connected with the preceding verse. This serves to explain the fact that the only sins mentioned as exciting the wrath of God are covetousness and blood-guiltiness. הִבָּה בַר, as 2Ki. 11:12 clearly shows, is a contracted expression for הִבָּה בַר אֶל בַר (Eze. 21:19), and the smiting of the hands together is a gesture indicative of wrathful indignation. For the form דָּמָד, contracted from דָּמָד, see the comm. on Eze. 16:45. — As v. 13 leads on to the threatening of judgment, so does v. 14 point in anticipation to the terrible nature of the judgment itself. The question, “will thy heart stand firm?” involves a warning against security. עָמַד is the opposite of נָמַס (cf. Eze. 21:12), as standing forms the antithesis to passing away (cf. Ps. 102:27). עָשָׂה אֲנִתָד, as in Eze. 16:59 and 7:27. The Lord will scatter them (cf. Eze. 12:15; 20:23), and remove the uncleanness of sin, namely, by purifying the people in exile (cf. Isa. 4: 4). הָתַם, from תָּמַם, to cause to cease, with מִן, to take completely away. נִחַלָת, Niph. of חָלַל, connected with לְעֵינֵי גוֹיִם, as in Eze. 20: 9, not from נָחַל, as many of the commentators who follow the Septuagint and Vulgate suppose. בְּךָ, not *in te*, in thyself, but through thee, i.e., through thy sinful conduct and its consequences.

**Eze. 22:17-22.** Refining of Israel in the furnace of besieged Jerusalem.

V. 17. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 18. *Son of man, the house of Israel has become to me as dross; they are all brass, and tin, and iron, and lead in the furnace; dross of silver have they become.* V. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*

*Jehovah, Because ye have all become dross, therefore, behold, I gather you together in Jerusalem. V. 20. As men gather together silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin into the furnace, to blow the fire upon it for melting, so will I gather (you) together in my anger and my wrath, and put you in and melt you. V. 21. And I will collect you together, and blow the fire of my wrath upon you, that ye may be melted therein. V. 22. As silver is melted in the furnace, so shall ye be melted therein (viz., in Jerusalem), and shall learn that I Jehovah have poured out my wrath upon you.*

This second word of God rests no doubt upon the figure in v. 15b, of the uncleanness or dirt of sin; but it is not an exposition of the removal of the dirt, as predicted there. For that was to be effected through the dispersion of Israel among the nations, whereas the word of God, from v. 17 onwards, represents the siege awaiting Jerusalem as a melting process, through which God will separate the silver ore contained in Israel from the baser metals mingled with it. In v. 18 it commences with a description of the existing condition of Israel. It has turned to dross. **הָיָה** is clearly a perfect, and is not to be taken as a prophetic future, as Kliefoth proposes. Such a rendering is not only precluded by the clause **יֵאָמְרוּ הַיּוֹת וְגו'** in v. 19, cut could only be made to yield an admissible sense by taking the middle clause of the verse, "all of them brass and tin," etc., as a statement of what Israel had become, or as a preterite in opposition to all the rules of Hebrew syntax, inasmuch as this clause merely furnishes an explanation of **סִיגֵי הַיִּזְוֵלֹסִיג**, which only occurs here, for **סִיג** signifies dross, not smelting-ore (Kliefoth), literally, *recedanea*, the baser ingredients which are mixed with the silver, and separated from it by smelting. This is the meaning here, where it is directly afterwards interpreted as consisting of brass, tin, iron, and lead, and then still further defined as **סִיגִים בְּסֵרֶף**, dross of silver, i.e., brass, tin, iron, and lead, with a mixture of silver. Because Israel had turned into silver-dross of this kind, the Lord would gather it together in Jerusalem, to smelt it there as in a smelting furnace; just as men gather together brass, iron, lead, and tin in a furnace to smelt them, or rather to separate the silver contained thereon. **קְבֻצַּת כֶּסֶף**, literally, a collection of silver, etc., for "like a collection." The **כ** *simil.* is probably omitted for the sake of euphony, to avoid the discord occasioned by prefixing it to **קְבֻצַּת**. Ezekiel mentions the silver as well, because there is some silver contained in the brass, iron, etc., or the dross is silver-dross. **הַתִּזְוֵד**, *nomen verbale*, from **נִזְדַּד** in the *Hiphil*, smelting; literally, as the smelting of silver takes place in the furnace. The smelting is treated here simply as a figurative representation of punishment, and consequently the result of the smelting, namely, the refining of the silver by the removal of the baser ingredients, is not referred to any further, as in the case in Isa. 1:22, 25; Jer. 6:27-30; Mal. 3: 2, 3. This smelting process was experienced by Israel in the last siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans.

*Eze. 22:23-31.* The corrupt state of all classes in the kingdom is the immediate cause of its destruction.

V. 23. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 24. Son of man, say to it, Thou art a land which is not shined upon, nor rained upon in the day of anger. V. 25. Conspiracy of its prophets is within it; like a roaring lion, which rends in pieces the prey, they devour souls, take possessions and money; they multiply its widows within it. V. 26. Its priests violate my law and profane my holy things; they make no distinction between holy and unholy, and do not teach the difference between clean and unclean, and they hide their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. V. 27. Its princes in the midst of it are like wolves, which rend prey in pieces, that they may shed blood, destroy souls, to acquire gain. v. 28. And its prophets plaster it with cement, seeing what is worthless, and diving lies for them, saying, "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah," when Jehovah hath not spoken. V. 29. The common people offer violence and commit theft; they crush the wretched and the poor, and oppress the foreigner against right. V. 30. I seek among them for a man who might build a wall and step into the breach before me on behalf of the land, that I might not destroy it, but I find none. V. 31. Therefore I pour out my anger upon them; I destroy them in the fire of my wrath, I give their way upon their head, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

To show the necessity for the predicted judgment still more clearly, in the third word of God contained in this chapter a description is given of the spread of deep corruption among all classes of the people, and the impossibility of saving the kingdom is plainly shown. The words אָמַרְתָּ לָּהּ, "say unto her," are taken by most of the commentators as referring to Jerusalem, the abominations of which the prophet is commanded to declare. But although the clause, "thou art a land," etc. (v. 24), could unquestionably be made to harmonize with this, yet the words of v. 30, "I sought for a man who might stand in the gap before Jehovah for the land," indicate most unquestionably that this word of God is directed against the land of Judah, and consequently לָּהּ must be taken as referring to אֶרֶץ which follows, the pronoun in this case being placed before the noun to which it refers, as in Num. 24:17. Any allusion to the city of Jerusalem would therefore be somewhat out of place, inasmuch as in the preceding word of God the object referred to was not the city, but the house of Israel, or the nation generally, from which a transition is here made to the land, or the kingdom of Judah. The meaning of v. 24 is a disputed question. הֲיִיאֵל לֹא מְטַהָרָהּ, which is rendered ἡ οὐ βρεχομένη in the Sept., is taken by most of the expositors to mean, "it is not cleansed," the form מְטַהָרָהּ being correctly rendered as a participle *Pual* of טָהַר. But this rendering does not furnish any appropriate sense, unless the following words לֹא גִשְׁמָה are taken as a threat: there shall not be rain, or it shall not be rained upon in the day of wrath. But this view is hardly reconcilable with the form of the word. גִּשְׁמָה, according to

the Masoretic pointing with *Mappik* in the ה, is evidently meant to be taken as a noun גָּשָׁם = גִּשְׁמָה. In that case, if the words were intended to contain a threat, יִדְהָהּ ought not to be omitted. But without a verb the words contain a statement in harmony with what precedes. We regard the *Chetib* גִּשְׁמָה as the perfect *Pual* גִּשְׁמָה. And let it not be objected to this that the *Pual* of this verb is not met with elsewhere, for the form of the noun גָּשָׁם with the *u* sound does not occur anywhere else. As a perfect *Pual*, לֹא גִשְׁמָה is a simple continuation of the participial clause לֹא מִטְהַרְהָ הָיָא, containing like this an affirmation, and cannot possibly be taken as a threat or prediction. But “not cleansed” and “not rained upon” do not agree together, as rain is not a means of purification according to the Hebrew idea. It is true that in the law the withdrawal or suspension of rain is threatened as a punishment from God, and the pouring out of rain is promised as a theocratical blessing. But even if the words are taken in a tropical sense, as denoting a withdrawal of the blessings of divine grace, they will not harmonize with the other clause, “not cleansed.” We therefore take מִטְהַרְהָ in the sense of “shined upon by the light,” or provided with brightness; a meaning which is sustained by Exo. 24:10, where *tohar* occurs in the sense of splendour, and by the kindred word *tzohar*, light. In this way we obtain the suitable thought, land which has neither sunlight nor rain in the day of wrath, i.e., does not enjoy a single trace of the divine blessing, but is given up to the curse of barrenness.

The reason for this threat is given in vv. 25ff., where a picture is drawn of the moral corruption of all ranks; viz., of the prophets (v. 25), the priests (v. 26), the princes (v. 27), and the common people (v. 29). There is something very striking in the allusion to the prophets in v. 25, not so much because they are mentioned again in v. 28, — for this may be accounted for on the ground that in the latter passage they are simply introduced as false advisers of the princes, — as on account of the statement made concerning them in v. 25, namely, that, like lions tearing their prey, they devour souls, etc.; a description which is not given either in Eze. 13 or elsewhere. Hitzig therefore proposes to alter נְבִיאֵיהָ into נְשִׂאֵיהָ, after the rendering ἀφηγούμενοι given by the LXX. This alteration of the text, which confines itself to a single letter, is rendered very plausible by the fact that almost the same is affirmed of the persons mentioned in v. 25 as of the princes in v. 27, and that in the passage in Zephaniah (Zep. 3: 3, 4), which is so similar to the one before us, that Ezekiel appears to have had it in his mind, the princes (שָׂרֵיהָ) and the judges (שֹׁפְטֵיהָ) are called the prophets and the priests. The נְשִׂאֵיהָ here would correspond to the שָׂרִים of Zephaniah, and the שָׂרִים to the שֹׁפְטִים. According to v. 6, the נְשִׂאֵיהָ would indicate primarily the members of the royal family, possibly including the

chief officers of the crown; and the שָׂרִים (v. 27) would be the heads of tribes, of families, and of fathers' houses, in whose hands the national administration of justice principally lay (cf. Exo. 18:19ff.; Deu. 1:13-18; and my *Bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 149). I therefore prefer this conjecture, or correction, to the Masoretic reading, although the latter is supported by ancient witnesses, such as the Chaldee with its rendering סִפְרָהָא, scribes, and the version of Jerome. For the statement which the verse contains is not applicable to prophets, and the best explanation given of the Masoretic text — namely, that by Michaelis, “they have made a compact with one another as to what kind of teaching they would or would not give; and in order that their authority may continue undisturbed, they persecute even to blood those who do not act with them, or obey them, but rather contradict” — does not do justice to the words, but weakens their sense. קָשֶׁר is not a predicate to נֹבֵ, “they are (i.e., form) a conspiracy;” but נֹבֵ is a genitive. At the same time, there is no necessity to take קָשֶׁר in the sense of “company,” a rendering which cannot be sustained. The fact that in what follows, where the comparison to lions is introduced, the נְבִיאִים (נְשִׂאִים) are the subject, simply proves that in the first clause also these men actually form the prominent idea. There is no ground for supplying הִמָּה to וְגוֹרֵי פִאֲרִי (they are like, etc.); but the simile is to be linked on to the following clause. נֶפֶשׁ אָכְלוּ is to be explained from the comparison to a lion, which devours the prey that it has captured in its blood, in which is the soul, or *nephesh* (Gen. 9: 4; Lev. 17:11ff.). The thought is this: in their insatiable greed for riches they sacrifice men and put them to death, and thereby multiply the number of victims (for the fact, see Eze. 19: 5, 7). What is stated in v. 26 concerning the priests is simply a further expansion of Zep. 3: 4, where the first two clauses occur word for word; for קִדְשׁ in Zephaniah is really equivalent to קִדְשֵׁי, holy things and deeds. The desecration of the holy things consisted in the fact that they made no distinction between sacred and profane, clean and unclean. For the fact, compare Lev. 10:10, 11. Their covering their eyes from the Sabbaths showed itself in their permitting the Sabbaths to be desecrated by the people, without offering any opposition (cf. Jer. 17:27).

The comparison of the rulers (*sārim*) to ravening wolves is taken from Zep. 3: 3. Destroying souls to acquire gain is perfectly applicable to unjust judges, inasmuch as, according to Exo. 18:21, the judges were to hate בְּצַע. All that is affirmed in v. 28 of the conduct of the false prophets is repeated for the most part *verbatim* from Eze. 13:10, 9, and 7. By לָהֶם, which points back to the three classes of men already mentioned, and not merely to the *sārim*, the prophets are represented as helpers of those who support the ungodly in their wicked ways, by oracles which assured them of prosperity. אִם הָאָרֶץ (v. 29),

as distinguished from the spiritual and secular rulers of the nation, signifies the common people. With reference to their sins and wickednesses, see Eze. 18: 7, 12, 18; and for the command against oppressing the poor and foreigners, compare Exo. 22:20, 21; Deu. 24:17. — The corruption is so universal, that not a man is to be found who could enter into the gap as a righteous man, or avert the judgment of destruction by his intercession. **מִהֵמָּה** refers not merely to the prophets, who did not enter into the gap according to Eze. 13: 5, but to all the classes previously mentioned. At the same time, it does not follow from this, that entering into the gap by means of intercession cannot be the thing intended, as Hitzig supposes. The expression **לְפָנַי בְּאֵד הָאָרֶץ** clearly refers to intercession. This is apparent from the simple fact that, as Hitzig himself observes, the intercession of Abraham for Sodom (Gen. 18:13ff.) was floating before the mind of Ezekiel, since the concluding words of the verse contain an obvious allusion to Gen. 18:28. Because the Lord does not find a single righteous man, who might intercede for the land, He pours out His anger upon it, to destroy the inhabitants thereof. With reference to the fact and the separate words employed, compare Eze. 21:36; 7: 4; 9:10; 11:21, and 16:43. It does not follow from the word **וְאִשְׁפֹּךְ**, that Ezekiel “is speaking after the catastrophe” (Hitzig). For although **וְאִשְׁפֹּךְ** expresses the consequence of Jehovah’s seeking a righteous man and not finding one, it by no means follows from the occurrence of the preterite **וְלֹא מָצָאתִי** that **וְאִשְׁפֹּךְ** is also a preterite. **וְאִשְׁפֹּךְ** is simply connected with **וְאִבְקֶשׁ** as a consequence; and in both verbs the *Vav consec.* expresses the sequence of thought, and not of time. The seeking, therefore, with the result of not having found, cannot be understood in a chronological sense, i.e., as an event belonging to the past, for the simple reason that the preceding words do not record the chronological order of events. It merely depicts the existing moral condition of the people, and v. 30 sums up the result of the description in the thought that there was no one to be found who could enter in the gap before God. Consequently we cannot determine from the imperfect with *Vav consec.* either the time of the seeking and not finding, or that of the pouring out of the wrath.

## **Ch. 23. Oholah and Oholibah, the Harlots Samaria and Jerusalem**

*Eze. 23.* Samaria and Jerusalem, as the capitals and representatives of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, are two sisters, who have practised whoredom from the days of Egypt onwards (vv. 2-4). Samaria has carried on this whoredom with Assyria and Egypt, and has been given up by God into the power of the Assyrians as a consequent punishment (vv. 5-10). But Jerusalem, instead of allowing this to serve as a warning, committed fornication still more



grievously with Assyria and the Chaldeans, and, last of all, with Egypt again (vv. 11-21). In consequence of this, the Lord will permit the Chaldeans to make war upon them, and to plunder and put them to shame, so that, as a punishment for their whoredom and their forgetfulness of God, they may, in the fullest measure, experience Samaria's fate (vv. 22-35). In conclusion, both kingdoms are shown once more, and in still severer terms, the guilt of their idolatry (vv. 36-44), whilst the infliction of the punishment for both adultery and murder is foretold (vv. 45-49).

In its general character, therefore, this word of God is co-ordinate with the two preceding ones in Eze. 21 and 22, setting forth once more in a comprehensive way the sins and the punishment of Israel. But this is done in the form of an allegory, which closely resembles in its general features the allegorical description in Eze. 16; though, in the particular details, it possesses a character peculiarly its own, not only in certain original turns and figures, but still more in the arrangement and execution of the whole. The allegory in Eze. 16 depicts the attitude of Israel towards the Lord in the past, the present, and the future; but in the chapter before us, the guilt and punishment of Israel stand in the foreground of the picture throughout, so that a parallel is drawn between Jerusalem and Samaria, to show that the punishment of destruction, which Samaria has brought upon itself through its adulterous intercourse with the heathen, will inevitably fall upon Jerusalem and Judah also.

### *Eze. 23: 1-4.* The sisters Oholah and Oholibah.

*V. 1. And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, two women, daughters of one mother were they, V. 3. They committed whoredom in Egypt, in their youth they committed whoredom; there were their breasts pressed, and there men handled their virgin bosom. V. 4. Their names are Oholah, the greater, and Oholibah her sister, and they became mine, and bare sons and daughters. But their names are: Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem is Oholibah.*

The name **אֹהֶל־בָּהָא** is formed from **אֹהֶל־בָּהָא**, “my tent in her;” and, accordingly, **אֹהֶל־בָּהָא** is to be derived from **אֹהֶל־בָּהָא**, “her tent,” and not to be regarded as an abbreviation of **אֹהֶל־בָּהָא**, “her tent in her,” as Hitzig and Kliefoth maintain. There is no ground for this assumption, as “her tent,” in contrast with “my tent in her,” expresses the thought with sufficient clearness, that she had a tent of her own, and the place where her tent was does not come into consideration. The “tent” is the sanctuary: both tabernacle and temple. These names characterize the two kingdoms according to their attitude toward the Lord. Jerusalem had the sanctuary of Jehovah; Samaria, on the other hand, had her own sanctuary, i.e., one invented by herself. Samaria and Jerusalem, as the historical names of the two kingdoms, represent Israel of the ten tribes and Judah. Oholah and Oholibah are daughters of one mother, because they were

the two halves of the one Israel; and they are called women, because Jehovah had married them (v. 4). Oholah is called **הַגְּדֹלָה**, the great, i.e., the greater sister (not the elder, see the comm. on Eze. 16:46); because ten tribes, the greater portion of Israel, belonged to Samaria, whereas Judah had only two tribes. They committed whoredom even in Egypt in their youth, for even in Egypt the Israelites defiled themselves with Egyptian idolatry (see the comm. on Eze. 20: 7). **מִיָּאֵד**, to press, to crush: the *Pual* is used here to denote lewd handling. In a similar manner the *Piel* **עָשָׂה** is used to signify *tractare*, *contractare mammas*, in an obscene sense.

*Eze. 23: 5-10.* Samaria's whoredom and punishment. —

V. 5. *And Oholihah played the harlot under me, and burned towards her lovers, even as far as Assyria, standing near; V. 6. Clothed in purple, governors and officers, all of them choice men of good deportment, horsemen riding upon horses. V.7. And she directed her whoredom toward them, to the choice of the sons of Assyria all of them, and with all towards whom she burned, with all their idols she defiled herself. V. 8. Also her whoredom from Egypt she did not give up; for they had lain with her in her youth, and they had handled her virgin bosom, and had poured out their lust upon her. V. 9. Therefore I have given her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the sons of Assyria, towards whom she was inflamed. V. 10. They uncovered her nakedness, took away her sons and her daughters, and slew her with the sword, so that she became a legend among the women, and executed judgments upon her.*

Coquetting and whoring with Assyria and Egypt denote religious and political leaning towards and connection with these nations and kingdoms, including idolatry and the formation of alliances with them, as in Eze. 16. **תַּחְתִּי** is to be interpreted in accordance with **תַּחַת אִישָׁה** (Eze. 16:32). **עָגַב**, which only occurs in Ezekiel and once in Jeremiah, denotes the eager desire kindled by passionate love towards any one. By the words **אֵל-אֲשֹׁר** the lovers are more precisely defined. **קְרוּבִים** without an article is not an adjective, belonging to **מֵאֲהַבֶּיהָ**, but in apposition, which is continued in the next verse. In these appositions the particular features, which excited the ardent passion towards the lovers, are pointed out. **קְרוּב** is not to be taken in an outward or local sense, but as signifying inward or spiritual nearness: standing near, equivalent to inwardly related, as in Psa. 38:12; Job. 19:14. The description given of the Assyrians in v. 6 contains the thought that Israel, dazzled by Assyria's splendour, and overpowered by the might of that kingdom, had been drawn into intercourse with the Assyrians, which led her astray into idolatry. The predicate, clothed in purple, points to the splendour and glory of this imperial power; the other predicates, to the magnitude of its military force. **פְּחוֹת וְסִגְנִים** are rulers of higher and lower grades (cf. Jer. 51:57). "Here the expression is a general

one, signifying the different classes of office-bearers in the kingdom” (Hävernicks). With regard to פָּחָה, see my comm. on Hag. 1: 1; and for סָגָן, see Delitzsch on Isa. 41:25. “Riding upon horses” is added to פָּרָשִׁים to denote the noblest horsemen, in contrast to riders upon asses and camels (cf. Isa. 21: 7). In v. 7b בְּכָל־גְּלוּלֵיהֶם is in apposition to בְּכָל אַשְׁר־עָגְבָהּ, and defines more precisely the instigation to pollution: with all towards whom she burned in love, namely, with all their (the lovers’) idols. The thought is as follows: it was not merely through her intercourse with the Assyrians that Israel defiled herself, but also through their idols. At the same time, Samaria did not give up the idolatry which it had derived from Egypt. It was from Egypt that the worship of God under the image of the golden calves had been imported. The words are much too strong for us to understand them as relating simply to political intercourse, as Hitzig has done. We have already observed at Eze. 20: 7, that even in Egypt itself the Israelites had defiled themselves with Egyptian idolatry, as is also stated in v. 8b. — Vv. 9, 10. As a punishment for this, God gave Samaria into the power of the Assyrians, so that they executed judgment upon the harlot. In v. 10b the prophecy passes from the figure to the fact. The uncovering of the nakedness consisted in the transportation of the sons and daughters, i.e., the population of Samaria, into exile by the Assyrians, who slew the woman herself with the sword; in other words, destroyed the kingdom of Samaria. Thus did Samaria become a name for women; that is to say, her name was circulated among the nations, her fate became an object of conversation and ridicule to the nations, not “a nickname for the nations,” as Hävernicks supposes (vid., Eze. 36: 3). שְׂפוּטִים, a later form for שְׂפָטִים (cf. Eze. 16:41).

### *Eze. 23:11-21.* Whoredom of Judah.

V. 11. *And her sister Oholibah saw it, and carried on her coquetry still more wantonly than she had done, and her whoredom more than the whoredom of her sister.* V. 12. *She was inflamed with lust towards the sons of Asshur, governors and officers, standing near, clothed in perfect beauty, horsemen riding upon horses, choice men of good deportment.* V. 13. *And I saw that she had defiled herself; they both went one way.* V. 14. *And she carried her whoredom still further; she saw men engraved upon the wall, figures of Chaldeans engraved with red ochre,* V. 15. *Girded about the hips with girdles, with overhanging caps upon their heads, all of them knights in appearance, resembling the sons of Babel, the land of whose birth is Chaldea:* V. 16. *And she was inflamed with lust toward them, when her eyes saw them, and sent messengers to them to Chaldea.* V. 17. *Then the sons of Babylon came to her to the bed of love, and defiled her with their whoredom; and when she had defiled herself with them, her soul tore itself away from them.* V. 18. *And when she uncovered her whoredom, and uncovered her nakedness, my soul tore itself away from her, as my soul had torn itself away from her sister.* V. 19. *And she increased her whoredom, so that she remembered the days of her youth, when she played the harlot in the land of Egypt.* V. 20. *And she burned toward their paramours, who have members like asses and heat like horses.* V. 21. *Thou lookest*

after the lewdness of thy youth, when they of Egypt handled thy bosom because of thy virgin breasts. — The train of thought in these verses is the following:

Judah went much further than Samaria. It not only indulged in sinful intercourse with Assyria, which led on to idolatry as the latter had done, but it also allowed itself to be led astray by the splendour of Chaldea, to form alliances with that imperial power, and to defile itself with her idolatry. And when it became tired of the Chaldeans, it formed impure connections with the Egyptians, as it had done once before during its sojourn in Egypt. The description of the Assyrians in v. 12 coincides with that in vv. 5 and 6, except that some of the predicates are placed in a different order, and **לְבָשִׁי מְכֻלָּל** is substituted for **תְּכֵלֶת** **לְבָשִׁי**. The former expression, which occurs again in Eze. 38: 4, must really mean the same as **לְבַי תְּכֵלֶת**. But it does not follow from this that **מְכֻלָּל** signifies purple, as Hitzig maintains. The true meaning is perfection; and when used of the clothing, it signifies perfect beauty. The Septuagint rendering, **ἐμπάρυφα**, with a beautiful border, — more especially a variegated one, — merely expresses the sense, but not the actual meaning of **מְכֻלָּל**. The Chaldee rendering is **לְבָשִׁי גִמְר**, *perfecte induti*. — There is great obscurity in the statement in v. 14 as to the way in which Judah was seduced to cultivate intercourse with the Chaldeans. She saw men engraved or drawn upon the wall (**מִחֲקָה**, a participle *Pual* of **חָקַק**, engraved work, or sculpture). These figures were pictures of Chaldeans, engraved (drawn) with **שֵׁשֶׁר**, red ochre, a bright-red colour. **חֲגוּרִי**, an adjective form **חָגוּר**, wearing a girdle. **טְבוּלִים**, coloured cloth, from **טָבַל**, to colour; here, according to the context, variegated headbands or turbans. **סְרוּיָה**, the overhanging, used here of the cap. The reference is to the *tiaræ tinctæ* (Vulgate), the lofty turbans or caps, as they are to be seen upon the monuments of ancient Nineveh. **שְׁלֵי־נְשִׁים**, not chariot-warriors, but knights: “*tristatae*, the name of the second grade after the regal dignity” (Jerome. See the comm. on Exo. 14: 7 and 2Sa. 23: 8).

The description of these engravings answers perfectly to the sculptures upon the inner walls of the Assyrian palaces in the monuments of Nimrud, Khorsabad, and Kouyunjik (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, and Vaux, *Nineveh and Persepolis*). The pictures of the Chaldeans are not mythological figures (Hävernick), but sculptures depicting war-scenes, triumphal processions of Chaldean rulers and warriors, with which the Assyrian palaces were adorned. We have not to look for these sculptures in Jerusalem or Palestine. This cannot be inferred from Eze. 8:10, as Hävernick supposes; nor established by Hitzig's argument, that the woman must have been in circumstances to see such pictures. The intercourse between Palestine and Nineveh, which was carried on even in Jonah's time, was quite sufficient to render it possible for the pictures to

be seen. When Israelites travelled to Nineveh, and saw the palaces there, they could easily make the people acquainted with the glory of Nineveh by the accounts they would give on their return. It is no reply to this, to state that the woman does not send ambassadors till afterwards (v. 16), as Hitzig argues; for Judah sent ambassadors to Chaldea not to view the glories of Assyria, but to form alliances with the Chaldeans, or to sue for their favour. Such an embassy, for example, was sent to Babylon by Zedekiah (Jer. 29: 3); and there is no doubt that in v. 16*b* Ezekiel has this in his mind. Others may have preceded this, concerning which the books of Kings and Chronicles are just as silent as they are concerning that of Zedekiah. The thought in these verses is therefore the following: — The acquaintance made by Israel (Judah) with the imperial splendour of the Chaldeans, as exhibited in the sculptures of their palaces, incited Judah to cultivate political and mercantile intercourse with this imperial power, which led to its becoming entangled in the heathen ways and idolatry of the Chaldeans. The Chaldeans themselves came and laid the foundation for an intercourse which led to the pollution of Judah with heathenism, and afterwards filled it with disgust, because it was brought thereby into dependence upon the Chaldeans. The consequence of all this was, that the Lord became tired of Judah (vv. 17, 18). For instead of returning to the Lord, Judah turned to the other power of the world, namely, to Egypt; and in the time of Zedekiah renewed its ancient coquetry with that nation (vv. 19-21 compared with v. 8). The form **וַתַּעֲנֶבֶה** in v. 20, which the *Keri* also gives in v. 18, has taken *ah* as a feminine termination (not the cohortative *ah*), like **תִּרְנָה** in Pro. 1:20; 8: 1 (vid., Delitzsch, *Comm. on Job*, en loc.). **בְּלִגְשִׁים** are *scorta mascula* (here (Kimchi), — a drastically sarcastic epithet applied to the *sârisim*, the eunuchs, or courtiers. The figurative epithet answers to the licentious character of the Egyptian idolatry. The sexual heat both of horses and asses is referred to by Aristotle, *Hist. anim.* vi. 22, and Columella, *de re rust.* vi. 27; and that of the horse has already been applied to the idolatry of the people by Jeremiah (vid., Jer. 5: 8). **בְּשֵׁר**, as in Eze. 16:26. **פִּקֵּד** (v. 21), to look about for anything, i.e., to search for it; not to miss it, as Hävernîck imagines.

### *Eze. 23:22-35.* Punishment of the harlot Jerusalem. —

V. 22. *Therefore, Oholibah, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy soul has torn itself away, and cause them to come upon thee from every side; V. 23. The sons of Babel, and all the Chaldeans, rulers, lords, and nobles, all the sons of Assyria with them: chosen men of graceful deportment, governors and officers together, knights and counsellors, all riding upon horses. V. 24. And they will come upon thee with weapons, chariots, and wheels, and with a host of peoples; target and shield and helmet will they direct against thee round about: and I commit to them the judgment, that they may judge thee according to their rights. V. 25. And I direct my jealousy against thee, so that*

*they shall deal with thee in wrath: nose and ears will they cut off from thee; and thy last one shall fall by the sword: they will take thy sons and thy daughters; and thy last one will be consumed by fire. V. 26. They will strip off thy clothes from thee, and take thy splendid jewellery. V. 27. I will abolish thy lewdness from thee, and thy whoredom from the land of Egypt: that thou mayest no more lift thine eyes to them, and no longer remember Egypt. V. 28. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I give thee into the hand of those whom thou hatest, into the hand of those from whom thy soul has torn itself away: V. 29. And they shall deal with thee in hatred, and take all thy gain, and leave thee naked and bare; that thy whorish shame may be uncovered, and thy lewdness and thy whoredom. V. 30. This shall happen to thee, because thou goest whoring after the nations, and on account of thy defiling thyself with their idols. V. 31. In the way of thy sister hast thou walked; therefore I give her cup into thy hand. V. 32. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, The cup of thy sister thou shalt drink, the deep and broad one; it will be for laughter and for derision, because it contains so much. V. 33. Thou wilt become full of drunkenness and misery: a cup of desolation and devastation is the cup of thy sister Samaria. V. 34. Thou wilt drink it up and drain it, and gnaw its fragments, and tear thy breasts (therewith); for I have spoken it, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 35. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thou hast forgotten me, and hast cast me behind thy back, thou shalt also bear thy lewdness and thy whoredom. —*

As Jerusalem has given herself up to whoredom, like her sister Samaria, she shall also share her sister's fate. The paramours, of whom she has become tired, God will bring against her as enemies. The Chaldeans will come with all their might, and execute the judgment of destruction upon her. — For the purpose of depicting their great and powerful forces, Ezekiel enumerates in vv. 23 and 24 the peoples and their military equipment: viz., the sons of Babel, i.e., the inhabitants of Babylonia, the Chaldeans, — the ruling people of the empire at that time, — and all the sons of Asshur, i.e., the inhabitants of the eastern portions of the empire, the former rulers of the world. There is some obscurity in the words **פְּקֹד וְשׂוֹא וְקָנָא**, which the older theologians have almost unanimously taken to be the names of different tribes in the Chaldean empire. Ewald also adopts this view, but it is certainly incorrect; for the words are in apposition to **וְכָל-בְּשָׂדִים**, as the omission of the copula **ו** before **פְּקֹד** is sufficient to show. This is confirmed by the fact that **שׂוֹא** is used, in Isa. 32: 5 and Job. 34:19, in the sense of the man of high rank, distinguished for his prosperity, which is quite in harmony with the passage before us. Consequently **פְּקֹד** is not to be taken in the sense of visitation or punishment, after Jer. 50:21; but the meaning is to be sought in the verb **פָּקַד**, to exercise supervision, or lead; and the abstract oversight is used for overseer, or ruler, as an equivalent to **פְּקֹד**. Lastly, according to Rabbins, the Vulgate, and others, **קָנָא** signifies princes, or nobles. The predicates in v. 23b are repeated from vv. 6 and 12, and **קְרֹואִים** alone is added. This is a word taken from the Pentateuch, where the heads of the tribes and families, as being members of the

council of the whole congregation of Israel, are called **קְרוּאֵי הָעֵדָה** or **מוֹעֵד קְרוּאֵי**, persons called or summoned to the meeting (Num. 1:16; 16: 2). As Michaelis has aptly observed, “he describes them sarcastically in the very same way in which he had previously described those upon whom she doted.”

There is a difficulty in explaining the **אֵת. לֵעָ. הֶצֵן**, — for which many MSS read **הֶצֵן**, — as regards not only its meaning, but its position in the sentence. The fact that it is associated with **רֶכֶב וְנִלְוָל** would seem to indicate that **הֶצֵן** is also either an implement of war or some kind of weapon. At the same time, the words cannot be the subject to **וּבָאוּ**; but as the expression **וּבִקְהַל אַמִּים**, which follows, clearly shows, they simply contain a subordinate definition of the manner in which, or the things with which, the peoples mentioned in vv. 23, 24 will come, while they are governed by the verb in the freest way. The attempts which Ewald and Hitzig have made to remove the difficulty, by means of conjectures, are forced and extremely improbable. **נָתַתִּי לְפָנֵיהֶם**, I give up to them (not, I place before them); **נָתַן לְפָנַי**, as in 1Ki. 8:46, to deliver up, or give a thing into a person’s hand or power. **לְפָנַי** is used in this sense in Gen. 13: 9 and 24:51. — In vv. 25, 26, the execution of the judgment is depicted in detail. The words, “they take away thy nose and ears,” are not to be interpreted, as the earlier expositors suppose, from the custom prevalent among the Egyptians and other nations of cutting off the nose of an adulteress; but depict, by one particular example, the mutilation of prisoners captured by their enemies. **אַחֲרֵיתָא**: not posterity, which by no means suits the last clause of the verse, and cannot be defended from the usage of the language (see the comm. on Amo. 4: 2); but the last, according to the figure employed in the first clause, the trunk; or, following the second clause, the last thing remaining in Jerusalem, after the taking away of the sons and daughters, i.e., after the slaying and the deportation of the inhabitants, — viz. the empty houses. For v. 26, compare Eze. 16:39. — In v. 27, “from the land of Egypt” is not equivalent to “dating from Egypt;” for according to the parallel **מִמֶּךָ**, from thee, this definition does not belong to **וְנִוְתַדְךָ**, “thy whoredom,” but to **הַשְׁבַּתִּי**, “I cause thy whoredom to cease from Egypt” (Hitzig). — For v. 28a, compare Eze. 16:37; for v. 28b, vid., v. 17 above; and for v. 29, see vv. 25 and 26, and Eze. 16:39. — V. 31 looks back to v. 13; and v. 31b is still further expanded in vv. 32-34. Judah shall drink the cup of the wrathful judgment of God, as Samaria has done. For the figure of the cup, compare Isa. 51:17 and Jer. 25:15. This cup is described in v. 32 as deep and wide, i.e., very capacious, so that whoever exhausts all its contents must be thoroughly intoxicated. **תִּהְיֶה** is the third person; but the subject is **מִרְבֵּה**, and not **כּוֹס**. The greatness or breadth of the cup will be a subject of laughter and ridicule. It is very arbitrary to supply “to thee,” so as to

read: will be for laughter and ridicule to thee, which does not even yield a suitable meaning, since it is not Judah but the nations who laugh at the cup. Others regard **תְּהִיָּה** as the second person, thou wilt become; but apart from the anomaly in the gender, as the masculine would stand for the feminine, Hitzig has adduced the forcible objection, that according to this view the words would not only anticipate the explanation give of the figure in the next verse, but would announce the consequences of the **שְׁכָרוֹן וְגִוּוֹן** mentioned there. Hitzig therefore proposes to erase the words from **תְּהִיָּה** to **וּלְלֹאג** as a gloss, and to alter **מְרַבָּה** into **מְרַבָּה**: which contains much, is very capacious. But there is not sufficient reason to warrant such critical violence as this. Although the form **מְרַבָּה** is *ἀπ. λεγ.*, it is not to be rejected as a *nomen subst.*; and if we take **מְרַבָּה לְהַכִּיל**, the magnitude to hold, as the subject of the sentence, it contains a still further description of the cup, which does not anticipate what follows, even though the cup will be an object of laughter and ridicule, not so much for its size, as because of its being destined to be drunk completely empty. In v. 33 the figure and the fact are combined, — **וְגִוּוֹן**, lamentation, misery, being added to **שְׁכָרוֹן**, drunkenness, and the cup being designated a cup of devastation. The figure of drinking is expanded in the boldest manner in v. 34 into the gnawing of the fragments of the cup, and the tearing of the breasts with the fragments. — In v. 35 the picture of the judgment is closed with a repetition of the description of the nation's guilt. For v. 35*b*, compare Eze. 16:52 and 58.

**Eze. 23:36-49.** Another summary of the sins and punishment of the two women.

V. 36. *And Jehovah said to me, Son of man, wilt thou judge Oholah and Oholibah, then show them their abominations; V. 37. For they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands; and they have committed adultery with their idols; and their sons also whom they bare to me they have caused to pass through to them to be devoured. V. 38. Yea more, they have done this to me; they have defiled my sanctuary the same day, and have desecrated my Sabbaths. V. 39. When they slaughtered their sons to their idols, they came into my sanctuary the same day to desecrate it; and, behold, they have acted thus in the midst of my house. V. 40. Yea, they have even sent to men coming from afar, to them was a message sent, and, behold, they came, for whom thou didst bathe thyself, paint thine eyes, and put on ornaments, V. 41. And didst seat thyself upon a splendid cushion, and a table was spread before them, thou didst lay thereon my incense and my oil. V. 42. And the loud noise became still thereat, and to the men out of the multitude there were brought topers out of the desert, and they put armlets upon their hands, and glorious crowns upon their heads. V. 43. Then I said to her who was debilitated for adultery, Now will her whoredom itself go whoring, V. 44. And they will go in to her as they go in to a shore; so did they go in to Oholah and Oholibah, the lewd women. V. 45. But righteous men, these shall judge them according to the judgment of adulteresses and according to the judgment of murderesses; for they are adulteresses, and there*



*is blood in their hands. V. 46. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will bring up against them an assembly, and deliver them up for maltreating and for booty. V. 47. And the assembly shall stone them, and cut them in pieces with their swords; their sons and their daughters shall they kill, and burn their houses with fire. V. 48. Thus will I eradicate lewdness from the land, that all women may take warning and not practise lewdness like you. V. 49. And they shall bring your lewdness upon you, and ye shall bear the sins of your idols, and shall learn that I am the Lord Jehovah.*

The introductory words **הַתְּשׁוּבָה וְגו'** point back not only to Eze. 22: 2, but also to Eze. 20: 4, and show that this section is really a summary of the contents of the whole group (Eze. 20:23). The actual subject-matter of these verses is closely connected with v. 16, more especially in the designation of the sins as adultery and bloodshed (compare vv. 37 and 45 with Eze. 16:38). **נִאֲף אֶת־הַגּוֹלִים**, to commit adultery with the idols, whereby the idols are placed on a par with Jehovah as the husband of Israel (compare Jer. 3: 8 and 2:27). For the Moloch-worship in v. 37b, compare Eze. 16:20, 21, and Eze. 20:31. The desecration of the sanctuary (v. 38a) is more minutely defined in v. 39. **בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא** in v. 38, which has so offended the LXX and Hitzig that it is omitted by the former, while the latter proposes to strike it out as a gloss, is added for the purpose of designating the profanation of the sanctuary as contemporaneous with the Moloch-worship of v. 37b, as is evident from v. 39. For the fact itself, compare 2Ki. 21: 4, 5, 7. The desecration of the Sabbaths, as in Eze. 20:13, 16. For v. 39a, compare Eze. 16:21. The words are not to be understood as signifying that they sacrificed children to Moloch in the temple, but simply that immediately after they had sacrificed children to Moloch, they went into the temple of Jehovah, that there they might worship Jehovah also, and thus placed Jehovah upon a par with Moloch. This was a profanation (**חִלּוּל**) of His sanctuary.

In vv. 40-44 the allusion is not to actual idolatry, but to the ungodly alliance into which Judah had entered with Chaldea. Judah sent ambassadors to Chaldea, and for the purpose of receiving the Chaldeans, adorned herself as a woman would do for the reception of her paramours. She seated herself upon a splendid divan, and in front of this there was a table spread, upon which stood the incense and the oil that she ought to have offered to Jehovah. This is the explanation which Kliefoth has correctly given of vv. 40 and 41. The emphatic **נִאֲף בִּי** in v. 40 is sufficient to show that the reference is to a new crime deserving of punishment. This cannot be idolatry, because the worship of Moloch has already been mentioned in vv. 38 and 39 as the worst of all the idolatrous abominations. Moreover, sending for (or to) men who come from afar does not apply to idolatry in the literal sense of the word; for men to whom the harlot sent messengers to invite them to come to her could not be idols for which she sent to a distant land. The allusion is rather to Assyrians or Chaldeans, and, according to v. 42, it is the former who are referred to here

(compare Isa. 39: 3). There is no force in Hitzig's objection, namely, that the one woman sent to these, and that their being sent for and coming have already been disposed of in v. 16. For the singulars in the last clause of v. 40 show that even here only one woman is said to have sent for the men. Again, תִּשְׁלַחְנָה might even be the third person singular, as this form does sometimes take the termination נָה (vid., Ewald, § 191c, and Ges. § 47, Anm. 3). At the same time, there is nothing in the fact that the sending to Chaldea has already been mentioned in v. 16 to preclude another allusion to the same circumstance from a different point of view. The woman adorned herself that she might secure the favour of the men for whom she had sent. כְּהַל is the Arabic *khl*, to paint the eyes with stibium (*kohol*). For the fact itself, see the remarks on 2Ki. 9:30. She then seated herself upon a cushion (not lay down upon a bed; for יָשַׁב does not mean to lie down), and in front of this there was a table, spread with different kinds of food, upon which she placed incense and oil. The suffix to עָלֶיהָ refers to שֻׁלְחָן, and is to be taken as a neuter, which suits the table as a thing, whilst שֻׁלְחָן generally takes the termination וֹת in the plural. In v. 41, Ewald and Hävernick detect a description of the *lectisternia* of the licentious worship of the Babylonian Mylitta. But neither the sitting (יָשַׁב) upon a cushion (divan), nor the position taken by the woman behind the table, harmonizes with this. As Hitzig has correctly observed, "if she has taken her seat upon a cushion, and has a table spread before her, she evidently intends to dine, and that with the men for whom she has adorned herself. The oil is meant for anointing at meal-time (Amo. 6: 6; Pro. 21:17; cf. Psa. 23: 5), and the incense for burning." "My incense and my oil" are the incense and oil given to her by God, which she ought to have devoted to His service, but had squandered upon herself and her foreign friends (cf. Eze. 16:18; Hos. 2:10). The oil, as the produce of the land of Palestine, was the gift of Jehovah; and although incense was not a production of Palestine, yet as the money with which Judah purchased it, or the goods bartered for it, were the fists of God, Jehovah could also call it His incense.

Ver. 42 is very obscure. Such renderings of the first clause as *et vox multitudinis exultantis in ea* (Vulg.), and "the voice of a careless multitude within her" (Hävernick), can hardly be sustained. In every other passage in which קוֹל הַמּוֹן occurs, it does not signify the voice of a multitude, but a loud tumult; compare Isa. 13: 4; 33: 3, Dan. 10: 6, and 1Sa. 4:14, where קוֹל הַמּוֹן is used as synonymous with קוֹל הַצֶּעֶקָה. Even in cases where הַמּוֹן is used for a multitude, it denotes a noisy, boisterous, tumultuous crowd. Consequently שָׁלוֹם cannot be taken as an adjective connected with הַמּוֹן, because a quiet tumult is a contradiction, and שָׁלוֹם does not mean either *exultans* or recklessly breaking loose (Hävernick), but simply living in quiet, peaceful and contented.

שָׁלוֹ must therefore be the predicate to קוֹל הַמּוֹן; the sound of the tumult or the loud noise was (or became) quiet, still. בָּה, thereat (neuter, like בָּה, thereby, Gen. 24:14). The words which follow, וְאֵל אֲנָשִׁים וְגוֹ, are not to be taken with the preceding clause, as the connection would yield no sense. They belong to what follows. אֲנָשִׁים מֵרֵב אָדָם can only be the men who came from afar (v. 40). In addition to these, there were brought, i.e., induced to come, toppers from the desert. The *Chetib* סוֹבְאִים is no doubt a participle of סָבָא, drinkers, toppers; and the *Hophal* מוֹבְאִים is chosen instead of the *Kal* בְּאִים, for the sake of the paronomasia, with סוֹבְאִים. The former, therefore, can only be the Assyrians (בְּנֵי אַשּׁוּר, vv. 5 and 7), the latter (the toppers) the Chaldeans (בְּנֵי בָבֶל, v. 15). The epithet drinkers is a very appropriate one for the sons of Babylon; as Curtius (v. 1) describes the Babylonians as *maxime in vinum et quae ebrietatem sequuntur effusi*. The phrase “from the desert” cannot indicate the home of these men, although מִמֶּדְבָּר corresponds to מִמְּרָחֵק in v. 40, but simply the place from which they came to Judah, namely, from the desert of Syria and Arabia, which separated Palestine from Babylon. These peoples decorated the arms of the harlots with clasps, and their heads with splendid wreaths (crowns). The plural suffixes indicate that the words apply to both women, and this is confirmed by the fact that they are both named in v. 44. The subject to וַיִּתְּנוּ is not merely the סוֹבְאִים, but also the אֲנָשִׁים מִמְּרָחֵק in v. 40. The thought is simply that Samaria and Judah had attained to wealth and earthly glory through their intercourse with these nations; the very gifts with which, according to Eze. 16:11ff., Jehovah Himself had adorned His people. The meaning of the verse, therefore, when taken in its connection, appears to be the following: — When the Assyrians began to form alliances with Israel, quiet was the immediate result. The Chaldeans were afterwards added to these, so that through their adulterous intercourse with both these nations Israel and Judah acquired both wealth and glory. The sentence which God pronounced upon this conduct was, that Judah had sunk so deeply into adultery that it would be impossible for it ever to desist from the sin.

This is the way in which we understand v. 43, connecting לְבָלְהָ נְאֻפִים with וַאֲמַר: “I said concerning her who was debilitated with whoredom.” בָּלְהָ, feminine of בָּלָה, used up, worn out; see, for example, Jos. 9: 4, 5, where it is applied to clothes; here it is transferred to persons decayed, debilitated, in which sense the verb occurs in Gen. 18:12. נְאֻפִים, which is co-ordinated with בָּלְהָ, does not indicate the means by which the strength has been exhausted, but is an accusative of direction or reference, debilitated with regard to adultery, so as no longer to be capable of practising it. <sup>125</sup>

In the next clause **אֵת יְזֵנָה וְגוֹר' תִּזְנוּתֶיהָ**, is the subject to **יְזֵנָה**, and the *Chetib* is correct, the *Keri* being erroneous, and the result of false exposition. If **תִּזְנוּתֶיהָ** were the object to **יְזֵנָה**, so that the woman would be the subject, we should have the feminine **תִּזְנוּהָ**. But if, on the other hand, **תִּזְנוּתֶיהָ** is the subject, there is no necessity for this, whether we regard the word as a plural, from **תִּזְנוּתִים**, or take it as a singular, as Ewald (§ 259a) has done, inasmuch as in either case it is still an abstract, which might easily be preceded by the verb in the masculine form. **וְהִיא** gives greater force, not only to the suffix, but also the noun — and that even she (her whoredom). The sin of whoredom is personified, or regarded as **רוּחַ זְנוּנִים** (Hos. 4:12), as a propensity to whoredom, which continues in all its force after the capacity of the woman herself is gone. — V. 44 contains the result of the foregoing description of the adulterous conduct of the two women, and this is followed in vv. 45ff. by an account of the attitude assumed by God, and the punishment of the sinful women. **וַיָּבֹאוּ**, with an indefinite subject, they (*man*, one) went to her. **אֵלֶיהָ**, the one woman, Oholibah. It is only in the apodosis that what has to be said is extended to both women. This is the only interpretation of v. 44 which does justice both to the verb **וַיָּבֹאוּ** (imperfect with *Vav consec.* as the historical tense) and the perfect **בָּאוּ**. The plural **אִשָּׁה** does not occur anywhere else. Hitzig would therefore alter it into the singular, as “unheard of,” and confine the attribute to Oholibah, who is the only one mentioned in the first clause of the verse, and also in vv. 43, 40, and 41. The judgment upon the two sisters is to be executed by righteous men (v. 45). The Chaldeans are not designated as righteous in contrast to the Israelites, but as the instruments of the punitive righteousness of God in this particular instance, executing just judgment upon the sinners for adultery and bloodshed (vid., Eze. 16:38). The infinitives **הַעֲלֶה** and **נָתוּן** in v. 46 stand for the third person future. For other points, compare the commentary on Eze. 16:40 and 41. The formula **נָתַן לְזַעֲוָה** is derived from Deu. 28:25, and has been explained in the exposition of that passage. **וּבְרָא** is the *inf. abs. Piel*. For the meaning of the word, see the comm. on Eze. 21:24. From this judgment all women, i.e., all nations, are to take warning to desist from idolatry. **נִנְסְרוּ** is a mixed form, compounded of the *Niphal* and *Hithpael*, for **הִתְנַסְרוּ**, like **נִכְפְּרוּ** in Deu. 21: 8 (see the comm. *in loc.*). — For v. 49, vid., Eze. 16:58. — The punishment is announced to both the women, Israel and Judah, as still in the future, although Oholah (Samaria) had been overtaken by the judgment a considerable time before. The explanation of this is to be found in the allegory itself, in which both kingdoms are represented as being sisters of one mother; and it may also be defended on the ground that the approaching destruction of Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah affected the

remnants of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which were still to be found in Palestine; whilst, on the other hand, the judgment was not restricted to the destruction of the two kingdoms, but also embraced the later judgments which fell upon the entire nation.

## **Ch. 24. Prediction of the Destruction of Jerusalem both in Parable and by Sign**

*Eze. 24.* On the day on which the king of Babylon commenced the siege and blockade of Jerusalem, this event was revealed by God to Ezekiel on the Chaboras (vv. 1 and 2); and he was commanded to predict to the people through the medium of a parable the fate of the city and its inhabitants (vv. 3-14). God then foretold to him the death of his own wife, and commanded him to show no sign of mourning on account of it. His wife died the following evening, and he did as he was commanded. When he was asked by the people the reason of this, he explained to them, that what he was doing was symbolical of the way in which they were to act when Jerusalem fell (vv. 15-24). The fall would be announced to the prophet by a fugitive, and then he would no longer remain mute, but would speak to the people again (vv. 25-27). — Apart, therefore, from the last three verses, this chapter contains two words of God, the first of which unfolds in a parable the approaching calamities, and the result of the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (vv. 1-14); whilst the second typifies by means of a sign the pain and mourning of Israel, namely, of the exiles at the destruction of the city with its sanctuary and its inhabitants. These two words of God, being connected together by their contents, were addressed to the prophet on the same day, and that, as the introduction (vv. 1 and 2) expressly observes, the day on which the siege of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon began.

### *Eze. 24: 1.*

*And the word of Jehovah came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, saying, V. 2. Son of man, write for thyself the name of the day, this same day! The king of Babylon has fallen upon Jerusalem this same day. —*

The date given, namely, the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year after the carrying away of Jehoiachin (Eze. 1: 2), or what is the same thing, of the reign of Zedekiah, who was appointed king in his stead, is mentioned in Jer. 52: 4; 39: 1, and 2Ki. 25: 1, as the day on which Nebuchadnezzar blockaded the city of Jerusalem by throwing up a rampart; and after the captivity this day was still kept as a fast-day in consequence (Zec. 8:19). What was thus taking place at Jerusalem was revealed to Ezekiel on the Chaboras the very same day; and he was instructed to announce it to the exiles, “that they and the besieged might learn both from the time and the result, that the destruction of the city was not to be ascribed to chance or to the power of the Babylonians,

but to the will of Him who had long ago foretold that, on account of the wickedness of the inhabitants, the city would be burned with fire; and that Ezekiel was a true prophet, because even when in Babylon, which was at so great a distance, he had known and had publicly announced the state of Jerusalem.” The definite character of this prediction cannot be changed into a *vaticinium post eventum*, either by arbitrary explanations of the words, or by the unfounded hypothesis proposed by Hitzig, that the day was not set down in this definite form till after the event. — Writing the name of the day is equivalent to making a note of the day. The reason for this is given in v. 2*b*, namely, because Nebuchadnezzar had fallen upon Jerusalem on that very day. **תָּמַדָּ** signifies to support, hold up (his hand); and hence both here and in Psa. 88: 8 the meaning to press violently upon anything. The rendering “to draw near,” which has been forced upon the word from the Syriac (Ges., Winer, and others), cannot be sustained.

### *Eze. 24: 3-14.* Parable of the Pot with the Boiling Pieces.

V. 3. *And relate a parable to the rebellious house, and say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Set on the pot, set on and also pour water into it.* V. 4. *Gather its pieces of flesh into it, all the good pieces, haunch and shoulder, fill it with choice bones.* V. 5. *Take the choice of the flock, and also a pile of wood underneath for the bones; make it boil well, also cook its bones therein.* V. 6. *Therefore, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Woe! O city of murders! O pot in which is rust, and whose rust doth not depart from it; piece by piece fetch it out, the lot hath not fallen upon it.* V. 7. *For her blood is in the midst of her; she hath placed it upon the naked rock; she hath not poured it upon the ground, that they might cover it with dust.* V. 8. *To bring up fury, to take vengeance, I have made her blood come upon the naked rock, that it might not be covered.* V. 9. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Woe to the city of murders! I also will make the pile of wood great.* V. 10. *Heap up the wood, stir the fire, do the flesh thoroughly, make the broth boil, that the bones may also be cooked away.* V. 11. *And set it empty upon the coals thereof, that its brass may become hot and glowing, that the uncleanness thereof may melt within it, its rust pass away.* V. 12. *He hath exhausted the pains, and her great rust doth not go from her, into the fire with her rust!* V. 13. *In thine uncleanness is abomination; because I have cleansed thee, and thou hast not become clean, thou wilt no more become clean from thy uncleanness, till I quiet my fury upon thee.* V. 14. *I Jehovah have spoken it; it cometh, and I will do it, I will not cease, nor spare, nor let it repent me. According to thy ways, and according to thy deeds, shall they judge thee, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

The contents of these verses are called **מִשְׁל**, a proverb or parable; and Ezekiel is to communicate them to the refractory generation. It follows from this that the ensuing act, which the prophet is commanded to perform, is not to be regarded as a symbolical act which he really carried out, but that the act forms the substance of the *mâshâl*, in other words, belongs to the parable itself. Consequently the interpretation of the parable in vv. 10ff. is clothed in the form

of a thing actually done. The pot with the pieces of flesh and the bones, which are to be boiled in it and boiled away, represents Jerusalem with its inhabitants. The fire, with which they are boiled, is the fire of war, and the setting of the pot upon the fire is the commencement of the siege, by which the population of the city is to be boiled away like the flesh and bones in a pot. שִׁפֹּת is used, as in 2Ki. 4:38, to signify the setting of a pot by or upon the fire. אָסַף וְגוֹ': put in its pieces all together. נִתְחַיָּהּ, its pieces of flesh, i.e., the pieces belonging to the cooking-pot. These are defined still more minutely as the best of the pieces of flesh, and of these the thigh (haunch) and shoulder are mentioned as the most important pieces, to which the choicest of the bones are to be added. This is rendered still more emphatic by the further instruction to take the choice of the flock in addition to these. The choicest pieces of flesh and the pieces of bone denote the strongest and ablest portion of the population of the city. To boil these pieces away, more especially the bones, a large fire is requisite. This is indicated by the words, "and also a pile of wood underneath for the bones." דֹּר in v. 5, for which מְדוּרָה is substituted in v. 9, signifies a pile of wood, and occurs in this sense in Isa. 30:33, from דֹּר, to lay round, to arrange, pile up. דֹּר הָעֲצָמִים cannot mean a heap of bones, on account of the article, but simply a pile of wood for the (previously mentioned) bones, namely, for the purpose of boiling them away. If we pay attention to the article, we shall see that the supposition that Ezekiel was to place a heap of bones under the pot, and the alteration proposed by Böttcher, Ewald, and Hitzig of הָעֲצָמִים into עֲצִים, are alike untenable. Even if דֹּר in itself does not mean a pile of wood, but simply *strues*, an irregular heap, the fact that it is wood which is piled up is apparent enough from the context. If הָעֲצָמִים had grown out of עֲצִים through a corruption of the text, under the influence of the preceding עֲצָמִים, it would not have had an article prefixed. Hitzig also proposes to alter רְתַחֶהּ into נִתְחַיָּהּ, though without any necessity. The fact that רְתַחִים does not occur again proves nothing at all. The noun is added to the verb to intensify its force, and is *plurale tant.* in the sense of boiling. גַּם-בְּשָׁלוֹ וְגוֹ' is dependent upon the previous clause נִבְשָׁל taking the place of the copulative וּבִשָּׁל, to be cooked, thoroughly done, see the comm. on Exo. 12: 9.

In vv. 6-8 the interpretation of the parable is given, and that in two trains of thought introduced by לָכֵן (vv. 6 and 9). The reason for commencing with לָכֵן, therefore, may be found in the fact that in the parable contained in vv. 3ff., or more correctly in the blockade of Jerusalem, which furnished the occasion for the parable, the judgment about to burst upon Jerusalem is plainly indicated. The train of thought is the following: — Because the judgment upon Jerusalem

is now about to commence, therefore woe to her, for her blood-guiltiness is so great that she must be destroyed. But the punishment answering to the magnitude of the guilt is so distributed in the two strophes, vv. 6-8 and vv. 9-13, that the first strophe treats of the punishment of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the second, of the punishment of the city itself. To account for the latter feature, there is a circumstance introduced which is not mentioned in the parable itself, namely, the rust upon the pot, and the figure of the pot is thereby appropriately extended. Moreover, in the explanation of the parable the figure and the fact pass repeatedly the one into the other. Because Jerusalem is a city of murders, it resembles a pot on which there are spots of rust that cannot be removed. V. 6b is difficult, and has been expounded in various ways. The ל before the twofold נִתְחַיֶּה is, no doubt, to be taken distributively: according to its several pieces, i.e., piece by piece, bring it out. But the suffix attached to הוֹצִיָא cannot be taken as referring to סִיר, as Kliefoth proposes, for this does not yield a suitable meaning. One would not say: bring out the pot by its pieces of flesh, when nothing more is meant than the bringing of the pieces of flesh out of the pot. And this difficulty is not removed by giving to הוֹצִיָא the meaning to reach hither. For, apart from the fact that there is nothing in the usage of the language to sustain the meaning, reach it hither for the purpose of setting it upon the fire, one would not say: reach hither the pot according to its several pieces of flesh, piece by piece, when all that was meant was, bring hither the pot filled with pieces of flesh. The suffix to הוֹצִיָא refers to the city (עִיר), i.e., to its population, “to which the blood-guiltiness really adhered, and not to its collection of houses” (Hitzig). It is only in appearance also that the suffix to נִתְחַיֶּה refers to the pot; actually it refers to the city, i.e., to the whole of its population, the different individuals in which are the separate pieces of flesh. The meaning of the instructions therefore is by no means doubtful: the whole of the population to be found in Jerusalem is to be brought out, and that without any exception, inasmuch as the lot, which would fall upon one and not upon another, will not be cast upon her. There is no necessity to seek for any causal connection between the reference to the rust upon the pot and the bringing out of the pieces of flesh that are cooking within it, and to take the words as signifying that all the pieces, which had been rendered useless by the rust upon the pot, were to be taken out and thrown away (Hävernick); but through the allusion to the rust the interpretation already passes beyond the limits of the figure. The pieces of the flesh are to be brought out, after they have been thoroughly boiled, to empty the pot, that it may then be set upon the fire again, to burn out the rust adhering to it (v. 11). There is no force in Kliefoth’s objection, that this exposition does not agree with the context, inasmuch as, “according to the last clause of v. 5 and vv. 10 and 11, the pieces of flesh and even the bones are not to be taken out, but to be boiled away by a strong fire;



and the pot is to become empty not by the fact that the pieces of flesh are taken out and thrown away, but by the pieces being thoroughly boiled away, first to broth and then to nothing.” For “boiling away to nothing” is not found in the text, but simply that even the bones are to be thoroughly done, so as to turn into the softness of jelly. — So far as the fact is concerned, we cannot follow the majority of commentators, who suppose that the reference is simply to the carrying away of the inhabitants into exile. Bringing the pieces of flesh out of the pot, denotes the sweeping away of the inhabitants from the city, whether by death (vid., Eze. 11: 7) or by their being carried away captive. The city is to be emptied of men in consequence of its being blockaded by the king of Babylon. The reason of this is given in vv. 7 and 8, where the guilt of Jerusalem is depicted. The city has shed blood, which is not covered with earth, but has been left uncovered, like blood poured out upon a hard rock, which the stone cannot absorb, and which cries to God for vengeance, because it is uncovered (cf. Gen. 4:10; Job. 16:18; and Isa. 26:21). The thought is this: she has sinned in an insolent and shameless manner, and has done nothing to cover her sin, has shown no sign of repentance or atonement, by which she might have got rid of her sin. This has all been ordered by God. He has caused the blood that was shed to fall upon a bare rock, that it might lie uncovered, and He might be able to execute vengeance for the crime.

The second turn in the address (v. 9) commences in just the same manner as the first in v. 6, and proceeds with a further picture of the execution of punishment. To avenge the guilt, God will make the pile of wood large, and stir up a fierce fire. The development of this thought is given in v. 10 in the form of a command addressed to the prophet, to put much wood underneath, and to kindle a fire, so that both flesh and bones may boil away. **תָּמַם**, from **תָּמַם**, to finish, complete; with **בְּבֶשֶׂר**, to cook thoroughly. There are differences of opinion as to the true meaning of **הַמְרִקָה**; but the rendering sometimes given to **רָקַח**, namely, to spice, is at all events unsuitable, and cannot be sustained by the usage of the language. It is true that in Exo. 30:25ff. the verb **רָקַח** is used for the preparation of the anointing oil, but it is not the mixing of the different ingredients that is referred to, but in all probability the thorough boiling of the spices, for the purpose of extracting their essence, so that “thorough boiling” is no doubt the true meaning of the word. In Job. 41:23 (31), **מְרִקָה** is the boiling unguent-pot. **יִחַרְוּ** is a cohortative *Hiphil*, from **חָרַר**, to become red-hot, to be consumed. — V. 11. When the flesh and bones have thus been thoroughly boiled, the pot is to be placed upon the coals empty, that the rust upon it may be burned away by the heat. The emptying of the pot or kettle by pouring out the flesh, which has been boiled to broth, is passed over as self-evident. The uncleanness of the pot is the rust upon it. **תָּתַם** is an

Aramaean form for **מִתְּרַחֵם** = **מִתְּרַחֵם**. Michaelis has given the true explanation of the words: “*civibus caesis etiam urbs consumetur*” (when the inhabitants are slain, the city itself will be destroyed).<sup>126</sup>

— In vv. 12ff. the reason is given, which rendered it necessary to inflict this exterminating judgment. In v. 12 the address still keeps to the figure, but in v. 13 it passes over to the actual fact. It (the pot) has exhausted the pains (**תִּשְׂאֵנִי**, *ἄπ. λεγ.*, namely, as v. 13 clearly shows, the pains, or wearisome exertions, to make it clean by milder means, and not (as Hitzig erroneously infers from the following clause) to eat away the rust by such extreme heat. **תִּלְשָׁתָּהּ**, third pers. *Hiphil* of **לָשָׁף**, is the earlier form, which fell into almost entire disuse in later times (vid., Ges. § 75, Anm. 1). The last words of v. 11, I agree with Hitzig, Hävernicks, and others, in taking as an exclamation. Because the pot has exhausted all the efforts made to cleanse it, its rust is to go into the fire. In v. 13 Jerusalem is addressed, and **זִמָּה** is not a genitive belonging to **בְּמַטְאֵתָהּ**, “on account of thy licentious uncleanness” (Ewald and Hitzig), but a predicate, “in thine uncleanness is (there lies) **זִמָּה**, i.e., an abomination deserving of death” (see Lev. 18:17 and 20:14, where the fleshly sins, which are designated as *zimmâh*, are ordered to be punished with death). The cleansings which God had attempted, but without Jerusalem becoming clean, consisted in the endeavour, which preceded the Chaldean judgment of destruction, to convert the people from their sinful ways, partly by threats and promises communicated through the prophets (vid., 2Ch. 36:15), and partly by means of chastisements. For **חֲמָה** **חֲנִי**, see Eze. 5:13. In v. 14 there is a summary of the whole, which brings the threat to a close.

**Eze. 24:15-24.** The Sign of Silent Sorrow concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem.

V. 14. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 16. *Son of man, behold, I take from thee thine eyes' delight by a stroke, and thou shalt not mourn nor weep, and no tear shall come from thee.* V. 17. *Sigh in silence; lamentation for the dead thou shalt not make; bind thy head-attire upon thee, and put thy shoes upon thy feet, and do not cover thy beard, and eat not the bread of men.* V. 18. *And I spake to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded.* V. 19. *Then the people said to me, Wilt thou not show us what this signifies to us that thou doest so?* v. 20. *And I said to them, The word of Jehovah has come to me, saying,* V. 21. *Say to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your strength, the delight of your eyes, and the desire of your soul; and your sons and your daughters, whom ye have left, will fall by the sword.* V. 22. *Then will ye do as I have done, ye will not cover the beard, nor eat the bread of men;* V. 23. *And ye will have your head-attired upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet, ye will not mourn nor weep, but will pine away in your iniquity, and sigh one towards another.* V. 24. *Thus will Ezekiel be a*

*sign to you, as he hath done will ye do; when it cometh, ye will know that I the Lord am Jehovah.*

From the statements in v. 18, to the effect that the prophet spoke to the people in the morning, and then in the evening his wife died, and then again in the (following) morning, according to the command of God, he manifested no grief, and in answer to the inquiry of the people explained to them the meaning of what he did, it is evident that the word of God contained in this section came to him on the same day as the preceding one, namely, on the day of the blockade of Jerusalem; for what he said to the people on the morning of this day (v. 18) is the prophecy contained in vv. 3-14. Immediately after He had made this revelation to him, God also announced to him the approaching death of his wife, together with the significance which this event would have to the people generally. The delight of the eyes (v. 16) is his wife (v. 18) **בַּמִּנְפֵה** by a stroke, i.e., by a sudden death inflicted by God (vid., Num. 14:37; 17:13). On the occurrence of her death, he is neither to allow of any loud lamentings, nor to manifest any sign of grief, but simply to sigh in silence. **מֵתִים אֲבֵל** does not stand for **אֲבֵל מֵתִים**, but the words are both accusatives. The literal rendering would be: the dead shalt thou not make an object of mourning, i.e., thou shalt not have any mourning for the dead, as Storr (*observv.* p. 19) has correctly explained the words. On occasions of mourning it was customary to uncover the head and strew ashes upon it (Isa. 61: 3), to go barefoot (2Sa. 15:30; Isa. 20: 2), and to cover the beard, that is to say, the lower part of the face as far as the nose (Mic. 3: 7). Ezekiel is not to do any of these things, but to arrange his head-attire (**פֶּאֶר**), the head-attire generally, or turban, vid., v. 23 and Isa. 61: 3, and not specially that of the priests, which is called **הַמִּנְבֵּעָה** (**פֶּאֶרִי** in Exo. 39:28), and to put on his shoes, and also to eat no mourning bread. **לֶחֶם אֲנָשִׁים** does not mean *panis miserorum, cibus lugentium*, in which case **אֲנָשִׁים** would be equivalent to **אֲנָשִׁים**, but bread of men, i.e., of the people, that is to say, according to the context, bread which the people were accustomed to send to the house of mourning in cases of death, to manifest their sympathy and to console and refresh the mourners, — a custom which gave rise in the course of time to that of formal funeral meals. These are not mentioned in the Old Testament; but the sending of bread or food to the house of mourning is clearly referred to in Deu. 26:14, Hos. 9: 4, and Jer. 16: 7 (see also 2Sa. 3:35). — When Ezekiel thus abstained from all lamentation and outward sign of mourning on the death of his dearest one, the people conjectured that such striking conduct must have some significance, and asked him what it was that he intended to show thereby. He then announced to them the word of God (vv. 20-24). As his dearest one, his wife, had been taken from him, so should it dearest object, the holy temple, be taken from the nation by

destruction, and their children by the sword. When this occurred, then would they act as he was doing now; they would not mourn and weep, but simply in their gloomy sorrow sigh in silence on account of their sins, and groan one toward another.

The profanation (**חלל**) of the sanctuary is effected through its destruction (cf. Eze. 7:24). To show the magnitude of the loss, the worth of the temple in the eyes of the nation is dwelt upon in the following clauses. **נאון עינכם** is taken from Lev. 26:19. The temple is called the pride of your strength, because Israel based its might and strength upon it as the scene of the gracious presence of God, living in the hope that the Lord would not give up His sanctuary to the heathen to be destroyed, but would defend the temple, and therewith Jerusalem and its inhabitants also (cf. Jer. 7: 4). **מחמל נפשכם**, the desire or longing of the soul (from **חמל**, in Arabic, *desiderio ferri ad aliquam rem*). The sons and daughters of the people are the relatives and countrymen whom the exiles had been obliged to leave behind in Canaan. — The explanation of this lamentation and mourning on account of the destruction of the sanctuary and death of their relations, is to be found in the antithesis: **ונמקרתם בעו**, ye will pine or languish away in your iniquities (compare Eze. 4:17 and Lev. 26:39). Consequently we have not to imagine either “stolid indifference” (Eichhorn and Hitzig), or “stolid impenitence” (Ewald), but overwhelming grief, for which there were no tears, no lamentation, but only deep inward sighing on account of the sins which had occasioned so terrible a calamity. **נהם**, lit., to utter a deep growl, like the bears (Isa. 59:11); here to sigh or utter a deep groan. “One toward another,” i.e., manifesting the grief to one another by deep sighs; not “full of murmuring and seeking the sin which occasioned the calamity in others rather than in themselves,” as Hitzig supposes. The latter exposition is entirely at variance with the context. This grief, which consumes the bodily strength, leads to a clear perception of the sin, and also to true repentance, and through penitence and atonement to regeneration and newness of life. And thus will they attain to a knowledge of the Lord through the catastrophe which bursts upon them (cf. Lev. 26:40ff.). For **מופת**, a sign, see the comm. on Exo. 4:21.

**Eze. 24:25-27.** Sequel of the Destruction of Jerusalem to the Prophet Himself. —

V. 25. *And thou, son of man, behold, in the day when I take from them their might, their glorious joy, the delight of their eyes and the desire of their soul, their sons and their daughters,* V. 26. *In that day will a fugitive come to thee, to tell it to thine ears.* V. 27. *In that day will thy mouth be opened with the fugitive, and thou wilt speak, and no longer be mute; and thus shalt thou be a sign to them that they may know that I am Jehovah.* —

As the destruction of Jerusalem would exert a powerful influence upon the future history of the exiles on the Chaboras, and be followed by most important results, so was it also to be a turning-point for the prophet himself in the execution of his calling. Hävernick has thus correctly explained the connection between these closing verses and what precedes, as indicated by **וְאִתָּהָ** in v. 25. As Ezekiel up to this time was to speak to the people only when the Lord gave him a word for them, and at other times was to remain silent and dumb (Eze. 3:26 and 27); from the day on which a messenger should come to bring him the tidings of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, he was to open his mouth, and not continue dumb any longer. The execution of this word of God is related in Eze. 33:21, 22. The words, “when I take from them their strength,” etc., are to be understood in accordance with v. 21. Consequently **מִמְעוֹן** is the sanctuary, which was taken from the Israelites through the destruction of Jerusalem. The predicates which follow down to **מִשָּׂא נַפְשָׁם** refer to the temple (cf. v. 21). **מִשָּׂא נַפֶּשׁ**, an object toward which the soul lifts itself up (**נָשָׂא**), i.e., for which it cherishes a desire or longing; hence synonymous with **מִחְמַל נַפֶּשׁ** in v. 21. The sons and daughters are attached **ἀσυνδέτως**. **בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא** (in that day), in v. 26, which resumes the words **וּגְוֹ בַּיּוֹם קִחְתִּי** (in the day when I take, etc.) in v. 25, is not the day of the destruction of the temple, but generally the time of this event, or more precisely, the day on which the tidings would reach the prophet. **הַפְּלִיט**, with the generic article, a fugitive (vid., Gen. 14:13). **לְהִשְׁמָעוֹת אָזְנִים**, to cause the ears to hear (it), i.e., to relate it, namely to the bodily ears of the prophet, whereas he had already heard it in spirit from God. **הַשְּׁמָעוֹת**, a verbal noun, used instead of the infinitive *Hiphil*. **אֶת־הַפְּלִיט**, with the escaped one, i.e., at the same time “with the mouth of the fugitive” (Hitzig). **אֵת** expresses association, or so far as the fact is concerned, simultaneousness. The words, “then wilt thou speak, and no longer be dumb,” do not imply that it was only from that time forward that Ezekiel was to keep silence, but point back to Eze. 3:26 and 27, where silence is imposed upon him, with the exceptions mentioned there, from the very commencement of his ministry; and in comparison with that passage, simply involve *implicite* the thought that the silence imposed upon him then was to be observed in the strictest manner from the present time until the reception of the intelligence of the fall of Jerusalem, when his mouth would be opened once more. Through the “words of God” that were given to His prophet (Eze. 4-24), the Lord had now said to the people of Israel all that He had to say concerning the approaching catastrophe for them to consider and lay to heart, that they might be brought to acknowledge their sin, and turn with sorrow and repentance to their God. Therefore was Ezekiel from this time forward to keep perfect silence toward Israel, and to let God the Lord

speak by His acts and the execution of His threatening words. It was not till after the judgment had commenced that his mouth was to be opened again for still further announcements (vid., Eze. 33:22). — Ezekiel was thereby to become a sign to the Israelites. These words have a somewhat different meaning in v. 27 from that which they have in v. 24. There, Ezekiel, by the way in which he behaved at the death of his wife, was to be a sign to the people of the manner in which they were to act when the judgment should fall upon Jerusalem; whereas here (v. 27), **לְמוֹפֶת** refers to the whole of the ministry of the prophet, his silence hitherto, and that which he was still to observe, as well as his future words. Through both of these he was to exhibit himself to his countrymen as a man whose silence, speech, and action were alike marvellous and full of meaning to them, and all designed to lead them to the knowledge of the Lord, the God of their salvation.

## **CH. 25-32 — Predictions of Judgment upon the Heathen Nations**

*Eze. 25-32.* While the prophet's mouth was to be mute to Israel, the Lord directed him to speak against the heathen nations, and to foretell to them the judgment of destruction, that they might not be lifted up by the fall of the people and kingdom of God, but might recognise in the judgment upon Israel a work of the omnipotence and righteousness of the Lord, the Judge of the whole earth. There are seven heathen nations whose destruction Ezekiel foretells in this section of his book, viz.,

- (1) Ammon;
- (2) Moab;
- (3) Edom;
- (4) The Philistines (Eze. 25);
- (5) Tyre,
- (6) Sidon (Eze. 26-28); and
- (7) Egypt (Eze. 29-32).

These prophecies are divided into thirteen words of God by the introductory formula, "The word of Jehovah came to me," the utterances against Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines, being all comprehended in one word of God; whereas there are four separate words of God directed against Tyre, one against Sidon, and seven against Egypt. In the seven nations and the seven words of God directed against Egypt we cannot fail to discover an allusion to the symbolical significance of the number. Sidon, which had lost its commanding position and become dependent upon Tyre long before the time of Ezekiel, is evidently selected for a special word of God only for the purpose of making up the number seven. And in order to make it the more apparent that the number has been chosen on account of its significance, Ezekiel divides his

announcement of the judgment upon the seventh people into seven words of God. On the basis of Gen. 1, seven is the number denoting the completion of the works of God. When, therefore, Ezekiel selects seven nations and utters seven words of God concerning the principal nation, namely Egypt, he evidently intends to indicate thereby that the judgment predicted will be executed and completed upon the heathen world and its peoples through the word and acts of God. — The predictions of judgment upon these seven heathen nations are divisible, accordingly, into two groups. Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, and Sidon form one group, while the second treats of Egypt alone. This is certainly the way in which the cycle of these prophecies is to be divided rather than the plan ordinarily adopted, according to which the nations included in Eze. 25, as representatives of the one phase of the world-power, are placed in contrast with the other phase of heathenism represented by Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt. The latter is the opinion entertained by Hävernick, for example, with regard to the “beautiful and symmetrical arrangement” of these prophecies. “First of all,” says he, “the prophet shows in one series of nations how the idea of the judgment of God was realized in the case of those nations which rose up in direct and open hostility to the theocracy, and thereby represented the might of heathenism as turned away from God and engaged in downright rebellion against Him (Eze. 25). The prophecies concerning Tyre and Sidon contemplate heathenism in a second aspect (Eze. 26-28). In Tyre we have an exhibition of pride or carnal security, which looks away from God, and plunges deeper and deeper into the sin and worthlessness of the natural life. Both aspects are then finally combined in Egypt, that ancient foe of the covenant nation, which had grown into a world-power, and while displaying in this capacity unbending arrogance and pride, was now, like all the rest, about to be hurled down from the summit of its ancient glory into a bottomless deep.” But this interpretation is, in more than one respect, manifestly at variance with the substance of the prophecies. This applies, in the first place, to the antithesis which is said to exist between the nations threatened in Eze. 25 on the one hand, and Tyre and Sidon on the other. In the case of Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines, for example, the sins mentioned as those for which they would be overthrown by the judgment are their malicious delight at the fall of Israel, and their revengeful, hostile behaviour towards the covenant nation (Eze. 25: 3, 8, 12, 15). And in the same way, according to Eze. 26: 2, Tyre had involved itself in guilt by giving utterance to its delight at the destruction of Jerusalem, which inspired the hope that everything would now flow into its own store. On the other hand, nothing more is said in the case of Pharaoh and Egypt about malicious pleasure, or hostility, or enmity towards Israel or the kingdom of God; but Pharaoh has rendered himself guilty by saying: the Nile is mine, I have made it for myself; and by the fact that Egypt had become a staff of reed to the house of Israel, which broke when they sought to lean upon it (Eze. 29: 3, 6,

7). According to these obvious explanations, Ezekiel reckoned Tyre and Sidon among the nations that were inimically disposed towards Israel, even though the hostile attitude of the Phoenicians was dictated by different motives from those of Edom and the other nations mentioned in Eze. 25; and the heathen nations are arranged in two groups, and not in three. This is established beyond all doubt, when we observe that each of these two groups terminates with a promise for Israel. To the threat of judgment uttered against Sidon there is appended the promise: and there shall be no more for Israel a malicious briar and smarting thorn from all that are round about them who despise them; and when the Lord shall gather Israel from its dispersion, then will He cause it to dwell safely and prosperously in His land, inasmuch as He will execute judgment upon all round about them who despise them (Eze. 28:24-26). And the prediction of judgment upon Egypt in the last prophecy uttered concerning this land, in the twenty-seventh year of the captivity (Eze. 29:17), closes in a similar manner, with the promise that at the time when the Lord gives Egypt as spoil to the king of Babylon, He will cause a horn to grow to the house of Israel (Eze. 29:21). The fact that these two prophecies correspond to each other would not have been overlooked by the commentators if the prophecy concerning Egypt, which was really the last in order of time, had been placed in its proper chronological position in the book of Ezekiel, namely, at the close of the words of God directed against that land.

The date of the great mass of these prophecies falls within the period of the last siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, that is to say, in the interval between Eze. 24 and Eze. 33, as the chronological data in the headings plainly affirm. The first word concerning Tyre is from the eleventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin (Eze. 26: 1). Of the prophecies against Egypt, the one in Eze. 29: 1-16 dates from the tenth month of the tenth year; that in Eze. 30:20-26, from the first month of the eleventh year; that in Eze. 31, from the third month of the same year; the two in Eze. 32: 1ff. and 17ff., from the twelfth month of the twelfth year; and lastly, the brief utterance in Eze. 29:17-21, from the twenty-seventh year of the captivity. There are no chronological data attached to the others. But the short, threatening words against the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines in Eze. 25 belong to the time immediately succeeding the fall of Jerusalem, since they presuppose its having occurred. The second and third utterances concerning Tyre in Eze. 27 and Eze. 28: 1-19, as well as that concerning Sidon in Eze. 28:20ff., are closely connected, so far as their contents are concerned, with the first word of God against Tyre belonging to the eleventh year of the captivity. And lastly, the threatening word concerning Egypt in Eze. 30: 1-19, to which no definite chronological data are attached, appears to stand nearer in point of time to Eze. 29: 1-16 than to Eze. 29:17-21. — Consequently the arrangement is based upon the subject-matter of the



prophecies, and the chronological sequence is kept subordinate to this, or rather to the comparative importance of the several nations in relation to the theocracy.

These prophecies evidently rest upon the predictions of the earlier prophets against the same nations, so far as their contents are concerned; and in the threats directed against Tyre and Egypt, more especially, many of the thoughts contained in the prophecies of Isaiah (Isa. 23 and 19) are reproduced and expanded. But notwithstanding this resting upon the utterances of earlier prophets, Ezekiel's prophecy against the heathen nations is distinguished in a characteristic manner from that of the other prophets, by the fact that he does not say a word about the prospect of these nations being ultimately pardoned, or of the remnant of them being converted to the Lord, but stops with the announcement of the utter destruction of the earthly and temporal condition of all these kingdoms and nations. The prophecy concerning Egypt in Eze. 29:13-16, to the effect that after forty years of chastisement God will turn its captivity, and gather it together again, is only an apparent and not a real exception to this; for this turning of the judgment is not to bring about a restoration of Egypt to its former might and greatness or its glorification in the future; but, according to vv. 14ff., is simply to restore a lowly and impotent kingdom, which will offer no inducement to Israel to rely upon its strength. Through this promise, therefore, the threat of complete destruction is only somewhat modified, but by no means withdrawn. The only thing which Ezekiel positively holds out to view before the seven heathen nations is, that in consequence of the judgment falling upon them, they will learn that God is Jehovah, or the Lord. This formula regularly returns in the case of all the nations (vid., Eze. 25: 5, 7, 11, 17; 26: 6; 28:22, 23; 29: 6, 9; 30: 8, 19, 25, 26; 32:15); and we might take it to mean, that through the judgment of their destruction in a temporal respect, these nations will come to the knowledge of the God of salvation. And with this interpretation it would contain a slight allusion to the salvation, which will flourish in consequence of and after the judgment, in the case of those who have escaped destruction. If, however, we consider, on the one hand, that in the case of Edom (Eze. 25:14) the formula takes a harsher form, namely, not that they shall know Jehovah, but that they shall experience His vengeance; and, on the other hand, that the mighty Tyre is repeatedly threatened with destruction, even eternal extinction (Eze. 26:20, 21; 27:36; 28:19), and that the whole cycle of these prophecies closes with a funeral-dirge on the descent of all the heathen nations into Sheol (Eze. 32:17-32), — we shall see that the formula in question cannot be taken in the sense indicated above, as Kliefoth maintains, but must be understood as signifying that these nations will discern in their destruction the punitive righteousness of God, so that it presents no prospect of future salvation, but simply increases the force of the threat. There is nothing in this

distinction, however, to establish a discrepancy between Ezekiel and the earlier prophets; for Ezekiel simply fixes his eye upon the judgment, which will fall upon the heathen nations, partly on account of their hostile attitude towards the kingdom of God, and partly on account of their deification of their own might, and is silent as to the salvation which will accrue even to them out of the judgment itself, but without in the least degree denying it. The reason for his doing this is not that the contemplation of the particular features, which form the details of the immediate fulfilment, has led him to avert his eye from the more comprehensive survey of the entire future;<sup>127</sup> but that the proclamation of the spread of salvation among the heathen lay outside the limits of the calling which he had received from the Spirit of God. The prophetic mission of Ezekiel was restricted to the remnant of the covenant nation, which was carried into exile, and scattered among the heathen. To this remnant he was to foretell the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, and after the occurrence of that catastrophe the preservation and eventual restoration of the kingdom of God in a renewed and glorified form. With this commission, which he had received from the Lord, there was associated, it is true, the announcement of judgment upon the heathen, inasmuch as such an announcement was well fitted to preserve from despair the Israelites, who were pining under the oppression of the heathen, and to revive the hope of the fulfilment of the promise held out before the penitent of their future redemption from their state of misery and restoration to the position of the people of God. But this would not apply to the prophecies of the reception of the heathen into the renovated kingdom of God, as they contained no special element of consolation to the covenant people in their depression.

In connection with this we have the equally striking circumstance, that Ezekiel does not mention Babylon among the heathen nations. This may also be explained, not merely from the predominance of the idea of the judgment upon Israel and Jerusalem, which the Chaldeans were to execute as “righteous men” (Eze. 23:45), so that they only came before him as such righteous men, and not as a world-power also (Kliefoth), but chiefly from the fact that, for the reason described above, Ezekiel’s prophecy of the judgment upon the heathen is restricted to those nations which had hitherto cherished and displayed either enmity or false friendship toward Israel, and the Chaldeans were not then reckoned among the number. — For the further development of the prophecy concerning the future of the whole heathen world, the Lord had called the prophet Daniel at the same time as Ezekiel, and assigned him his post at the seat of the existing heathen imperial power.

## CH. 25. AGAINST AMMON, MOAB, EDOM, AND THE PHILISTINES

*Eze. 25.* The prophecies, comprehended in the heading (v. 1) in one “word of the Lord,” against Ammon (vv. 1-7), Moab (vv. 8-11), Edom (vv. 12-14), and the Philistines (vv. 15-17), those four border-nations of Israel, are very concise, the judgment of destruction being foretold to them, in a few forcible lines, partly on account of their scorn at the fall of the people and kingdom of God, and partly because of actual hostility manifested toward them. The date of these utterances is not given in the heading; but in vv. 3, 6, and 8 the destruction of Jerusalem is presupposed as having already occurred, so that they cannot have been delivered till after this catastrophe.

### *Eze. 25: 1-7.* AGAINST THE AMMONITES. —

*V. 1. And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, direct thy face towards the sons of Ammon, and prophesy against them, V. 3. And say to the sons of Ammon, Hear ye the word of the Lord Jehovah! Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thou sayest, Aha! concerning my sanctuary, that it is profaned; and concerning the land of Israel, that it is laid waste; and concerning the house of Judah, that they have gone into captivity; V. 4. Therefore, behold, I will give thee to the sons of the east for a possession, that they may pitch their tent-villages in thee, and erect their dwellings in thee; they shall eat thy fruits, and they shall drink thy milk. V. 5. And Rabbah will I make a camel-ground, and the sons of Ammon a resting-place for flocks; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. V. 6. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thou hast clapped thy hand, and stamped with thy foot, and hast rejoiced in soul with all thy contempt concerning the house of Israel, V. 7. Therefore, behold, I will stretch out my hand against thee, and give thee to the nations for booty, and cut thee off from the peoples, and exterminate thee from the lands; I will destroy thee, that thou mayst learn that I am Jehovah.*

In *Eze. 21:28ff.*, when predicting the expedition of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem, Ezekiel had already foretold the destruction of the Ammonites, so that these verses are simply a resumption and confirmation of the earlier prophecy. In the passage referred to, Ezekiel, like Zephaniah before him (*Zep. 2: 8, 10*), mentions their reviling of the people of God as the sin for which they are to be punished with destruction. This reviling, in which their hatred of the divine calling of Israel found vent, was the radical sin of Ammon. On the occasion of Judah's fall, it rose even to contemptuous and malicious joy at the profanation of the sanctuary of Jehovah by the destruction of the temple (a comparison with *Eze. 24:21* will show that this is the sense in which נִחַל is to be understood), at the devastation of the land of Israel, and at the captivity of Judah, — in other words, at the destruction of the religious and political existence of Israel as the people of God. The profanation of the sanctuary is mentioned first, to intimate that the hostility to Israel, manifested by the Ammonites on every occasion that presented itself (for proofs, see the comm.

on Zep. 2: 8), had its roots not so much in national antipathies, as in antagonism to the sacred calling of Israel. As a punishment for this, they are not only to lose their land (vv. 4 and 5), but to be cut off from the number of the nations (vv. 6 and 7). The Lord will give up their land, with its productions, for a possession to the sons of the east, i.e., according to Gen. 25:13-18, to the Arabs, the Bedouins (for **בְּנֵי קְדָם**, see the comm. on Jud. 6: 3 and Job. 1: 3). The *Piel* **יָשְׁבוּ**, although only occurring here, is not to be rejected as critically suspicious, and to be changed into *Kal*, as Hitzig proposes. The *Kal* would be unsuitable, because the subject of the sentence can only be **בְּנֵי קְדָם**, and not **מִירוֹתֵיהֶם**; and **יָשַׁב** in the *Kal* has an intransitive sense. For **מִירוֹת**, tent-villages of nomads, see the comm. on Gen. 25:16. **מִשְׁכָּנֵיהֶם**, dwellings, are the separate tents of the shepherds. In the last clauses of v. 4, **הַמָּה** is repeated for the sake of emphasis; and Hitzig's opinion, that the first **הַמָּה** corresponds to the subject in the clause **וַיָּשְׁבוּ וְגו'**, the second to that in **וַנִּתְּנוּ**, is to be rejected as a marvellous flight of imagination, which approaches absurdity in the assertion that **פְּרֵי הָאָרֶץ** signifies the folds, i.e., the animals, of the land. Along with the fruit of the land, i.e., the produce of the soil, milk is also mentioned as a production of pastoral life, and the principal food of nomads. On the wealth of the Ammonites in flocks and herds, see Jud. 6: 5. The words are addressed to Ammon, as a land or kingdom, and hence the feminine suffix. The capital will also share the fate of the land. *Rabbah* (see the comm. on Deu. 3:11) will become a camel-ground, a waste spot where camels lie down and feed. This has been almost literally fulfilled. The ruins of *Ammân* are deserted by men, and Seetzen found Arabs with their camels not far off (vid., von Raumer, *Palestine*, p. 268). In the parallel clause, the sons of Ammon, i.e., the Ammonites, are mentioned instead of their land.

In vv. 6 and 7, the Lord announces to the nation of the Ammonites the destruction that awaits them, and reiterates with still stronger emphasis the sin which occasioned it, namely, the malicious delight they had manifested at Israel's fall. **בְּכָל-שְׂאֵמָה** is strengthened by **בְּנִפְשׁוֹ**: with all thy contempt in the soul, i.e., with all the contempt which thy soul could cherish. In v. 7 the **ἀπ. λεγ. לָבַג** occasions some difficulty. The *Keri* has substituted **לָבַג**, for booty for the nations (cf. Eze. 26: 5); and all the ancient versions have adopted this. Consequently **בָּג** might be a copyist's error for **בַּג**; and in support of this the circumstance might be adduced, that in Eze. 47:13, where **גָּה** stands for **גָּה**, we have unquestionably a substitution of **ג** for **ג**. But if the *Chetib* **בּו** be correct, the word is to be explained — as it has been by Benfey (*Die Montasnamen*, p. 194) and Gildemeister (in Lassen's *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, iv. 1, p. 213ff.) — from the Sanscrit *bhāga*, *pars*, *portio*, and

has passed into the Semitic languages from the Aryan, like the Syriac *bagā*<sup>c</sup>, *esca*, which P. Boetticher (*Horae aram.* p. 21) has correctly traced to the Sanscrit *bhāj*, *conquere*. — The executors of the judgment are not named; for the threat that God will give up the land of the Ammonites to the Bedouins for their possession, does not imply that they are to exterminate the Ammonites. On the contrary, a comparison of this passage with Amo. 1:13-15 and Jer. 49: 1-5, where the Ammonites are threatened not only with the devastation of their land, but also with transportation into exile, will show that the Chaldeans are to be thought of as executing the judgment. (See the comm. on v. 11.)

*Eze. 25: 8-11.* Against the Moabites. —

*V. 8. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because Moab, like Seir, saith, Behold, like all other nations is the house of Judah: V. 9. Therefore, behold, I will open the shoulder of Moab from the cities, from its cities even to the last, the ornament of the land, Beth-hayeshimoth, Baal-meon, and as far as Kiryathaim, V. 10. To the sons of the east, together with the sons of Ammon, and will give it for a possession, that the sons of Ammon may no more be remembered among the nations. V. 11. Upon Moab will I execute judgments; and they shall learn that I am Jehovah.*

Moab has become guilty of the same sin against Judah, the people of God, as Ammon, namely, of misunderstanding and despising the divine election of Israel. Ammon gave expression to this, when Judah was overthrown, in the malicious assertion that the house of Judah was like all the heathen nations, — that is to say, had no pre-eminence over them, and shared the same fate as they. There is something remarkable in the allusion to Seir, i.e., Edom, in connection with Moab, inasmuch as no reference is made to it in the threat contained in vv. 9-11; and in vv. 12-13, there follows a separate prediction concerning Edom. Hitzig therefore proposes to follow the example of the LXX, and erase it from the text as a gloss, but without being able in the smallest degree to show in what way it is probable that such a gloss could have found admission into an obviously unsuitable place. Seir is mentioned along with Moab to mark the feeling expressed in the words of Moab as springing, like the enmity of Edom towards Israel, from hatred and envy of the spiritual birthright of Israel, i.e., of its peculiar prerogatives in sacred history. As a punishment for this, Moab was to be given up, like Ammon, to the Bedouins for their possession, and the people of the Moabites were to disappear from the number of the nations. Vv. 9 and 10 form one period, לְבִנְיָ קָדָם in v. 10 being governed by פְּתָחָהּ in v. 9. The shoulder of Moab is the side of the Moabitish land. In the application of the word פְּתָחָהּ to lands or provinces, regard is had to the position of the shoulder in relation to the whole body, but without reference to the elevation of the district. We find an analogy to this in the use of פְּתָחָהּ in connection with the sides of a

building. In **מִהָעָרִים וְגו'**, the **מִן** cannot be taken, in a privative sense, for **מִהְיֹוֹת**; for neither the article **הָעָרִים**, nor the more emphatic **מִקְצֵהוּ**, allows this; but **מִן** indicates the direction, “from the cities onwards,” “from its cities onwards, reckoning to the very last,” — that is to say, in its whole extent. **מִקְצֵהוּ**, as in Isa. 56:11, Gen. 19: 4, etc. This tract of land is first of all designated as a glorious land, with reference to its worth as a possession on account of the excellence of its soil for the rearing of cattle (see the comm. on Num. 32: 4), and then defined with geographical minuteness by the introduction of the names of some of its cities. *Beth-Hayeshimoth*, i.e., house of wastes (see the comm. on Num. 22: 1), has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Suaimé*, which F. de Saulcy discovered on the north-eastern border of the Dead Sea, a little farther inland (vid., *Voyage en terre sainte*, Paris 1865, t. i. p. 315). *Baal-Meon*, — when written fully, *Beth-Baal-Meon* (Jos. 13:17), — contracted into *Beth-Meon* in Jer. 48:23, is to be sought for to the south-east of this, in the ruins of *Myun*, three-quarters of an hour’s journey to the south of Heshbon (see the comm. on Num. 32:38). *Kiryathaim* was still farther south, probably on the site of the ruins of *El Teym* (see the comm. on Gen. 14: 5 and Num. 32:37). The *Chetib* **קְרִיתָמָה** is based upon the form **קְרִיתָם**, a secondary form of **קְרִיתָיִם**, like **דָּתָן**, a secondary form of **דָּתָיִן**, in 2Ki. 6:13. The cities named were situated to the north of the Arnon, in that portion of the Moabitish land which had been taken from the Moabites by the Amorites before the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan (Num. 21:13, 26), and was given to the tribe of Reuben for its inheritance after the defeat of the Amoritish kings by the Israelites; and then, still later, when the tribes beyond the Jordan were carried into captivity by the Assyrians, came into the possession of the Moabites again, as is evident from Isa. 15 and 16, and Jer. 48: 1, 23, where these cities are mentioned once more among the cities of the Moabites. This will explain not only the naming of this particular district of the Moabitish country, but the definition, “from its cities.” For the fact upon which the stress is laid in the passage before us is, that the land in question rightfully belonged to the Israelites, according to Num. 32:37, 38; 33:49, Jos. 12: 2, 3; 13:20, 21, and that it was therefore unlawfully usurped by the Moabites after the deportation of the trans-Jordanic tribes; and the thought is this, that the judgment would burst upon Moab from this land and these cities, and they would thereby be destroyed (Hävernick and Kliefoth). **אֵל בְּנֵי-אֲמּוֹן**, not “over the sons of Ammon,” but “in addition to the sons of Ammon.” They, that is to say, their land, had already been promised to the sons of the east (v. 4). In addition to this, they are now to receive Moab for their possession (Hitzig and Kliefoth). Thus will the Lord execute judgments upon Moab. V. 11 sums up what is affirmed concerning Moab in vv. 9 and 10, in the one idea of the judgments of God upon this people.

The execution of these judgments commenced with the subjugation of the Ammonites and Moabites by Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the destruction of Jerusalem (vid., Josephus, *Antt.* x. 9. 7, and M. von Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, etc., p. 215). Nevertheless the Ammonites continued to exist as a nation for a long time after the captivity, so that Judas the Maccabaeus waged war against them (1 Macc. 5: 6, 30-43); and even Justin Martyr speaks of Ἀμμωνιτῶν νῦν πολὺ πλῆθος (*Dial. Tryph.* p. 272). — But Origen includes their land in the general name of Arabia (lib. i. *in Job*). The name of the Moabites appears to have become extinct at a much earlier period. After the captivity, it is only in Eze. 9: 1, Neh. 13: 1, and Dan. 11:41, that we find any notice of them as a people. Their land is mentioned by Josephus in the *Antiq.* xiii. 14. 2, and xv. 4, and in the *Bell. Jud.* iii. 3. 3. — A further fulfilment by the Messianic judgment, which is referred to in Zep. 2:10, is not indicated in these words of Ezekiel; but judging from the prophecy concerning the Edomites (see the comm. on v. 14), it is not to be excluded.

*Eze. 25:12-14.* Against the Edomites. —

V. 12. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because Edom acteth revengefully towards the house of Judah, and hath been very guilty in avenging itself upon them,* V. 13. *Therefore, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will stretch out my hand over Edom, and cut off man and beast from it, and make it a desert from Teman, and unto Dedan they shall fall by the sword.* V. 14. *And I will inflict my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, that they may do to Edom according to my anger and my wrath; and they shall experience my vengeance, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

Whilst the Ammonites and the Moabites are charged with nothing more than malicious pleasure at the fall of Israel, and disregard of its divine calling, the Edomites are reproached with revengeful acts of hostility towards the house of Judah, and threatened with extermination in consequence. The עֲשׂוֹת, doing or acting of Edom, is more precisely defined as בְּנִקְוֹם וְגו', i.e., as consisting in the taking of vengeance, and designated as very guilty, יָאֲשָׁמוּ אֲשָׁם, followed by עַל with an infinitive, as in Eze. 17:17. Edom had sought every opportunity of acting thus revengefully towards Israel (vid., Obad. 1:11ff.; Amo. 1:11), so that in Eze. 35: 5 Ezekiel speaks of the “eternal enmity” of Edom against Israel. For this reason we must not restrict the reproach in v. 12 to particular outbreaks of this revenge at the time of the devastation and destruction of Judah by the Chaldeans, of which the Psalmist complains in Psa. 137, and for which he invokes the vengeance of God upon Edom. Man and beast are to be cut off from Edom in consequence, and the land to become a desert from Teman to Dedan. These names denote not cities, but districts. *Teman* is the southern portion of Idumaea (see the comm. on Amo. 1:12); and

*Dedan* is therefore the northern district. *Dedan* is probably not the Cushite tribe mentioned in Gen. 10: 7, but the tribe of the same name which sprang from the sons of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. 25: 3), and which is also mentioned in Jer. 49: 8 in connection with Edom. דְּדָן has ד local with *Seghol* instead of *Kametz*, probably on account of the preceding *a* (vid., Ewald, § 216c). There is no necessity to connect מְהִימָן with the following clause, as Hitzig and Kliefoth have done, in opposition to the accents. The two geographical names, which are used as a periphrasis for Idumaea as a whole, are distributed equally through the *parallelismus membrorum* between the two clauses of the sentence, so that they belong to both clauses, so far as the sense is concerned. Edom is to become a desert from Teman to Dedan, and its inhabitants from Teman to Dedan are to fall by the sword. This judgment of vengeance will be executed by God through His people Israel. The fulfilment of this threat, no doubt, commenced with the subjugation of the Edomites by the Maccabees; but it is not to be limited to that event, as Rosenmüller, Kliefoth, and others suppose, although the foundation was thereby laid for the disappearance of the national existence of Edom. For it is impossible with this limitation to do justice to the emphatic expression, “*my people Israel.*” On the ground, therefore, of the prophecies in Amo. 9:12 and Oba. 1:17ff., that the people of God are to take possession of Edom, when the fallen tabernacle of David is raised up again, i.e., in the Messianic times, which prophecies point back to that of Balaam in Num. 24:18, and have their roots, as this also has, in the promise of God concerning the twin sons of Isaac, “the elder shall serve the younger” (Gen. 25:23), we must seek for the complete fulfilment in the victories of the people of God over all their foes, among whom Edom from time immemorial had taken the leading place, at the time when the kingdom of God is perfected. For even here Edom is not introduced merely as a single nation that was peculiarly hostile to Judah, but also as a type of the implacable enmity of the heathen world towards the people and kingdom of God, as in Eze. 35, Isa. 34:63, etc. The vengeance, answering to the anger and wrath of Jehovah, which Israel, as the people of God, is to execute upon Edom, consists not merely in the annihilation of the national existence of Edom, which John Hyrcanus carried into effect by compelling the subjugated Edomites to adopt circumcision (see the comm. on Num. 24:18), but chiefly in the wrathful judgment which Israel will execute in the person of Christ upon the arch-enemy of the kingdom of God by its complete extinction.

*Eze. 25:15-17.* Against the Philistines.

V. 15. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because the Philistines act with revenge, and avenge themselves with contempt in the soul to destroy in everlasting enmity, V. 16. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will stretch out my hand over the Philistines, and cut off the Cretans, and destroy the remnant by the seashore. V. 17.*



*And I will execute great vengeance upon them through chastisements of wrath, and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I bring my vengeance upon them.*

The Philistines resembled the Edomites and Ammonites in their disposition towards the covenant nation, the former in their thirst for revenge, the latter in their malicious rejoicing at Israel's fall. For this reason they had already been classed by Isaiah (Isa. 11:14) with Edom, Moab, and Ammon as enemies, who would be successfully attacked and overcome by Israel, when the Lord had gathered it again from its dispersion. In the description of its sin towards Israel we have a combination of elements taken from the conduct of Edom and Ammon (vv. 12 and 6). They execute revenge with contempt in the soul (בְּנִפְשׁוֹם, as in v. 6), with the intention to destroy (לְמַשְׁחִיתוֹ) Israel; and this revenge springs from eternal, never-ending hostility. The Lord will cut off the whole of the people of the Philistines for this. פְּרִתִים, Cretans, originally a branch of the Philistian people, settled in the south-west of Canaan. The name is used by Ezekiel for the people, as it had already been by Zephaniah (Zep. 2: 5), for the sake of the *paronomasia* with הַבְּרִתִּי. The origin of the name is involved in obscurity, as the current derivation from *Creta* rests upon a very doubtful combination (cf. Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 66 and 99ff.). By the "remnant of the sea-coast," i.e., the remnant of the inhabitants of the coast of the Mediterranean, in other words, of the Philistines, the destruction of which had already been predicted by Amos (Amo. 1: 8), Isaiah (Isa. 14:30), and Jeremiah (Jer. 42: 4), we are to understand the whole nation to the very last man, all that was still left of the Philistines (see the comm. on Amo. 1: 8). — The execution of the vengeance threatened by God began in the Chaldean period, in which Gaza was attacked by Pharaoh, and, judging from Jer. 47, the whole of Philistia was laid waste by the Chaldeans (see the fuller comments on this in the exposition of Jer. 47). But the ultimate fulfilment will take place in the case of Philistia also, through the Messianic judgment, in the manner described in the commentary on Zep. 2:10.

## CH. 26-28 — AGAINST TYRE AND SIDON

*Eze. 26-28.* The greater portion of these three chapters is occupied with the prophecy concerning Tyre, which extends from Eze. 26: 1 to Eze. 28:19. The prophecy against Sidon is limited to Eze. 28:20-26. The reason for this is, that the grandeur and importance of Phoenicia were concentrated at that time in the power and rule of Tyre, to which Sidon had been obliged to relinquish the hegemony, which it had formerly possessed over Phoenicia. The prophecy against Tyre consists of four words of God, of which the first (Eze. 26) contains the threat of destruction to the city and state of Tyre; the second (Eze. 27), a lamentation over this destruction; the third (Eze. 28: 1-10), the

threat against the king of Tyre; the fourth (Eze. 28:11-19), a lamentation over his fall.

## CH. 26. THE FALL OF TYRE

*Eze. 26.* In four sections, commencing with the formula, “thus saith the Lord,” Tyre, the mistress of the sea, is threatened with destruction. In the first strophe (vv. 2-6) there is a general threat of its destruction by a host of nations. In the second (vv. 7-14), the enemy is mentioned by name, and designated as a powerful one; and the conquest and destruction emanating from his are circumstantially described. In the third (vv. 15-18), the impression which this event would produce upon the inhabitants of the islands and coast-lands is depicted. And in the fourth (vv. 19-21), the threat is repeated in an energetic manner, and the prophecy is thereby rounded off.

This word of God bears in the introduction to the date of its delivery to the prophet and enunciation by him. —

*V. 1. It came to pass in the eleventh year, on the first of the month, that the word of Jehovah came to me, saying.*

The eleventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin was the year of the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem (Jer. 52: 6, 12), the occurrence of which is presupposed in v. 2 also. There is something striking in the omission of the number of the month both here and in Eze. 32:17, as the day of the month is given. The attempt to discover in the words **בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ** an indication of the number of the month, by understanding **לַחֹדֶשׁ** as signifying the first month of the year: “on the first as regards the month,” equivalent to, “in the first month, on the first day of it” (LXX, Luther, Kliefoth, and others), is as forced and untenable as the notion that that particular month is intended which had peculiar significance for Ezekiel, namely, the month in which Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed. The first explanation is proved to be erroneous by v. 2, where the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred in the fifth month of the year named, is assumed to have already happened. The second view is open to the objection that the conquest of Jerusalem happened in the fourth month, and the destruction in the fifth (Jer. 52: 6 and 12); and it cannot be affirmed that the conquest was of less importance to Ezekiel than the destruction. We cannot escape the conclusion, therefore, that the number of the month has been dropped through a corruption of the text, which has occurred in copying; but in that case we must give up all hope of being able to determine what the month really was. The conjecture offered by Ewald and Hitzig, that one of the last months of the year is intended, because Ezekiel could not have known before then what impression the conquest of Jerusalem had made upon Tyre, stands or

falls with the naturalistic view entertained by these writers with regard to prophecy.

*Eze. 26: 2-6.* Tyre shall be broken and utterly destroyed. —

V. 2. *Son of man, because Tyre saith concerning Jerusalem, "Aha, the door of the nations is broken; it turneth to me; I shall become full; she is laid waste;"* V. 3. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will come upon thee, O Tyre, and will bring up against thee many nations, as the sea bringing up its waves.* V. 4. *They will destroy the walls of Tyre, and throw down her towers; and I will sweep away her dust from her, and make her a bare rock.* V. 5. *She shall become a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah; and she shall become booty for the nations.* V. 6. *And her daughters which are in the land shall be slain with the sword; and they shall learn that I am Jehovah.*

Tyre, as in the prophecy of Isaiah (Isa. 23), is not the city of that name upon the mainland, ἡ πάλαι Τύρος or Παλαίτυρος, Old Tyre, which was taken by Shalmaneser and destroyed by Alexander (as Perizon., Marsh, Vitringa, J. D. Michaelis, and Eichhorn supposed), but Insular Tyre, which was three-quarters of a mile farther north, and only 1200 paces from the land, being built upon a small island, and separated from the mainland by a strait of no great depth (vid., Movers, *Phoenizier*, II p. 288ff.). This Insular Tyre had successfully resisted the Assyrians (Josephus, *Antt.* ix. 14. 2), and was at that time the market of the nations; and in Ezekiel's day it had reached the summit of its greatness as mistress of the sea and the centre of the commerce of the world. That it is against this Tyre that our prophecy is chiefly directed, is evident from vv. 5 and 14, according to which Tyre is to become a bare rock in the midst of the sea, and from the allusion to the daughter cities, בַּשְּׂדֵה, in the field, i.e., on the mainland (in v. 6), as contrasted with the position occupied by Tyre upon a rocky island in the sea; and, lastly, from the description given in Eze. 27 of the maritime trade of Tyre with all nations, to which Old Tyre never attained, inasmuch as it possessed no harbour (vid., Movers, *l.c.* p. 176). This may easily be reconciled with such passages as vv. 6, 8, and Eze. 27, 28, in which reference is also made to the continental Tyre, and the conquest of Tyre is depicted as the conquest of a land-city (see the exposition of these verses). — The threat against Tyre commences, as in the case of the nations threatened in Eze. 25, with a brief description of its sin. Tyre gave expression to its joy at the fall of Jerusalem, because it hoped to derive profit therefrom through the extension of its commerce and increase of its wealth. Different explanations have been given of the meaning of the words put into the mouth of Tyre. "The door of the nations is broken in pieces." The plural דְּלֶתוֹת indicates the folding doors which formed the gate, and are mentioned in its stead. Jerusalem is the door of the nations, and is so called according to the current opinion of

expositors, because it was the centre of the commerce of the nations, i.e., as a place of trade. But nothing is known to warrant the idea that Jerusalem was ever able to enter into rivalry with Tyre as a commercial city. The importance of Jerusalem with regard to other nations was to be found, not in its commerce, nor in the favourable situation which it occupied for trade, in support of which Hävernick refers to Herodotus, iii. 5, and Hitzig to Ezekiel 23:40, 41, but in its sanctuary, or the sacred calling which it had received for the whole world of nations. Kliefoth has therefore decided in favour of the following view: That Jerusalem is called a gate of the nations, not because it had hitherto been open to the nations for free and manifold intercourse, but for the very opposite reason, namely, because the gate of Jerusalem had hitherto been closed and barred against the nations, but was now broken in pieces through the destruction of the city, and thereby opened to the nations. Consequently the nations, and notably Tyre, would be able to enter now; and from this fact the Tyrians hoped to derive advantage, so far as their commercial interests were concerned. But this view is not in harmony with the text. Although a gate is opened by being broken in pieces, and one may force an entrance into a house by breaking the door (Gen. 19: 9), yet the expression “door of the nations” cannot signify a door which bars all entrance on the part of the nations, inasmuch as doors and gates are not made to secure houses and cities against the forcible entrance of men and nations, but to render it possible for them to go out and in. Moreover, the supposition that “door of the nations” is equivalent to shutting against the nations, is not in harmony with the words **נְסֻבָּה אֵלַי** which follow. The expression “it has turned to me,” or it is turned to me, has no meaning unless it signifies that through the breaking of the door the stream of the nations would turn away from Jerusalem to Tyre, and therefore that hitherto the nations had turned to Jerusalem. **נְסֻבָּה** is the 3rd pers. perf. *Niphal* of **סָבַב**, for **נְסֻבָּה**, formed after the analogy of **נָמַס**, etc. The missing subject to **נְסֻבָּה** is to be found *ad sensum* in **דִּלְתוֹת הָאֲמִיּוֹת**. It is not the door itself, but the entrance and streaming in of the nations, which had previously been directed towards Jerusalem, and would now turn to Tyre. There is no necessity, therefore, for Hitzig’s conjecture, that **אֲמִלְאָה** should be altered into **מִלְאָה**, and the latter taken as the subject.

Consequently we must understand the words of the Tyrians as signifying that they had regarded the drawing of the nations to Jerusalem, i.e., the force of attraction which Jerusalem had hitherto exerted upon the nations, as the seat of the divine revelation of mercy, or of the law and judgment of the Lord, as interfering with their endeavour to draw all nations to themselves and gain them over to their purposes, and that they rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem, because they hoped that henceforth they would be able to attract the nations to

themselves and enrich themselves with their possessions. This does not require that we should accredit the Tyrians with any such insight into the spiritual calling of Jerusalem as would lie beyond their heathen point of view. The simple circumstance, that the position occupied by Jerusalem in relation to the world apparently interfered with the mercantile interests of the Tyrians, would be quite sufficient to excite a malignant pleasure at the fall of the city of God, as the worship of God and the worship of Mammon are irreconcilably opposed. The source from which the envy and the enmity manifesting itself in this malicious pleasure took their rise, is indicated in the last words: "I shall fill myself, she (Jerusalem) is laid waste," which Jerome has correctly linked together thus: *quia illa deserta est, idcirco ego implebor*. הַמָּלֵא, to be filled with merchandise and wealth, as in Eze. 27:25. On account of this disposition toward the kingdom of God, which led Tyre to expect an increase of power and wealth from its destruction, the Lord God would smite it with ruin and annihilation. הִנְנִי עֹלֶיךָ, behold, I will come upon thee, as in Eze. 13: 8; Jer. 50:31, Nah. 3: 5. God will lead a powerful army against Tyre, which shall destroy its walls and towers. Instead of the army, "many nations" are mentioned, because Tyre is hoping to attract more nations to itself in consequence of the destruction of Jerusalem. This hope is to be fulfilled, though in a different sense from that which Tyre intended. The comparison of the advancing army to the advancing waves of the sea is very significant when the situation of Tyre is considered. הַיָּם is the subject to כַּהֲעֵלֹת, and the *Hiphil* is construed with לְ instead of the accusative (compare Ewald, § 292c with § 277e). According to Arrian, ii. 18. 3, and Curtius, iv. 2. 9, 12, and 3. 13, Insular Tyre was fortified all round with lofty walls and towers, which were certainly in existence as early as Nebuchadnezzar's time. Even the dust of the demolished buildings (עִפְרָהּ) God would sweep away (סִחִיתִי, ἀπ. λεγ., with a play upon שִׁחַתוּ), so that the city, i.e., the site on which it had stood, would become a bare and barren rock (צִחִיָּה סֹלֶעַ, as in Eze. 24: 7), a place where fishermen would spread out their nets to dry. "Her daughters" also, that is to say, the towns dependent upon Tyre, "on the field," i.e., the open country, — in other words, their inhabitants, — would be slain with the sword.

In vv. 7-14 the threat is carried still further. —

V. 7. *For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will bring against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, from the north, the king of kings, with horses, and chariots, and horsemen, and a multitude of much people.* V. 8. *Thy daughters in the field he will slay with the sword, and he will erect siege-towers against thee, and throw up a rampart against thee, and set up shields against thee,* V. 9. *And direct his battering-rams against thy walls, and throw down thy towers with his swords.* V. 10. *From the multitude of his horses their dust will cover thee; from the noise of the horsemen, wheels, and chariots, thy walls will shake when he shall enter into thy*

*gates, as they enter a city broken open. V. 11. With the hoofs of his horses he will tread down all thy streets; thy people he will slay with the sword, and thy glorious pillars will fall to the ground. v. 12. They will make booty of thy possessions, and plunder thy merchandise, destroy thy walls, and throw down thy splendid mansions, and sink thy stones, thy wood, and thy dust in the water. V. 13. I will put an end to the sound of thy songs, and the music of thy harps shall be heard no more. V. 14. I will make thee a bare rock; thou shalt be a place for the spreading of nets, and be built no more; for I Jehovah have spoken it, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. —*

Nebuchadnezzar, the great king of Babylon, — this is the meaning of the rhetorical description in these verses, — will come with a powerful army (v. 7), smite with the sword the inland cities dependent upon Tyre. (v. 8, compare v. 6), then commence the siege of Tyre, destroy its walls and towers (vv. 8b and 9), enter with his army the city in which breaches have been made, put the inhabitants to death (vv. 10 and 11), plunder the treasures, destroy walls and buildings, and cast the ruins into the sea (v. 12). *Nebuchadnezzar*, or *Nebuchadnezzar* (for the name see the comm. on 2Ki. 24:10, is called king of kings, as the supreme ruler of the Babylonian empire, because the kings of conquered provinces and lands were subject to him as vassals (see the comm. on Isa. 10: 8).

His army consists of war-chariots, and cavalry, and a great multitude of infantry. **קָהַל וְאַסְרָב** are co-ordinate, so far as the rhetorical style is concerned; but in reality **אַסְרָב** is subordinate to **קָהַל**, as in Eze. 23:24, inasmuch as the **קָהַל** consisted of **אַסְרָב**. On the siege-works mentioned in v. 8b, see the comm. on Eze. 4: 2. **הַקִּים צִנָּה** signifies the construction of a roof with shields, by which the besiegers were accustomed to defend themselves from the missiles of the defenders of the city wall while pursuing their labours. Herodotus repeatedly mentions such shield-roofs as used by the Persians (ix. 61. 99, 102), though, according to Layard, they are not to be found upon the Assyrian monuments (see the comm. on Nah. 2: 6). There is no doubt that **מַחֵי קָבְלוֹ** signifies the battering-ram, called **בַּר** in Eze. 21:27, though the meaning of the words is disputed. **מַחֵי**, literally, thrusting or smiting. **קָבְלוֹ**, from **קָבַל**, to be pointed either **קָבְלוֹ** or **קָבְלוֹ** (the form **קָבְלוֹ** adopted by v. d. Hooght and J. H. Michaelis is opposed to the grammatical rules), has been explained by Gesenius and others as signifying *res opposita*, that which is opposite; hence **מַחֵי קָבְלוֹ**, the thrusting or demolishing of that which stands opposite. In the opinion of others, **קָבַל** is an instrument employed in besieging; but there is nothing in the usage of the language to sustain either this explanation or that adopted by Hävernick, “destruction of his defence.” **חַרְבֵּי הַיָּדָיו**, his swords, used figuratively for his weapons or instruments of war, “his irons,” as Ewald has very aptly rendered it. The description in v. 10 is

hyperbolic. The number of horses is so great, that on their entering the city they cover it with dust, and the walls shake with the noise of the horsemen and chariots. **בְּמִבּוֹאֵי עִיר מֵב**, literally, as the marchings into a broken city, i.e., a city taken by storm, generally are. The simile may be explained from the peculiar situation of Insular Tyre. It means that the enemy will enter it as they march into a land-fortress into which a breach has been made by force. The words presuppose that the besieger has made a road to the city by throwing up an embankment or dam. **מַצְבוֹת עֹדֵךְ**, the memorial pillars of thy might, and the pillars dedicated to Baal, two of which are mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 44) as standing in the temple of Hercules at Tyre, one of gold, the other of emerald; not images of gods, but pillars, as symbols of Baal. These sink or fall to the ground before the overwhelming might of the foe (compare Isa. 46: 1; 21: 9, and 1Sa. 5: 3). After the slaughter of the inhabitants and the fall of the gods, the plundering of the treasures begins, and then follows the destruction of the city. **בְּתֵי הַמְּדִיחָה** are not pleasure-houses (“pleasure-towers, or garden-houses of the wealthy merchants,” as Ewald supposes), for there was not space enough upon the island for gardens (Strabo, xvi. 2. 23), but the lofty, magnificent houses of the city, the palaces mentioned in Isa. 23:13. Yea, the whole city shall be destroyed, and that so completely that they will sweep stones, wood, and rubbish into the sea. — Thus will the Lord put an end to the exultation and rejoicing in Tyre (v. 13; compare Isa. 14:11 and Amo. 5:23). — The picture of the destruction of this powerful city closes with the repetition of the thought from v. 5, that Tyre shall be turned into a bare rock, and shall never be built again.

**Eze. 26:15-18.** The tidings of the destruction of Tyre will produce great commotion in all her colonies and the islands connected with her.

V. 15. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to Tyre, Will not the islands tremble at the noise of thy fall, at the groaning of the wounded, at the slaughter in the midst of thee? V. 16. And all the princes of the sea will come down from their thrones, and will lay aside their robes and take off their embroidered clothes, and dress themselves in terrors, sit upon the earth, and they will tremble every moment, and be astonished at thee. V. 17. They will raise a lamentation for thee, and say to thee: How hast thou perished, thou who wast inhabited from out of the sea, thou renowned city, she who was mighty upon the sea, she and her inhabitants, who inspired all her inhabitants with fear of her! V. 18. Now do the islands tremble on the day of thy fall, and the islands in the sea are confounded at thy departure.*

**הִלֵּא**, *nonne*, has the force of a direct affirmation. **קוֹל מִפְּלֵה**, the noise of the fall, stands for the tidings of the noise, since the noise itself could not be heard upon the islands. The fall takes place, as is added for the purpose of depicting the terrible nature of the event, at or amidst the groaning of the wounded, and the slaughter in the midst of thee. **בְּהִרְגֵךְ** is the infinitive *Niphal*, with the accent

drawn back on account of the following *Milel*, and should be pointed **בְּהֶרֶג**. The word **אִיִּם**, islands, is frequently used so as to embrace the coast lands of the Mediterranean Sea; we have therefore to understand it here as applied to the Phoenician colonies on the islands and coasts of that sea. The “princes of the sea” are not kings of the islands, but, according to Isa. 23: 8, the merchants presiding over the colonies of Tyre, who resembled princes. **בְּסִאוֹת**, not royal thrones, but chairs, as in 1Sa. 4:13, etc. The picture of their mourning recalls the description in Jon. 3: 6; it is not derived from that passage, however, but is an independent description of the mourning customs which commonly prevailed among princes. The antithesis introduced as a very striking one: clothing themselves in terrors, putting on terrors in the place of the robes of state which they have laid aside (see the similar trope in Eze. 7:27). The thought is rendered still more forcible by the closing sentences of the verse: they tremble **לְרִגְעִים**, by moments, i.e., as the moments return, — actually, therefore, “every moment” (vid., Isa. 27: 3). — In the lamentation which they raise (v. 17), they give prominence to the alarming revolution of all things, occasioned by the fact that the mistress of the seas, once so renowned, has now become an object of horror and alarm. **נִנְשְׁבֶת מִיָּם**, inhabited from the seas. This is not to be taken as equivalent to “as far as the seas,” in the sense of, whose inhabitants spread over the seas and settle there, as Gesenius (*Thes.*) and Hävernick suppose; for being inhabited is the very opposite of sending the inhabitants abroad. If **מִן** were to be taken in the geographical sense of direction or locality, the meaning of the expression could only be, whose inhabitants spring from the seas, or have migrated thither from all seas; but this would not apply to the population of Tyre, which did not consist of men of all nations under heaven. Hitzig has given the correct interpretation, namely, from the sea, or out of the seas, which had as it were ascended as an inhabited city out of the bosom of the sea. It is not easy to explain the last clause of v. 17: who inspired all her inhabitants with their terror, or with terror of them (of themselves); for if the relative **אֲשֶׁר** is taken in connection with the preceding **יִשְׁבִּיהָ**, the thought arises that the inhabitants of Tyre inspired her inhabitants, i.e., themselves, with their terror, or terror of themselves. Kimchi, Rosenmüller, Ewald, Kliefoth, and others, have therefore proposed to take the suffix in the second **יִשְׁבִּיהָ** as referring to **הָיָם**, all the inhabitants of the sea, i.e., all her colonies. But this is open to the objection, that not only is **יָם** of the masculine gender, but it is extremely harsh to take the same suffix attached to the two **יִשְׁבִּיהָ** as referring to different subjects. We must therefore take the relative **אֲשֶׁר** and the suffix in **חֲתִיבָתָם** as both referring to **הִיא וְיִשְׁבִּיהָ**: the city with its population inspired all its several inhabitants with fear or itself. This is not to be understood, however, as signifying that the inhabitants of Tyre kept one another in a state of



terror and alarm; but that the city with its population, through its power upon the sea, inspired all the several inhabitants with fear of this its might, inasmuch as the distinction of the city and its population was reflected upon every individual citizen. This explanation of the words is confirmed by the parallel passages in Eze. 32:24 and 26. — This city had come to so appalling an end, that all the islands trembled thereat. The two hemistichs in v. 18 are synonymous, and the thought returns by way of conclusion to v. 15. **אֲנִי** has the Aramaean form of the plural, which is sometimes met with even in the earlier poetry (vid., Ewald, § 177a). **צֵאתָ**, departure, i.e., destruction.

**Eze. 26:19-21.** Thus will Tyre, covered by the waves of the sea, sink into the region of the dead, and vanish for ever from the earth.

*V. 19. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, When I make thee a desolate city, like the cities which are no longer inhabited, when I cause the deep to rise over thee, so that the many waters cover thee, V. 20. I cast thee down to those who have gone into the grave, to the people of olden time, and cause thee to dwell in the land of the lower regions, in the ruins from the olden time, with those who have gone into the grave, that thou mayest be no longer inhabited, and I create that which is glorious in the land of the living. V. 21. I make thee a terror, and thou art no more; they will seek thee, and find thee no more for ever, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

Not only will ruin and desolation come upon Tyre, but it will sink for ever into the region of the dead. In this concluding thought the whole threat is summed up. The infinitive clauses of v. 19 recapitulate the leading thoughts of the previous strophes, for the purpose of appending the closing thought of banishment to the under-world. By the rising of the deep we are to understand, according to v. 12, that the city in its ruins will be sunk into the depths of the sea. **יֹרְדֵי בֹר**, those who go down into the pit or grave, are the dead. They are described still further as **אִם עֲלָם**, not “those who are sleeping the long sleep of death,” or the generation of old whom all must join; but the people of the “old world” before the flood (2Pe. 2: 5), who were buried by the waters of the flood, in accordance with Job. 22:15, where **עֲלָם** denotes the generations of the primeval world, and after the analogy of the use of **אִם עֲלָם** in Isa. 44: 7, to describe the human race as existing from time immemorial.

In harmony with this, **חֲרָבוֹת מֵעֲלָם** are the ruins of the primeval world which perished in the flood. As **אִם עֲלָם** adds emphasis to the idea of **יֹרְדֵי בֹר**, so also does **בְּחֲרָבוֹת מֵעֲלָם** to that of **אֶרֶץ תַּחְתִּיּוֹת**. Tyre shall not only descend to the dead in Sheol, but be thrust down to the people of the dead, who were sunk into the depths of the earth by the waters of the flood, and shall there receive its everlasting dwelling-place among the ruins of the primeval world which was destroyed by the flood, beside that godless race of the olden time.

אֶרֶץ תַּחְתִּיּוֹת, land of the lowest places (cf. Eze. 32:18, 24), is a periphrasis for Sheol, the region of the dead (compare Eph. 4: 9, “the lower parts of the earth”). On וְנִתְּתִי צְבִי וְגוֹ׳ Hitzig has observed with perfect correctness: “If we retain the pointing as the first person, with which the place assigned to the *Athnach* (—) coincides, we must at any rate not regard the clause as still dependent upon לְמֵאן, and the force of the לֹא as continued. We should then have to take the clause as independent and affirmative, as the accentuators and the Targum have done.” But as this would give rise to a discrepancy between the two halves of the verse, Hitzig proposes to alter וְנִתְּתִי into the second person וְנִתְּתִי, so that the clause would still be governed by לְמֵאן לֹא. But the want of agreement between the two halves of the verse does not warrant an alteration of the text, especially if it lead to nothing better than the forced rendering adopted by Hitzig, “and thou no longer shinest with glory in the land of the living,” which there is nothing in the language to justify. And even the explanation proposed by Hävernick and Kliefoth, “that I no longer produce anything glorious from thee (Tyre) in the land of the living,” is open to this objection, that “from thee” is arbitrarily interpolated into the text; and if this were what Ezekiel meant, he would either have added לְךָ or written וְנִתְּתִיךָ. Moreover, the change of the person is a sufficient objection to our taking וְנִתְּתִי as dependent upon לְמֵאן, and supplying לֹא וְנִתְּתִי is evidently a simple continuation of וְהוֹשַׁבְתִּיךָ. And nothing but the weightiest objections should lead us to give up a view which so naturally suggests itself. But no such objections exist. Neither the want of harmony between the two halves of the verse, nor the context, — according to which Tyre and its destruction are referred to both before and immediately after, — forces us to the adoption of explanations at variance with the simple meaning of the words. We therefore adhere to the natural interpretation of the words, “and I set (establish) glory in the land of the living;” and understand by the land of the living, not the theocracy especially, but the earth, in contrast to the region of the dead. The words contain the general thought, that on and after the overthrow of the glory of the ungodly power of the world, He will create that which is glorious on the earth to endure for ever; and this He really does by the establishing of His kingdom. — Tyre, on the contrary, shall become, through its fate, an object of terror, or an example of sudden destruction, and pass away with all its glory, not leaving a trace behind. For v. 21b, compare Isa. 41:12 and Psa. 37:36.

וְתִבְקְשִׁי, imperf. *Pual*, has *Chateph-patach* between the two *u*, to indicate emphatically that the syllable is only a very loosely closed one (vid., Ewald, § 31b, p. 95).

## CH. 27. LAMENTATION OVER THE FALL OF TYRE

*Eze. 27.* The lamentation commences with a picture of the glory of the city of Tyre, its situation, its architectural beauty, its military strength and defences (vv. 3-11), and its wide-spread commercial relations (vv. 12-25); and then passes into mournful lamentation over the ruin of all this glory (vv. 26-36).

*Eze. 27: 1-11.* Introduction and description of the glory and might of Tyre.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 2. *And do thou, O son of man, raise a lamentation over Tyre,* V. 3. *And say to Tyre, Thou who dwellest at the approaches of the sea, merchant of the nations to many islands, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Tyre, thou sayest, I am perfect in beauty.* V. 4. *In the heart of the seas is thy territory; thy builders have made thy beauty perfect.* V. 5. *Out of cypresses of Senir they built all double-plank-work for thee; they took cedars of Lebanon to make a mast upon thee.* V. 6. *They made thine oars of oaks of Bashan, thy benches they made of ivory set in box from the islands of the Chittaeans.* V. 7. *Byssus in embroidery from Egypt was thy sail, to serve thee for a banner; blue and red purple from the islands of Elishah was thine awning.* V. 8. *The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were thy rowers; thy skilful men, O Tyre, were in thee, they were thy sailors.* V. 9. *The elders of Gebal and its skilful men were with thee to repair thy leaks; all the ships of the sea and their mariners were in thee to barter thy goods.* V. 10. *Persian and Lydian and Libyan were in thine army, thy men of war; shield and helmet they hung up in thee; they gave brilliancy to thee.* V. 11. *The sons of Arvad and thine army were upon thy walls round about, and brave men were upon thy towers; they hung up their shields upon thy walls round about; they have made thy beauty perfect.*

The lamentation commences with an address to Tyre, in which its favourable situation for purposes of trade, and the perfect beauty of which she was conscious, are placed in the foreground (v. 3). Tyre is sitting, or dwelling, at the approaches of the sea. מְבוֹאוֹת יָם, approaches or entrances of the sea, are harbours into which ships sail and from which they depart, just as מְבוֹא הָעִיר, the gate of the city, it both entrance and exit. This description does not point to the city on the mainland, or Old Tyre, but answers exactly to Insular Tyre with its two harbours.<sup>128</sup>

יִשְׁבְּתִי, with the connecting *i*, which is apparently confounded here after the Aramaean fashion with the *i* of the feminine pronoun, and has therefore been marked by the Masora as superfluous (vid., Ewald, § 211*b*). The combination of רַכְּלָת with אֵל אַיִם רַ with אֵל אַיִם רַ may be accounted for from the primary meaning of רַכְּל, to travel about as a merchant: thou who didst go to the nations on many shores to carry on thy trade. Tyre itself considers that she is perfect in her beauty, partly on account of her strong position in the sea, and partly because of her splendid edifices.<sup>129</sup>

In the description which follows of this beauty and glory, from v. 4 onwards, Tyre is depicted allegorically as a beautiful ship, splendidly built and equipped throughout, and its destruction is afterwards represented as a shipwreck occasioned by the east wind (vv. 26ff).<sup>130</sup>

The words, “in the heart of the seas is thy territory” (v. 4a), are equally applicable to the city of Tyre and to a ship, the building of which is described in what follows. The comparison of Tyre to a ship was very naturally suggested by the situation of the city in the midst of the sea, completely surrounded by water. As a ship, it must of necessity be built of wood. The shipbuilders selected the finest kinds of wood for the purpose; cypresses of Antilibanus for double planks, which formed the sides of the vessel, and cedar of Lebanon for the mast. *S<sup>e</sup>nir*, according to Deu. 3: 9, was the Amoritish name of *Hermon* or *Antilibanus*, whereas the Sidonians called it *Sirion*. On the other hand, *S<sup>e</sup>nir* occurs in 1Ch. 5:23, and *Sh<sup>e</sup>nir* in Son. 4: 8, in connection with *Hermon*, where they are used to denote separate portions of Antilibanus. Ezekiel evidently uses *Senir* as a foreign name, which had been retained to his own time, whereas *Sirion* had possibly become obsolete, as the names had both the same meaning (see the comm. on Deu. 3: 9). The naming of the places from which the several materials were obtained for the fitting out of the ship, serve to heighten the glory of its construction and give an ideal character to the picture. All lands have contributed their productions to complete the glory and might of Tyre. Cypress-wood was frequently used by the ancients for buildings and (according to Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 443) also for ships, because it was exempt from the attacks of worms, and was almost imperishable, and yet very light (Theophr. *Hist. plant.* v. 8; Plinii *Hist. nat.* xvi. 79). לַחֲתִים, a dual form, like חֲמַתִּים in 2Ki. 25: 4, Isa. 22:11, double-planks, used for the two side-walls of the ship. For oars they chose oaks of Bashan (מִשׁוֹט as well as מִשׁוֹט in v. 29 from שׁוֹט, to row), and the rowing benches (or deck) were of ivory inlaid in box. קֶרֶשׁ is used in Exo. 26:15ff. for the boards or planks of the wooden walls of the tabernacle; here it is employed in a collective sense, either for the rowing benches, of which there were at least two, and sometimes three rows in a vessel, one above another, or more properly, for the deck of the vessel (Hitzig). This was made of *shēn*, or ivory, inlaid in wood. The ivory is mentioned first as the most valuable material of the קֶרֶשׁ, the object being to picture the ship as possessing all possible splendour. The expression בַּתִּשְׁרִים, occasions some difficulty, partly on account of the use of the word בַּת, and partly in connection with the meaning of תִּשְׁרִים, although so much may be inferred from the context, that the allusion is to some kind of wood inlaid with ivory, and the custom of inlaying wood with ivory for the purpose of decoration is attested by Virgil, *Aen.* x. 137:

*“Vel quale per artem  
Inclusum buxo, aut Oricia terebintho  
Lucet ebur.*

But the use of **בַּתֵּי** does not harmonize with the relation of the wood to the ivory inserted in wood; nor can it be defended by the fact that in Lam. 3: 3 an arrow is designated “the son of the quiver.” According to this analogy, the ivory ought to have been called the son of the Ashurim, because the ivory is inserted in the wood, and not the wood in the ivory.<sup>B1</sup>

We must therefore adopt the solution proposed by R. Salomo and others, — namely, that the Masoretic division of **בַּתֵּי־אֲשֻׁרִים** into two words is founded upon a mistake, and that it should be read as one word **בַּתֵּי־אֲשֻׁרִים**, ivory in **אֲשֻׁרִים**, i.e., either sherbin-cedar (according to more recent expositors), or box-wood, for which Bochart (*Phal.* III 5) has decided. The fact that in Isa. 60:13 the **אֲשֻׁרִים** is mentioned among the trees growing upon Lebanon, whereas here the **אֲשֻׁרִים** are described as coming from the islands of the **בְּתַיִם**, does not furnish a decisive argument to the contrary. We cannot determine with certainty what species of tree is referred to, and therefore it cannot be affirmed that the tree grew upon Lebanon alone, and not upon the islands of the Mediterranean. **בְּתַיִם** are the **Κίτιαις**, the inhabitants of the port of **Κίτιον** in Cyprus; then the Cyprians generally; and here, as in Jer. 2:10, where **בְּתַיִם** of the **בְּתַיִם** are mentioned, in a still broader sense, inhabitants of Cyprus and other islands and coast-lands of the Mediterranean. In 1 Macc. 1: 1 and 8: 5, even Macedonia is reckoned as belonging to the **γῆ Χερραιῶν** or **Κιτίων**. Consequently the place from which the **אֲשֻׁרִים** were brought does not furnish any conclusive proof that the Cyprian pine is referred to, although this was frequently used for ship-building. There is just as much ground for thinking of the box, as Bochart does, and we may appeal in support of this to the fact that, according to Theophrastus, there is no place in which it grows more vigorously than on the island of Corsica. In any case, Ezekiel mentions it as a very valuable kind of wood; though we cannot determine with certainty to what wood he refers, either from the place where it grew or from the accounts of the ancients concerning the kinds of wood that ship-builders used. The reason for this, however, is a very simple one, — namely, that the whole description has an ideal character, and, as Hitzig has correctly observed, “the application of the several kinds of wood to the different parts of the ship is evidently only poetical.”

The same may be said of the materials of which, according to v. 7, the sails and awning of the ship were made. *Byssus* in party-coloured work (**רִקְמָה**), see

comm. on Exo. 26:36), i.e., woven in mixed colours, probably not merely in stripes, but woven with figures and flowers.”<sup>132</sup>

“From Egypt;” the byssus-weaving of Egypt was celebrated in antiquity, so that byssus-linen formed one of the principal articles of export (vid., Movers, *ut supra*, pp. 317ff.). מִפְּרֶשֶׁת, literally, spreading out, evidently signifies the sail, which we expect to find mentioned here, and with which the following clause, “to serve thee for a banner,” can be reconciled, inasmuch as it may be assumed either that the sails also served for a banner, because the ships had no actual flag, like those in Wilkinson’s engraving, or that the flag (נֵס) being also extended is included under the term מִפְּרֶשֶׁת (Hitzig). The covering of the ship, i.e., the awning which was put up above the deck for protection from the heat of the sun, consisted of purple (תִּכְלֶת and אַרְגָּמָן, see the comm. on Exo. 25: 4) from the islands of *Elishah*, i.e., of the Grecian Peloponesus, which naturally suggests the Laconian purple so highly valued in antiquity on account of its splendid colour (Plin. *Hist. nat.* ix. 36, xxi. 8). The account of the building of the ship is followed by the manning, and the attention paid to its condition. The words of v. 8a may be taken as referring quite as much to the ship as to the city, which was in possession of ships, and is mentioned by name in v. 8b. The reference to the *Sidonians* and *Arvad*, i.e., to the inhabitants of *Aradus*, a rocky island to the north of Tripolis, as rowers, is not at variance with the latter; since there is no need to understand by the rowers either slaves or servants employed to row, and the Tyrians certainly drew their rowers from the whole of the Phoenician population, whereas the chief men in command of the ships, the captain and pilot (הַבָּלִים), were no doubt as a rule citizens of Tyre. The introduction of the inhabitants of *Gebal*, i.e., the *Byblos* of the Greeks, the present *Jebail*, between Tripolis and Berytus (see the comm. on Jos. 13: 5), who were noted even in Solomon’s time as skilful architects (1Ki. 5:32), as repairers of the leak, decidedly favours the supposition that the idea of the ship is still kept in the foreground; and by the naming of those who took charge of the piloting and condition of the vessel, the thought is expressed that all the cities of Phoenicia assisted to maintain the might and glory of Tyre, since Tyre was supreme in Phoenicia. It is not till v. 9b that the allegory falls into the background. Tyre now appears no longer as a ship, but as a maritime city, into which all the ships of the sea sail, to carry on and improve her commerce.

Vv. 10, 11. Tyre had also made the best provision for its defence. It maintained an army of mercenary troops from foreign countries to protect its colonies and extend its settlements, and entrusted the guarding of the walls of the city to fighting men of Phoenicia. The hired troops specially named in v. 10 are *Pharas*, *Lud*, and *Phut*. פְּוֹט is no doubt an African tribe, in Coptic *Phaiat*, the Libyans of the ancients, who had spread themselves over the whole of North

Africa as far as Mauretania (see the comm. on Gen. 10: 6). לֹדִי is not the Semitic people of that name, the Lydians (Gen. 10:22), but here, as in Eze. 30: 5, Isa. 66:19, and Jer. 46: 9, the Hamitic people of לוֹדִים (Gen. 10:13), probably a general name for the whole of the Moorish tribes, since לוֹד (Eze. 30: 5) and לוֹדִים (Jer. 44: 9) are mentioned in connection with פֹּט as auxiliaries in the Egyptian army. There is something striking in the reference to פְּרָס, the Persians. Hävernicks points to the early intercourse carried on by the Phoenicians with Persia through the Persian Gulf, through which the former would not doubt be able to obtain mercenary soldiers, for which it was a general rule to select tribes as remote as possible. Hitzig objects to this, on the ground that there is no proof that this intercourse with Persia through the Persian Gulf was carried on in Ezekiel's time, and that even if it were, it does not follow that there were any Persian mercenaries. He therefore proposes to understand by פְּרָס, Persians who had settled in Africa in the olden time. But this settlement cannot be inferred with sufficient certainty either from Sallust, *Jug.* c. 18, or from the occurrence of the African Μάκαι of Herodotus, iv. 175, along with the Asiatic (Ptol. vi. 7. 14), to take it as an explanation of פְּרָס. If we compare Eze. 38: 5, where *Pâras* is mentioned in connection with *Cush* and *Phut*, *Gomer* and *Togarmah*, as auxiliaries in the army of *Gog*, there can be no doubt that Asiatic Persians are intended there. And we have to take the word in the same sense here; for Hitzig's objections consist of pure conjectures which have no conclusive force. Ezekiel evidently intends to give the names of tribes from the far-off east, west, and south, who were enlisted as mercenaries in the military service of Tyre. Hanging the shields and helmets in the city, to ornament its walls, appears to have been a Phoenician custom, which Solomon also introduced into Judah (1Ki. 10:16, 17, Son. 4: 4), and which is mentioned again in the times of the Maccabees (1 Macc. 4:57). — A distinction is drawn in v. 11 between the mercenary troops on the one hand, and the Aradians, and הִילָי, thine army, the military corps consisting of Tyrians, on the other. The latter appears upon the walls of Tyre, because native troops were employed to watch and defend the city, whilst the mercenaries had to march into the field. The ἄπ. λεγ. גַּמְדִּים (*Gammâdim*) signifies brave men, as Roediger has conclusively shown from the Syrian usage, in his *Addenda* to Gesenius' *Thes.* p. 70f. It is therefore an *epitheton* of the native troops of Tyre. — With the words, "they (the troops) completed thy beauty," the picture of the glory of Tyre is rounded off, returning to its starting-point in vv. 4 and 5.

**Eze. 27:12-25.** This is followed by a description of the commerce of Tyre with all nations, who delivered their productions in the market of this

metropolis of the commerce of the world, and received the wares and manufactures of this city in return.

V. 12. *Tarshish traded with thee for the multitude of goods of all kinds; with silver, iron, tin, and lead they paid for thy sales.* V. 13. *Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants; with souls of men and brazen vessels they made thy barter.* V. 14. *From the house of Togarmah they paid horses, riding-horses, and mules for thy sales.* V. 15. *The sons of Dedan were thy merchants; many islands were at thy hand for commerce; ivory horns and ebony they brought thee in payment.* V. 16. *Aram traded with thee for the multitude of thy productions; with carbuncle, red purple, and embroidery, and byssus, and corals, and rubies they paid for thy sales.* V. 17. *Judah and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants; with wheat of Minnith and confectionery, and honey and oil, and balsam they made thy barter.* V. 18. *Damascus traded with thee in the multitude of thy productions, for the multitude of goods of all kinds, with wine of Chelbon and white wool.* V. 19. *Vedan and Javan from Uzal gave wrought iron for thy salves; cassia and calamus were for thy barter.* V. 20. *Vedan was thy merchant in cloths spread for riding.* v. 21. *Arabia and all the princes of Kedar, they were at thy hand for commerce; lambs and rams and he-goats, in these they traded with thee.* V. 22. *The merchants of Sheba and Ragmah, they were thy merchants; with all kinds of costly spices and with all kinds of precious stones and gold they paid for thy sales.* V. 23. *Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, Chilmad, were they merchants;* V. 24. *They were thy merchants in splendid clothes, in purple and embroidered robes, and in treasures of twisted yarn, in wound and strong cords for thy wares.* V. 25. *The ships of Tarshish were thy caravans, thy trade, and thou wast filled and glorious in the heart of the seas.*

The enumeration of the different peoples, lands, and cities, which carried on trade with Tyre, commences with Tarshish (Tartessus) in the extreme west, then turns to the north, passes through the different lands of Anterior Asia and the Mediterranean to the remotest north-east, and ends by mentioning Tarshish again, to round off the list. But the lands and peoples, which are mentioned in vv. 5-11 as furnishing produce and manufactures for the building of Tyre, viz., Egypt and the tribes of Northern Africa, are left out. — To avoid wearisome uniformity in the enumeration, Ezekiel has used interchangeably the synonymous words which the language possessed for trade, besides endeavouring to give life to the description by a variety of turns of expression. Thus סַחֲרֵתָּךְ (vv. 12, 16, 18), סַחֲרֵיךָ (v. 21), and סַחֲרֵת יָדְךָ (v. 15), or יָדְךָ סַחֲרֵי (v. 21), are interchanged with רַבְלֵיךָ (vv. 13, 15, 17, 22, 24), רַבְלֵתָּךְ (vv. 20, 23), and מַרְבְּלֵתָּךְ (v. 24); and, again, נָתַן עֲזֹבוֹנֶיךָ (vv. 12, 14, 22), נָתַן בְּעֲזֹבוֹנֶיךָ (vv. 16, 19), with נָתַן מְעַרְבֶדְךָ (vv. 13, 17), and בְּמַעַרְבֶד הָיָה (v. 19), and הָשִׁיב אֶשְׁכְּרֶךָ (v. 15). The words סַחַר, participle of סַחַר, and רַבַּל, from רַבַּל, signify merchants, traders, who travel through different lands for purposes of trade. סַחֲרֵת, literally, the female trader; and סַחֲרָה, literally, trade; then used as abstract for concrete, the tradesman or merchant. רַבַּל, the



travelling merchant. — רַכְלָת, the female trader, a city carrying on trade. מַרְכָּלָת, trade or a place of trade, a commercial town. עִבּוּנִים (*pluralet.*) does not mean a place of trade, market, and profits (Gesenius and others); but according to its derivation from עִזַּב, to leave, relinquish, literally, leaving or giving up, and as Gusset. has correctly explained it, “that which you leave with another in the place of something else which he has given up to you.” Ewald, in accordance with this explanation, has adopted the very appropriate rendering *Absatz*, or sale. נָתַן עִבּוּנִיךָ, with ב, or with a double accusative, literally, to make thy sale with something, i.e., to pay or to give, i.e., pay, something as an equivalent for the sale; נָתַן בְּעִבּוֹב, to give something for the sale, or the goods to be sold. מַעְרָב, barter, goods bartered with נָתַן, to give bartered goods, or carry on trade by barter.

The following are the countries and peoples enumerated: — תַּרְשִׁישׁ, the Tyrian colony of *Tarshish* or *Tartessus*, in *Hispania Baetica*, which was celebrated for its wealth in silver (Jer. 10: 9), and, according to the passage before us, also supplied iron, tin, and lead (vid., Plin. *Hist. nat.* iii. 3 [4], xxxiii. 6 [31], xxiv. 14 [41]; Diod. Sic. v. 38). Further particulars concerning *Tarshish* are to be found in Movers, *Phoeniz.* II 2, pp. 588ff., and II 3, p. 36. — *Javan*, i.e., *Jania*, Greece or Greeks. — *Tubal* and *Meshech* are the *Tibareni* and *Moschi* of the ancients between the Black and Caspian Seas (see the comm. on Gen. 10: 2). They supplied souls of men, i.e., slaves, and things in brass. The slave trade was carried on most vigorously by the Ionians and Greeks (see Joe. 4: 6, from which we learn that the Phoenicians sold prisoners of war to them); and both Greeks and Romans drew their largest supplies and the best slaves from the Pontus (for proofs of this, see Movers, II 3, pp. 81f.). It is probable that the principal supplies of brazen articles were furnished by the *Tibareni* and *Moschi*, as the Colchian mountains still contain an inexhaustible quantity of copper. In Greece, copper was found and wrought in *Euboea* alone; and the only other rich mines were in Cyprus (vid., Movers, II 3, pp. 66, 67). — V. 14. “From the house of *Togarmah* they paid,” i.e., they of the house of *Togarmah* paid. *Togarmah* is one of the names of the *Armenians* (see the comm. on Gen. 10: 3); and Strabo (XI 14. 9) mentions the wealth of Armenia in horses, whilst that in asses is attested by Herodotus (i. 194), so that we may safely infer that mules were also bred there. — V. 15. The sons of *Dedan*, or the *Dedanites*, are, no doubt, the *Dedanites* mentioned in Gen. 10: 7 as descendants of Cush, who conducted the carrying trade between the Persian Gulf and Tyre, and whose caravans are mentioned in Isa. 21:13. Their relation to the Semitic *Dedanites*, who are evidently intended in v. 20, and by the inhabitants of *Dedan* mentioned in connection with Edom in Eze. 25:13 and Jer. 49: 8, is involved in obscurity (see the comm. on Gen. 10: 7). The combination with אֵיִם רְבִים and the articles of

commerce which they brought to Tyre, point to a people of southern Arabia settled in the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf. The many יִסְרָאֵל are the islands and coasts of Arabia on the Persian Gulf and Erythraean Sea. <sup>B3</sup>

סַחֲרַת יָדְךָ, the commerce of thy hand, i.e., as *abstr. pro concr.*, those who were ready to thy hand as merchants. קַרְנֹת שֵׁן, ivory horns. This is the term applied to the elephants' tusks (*shēn*) on account of their shape and resemblance to horns, just as Pliny (*Hist. nat.* xviii. 1) also speaks of *cornua elephanti*, although he says, in viii. 3 (4), that an elephant's weapons, which Juba calls *cornua*, are more correctly to be called *dentes*. <sup>B4</sup>

The ἀπ. λεγ. הַבְּנִים, *Keri* הַבְּנִים, signifies ἕβενος *hebenum*, ebony. The ancients obtained both productions partly from India, partly from Ethiopia (Plin. xii. 4 [8]). According to Dioscor. i. 130, the Ethiopian ebony was preferred to the Indian. הַשִּׁיב אֶשְׁכְּרָה to return payment (see the comm. on Psa. 72:10).

In v. 16, J. D. Michaelis, Ewald, Hitzig, and others read אֶדָם for אֶרֶם, after the LXX and Pesh., because Aram did not lie in the road from Dedan and the יִסְרָאֵל to Israel (v. 17), and it is not till v. 18 that Ezekiel reaches Aram. Moreover, the corruption אֶרֶם for אֶדָם could arise all the more readily from the simple fact that the defective form אֶדָם only occurs in Ezekiel (Eze. 25:14), and is altogether an extraordinary one. These reasons are undoubtedly worthy of consideration; still they are not conclusive, since the enumeration does not follow a strictly geographical order, inasmuch as Damascus is followed in vv. 19ff. by many of the tribes of Southern Arabia, so that *Aram* might stand, as Hävernick supposes, for Mesopotamian Aram, for which the articles mentioned in v. 16 would be quite as suitable as for Edom, whose chief city *Petra* was an important place of commerce and emporium for goods. רַב מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, the multitude of thy works, thy manufactures. Of the articles of commerce delivered by אֶרֶם, the red purple, embroidery, and בּוּץ (the Aramaean name for byssus, which appears, according to Movers, to have originally denoted a species of cotton), favour Aram, particularly Babylonia, rather than Edom. For the woven fabrics of Babylonia were celebrated from the earliest times (vid., Movers, II 3, pp. 260ff.); and Babylon was also the oldest and most important market for precious stones (vid., Movers, p. 266). נִפְךָ is the carbuncle (see the comm. on Exo. 28:18). בְּרָכָד, probably the ruby; in any case, a precious stone of brilliant splendour (vid., Isa. 54:12). רְאֻמֹת, corals or pearls (vid., Delitzsch on Job. 28:18). — *Judah* (v. 17) delivered to Tyre wheat of *Minnith*, i.e., according to Jud. 11:33, an Ammonitish place, situated, according to the *Onomast.*, four Roman miles from Heshbon in the direction of Philadelphia. That Ammonitis abounded in wheat, is evident from 2Ch. 27: 5, although the

land of Israel also supplied the Tyrians with wheat (1Ki. 5:25). The meaning of the **אֲפ. לַעַי. נֶבֶן** cannot be definitely ascertained. The rendering confectionery is founded upon the Aramaean **פִּנְיָ**, *deliciari*, and the Chaldee translation, **קֹלִיָּא**, i.e., *κολία*, according to Hesychius, *τὰ ἐκ μέλιτος τρωγάλια*, or sweetmeats made from honey. Jerome renders it *balsamum*, after the **μύρων** of the LXX; and in Hitzig's opinion, *Pannaga* (literally, a snake) is a name used in Sanscrit for a sweet-scented wood, which was employed in medicine as a cooling and strengthening drug (?). Honey (from bees) and oil are well-known productions of Palestine. **בָּצָר** is balsam; whether *resina* or the true balsam grown in gardens about Jericho (*opobalsamum*), it is impossible to decide (see my *Bibl. Archäol.* I p. 38, and Movers, II 3, pp. 220ff.). *Damascus* supplied Tyre with wine of *Chelbon*. **חֶלְבוֹן** still exists in the village of *Helbôn*, a place with many ruins, three hours and a half to the north of Damascus, in the midst of a valley of the same name, which is planted with vines wherever it is practicable, from whose grapes the best and most costly wine of the country is made (vid., Robinson, *Biblical Researches*). Even in ancient times this wine was so celebrated, that, according to Posidonius (in *Athen. Deipnos.* i. 22), the kings of Persia drank only Chalybonian wine from Damascus (vid., Strabo, XV 3. 22). **צֶמֶר צָהָר**, wool of dazzling whiteness; or, according to others, wool of *Zachar*, for which the Septuagint has *ἔρια ἐκ Μιλήτου*, Milesian wool. <sup>B5</sup>

Ver. 19. Various explanations have been given of the first three words. **דָּדַי** is not to be altered into **דָּדַי**, as it has been by Ewald, both arbitrarily and unsuitably with v. 20 immediately following; nor is it to be rendered “*and Dan.*” It is a decisive objection to this, that throughout the whole enumeration not a single land or people is introduced with the copula **וְ**. *Vedan*, which may be compared with the *Vaheb* of Num. 21:14, a place also mentioned only once, is the name of a tribe and tract of land not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament. Movers (p. 302) conjectures that it is the celebrated city of *Aden* (Arab. *dn*). *Javan* is also the name of an Arabian place or tribe; and, according to a notice in the *Kamus*, it is a place in *Yemen*. Tuch (*Genesis*, p. 210) supposes it to be a Greek (Ionian) settlement, the founders of which had been led by their enterprising spirit to cross the land of Egypt into Southern Arabia. For the purpose of distinguishing this Arabian *Javan* from Greece itself, or in order to define it more precisely, **מִצְוֵיָא** is appended, which all the older translators have taken to be a proper name. According to the Masoretic pointing **מִצְוֵיָא**, the word is, no doubt, to be regarded as a participle *Pual* of **צָוַן**, in the sense of spun, from **צָוַן**, to spin. But apart from the fact that it would be a surprising thing to find spun goods mentioned in connection with the trade of the Arabian tribes, the explanation itself could not be sustained

from the usage of the language; for there is nothing in the dialects to confirm the idea that **אזל** is a softened form of **עזל**, inasmuch as they have all **עזל** (Aram.) and *gzl* (Arab.), and the Talmudic **אזל**, *texere*, occurs first of all in the Gemara, and may possibly have been derived in the first instance from the Rabbinical rendering of our **מאזל** by “spun.” Even the fact that the word is written with *Shurek* is against this explanation rather than in its favour; and in all probability its origin is to be traced to the simple circumstance, that in vv. 12, 14, 16 the articles of commerce are always mentioned before **נִתְּנוּ עִזְבוֹנֵיךָ**, and in this verse they would appear to be omitted altogether, unless they are covered by the word **מאזל**. But we can very properly take the following words **בְּרֵזֶל עֲשׂוֹת** as the object of the first hemistich, since the Masoretic accentuation is founded upon the idea that **מאזל** is to be taken as the object here. We therefore regard **מאזל** as the only admissible pointing, and take **אזל** as a proper name, as in Gen. 10:27: “from *Uzal*,” the ancient name of *Sanaa*, the subsequent capital of *Yemen*. The productions mentioned bear this out. Forged or wrought iron, by which Tuch (*l.c.* p. 260) supposes that sword-blades from *Yemen* are chiefly intended, which were celebrated among the Arabs as much as the Indian. Cassia and calamus (see the comm. on Exo. 30:23 and 24), two Indian productions, as *Yemen* traded with *India* from the very earliest times. — *Dedan* (v. 20) is the inland people of that name, living in the neighbourhood of *Edom* (cf. Eze. 25:13; see the comm. on v. 15). They furnished **בְּגָדֵי חֲפָשׁ**, *tapetes straguli*, cloths for spreading out, most likely costly riding-cloths, like the *middim* of Jud. 5:10. **עֲרָב** and **קֶדָר** represent the nomad tribes of central Arabia, the Bedouins. For **עֲרָב** is never used in the Old Testament for the whole of Arabia; but, according to its derivation from **עֲרָבָה**, a steppe or desert, simply for the tribes living as nomads in the desert (as in Isa. 13:20; Jer. 3:2; cf. Ewald, *Grammat. Arab.* I p. 5). *Kedar*, descended from *Ishmael*, an Arabian nomad tribe, living in the desert between *Arabia Petraea* and *Babylonia*, the *Cedrei* of *Pliny* (see the comm. on Gen. 25:13). They supplied lambs, rams, and he-goats, from the abundance of their flocks, in return for the goods obtained from *Tyre*.

Ver. 22. Next to these the merchants of *Sheba* and *Ragmah* (**רַעְמָה**) are mentioned. They were Arabs of Cushite descent (Gen. 10:7) in south-eastern Arabia (*Oman*); for **רַעְמָה**, **Ρεγμα**, was in the modern province of *Oman* in the bay of the same name in the Persian Gulf. Their goods were all kinds of spices, precious stones, and gold, in which southern Arabia abounded. **רֹאשׁ כָּל-בִּשְׂמֵם**, the chief or best of all perfumes (on this use of **רֹאשׁ**, see the comm. on Exo. 30:23; Son. 4:14), is most likely the genuine balsam, which grew in *Yemen*

(*Arabia felix*), according to Diod. Sic. iii. 45, along with other costly spices, and grows there still; for Forskal found a shrub between Mecca and Medina, called *Abu sham*, which he believed to be the true balsam, and of which he has given a botanical account in his *Flora Aeg.* pp. 79, 80 (as *Amyris opobalsamum*), as well as of two other kinds. Precious stones, viz., onyx-stones, rubies, agates, and cornelians, are still found in the mountains of Hadramaut; and in Yemen also jaspers, crystals, and many good rubies (vid., Niebuhr, *Descript.* p. 125, and Seetzen in Zach's *Monatl. Corresp.* xix. p. 339). And, lastly, the wealth of Yemen in gold is too strongly attested by ancient writers to be called in question (cf. Bochart, *Phal.* II 28), although this precious metal is no found there now.

In vv. 23, 24 the trade with Mesopotamia is mentioned. **קַרְחַי**, the *Carrhae* of the Romans in north-western Mesopotamia (see the comm. on Gen. 11:31), was situated at the crossing of the caravan-roads which intersect Mesopotamia; for it was at this point that the two caravan routes from Babylonia and the Delta of the Persian Gulf joined the old military and commercial road to Canaan (Movers, p. 247). The eastern route ran along the Tigris, where *Calneh*, the later *Ktesiphon*, and the most important commercial city. It is here called **כַּנְה** (Canneh), contracted from **כַּלְנֵה** (see the comm. on Gen. 10:10; Amo. 6: 2). The western route ran along the Euphrates, past the cities mentioned in v. 23b. **עֵדֵן** is not the Syrian, but the Mesopotamian *Eden* (2Ki. 19:12; Isa. 37:12), the situation of which has not yet been determined, though Movers (p. 257) has sought for it in the Delta of the Euphrates and Tigris. The singular circumstance that the merchants of Sheba should be mentioned in connection with localities in Mesopotamia, which has given rise both to arbitrary alterations of the text and to various forced explanations, has been explained by Movers (p. 247 compared with p. 139) from a notice of Juba in Pliny's *Hist. nat.* xii. 17 (40), namely, that the Sabaeans, the inhabitants of the spice country, came with their goods from the Persian Gulf to Carrhae, where they held their yearly markets, and from which they were accustomed to proceed to Gabba (Gabala in Phoenicia) and Palestinian Syria. Consequently the merchants of Sabaea are mentioned as those who carried on the trade between Mesopotamia and Tyre, and are not unsuitably placed in the centre of those localities which formed the most important seats of trade on the two great commercial roads of Mesopotamia.

*Asshur* and *Chilmad*, as we have already observed, were on the western road which ran along the Euphrates. **כַּלְמַד** has already been discovered by Bochart (*Phal.* I 18) in the *Charmande* of Xenophon (*Anab.* i. 5. 10), and Sophænetus (see Steph. Byz. s.v. **Χαρμάνδη**), a large and wealthy city in a desert region "beyond the river Euphrates." The *Asshur* mentioned along with *Chilmad*, in the midst of purely commercial cities, cannot be the land of Assyria, but must be

the emporium *Sura* (Movers, p. 252), the present *Essurieh*, which stands upon the bank on this side of the Euphrates above Thapsacus and on the caravan route, which runs from Palmyra past Rusapha (*Rezeph*, Isa. 37:12; 2Ki. 19:12) to Nicephorium or Rakka, then in a northerly direction to Haran, and bending southwards, runs along the bank of the river in the direction of Chilmad or Charmande (Ritter, *Erdk.* XI pp. 1081ff.). The articles of commerce from these emporia, which were brought to Tyre by Sabaean caravans, consisted of **מְכַלְלִים**, literally, articles of perfect beauty, either state-dresses (cf. **מְכַלְלִים**, Eze. 23:12 and 34: 4), or more generally, costly works of art (Hävernick). The omission of the copula **ו** before **בְּגָלוּמֵי** is decisive in favour of the former, as we may infer from this that **בְּגָלָה** is intended as an explanatory apposition to **מְכַלְלִים**, **גְּלוּמֵי תְּכֵלֶת וְרֻקְמָה**, cloaks (**גְּלוּם** connected with *χλαμύς*) of hyacinth-purple and embroidery, for which Babylonia was celebrated (for proofs of this, see Movers, pp. 258ff.). The words which follow cannot be explained with certainty. All that is evident is, that **בְּחֻבְלִים חֲבִי וְאֵרֶב** is appended to **בְּגָלוּמֵי בְּרוּמִים** without a copula, as **בְּגָלוּמֵי וְגוֹ'** is to **בְּמְכַלְלִים** in the first hemistich, and therefore, like the latter, is intended as an explanatory apposition. **חֻבְלִים** does not mean either cloths or threads, but lines or cords. **חֻבְשִׁים** signifies literally bound or would up; probably twisted, i.e., formed of several threads wound together or spun; and **אֲרָזִים**, firm, compact, from Arab. *arz*, to be drawn together. Consequently **גְּנֵי בְּרוּמִים וְגוֹ'** can hardly have any other meaning than treasures of spun yarns, i.e., the most valuable yarns formed of different threads. For “treasures” is the only meaning which can be assigned to **גְּנֵי** with any certainty on philological grounds, and **בְּרוּמִים**, from **בְּרָם**, Arab. *brm*, *contorsit*, is either yarn spun from several or various threads, or cloth woven from such threads. But the latter would not harmonize with **חֻבְלִים**. Movers (II 3, pp. 263ff.) adopts a similar conclusion, and adduces evidence that silk yarn, bombyx, and cotton came to Tyre through the Mesopotamian trade, and were there dyed in the splendid Tyrian purples, and woven into cloths, or brought for sale with the dyeing complete. All the other explanations which have been given of these difficult words are arbitrary and untenable; not only the Rabbinical rendering of **גְּנֵי בְּרוּמִים**, viz., chests of damask, but that of Ewald, “pockets of damask,” and that proposed by Hartmann, Hävernick, and others, viz., girdles of various colours, **ζῶναι σακιστάι**. In v. 25 the description is rounded off with a notice of the lever of this world-wide trade. **שָׁרוֹת** cannot mean “walls” in this instance, as in Jer. 5:10, and like **שָׁרוֹת** in Job. 24:11, because the ships, through which Tyre became so rich, could not be called walls. The word signifies “caravans,” after **שׁוּר** = Arab. *sâr* (Isa. 57: 9), corresponding to the Aramaean **שִׁרְבָן מְעַרְבָן** might be

regarded as an accusative of more precise definition: caravans, with regard to (for) thy bartering trade. At the same time it is more rhetorical to take **מַעֲרִיבָד** as a second predicate: they were thy trade, i.e., the carriers of thy trade. What the caravans were for the emporia of trade on the mainland, the ships of Tarshish were for Tyre, and these on the largest sea-going ships are mentioned *instar omnium*. By means of these vessels Tyre was filled with goods, and rendered weighty (**נִבְבֵּד**), i.e., rich and glorious. — But a tempest from the east would destroy Tyre with all its glory.

*Eze. 27:26-36.* Destruction of Tyre. —

*V. 26. Thy rowers brought thee into great waters: the east wind broke thee up in the heart of the seas. V. 27. Thy riches and thy sales, thy bartering wares, thy seamen and thy sailors, the repairers of thy leaks and the treaders in thy wares, and all thy fighting men in thee, together with all the multitude of people in thee, fell into the heart of the seas in the day of thy fall. V. 28. At the noise of the cry of thy sailors the places tremble. V. 29. And out of their ships come all the oarsmen, seamen, all the sailors of the sea; they come upon the land, V. 20. And make their voice heard over thee, and cry bitterly, and put dust upon their heads, and cover themselves with ashes; V. 31. And shave themselves bald on thy account, and gird on sackcloth, and weep for thee in anguish of soul a bitter wailing. V. 32. They raise over thee in their grief a lamentation, and lament over thee: Who is like Tyre! like the destroyed one in the midst of the sea!. V. 33. When thy sales came forth out of the seas, thou didst satisfy many nations; with the abundance of thy goods and thy wares thou didst enrich kings of the earth. V. 34. Now that thou art wrecked away from the seas in the depths of the water, thy wares and all thy company are fallen in thee. V. 35. All the inhabitants of the islands are amazed at thee, and their kings shudder greatly; their faces quiver. V. 36. The traders among the nations hiss over thee; thou hast become a terror, and art gone for ever.*

The allusion to the ships of Tarshish, to which Tyre was indebted for its glory, serves as an introduction to a renewal in v. 26 of the allegory of vv. 5-9a; Tyre is a ship, which is wrecked by the east wind (cf. *Psa.* 48: 8). In Palestine (Arabia and Syria) the east wind is characterized by continued gusts; and if it rises into a tempest, it generally causes great damage on account of the violence of the gusts (see Wetzstein in Delitzsch's commentary on *Job.* 27: 1). Like a ship broken in pieces by the storm, Tyre with all its glory sinks into the depths of the sea. The repetition of **בְּלֵב יַמִּים** in vv. 26 and 27 forms an effective contrast to v. 25; just as the enumeration of all the possessions of Tyre, which fall with the ship into the heart of the sea, does to the wealth and glory in v. 25b. They who manned the ship also perish with the cargo, — "the seamen," i.e., sailors, rowers, repairers of leaks (calkers), also the merchants on board, and the fighting men who defended the ship and its goods against pirates, — the whole *qâhâl*, or gathering of people, in the ship. The difficult expression **בְּכָל-קְהָלָךְ** can only be taken as an explanatory apposition to **אִשְׁרֵךְ בָּדָד**: all the men who

are in thee, namely, in the multitude of people in thee. V. 28. When the vessel is wrecked, the managers of the ship raise such a cry that the *migreshōth* tremble. **מִגְרֵשׁ** is used in Num. 35: 2 for the precincts around the Levitical cities, which were set apart as pasture ground for the flocks; and in Eze. 45: 2; 48:17, for the ground surrounding the holy city. Consequently **מִגְרֵשׁוֹת** cannot mean the suburbs of Tyre in the passage before us, but must signify the open places on the mainland belonging to Tyre, i.e., the whole of its territory, with the fields and villages contained therein. The rendering “fleet,” which Ewald follows the Vulgate in adopting, has nothing to support it.

Vv. 29ff. The ruin of this wealthy and powerful metropolis of the commerce of the world produces the greatest consternation among all who sail upon the sea, so that they forsake their ships, as if they were no longer safe in them, and leaving them for the land, bewail the fall of Tyre with deepest lamentation. **הַשְּׂמִיא** with **בְּקוֹל**, as in Psa. 26: 7; 1Ch. 15:19, etc. For the purpose of depicting the lamentation as great and bitter in the extreme, Ezekiel groups together all the things that were generally done under such circumstances, viz., covering the head with dust (cf. Jos. 7: 6; 1Sa. 4:12; and Job. 2:12) and ashes (**הִתְפַּלֵּשׁ**, to strew, or cover oneself, not to roll oneself: see the comm. on Mic. 1:10); shaving a bald place (see Eze. 7:18 and the comm. on Mic. 1:16); putting on sackcloth; loud, bitter weeping (**בְּמַר נֶפֶשׁ**), as in Job. 7:11 and 10: 1); and singing an mournful dirge (vv. 32ff.). **בְּנִיָּהֶם**, *in lamento eorum*, **נִי** contracted from **נְדִי** (Jer. 9:17, 18; cf. **הִי**, Eze. 2:10). The reading adopted by the LXX, Theodot., Syr., and eleven Codd. (**בְּנִיָּהֶם**) is unsuitable, as there is no allusion to sons, but the seamen themselves raise the lamentation. The correction proposed by Hitzig, **בְּפִיָּהֶם**, is altogether inappropriate. The exclamation, Who is like Tyre! is more precisely defined by **כְּדָמָה**, like the destroyed one in the midst of the sea. **דָּמָה**, participle *Pual*, with the **מ** dropt, as in 2Ki. 2:10, etc. (vid., Ges. § 52. 2, Anm. 6). It is quite superfluous to assume that there was a noun **דָּמָה** signifying destruction. **בִּצְאֵת עֵזֹב** has been aptly explained by Hitzig; “inasmuch as thy wares sprang out of the sea, like the plants and field-fruits out of the soil” (the selection of the word **הַשְּׂבֹאֵת** also suggested this simile); “not as being manufactured at Tyre, and therefore in the sea, but because the sea floated the goods to land for the people in the ships, and they satisfied the desire of the purchasers.” Tyre satisfied peoples and enriched kings with its wares, not only by purchasing from them and paying for their productions with money or barter, but also by the fact that the Tyrians gave a still higher value to the raw material by the labour which they bestowed upon them. **הַזִּנְיָד** in the plural is only met with here. — V. 34. But now Tyre with its treasures and its inhabitants has sunk in the depths of the sea. The



antithesis in which v. 34 really stands to v. 33 does not warrant our altering עַת נִשְׁבְּרָת into אֵת נִשְׁבְּרָת, as Ewald and Hitzig propose, or adopting a different division of the second hemistich. עַת is an adverbial accusative, as in Eze. 16:57: “at the time of the broken one away from the seas into the depth of the waters, thy wares and thy people have fallen, i.e., perished.” עַת נִשְׁבְּרָת, *tempore quo fracta es*. נִשְׁבְּרָת מִיָּמִים is intentionally selected as an antithesis to נִשְׁבַּת מִיָּמִים in Eze. 26:17. — V. 35. All the inhabitants of the islands and their kings, i.e., the inhabitants of the (coast of the) Mediterranean and its islands, will be thrown into consternation at the fall of Tyre; and (v. 36) the merchants among the nations, i.e., the foreign nations, the rivals of Tyre in trade, will hiss thereat; in other words, give utterance to malicious joy. שָׂמִים, to be laid waste, or thrown into perturbation with terror and amazement. פָּנִים רָאִים, to tremble or quiver in the face, i.e., to tremble so much that the terror shows itself in the countenance. — In v. 36b Ezekiel brings the lamentation to a close in a similar manner to the threat contained in Eze. 26 (vid., Eze. 26:21).

## CH. 28: 1-19. AGAINST THE PRINCE OF TYRE

As the city of Tyre was first of all threatened with destruction (Eze. 26), and then her fall was confirmed by a lamentation (Eze. 27), so here the prince of Tyre is first of all forewarned of his approaching death (vv. 1-10), and then a lamentation is composed thereon (vv. 11-19).

*Eze. 28: 1-10.* Fall of the Prince of Tyre.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 2. *Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thy heart has lifted itself up, and thou sayest, “I am a God, I sit upon a seat of Gods, in the heart of the seas,” when thou art a man and not God, and cherishest a mind like a God’s mind,* V. 3. *Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; nothing secret is obscure to thee;* V. 4. *Through thy wisdom and thy understanding hast thou acquired might, and put gold and silver in thy treasuries;* V. 5. *Through the greatness of thy wisdom hast thou increased thy might by thy trade, and thy heart has lifted itself up on account of thy might,* V. 6. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thou cherishest a mind like a God’s mind,* V. 7. *Therefore, behold, I will bring foreigners upon thee, violent men of the nations; they will draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and pollute thy splendour.* V. 8. *They will cast thee down into the pit, that thou mayest die the death of the slain in the heart of the seas.* V. 9. *Wilt thou indeed say, I am a God, in the face of him that slayeth thee, when thou art a man and not God in the hand of him that killeth thee?* V. 10. *Thou wilt die the death of the uncircumcised at the hand of foreigners; for I have spoken it, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. —*

This threat of judgment follows in general the same course as those addressed to other nations (compare especially Eze. 25), namely, that the sin is mentioned

first (vv. 2-5), and then the punishment consequent upon the sin (vv. 6-10). In v. 12 מֶלֶךְ is used instead of נָגִיד, *dux*. In the use of the term נָגִיד to designate the king, Kliefoth detects an indication of the peculiar position occupied by the prince in the commercial state of Tyre, which had been reared upon municipal foundations; inasmuch as he was not so much a monarch, comparable to the rulers of Babylon or to the Pharaohs, as the head of the great mercantile aristocracy. This is in harmony with the use of the word נָגִיד for the prince of Israel, David for example, whom God chose and anointed to be the *nāgīd* over His people; in other words, to be the leader of the tribes, who also formed an independent commonwealth (vid., 1Sa. 13:14; 2Sa. 7: 8, etc.). The pride of the prince of Tyre is described in v. 2 as consisting in the fact that he regarded himself as a God, and his seat in the island of Tyre as a God's seat. He calls his seat מוֹשֵׁב אֱלֹהִים, not "because his capital stood out from the sea, like the palace of God from the ocean of heaven" (Psa. 104: 3), as Hitzig supposes; for, apart from any other ground, this does not suit the subsequent description of his seat as God's mountain (v. 16), and God's holy mountain (v. 14). The God's seat and God's mountain are not the palace of the king of Tyre, but Tyre as a state, and that not because of its firm position upon a rocky island, but as a holy island (ἁγία νῆσος, as Tyre is called in Sanchun. ed. Orelli, p. 36), the founding of which has been glorified by myths (vid., Movers, *Phoenizier*, I pp. 637ff.). The words which Ezekiel puts into the mouth of the king of Tyre may be explained, as Kliefoth has well expressed it, "from the notion lying at the foundation of all natural religions, according to which every state, as the production of its physical factors and bases personified as the native deities of house and state, is regarded as a work and sanctuary of the gods." In Tyre especially the national and political development went hand in hand with the spread and propagation of its religion. "The Tyrian state was the production and seat of its gods. He, the prince of Tyre, presided over this divine creation and divine seat; therefore he, the prince, was himself a god, a manifestation of the deity, having its work and home in the state of Tyre." All heathen rulers looked upon themselves in this light; so that the king of Babylon is addressed in a similar manner in Isa. 14:13, 14. This self-deification is shown to be a delusion in v. 2b; He who is only a man makes his heart like a God's heart, i.e., cherishes the same thought as the Gods. לֵב, the heart, as the seat of the thoughts and imaginations, is named instead of the disposition.

This is carried out still further in vv. 3-5 by a description of the various sources from which this imagination sprang. He cherishes a God's mind, because he attributes to himself superhuman wisdom, through which he has created the greatness, and might, and wealth of Tyre. The words, "behold, thou art wiser," etc. (v. 3), are not to be taken as a question, "art thou indeed wiser?" as they

have been by the LXX, Syriac, and others; nor are they ironical, as Hävernick supposes; but they are to be taken literally, namely, inasmuch as the prince of Tyre was serious in attributing to himself supernatural and divine wisdom. Thou art, i.e., thou regardest thyself as being, wiser than Daniel. No hidden thing is obscure to thee (עַמֻּם), a later word akin to the Aramaean, “to be obscure”).

The comparison with Daniel refers to the fact that Daniel surpassed all the magi and wise men of Babylon in wisdom through his ability to interpret dreams, since God gave him an insight into the nature and development of the power of the world, such as no human sagacity could have secured. The wisdom of the prince of Tyre, on the other hand, consisted in the cleverness of the children of this world, which knows how to get possession of all the good things of the earth. Through such wisdom as this had the Tyrian prince acquired power and riches. חַיִל, might, possessions in the broader sense; not merely riches, but the whole of the might of the commercial state of Tyre, which was founded upon riches and treasures got by trade. In v. 5 בְּרַבְלָתֶךָ is in apposition to חֲכַמְתֶּךָ בְּרַב, and is introduced as explanatory. The fulness of its wisdom showed itself in its commerce and the manner in which it conducted it, whereby Tyre had become rich and powerful. It is not till we reach v. 6 that we meet with the apodosis answering to אֲנִי גִבֹהַ וְגוֹ' in v. 2, which has been pushed so far back by the intervening parenthetical sentences in vv. 2b -5. For this reason the sin of the prince of Tyre in deifying himself is briefly reiterated in the clause תִּתְּתֶךָ וְגוֹ' אֲנִי (v. 6b, compare v. 2b), after which the announcement of the punishment is introduced with a repetition of לָבֶן in v. 7. Wild foes approaching with barbarous violence will destroy all the king's resplendent glory, slay the king himself with the sword, and hurl him down into the pit as a godless man. The enemies are called עֲרִיצֵי גוֹיִם, violent ones of the peoples, — that is to say, the wild hordes composing the Chaldean army (cf. Eze. 30:11; 31:12). They drew the sword “against the beauty (יָפִי, the construct state of יָפִי) of thy wisdom,” i.e., the beauty produced by thy wisdom, and the beautiful Tyre itself, with all that it contains (Eze. 26: 3, 4). יָפְעָה, splendour; it is only here and in v. 17 that we meet with it as a noun. The king himself they hurl down into the pit, i.e., the grave, or the nether world. מְמוֹתֵי חָלָל, the death of a pierced one, substantially the same as מוֹתֵי עֲרָלִים. The plural מְמוֹתֵי and מוֹתֵי here and Jer. 16: 4 (*mortes*) is a *pluralis exaggerativus*, a death so painful as to be equivalent to dying many times (see the comm. on Isa. 53: 9). In v. 9 Ezekiel uses the *Piel* מִחַלֵּל in the place of the *Poel* מִחַוֵּל, as חָלַל in the *Piel* occurs elsewhere only in the sense of *profanare*, and in Isa. 51: 9 and *Poel* is used for piercing. But there is no necessity to alter the pointing in consequence, as we also find the *Pual* used by Ezekiel in Eze. 32:26 in the place of the *Poal* of

Isa. 53: 5. The death of the uncircumcised is such a death as godless men die — a violent death. The king of Tyre, who looks upon himself as a god, shall perish by the sword like a godless man. At the same time, the whole of this threat applies, not to the one king, *Ithobal*, who was reigning at the time of the siege of Tyre by the Chaldeans, but to the king as the founder and creator of the might of Tyre (vv. 3-5), i.e., to the supporter of that royalty which was to perish along with Tyre itself. — It is to the king, as the representative of the might and glory of Tyre, and not merely to the existing possessor of the regal dignity, that the following lamentation over his fall refers.

*Eze. 28:11-19.* Lamentation over the King of Tyre.

V. 11. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 12. Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Thou seal of a well-measured building, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. V. 13. In Eden, the garden of God, was thou; all kinds of precious stones were thy covering, cornelian, topaz, and diamond, chrysolite, beryl, and jasper, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald, and gold: the service of thy timbrels and of thy women was with thee; on the day that thou wast created, they were prepared. V. 14. Thou wast a cherub of anointing, which covered, and I made thee for it; thou wast on a holy mountain of God; thou didst walk in the midst of fiery stones. V. 15. Thou wast innocent in thy ways from the day on which thou wast created, until iniquity was found in thee. V. 16. On account of the multitude of thy commerce, thine inside was filled with wrong, and thou didst sin: I will therefore profane thee away from the mountain of God; and destroy thee, O covering cherub, away from the fiery stones! V. 17. Thy heart has lifted itself up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom together with thy splendour: I cast thee to the ground, I give thee up for a spectacle before kings. V. 18. Through the multitude of thy sins in thine unrighteous trade thou hast profaned thy holy places; I therefore cause fire to proceed from the midst of thee, which shall devour thee, and make thee into ashes upon the earth before the eyes of all who see thee. V. 19. All who know thee among the peoples are amazed at thee: thou hast become a terror, and art gone for ever. —*

The lamentation over the fall of the king of Tyre commences with a picture of the super-terrestrial glory of his position, so as to correspond to his self-deification as depicted in the foregoing word of God. In v. 12 he is addressed as **הָתָם תְּכִנִּית**. This does not mean, “artistically wrought signet-ring;” for **הָתָם** does not stand for **הָתָם**, but is a participle of **הָתָם**, to seal. There is all the more reason for adhering firmly to this meaning, that the following predicate, **מִלֵּא חֲכָמָה**, is altogether inapplicable to a signet-ring, though Hitzig once more scents a corruption of the text in consequence. **תְּכִנִּית**, from **תָּכַן**, to weigh, or measure off, does not mean perfection (Ewald), beauty (Ges.), *façon* (Hitzig), or symmetry (Hävernick); but just as in Eze. 43:10, the only other passage in which it occurs, it denotes the measured and well-arranged building of the temple, so here it signifies a well-measured and artistically arranged

building, namely, the Tyrian state in its artistic combination of well-measured institutions (Kliefoth). This building is sealed by the prince, inasmuch as he imparts to the state firmness, stability, and long duration, when he possesses the qualities requisite for a ruler. These are mentioned afterwards, namely, “full of wisdom, perfect in beauty.” If the prince answers to his position, the wisdom and beauty manifest in the institutions of the state are simply the impress received from the wisdom and beauty of his own mind. The prince of Tyre possessed such a mind, and therefore regarded himself as a God (v. 2). His place of abode, which is described in vv. 13 and 14, corresponded to his position. Ezekiel here compares the situation of the prince of Tyre with that of the first man in Paradise; and then, in vv. 15 and 16, draws a comparison between his fall and the fall of Adam. As the first man was placed in the garden of God, in Eden, so also was the prince of Tyre placed in the midst of paradisaical glory. **עֵדֶן** is shown, by the apposition **גֵּן אֱלֹהִים**, to be used as the proper name of Paradise; and this view is not to be upset by the captious objection of Hitzig, that Eden was not the garden of God, but that this was situated in Eden (Gen. 2: 8). The fact that Ezekiel calls Paradise **גֵּן עֵדֶן** in Eze. 36:35, proves nothing more than that the terms *Eden* and *Garden of God* do not cover precisely the same ground, inasmuch as the garden of God only occupied one portion of Eden. But notwithstanding this difference, Ezekiel could use the two expressions as synonymous, just as well as Isaiah (Isa. 51: 3). And even if any one should persist in pressing the difference, it would not follow that **בְּעֵדֶן** was corrupt in this passage, as Hitzig fancies, but simply that **גֵּן אֱלֹהִים** defined the idea of **עֵדֶן** more precisely — in other words, restricted it to the garden of Paradise.

There is, however, another point to be observed in connection with this expression, namely, that the epithet **גֵּן אֱלֹהִים** is used here and in Eze. 31: 8, 9; whereas, in other places, Paradise is called **גֵּן יְהוָה** (vid., Isa. 51: 3; Gen. 13:10). Ezekiel has chosen Elohim instead of Jehovah, because Paradise is brought into comparison, not on account of the historical significance which it bears to the human race in relation to the plan of salvation, but simply as the most glorious land in all the earthly creation. The prince of Tyre, placed in the pleasant land, was also adorned with the greatest earthly glory. Costly jewels were his coverings, that is to say, they formed the ornaments of his attire. This feature in the pictorial description is taken from the splendour with which Oriental rulers are accustomed to appear, namely, in robes covered with precious stones, pearls, and gold. **מַסְפָּה**, as a noun *ἀπ. λεγ.*, signifies a covering. In the enumeration of the precious stones, there is no reference to the breastplate of the high priest. For, in the first place, the order of the stones is a different one here; secondly, there are only nine stones named instead of twelve;

and lastly, there would be no intelligible sense in such a reference, so far as we can perceive. Both precious stones and gold are included in the glories of Eden (vid., Gen. 2:11, 12). For the names of the several stones, see the commentary on Exo. 28:17-20. The words **מְלֹאכֶת תְּפִיד וְגו'** — which even the early translators have entirely misunderstood, and which the commentators down to Hitzig and Ewald have made marvellous attempts to explain — present no peculiar difficulty, apart from the plural **נְקָבִיד**, which is only met with here. As the meaning timbrels, tambourins (*aduffa*), is well established for **תְּפִידִים**, and in 1Sa. 10: 5 and Isa. 5:12 flutes are mentioned along with the timbrels, it has been supposed by some that **נְקָבִים** must signify flutes here. But there is nothing to support such a rendering either in the Hebrew or in the other Semitic dialects. On the other hand, the meaning *pala gemmarum* (Vulgate), or ring-casket, has been quite arbitrarily forced upon the word by Jerome, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, and many others. We agree with Hävernick in regarding **נְקָבִים** as a plural of **נְקָבָה** (*foeminae*), formed, like a masculine, after the analogy of **נְשִׂים**, **פְּלִגְשִׁים**, etc., and account for the choice of this expression from the allusion to the history of the creation (Gen. 1:27). The service (**מְלֹאכֶת**, performance, as in Gen. 39:11, etc.) of the women is the leading of the circular dances by the odalisks who beat the timbrels: “the harem-pomp of Oriental kings.” This was made ready for the king on the day of his creation, i.e., not his birthday, but the day on which he became king, or commenced his reign, when the harem of his predecessor came into his possession with all its accompaniments. Ezekiel calls this the day of his creation, with special reference to the fact that it was God who appointed him king, and with an allusion to the parallel, underlying the whole description, between the position of the prince of Tyre and that of Adam in Paradise. <sup>B6</sup>

The next verse (v. 14) is a more difficult one. **אֶת** is an abbreviation of **אֶתֶּן**, **אֶתָּה**, as in Num. 11:15; Deu. 5:24 (see Ewald, § 184a). The **ἀπ. λεγ. מְמַשֵּׁחַ** has been explained in very different ways, but mostly according to the Vulgate rendering, *tu Cherub extensus et protegens*, as signifying spreading out or extension, in the sense of “with outspread wings” (Gesenius and many others.). But **מְמַשֵּׁחַ** does not mean either to spread out or to extend. The general meaning of the word is simply to anoint; and judging from **מְשָׁחָה** and **מְשָׁחָה**, *portio*, Lev. 7:35 and Num. 18: 8, also to measure off, from which the idea of extension cannot possibly be derived. Consequently the meaning “anointing” is the only one that can be established with certainty in the case of the word **מְמַשֵּׁחַ**. So far as the form is concerned, **מְמַשֵּׁחַ** might be in the construct state; but the connection with **הַסּוֹכֵךְ**, anointing, or anointed one, of the covering one, does not yield any admissible sense.

A comparison with v. 16, where **כְּרוּב הַסּוּכָה** occurs again, will show that the **מִמְשַׁח**, which stands between these two words in the verse before us, must contain a more precise definition of **כְּרוּב**, and therefore is to be connected with **כְּרוּב** in the construct state: cherub of anointing, i.e., anointed cherub. This is the rendering adopted by Kliefoth, the only commentator who has given the true explanation of the verse. **מִמְשַׁח** is the older form, which has only been retained in a few words, such as **מִרְמֵס** in Isa. 10: 6, together with the tone-lengthened *a* (vid., Ewald, § 160*a*). The prince of Tyre is called an anointed cherub, as Ephraem Syrus has observed, because he was a king even though he had not been anointed. **הַסּוּכָה** is not an abstract noun, either here or in Nah. 2: 6, but a participle; and this predicate points back to Exo. 25:20, “the cherubim covered (**סוּכְכִים**) the capporeth with their wings,” and is to be explained accordingly. Consequently the king of Tyre is called a cherub, because, as an anointed king, he covered or overshadowed a sanctuary, like the cherubim upon the ark of the covenant. What this sanctuary was is evident from the remarks already made at v. 2 concerning the divine seat of the king. If the “seat of God,” upon which the king of Tyre sat, is to be understood as signifying the state of Tyre, then the sanctuary which he covered or overshadowed as a cherub will also be the Tyrian state, with its holy places and sacred things. In the next clause, **וַיַּנְתִּיתִיךָ** is to be taken by itself according to the accents, “and I have made thee (so),” and not to be connected with **קָדַשׁ בְּהַר**. We are precluded from adopting the combination which some propose — viz. “I set thee upon a holy mountain; thou wast a God” — by the incongruity of first of all describing the prince of Tyre as a cherub, and then immediately afterwards as a God, inasmuch as, according to the Biblical view, the cherub, as an angelic being, is simply a creature and not a God; and the fanciful delusion of the prince of Tyre, that he was an *El* (v. 2), could not furnish the least ground for his being addressed as *Elohim* by Ezekiel. And still more are we precluded from taking the words in this manner by the declaration contained in v. 16, that Jehovah will cast him out “from the mountain of Elohim,” from which we may see that in the present verse also *Elohim* belongs to *har*, and that in v. 16, where the mountain of God is mentioned again, the predicate **קָדַשׁ** is simply omitted for the sake of brevity, just as **מִמְשַׁח** is afterwards omitted on the repetition of **כְּרוּב הַסּוּכָה**. The missing but actual object to **וַיַּנְתִּיתִיךָ** can easily be supplied from the preceding clause, — namely, this, i.e., an overshadowing cherub, had God made him, by placing him as king in paradisaical glory. The words, “thou wast upon a holy mountain of God,” are not to be interpreted in the sense suggested by Isa. 14:13, namely, that Ezekiel was thinking of the mountain of the gods (Alborj) met with in Asiatic mythology, because it was

there that the cherub had its home, as Hitzig and others suppose; for the Biblical idea of the cherub is entirely different from the heathen notion of the griffin keeping guard over gold. It is true that God placed the cherub as guardian of Paradise, but Paradise was not a mountain of God, nor even a mountainous land. The idea of a holy mountain of God, as being the seat of the king of Tyre, was founded partly upon the natural situation of Tyre itself, built as it was upon one or two rocky islands of the Mediterranean, and partly upon the heathen notion of the sacredness of this island as the seat of the Deity, to which the Tyrians attributed the grandeur of their state. To this we may probably add a reference to Mount Zion, upon which was the sanctuary, where the cherub covered the seat of the presence of God. For although the comparison of the prince of Tyre to a cherub was primarily suggested by the description of his abode as Paradise, the epithet **הַסּוֹכֵךְ** shows that the place of the cherub in the sanctuary was also present to the prophet's mind. At the same time, we must not understand by **הָרַ קְדֵשׁ** Mount Zion itself. The last clause, "thou didst walk in the midst of (among) fiery stones," is very difficult to explain. It is admitted by nearly all the more recent commentators, that "stones of fire" cannot be taken as equivalent to "every precious stone" (v. 13), both because the precious stones could hardly be called stones of fire on account of their brilliant splendour, and also being covered with precious stones is not walking in the midst of them. Nor can we explain the words, as Hävernick has done, from the account given by Herodotus (II 44) of the two emerald pillars in the temple of Hercules at Tyre, which shone resplendently by night; for pillars shining by night are not stones of fire, and the king of Tyre did not walk in the temple between these pillars. The explanation given by Hofmann and Kliefoth appears to be the correct one, namely, that the stones of fire are to be regarded as a wall of fire (Zec. 2: 9), which rendered the cherubic king of Tyre unapproachable upon his holy mountain.

In v. 15, the comparison of the prince of Tyre to Adam in Paradise is brought out still more prominently. As Adam was created sinless, so was the prince of Tyre innocent in his conduct in the day of his creation, but only until perverseness was found in him. As Adam forfeited and lost the happiness conferred upon him through his fall, so did the king of Tyre forfeit his glorious position through unrighteousness and sin, and cause God to cast him from his eminence down to the ground. He fell into perverseness in consequence of the abundance of his trade (v. 16a). Because his trade lifted him up to wealth and power, his heart was filled with iniquity. **מָלֵוּ** for **מָלְאוּ**, like **מָלוּ** for **מְלוּא** in Eze. 41: 8, and **נָשְׂוּ** for **נִשְׂאוּ** in Eze. 39:26. **תּוֹכְדֵךְ** is not the subject, but the object to **מָלוּ**; and the plural **מָלוּ**, with an indefinite subject, "they filled," is chosen in the place of the passive construction, because in the Hebrew, as in the



Aramaean, active combinations are preferred to passive whenever it is possible to adopt them (vid., Ewald, § 294*b* and 128*b*). מלא is used by Ezekiel in the transitive sense “to fill” (Eze. 8:17 and 30:11). תוך, the midst, is used for the interior in a physical sense, and not in a spiritual one; and the expression is chosen with an evident allusion to the history of the fall. As Adam sinned by eating the forbidden fruit of the tree, so did the king of Tyre sin by filling himself with wickedness in connection with trade (Hävernick and Kliefoth). God would therefore put him away from the mountain of God, and destroy him. חלל with מן is a pregnant expression: to desecrate away from, i.e., to divest of his glory and thrust away from. ואבדך is a contracted form for ואאבדך (vid., Ewald, § 232*h* and § 72*c*). — Vv. 17 and 18 contain a comprehensive description of the guilt of the prince of Tyre, and the approaching judgment is still further depicted. אל יפעתך cannot mean, “on account of thy splendour,” for this yields no appropriate thought, inasmuch as it was not the splendour itself which occasioned his overthrow, but the pride which corrupted the wisdom requisite to exalt the might of Tyre, — in other words, tempted the prince to commit iniquity in order to preserve and increase his glory. We therefore follow the LXX, Syr., Ros., and others, in taking על in the sense of *una cum*, together with. ראנה is an infinitive form, like אהבה for ראות, though Ewald (§ 238*e*) regards it as so extraordinary that he proposes to alter the text. ראה with ב is used for looking upon a person with malicious pleasure. בעול רבלתך shows in what the guilt (עון) consisted (עול is the construct state of עול). The sanctuaries (*miqdâshim*) which the king of Tyre desecrated by the unrighteousness of his commerce, are not the city or the state of Tyre, but the temples which made Tyre a holy island. These the king desecrated by bringing about their destruction through his own sin. Several of the codices and editions read מקדשך in the singular, and this is the reading adopted by the Chaldee, Syriac, and Vulgate versions. If this were the true reading, the sanctuary referred to would be the holy mountain of God (vv. 14 and 16). But the reading itself apparently owes its origin simply to this interpretation of the words. In the clause, “I cause fire to issue from the midst of thee,” מתוךך is to be understood in the same sense as תוךך in v. 16. The iniquity which the king has taken into himself becomes a fire issuing from him, by which he is consumed and burned to ashes. All who know him among the peoples will be astonished at his terrible fall (v. 19, compare Eze. 27:36).

If we proceed, in conclusion, to inquire into the fulfilment of these prophecies concerning Tyre and its king, we find the opinions of modern commentators divided. Some, for example Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Drechsler (on Isa. 23), and others, assuming that, after a thirteen years' siege, Nebuchadnezzar

conquered the strong Island Tyre, and destroyed it; while others — viz. Gesenius, Winer, Hitzig, etc. — deny the conquest by Nebuchadnezzar, or at any rate call it in question; and many of the earlier commentators suppose the prophecy to refer to Old Tyre, which stood upon the mainland. For the history of this dispute, see Hengstenberg, *De rebus Tyrionum comment.* (Berol. 1832); Hävernicks, *On Ezekiel*, pp. 420ff.; and Movers, *Phoenizier*, II 1, pp. 427ff. — The denial of the conquest of Insular Tyre by the king of Babylon rests partly on the silence which ancient historians, who mention the siege itself, have maintained as to its result; and partly on the statement contained in Eze. 29:17-20. — All that Josephus (*Antt.* x. 11. 1) is able to quote from the ancient historians on this point is the following: — In the first place, he states, on the authority of the third book of the Chaldean history of Berossus, that when the father of Nebuchadnezzar, on account of his own age and consequent infirmity, had transferred to his son the conduct of the war against the rebellious satrap in Egypt, Coelesyria, and Phoenicia, Nebuchadnezzar defeated him, and brought the whole country once more under his sway. But as the tidings reached him of the death of his father just at the same time, after arranging affairs in Egypt, and giving orders to some of his friends to lead into Babylon the captives taken from among the Judaeans, the Phoenicians, the Syrians, and the Egyptians, together with the heavy armed portion of the army, he himself hastened through the desert to Babylon, with a small number of attendants, to assume that government of the empire. Secondly, he states, on the authority of the Indian and Phoenician histories of Philostratus, that when Ithobal was on the throne, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years. The accounts taken from Berossus are repeated by Josephus in his *c. Apion* (i. § 19), where he also adds (§ 20), in confirmation of their credibility, that there were writings found in the archives of the Phoenicians which tallied with the statement made by Berossus concerning the king of Chaldea (Nebuchadnezzar), viz., “that he conquered all Syria and Phoenicia;” and that Philostratus also agrees with this, since he mentions the siege of Tyre in his histories (*μεμνημένος τῆς Τύρου πολιορκίας*). In addition to this, for synchronistic purposes, Josephus (*c. Ap.* i. 21) also communicates a fragment from the Phoenician history, containing not only the account of the thirteen years’ siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Ithobal, but also a list of the kings of Tyre who followed Ithobal, down to the time of Cyrus of Persia. <sup>137</sup>

The siege of Tyre is therefore mentioned three times by Josephus, on the authority of Phoenician histories; but he never says anything of the conquest and destruction of that city by Nebuchadnezzar. From this circumstance the conclusion has been drawn, that this was all he found there. For if, it is said, the siege had terminated with the conquest of the city, this glorious result of the thirteen years’ exertions could hardly have been passed over in silence,

inasmuch as in *Antt.* x. 11. 1 the testimony of foreign historians is quoted to the effect that Nebuchadnezzar was “an active man, and more fortunate than the kings that were before him.” But the argument is more plausible than conclusive. If we bear in mind that Berosus simply relates the account of a subjugation and devastation of the whole of Phoenicia, without even mentioning the siege of Tyre, and that it is only in Phoenician writings therefore that the latter is referred to, we cannot by any means conclude, from their silence as to the result or termination of the siege, that it ended gloriously for the Tyrians and with humiliation to Nebuchadnezzar, or that he was obliged to relinquish the attempt without success after the strenuous exertions of thirteen years. On the contrary, considering how all the historians of antiquity show the same anxiety, if not to pass over in silence, such events as were unfavourable to their country, at all events to put them in as favourable to their country, at all events to put them in as favourable a light as possible, the fact that the Tyrian historians observe the deepest silence as to the result of the thirteen years’ siege of Tyre would rather force us to the conclusion that it was very humiliating to Tyre. And this could only be the case if Nebuchadnezzar really conquered Tyre at the end of thirteen years. If he had been obliged to relinquish the siege because he found himself unable to conquer so strong a city, the Tyrian historians would most assuredly have related this termination of the thirteen years’ strenuous exertions of the great and mighty king of Babylon.

The silence of the Tyrian historians concerning the conquest of Tyre is no proof, therefore, that it did not really take place. But Eze. 29:17-20 has also been quoted as containing positive evidence of the failure of the thirteen years’ siege; in other words, of the fact that the city was not taken. We read in this passage, that Nebuchadnezzar caused his army to perform hard service against Tyre, and that neither he nor his army received any recompense for it. Jehovah would therefore give him Egypt to spoil and plunder as wages for this work of theirs in the service of Jehovah. Gesenius and Hitzig (on Isa. 23) infer from this, that Nebuchadnezzar obtained no recompense for the severe labour of the siege, because he did not succeed in entering the city. But Movers (*l.c.* p. 448) has already urged in reply to this, that “the passage before us does not imply that the city was not conquered any more than it does the opposite, but simply lays stress upon the fact that it *was not plundered*. For nothing can be clearer in this connection than that what we are to understand by the wages, which Nebuchadnezzar did not receive, notwithstanding the exertions connected with his many years’ siege, is simply the treasures of Tyre;” though Movers is of opinion that the passage contains an intimation that the siege was brought to an end with a certain compromise which satisfied the Tyrians, and infers, from the fact of stress being laid exclusively upon the neglected plundering, that the termination was of such a kind that plundering might easily have taken place,

and therefore that Tyre was either actually conquered, but treated mildly from wise considerations, or else submitted to the Chaldeans upon certain terms. But neither of these alternatives can make the least pretension to probability. In Eze. 29:20 it is expressly stated that “as wages, for which he (Nebuchadnezzar) has worked, I give him the land of Egypt, because they (Nebuchadnezzar and his army) have done it for me;” in other words, have done the work for me. When, therefore, Jehovah promises to give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as a reward or wages for the hard work which has been done for Him at Tyre, the words presuppose that Nebuchadnezzar had really accomplished against Tyre the task entrusted to him by God. But God had committed to him not merely the siege, but also the conquest and destruction of Tyre. Nebuchadnezzar must therefore have executed the commission, though without receiving the expected reward for the labour which he had bestowed; and on that account God would compensate him for his trouble with the treasures of Egypt. This precludes not only the supposition that the siege was terminated, or the city surrendered, on the condition that it should not be plundered, but also the idea that for wise reasons Nebuchadnezzar treated the city leniently after he had taken possession. In either case Nebuchadnezzar would not have executed the will of Jehovah upon Tyre in such a manner as to be able to put in any claim for compensation for the hard work performed. The only thing that could warrant such a claim would be the circumstance, that after conquering Tyre he found no treasures to plunder. And this is the explanation which Jerome has given of the passage *ad litteram*. “Nebuchadnezzar,” he says, “being unable, when besieging Tyre, to bring up his battering-rams, besieging towers, and *vineae* close to the walls, on account of the city being surrounded by the sea, employed a very large number of men from his army in collecting rocks and piling up mounds of earth, so as to fill up the intervening sea, and make a continuous road to the island at the narrowest part of the strait. And when the Tyrians saw that the task was actually accomplished, and the foundations of the walls were being disturbed by the shocks from the battering-rams, they placed in ships whatever articles of value the nobility possessed in gold, silver, clothing, and household furniture, and transported them to the islands; so that when the city was taken, Nebuchadnezzar found nothing to compensate him for all his labour. And because he had done the will of God in all this, some years after the conquest of Tyre, Egypt was given to him by God.” <sup>B8</sup>

It is true that we have no historical testimony from any other quarter to support this interpretation. But we could not expect it in any of the writings which have come down to us, inasmuch as the Phoenician accounts extracted by Josephus simply contain the fact of the thirteen years’ siege, and nothing at all concerning its progress and result. At the same time, there is the greatest probability that this was the case. If Nebuchadnezzar really besieged the city, which was

situated upon an island in the sea, he could not have contented himself with cutting off the supply of drinking water from the city simply on the land side, as Shalmanezzer, the king of Assyria, is said to have done (vid., Josephus, *Antt.* ix. 14. 2), but must have taken steps to fill up the strait between the city and the mainland with a mound, that he might construct a road for besieging and assaulting the walls, as Alexander of Macedonia afterwards did. And the words of Eze. 29:18, according to which every head was bald, and the skin rubbed off every shoulder with the severity of the toil, point indisputably to the undertaking of some such works as these. And if the Chaldeans really carried out their operations upon the city in this way, as the siege-works advanced, the Tyrians would not neglect any precaution to defend themselves as far as possible, in the event of the capture of the city. They would certainly send the possessions and treasures of the city by ship into the colonies, and thereby place them in security; just as, according to Curtius, iv. 3, they sent off their families to Carthage, when the city was besieged by Alexander.

This view of the termination of the Chaldean siege of Tyre receives a confirmation of no little weight from the fragment of Menander already given, relating to the succession of rulers in Tyre after the thirteen years' siege by Nebuchadnezzar. It is there stated that after Ithobal, Baal reigned for ten years, that judges (*suffetes*) were then appointed, nearly all of whom held office for a few months only; that among the last judges there was also a king *Balatorus*, who reigned for a year; that after this, however, the Tyrians sent to Babylon, and brought thence *Merbal*, and on his death *Hiram*, as kings, whose genuine Tyrian names undoubtedly show that they were descendants of the old native royal family. This circumstance proves not only that Tyre became a Chaldean dependency in consequence of the thirteen years' siege by Nebuchadnezzar, but also that the Chaldeans had led away the royal family to Babylonia, which would hardly have been the case if Tyre had submitted to the Chaldeans by a treaty of peace.

If, however, after what has been said, no well-founded doubt can remain as to the conquest of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, our prophecy was not so completely fulfilled thereby, that Tyre became a bare rock on which fishermen spread their nets, as is threatened in Eze. 26: 4, 5, 14. Even if Nebuchadnezzar destroyed its walls, and laid the city itself in ruins to a considerable extent, he did not totally destroy it, so that it was not restored. On the contrary, two hundred and fifty years afterwards, we find Tyre once more a splendid and powerful royal city, so strongly fortified, that Alexander the Great was not able to take it till after a siege of seven months, carried on with extraordinary exertions on the part of both the fleet and army, the latter attacking from the mainland by means of a mound of earth, which had been thrown up with considerable difficulty (Diod. Sic. xvii. 40ff.; Arrian, *Alex.* ii. 17ff.; Curtius, iv. 2-4). Even after this

catastrophe it rose once more into a distinguished commercial city under the rule of the Seleucidae and afterwards of the Romans, who made it the capital of Phoenicia. It is mentioned as such a city in the New Testament (Mat. 15:21; Act. 21: 3, 7); and Strabo (xvi. 2. 23) describes it as a busy city with two harbours and very lofty houses. But Tyre never recovered its ancient grandeur. In the first centuries of the Christian era, it is frequently mentioned as an archbishop's see. From A.D. 636 to A.D. 1125 it was under the rule of the Saracens, and was so strongly fortified, that it was not till after a siege of several months' duration that they succeeded in taking it. Benjamin of Tudela, who visited Tyre in the year 1060, describes it as a city of distinguished beauty, with a strongly fortified harbour, and surrounded by walls, and with the best glass and earthenware in the East. "Saladin, the conqueror of Palestine, broke his head against Tyre in the year 1189. But after Acre had been taken by storm in the year 1291 by the Sultan El-Ashraf, on the day following this conquest the city passed without resistance into the hands of the same Egyptian king; the inhabitants having forsaken Tyre by night, and fled by sea, that they might not fall into the power of such bloodthirsty soldiers" (Van de Velde). When it came into the hands of the Saracens once more, its fortifications were demolished; and from that time forward Tyre has never risen from its ruins again. Moreover, it had long ceased to be an insular city. The mound which Alexander piled up, grew into a broader and firmer tongue of land in consequence of the sand washed up by the sea, so that the island was joined to the mainland, and turned into a peninsula. The present *Sûr* is situated upon it, a market town of three or four thousand inhabitants, which does not deserve the name of a city or town. The houses are for the most part nothing but huts; and the streets are narrow, crooked, and dirty lanes. The ruins of the old Phoenician capital cover the surrounding country to the distance of more than half an hour's journey from the present town gate. The harbour is so thoroughly choked up with sand, and filled with the ruins of innumerable pillars and building stones, that only small boats can enter. The sea has swallowed up a considerable part of the greatness of Tyre; and quite as large a portion of its splendid temples and fortifications lie buried in the earth. To a depth of many feet the soil trodden at the present day is one solid mass of building stones, shafts of pillars, and rubbish composed of marble, porphyry, and granite. Fragments of pillars of the costly *verde antiquo* (green marble) also lie strewn about in large quantities. The crust, which forms the soil that is trodden to-day, is merely the surface of this general heap of ruins. Thus has Tyre actually become "a bare rock, and a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea;" and "the dwelling-places, which are now erected upon a portion of its former site, are not at variance with the terrible decree, 'thou shalt be built no more' " (compare Robinson's *Palestine*, and Van de Velde's *Travels*). — Thus has the prophecy of Ezekiel been completely fulfilled, though not directly by Nebuchadnezzar; for the prophecy is

not a bare prediction of historical details, but is pervaded by the idea of the judgment of God. To the prophet, Nebuchadnezzar is the instrument of the punitive righteousness of God, and Tyre the representative of the ungodly commerce of the world. Hence, as Hävernick has already observed, Nebuchadnezzar's action is more than an isolated deed in the prophet's esteem. "In his conquest of the city he sees the whole of the ruin concentrated, which history places before us as a closely connected chain. The breaking of the power of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar stands out before his view as inseparably connected with its utter destruction. This was required by the internal theocratic signification of the fact in its relation to the destruction of Jerusalem." Jerusalem will rise again to new glory out of its destruction through the covenant faithfulness of God (Eze. 28:25, 26). But Tyre, the city of the world's commerce, which is rejoicing over the fall of Jerusalem, will pass away for ever (Eze. 26:14; 27:36).

### **CH. 28:20-26. PROPHECY AGAINST SIDON AND PROMISE FOR ISRAEL**

*Eze. 28:20-26.* The threatening word against Sidon is very brief, and couched in general terms, because as a matter of fact the prophecy against Tyre involved the announcement of the fall of Sidon, which was dependent upon it; and, as we have already observed, Sidon received a special word of God simply for the purpose of making up the number of the heathen nations mentioned to the significant number seven. The word of God against Sidon brings to a close the cycle of predictions of judgment directed against those heathen nations which had given expression to malicious pleasure at the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah. There is therefore appended a promise for Israel (vv. 25, 26), which is really closely connected with the threatening words directed against the heathen nations, and for which the way is prepared by v. 24. The correspondence of **בָּהָרְשָׁתִּי** (I shall be sanctified in her) in v. 22 to **בָּם נִקְדַּשְׁתִּי** (I shall be sanctified in them) in v. 25, serves to place the future fate of Israel in antithesis not merely to the future fate of Sidon, but, as vv. 24 and 26 clearly show, to that of all the heathen nations against which the previous threats have been directed.

#### *Eze. 28:20.*

*And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 21. Son of man, direct thy face towards Sidon, and prophesy against it, V. 22. And say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will be against thee, O Sidon, and will glorify myself in the midst of thee; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I execute judgments upon it, and sanctify myself upon it. V. 23. I will send pestilence into it, and blood into its streets; slain will fall in the midst of it by the sword, which cometh upon it from*

*every side; and they shall learn that I am Jehovah. V. 24. And there shall be no more to the house of Israel a malignant thorn and smarting sting from all round about them, who despise them; but they shall learn that I am the Lord Jehovah.*

Jehovah will glorify Himself as the Lord upon Sidon, as He did before upon Pharaoh (compare Exo. 14: 4, 16, 17, to which the word נִכְבְּדָתִי in v. 22, an unusual expression for Ezekiel, evidently points). The glorification is effected by judgments, through which He proves Himself to be holy upon the enemies of His people. He executes the judgments through pestilence and blood (vid., Eze. 5:17; 38:22), i.e., through disease and bloodshed occasioned by war, so that men fall, slain by the sword (cf. Eze. 6: 7). Instead of נָפַל we have the intensive form נִפְלַל, which is regarded by Ewald and Hitzig as a copyist's error, because it is only met with here. Through these judgments the Lord will liberate His people Israel from all round about, who increase its suffering by their contempt. These thoughts sum up in v. 24 the design of God's judgments upon all the neighbouring nations which are threatened in Eze. 25-28, and thus prepare the way for the concluding promise in vv. 25 and 26. The figure of the sting and thorn points back to Num. 33:55, where it is said that the Canaanites whom Israel failed to exterminate would become thorns in its eyes and stings in its sides. As Israel did not keep itself free from the Canaanitish nature of the heathen nations, God caused it to feel these stings of heathenism. Having been deeply hurt by them, it was now lying utterly prostrate with its wounds. The sins of Canaan, to which Israel had given itself up, had occasioned the destruction of Jerusalem (Eze. 16). But Israel is not to succumb to its wounds. On the contrary, by destroying the heathen powers, the Lord will heal His people of the wounds which its heathen neighbours have inflicted upon it. סִלּוֹן, synonymous with סָלוֹן in Eze. 2: 6, a word only found in Ezekiel. מִמְּאִיר, on the contrary, is taken from Lev. 13:51 and 14:44, where it is applied to malignant leprosy (see the comm. on the former passage). — For אֲנִתָּם הַשְּׂאִתִּים, see Eze. 16:57 and 25: 6.

### *Eze. 28:25-26.*

*Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, When I shall gather the house of Israel out of the peoples among whom they have been scattered, I shall sanctify myself upon them before the eyes of the heathen nations, and they will dwell in their land which I have given to my servant Jacob. V. 26. They will dwell there securely, and build houses and plant vineyards, and will dwell securely when I execute judgments upon all who despise them of those round about them; and they shall learn that I Jehovah am their God.*

Whilst the heathen nations succumb to the judgments of God, Israel passes on to a time of blessed peace. The Lord will gather His people from their dispersion among the heathen, bring them into the land which He gave to the



patriarch Jacob, His servant, and give them in that land rest, security, and true prosperity. (For the fact itself, compare Eze. 11:17; 20:41; 36:22ff.)

## **Ch. 29-32 — Against Egypt**

*Eze. 29-32.* The announcement of the judgment upon Egypt is proclaimed in seven “words of God.” The first five are threats. The first (Eze. 29: 1-16) contains a threat of the judgment upon Pharaoh and his people and land, expressed in grand and general traits. The second (Eze. 29:17-21) gives a special prediction of the conquest and plundering of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar. The third (Eze. 30: 1-19) depicts the day of judgment which will break upon Egypt and its allies. The fourth (Eze. 30:20-26) foretells the annihilation of the might of Pharaoh by the king of Babylon; and the fifth (Eze. 31) holds up as a warning to the king and people of Egypt the glory and the overthrow of Assyria. The last two words of God in Eze. 32 contain lamentations over the destruction of Pharaoh and his might, viz., Eze. 32: 1-16, a lamentation over the king of Egypt; and Eze. 32:17-32, a second lamentation over the destruction of his imperial power. — Ezekiel’s prophecy concerning Egypt assumes this elaborate form, because he regards the power of Pharaoh and Egypt as the embodiment of that phase of the imperial power which imagines in its ungodly self-deification that it is able to uphold the kingdom of God, and thus seduces the people of God to rely with false confidence upon the imperial power of this world.

### **CH. 29: 1-16. THE JUDGMENT UPON PHARAOH AND HIS PEOPLE AND LAND**

Because Pharaoh looks upon himself as the creator of his kingdom and of his might, he is to be destroyed with his men of war (vv. 2-5a). In order that Israel may no longer put its trust in the fragile power of Egypt, the sword shall cut off from Egypt both man and beast, the land shall be turned into a barren wilderness, and the people shall be scattered over the lands (vv. 5b -12). But after the expiration of the time appointed for its punishment, both people and land shall be restored, though only to remain an insignificant kingdom (vv. 13-16). — According to v. 1, this prophecy belongs to the tenth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin; and as we may see by comparing it with the other oracles against Egypt of which the dates are given, it was the first word of God uttered by Ezekiel concerning this imperial kingdom. The contents also harmonize with this, inasmuch as the threat which it contains merely announces in general terms the overthrow of the might of Egypt and its king, without naming the instrument employed to execute the judgment, and at the same time the future condition of Egypt is also disclosed.

*Eze. 29: 1-12.* Destruction of the might of Pharaoh, and devastation of Egypt. —

V. 1. *In the tenth year, in the tenth (month), on the twelfth of the month, the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 2. *Son of man, direct thy face against Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt.* V. 3. *Speak and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, thou great dragon which lieth in its rivers, which saith, “Mine is the river, and I have made it for myself.”* V. 4. *I will put a ring into thy jaws, and cause the fishes of thy rivers to hang upon thy scales, and draw thee out of thy rivers, and all the fishes of thy rivers which hang upon thy scales;* V. 5. *And will cast thee into the desert, thee and all the fishes of thy rivers; upon the surface of the field wilt thou fall, thou wilt not be lifted up nor gathered together; I give thee for food to the beasts of the earth and the birds of the heaven.* V. 6. *And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall learn that I am Jehovah. Because it is a reed-staff to the house of Israel, —* V. 7. *When they grasp thee by thy branches, thou crackest and tearest open all their shoulder; and when they lean upon thee, thou breakest and causest all their loins to shake, —* V. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I bring upon thee the sword, and will cut off from thee man and beast;* V. 9. *And the land of Egypt will become a waste and desolation, and they shall learn that I am Jehovah. Because he saith: “The river is mine, and I have made it,”* V. 10. *Therefore, behold, I will deal with thee and thy rivers, and will make the land of Egypt into barren waste desolations from Migdol to Syene, even to the border of Cush.* V. 11. *The foot of man will not pass through it, and the foot of beast will not pass through it, and it will not be inhabited for forty years.* V. 12. *I make the land of Egypt a waste in the midst of devastated lands, and its cities shall be waste among desolate cities forty years; and I scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them in the lands.*

The date given, viz., “in the tenth year,” is defended even by Hitzig as more correct than the reading of the LXX, ἐν τῷ ἔτει τῷ δωδεκάτῳ; and he supposes the Alexandrian reading to have originated in the fact that the last date mentioned in Eze. 26: 1 had already brought down the account to the eleventh year. — Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, against whom the threat is first directed, is called “the great dragon” in v. 3. תַּנִּינִיּוֹן (here and Eze. 32: 2) is equivalent to תַּנִּינִיּוֹן, literally, the lengthened animal, the snake; here, the water-snake, the crocodile, the standing symbol of Egypt in the prophets (cf. Isa. 51: 9; 27: 1; Psa. 74:13), which is here transferred to Pharaoh, as the ruler of Egypt and representative of its power. By אַרְיֵי נִיּוֹן we are to understand the arms and canals of the Nile (vid., Isa. 7:18). The predicate, “lying in the midst of his rivers,” points at once to the proud security in his own power to which Pharaoh gave himself up. As the crocodile lies quietly in the waters of the Nile, as though he were lord of the river; so did Pharaoh regard himself as the omnipotent lord of Egypt. His words affirm this: “the river is mine, I have made it for myself.” The suffix attached to עֲשִׂיתִינִי stands in the place of לִי, as v. 9, where the suffix is wanting, clearly shows. There is an incorrectness in this use

of the suffix, which evidently passed into the language of literature from the popular phraseology (cf. Ewald, § 315*b*). The rendering of the Vulgate, *ego feci memetipsum*, is false. **אָרְרָא** is the expression used by him as a king who regards the land and its rivers as his own property; in connection with which we must bear in mind that Egypt is indebted to the Nile not only for its greatness, but for its actual existence. In this respect Pharaoh says emphatically **לִי**, it is mine, it belongs to me, because he regards himself as the creator. The words, “I have made it for myself,” simply explain the reason for the expression **לִי**, and affirm more than “I have put myself in possession of this through my own power, or have acquired its blessings for myself” (Hävernick); or, “I have put it into its present condition by constructing canals, dams, sluices, and buildings by the river-side” (Hitzig). Pharaoh calls himself the creator of the Nile, because he regards himself as the creator of the greatness of Egypt. This pride, in which he forgets God and attributes divine power to himself, is the cause of his sin, for which he will be overthrown by God. God will draw the crocodile Pharaoh out of his Nile with hooks, and cast him upon the dry land, where he and the fishes that have been drawn out along with him upon his scales will not be gathered up, but devoured by the wild beasts and birds of prey. The figure is derived from the manner in which even in ancient times the crocodile was caught with large hooks of a peculiar construction (compare Herod. ii. 70, and the testimonies of travellers in Oedmann’s *Vermischten Sammlungen*, III pp. 6ff., and Jomard in the *Déscription de l’Egypte*, I p. 27). The form **חַחִיִּים** with a double *Yod* is a copyist’s error, probably occasioned by the double *Yod* occurring after **ח** in **בְּלִחְיָיִךְ**, which follows. A dual form for **חַחִים** is unsuitable, and is not used anywhere else even by Ezekiel (cf. Eze. 19: 4, 9, and more especially Eze. 38: 4).

The fishes which hang upon the scales of the monster, and are drawn along with it out of the Nile, are the inhabitants of Egypt, for the Nile represents the land. The casting of the beast into the wilderness, where it putrefies and is devoured by the beasts and birds of prey, must not be interpreted in the insipid manner proposed by Hitzig, namely, that Pharaoh would advance with his army into the desert of Arabia and be defeated there. The wilderness is the dry and barren land, in which animals that inhabit the water must perish; and the thought is simply that the monster will be cast upon the desert land, where it will finally become the food of the beasts of prey.

In v. 6 the construction is a subject of dispute, inasmuch as many of the commentators follow the Hebrew division of the verse, taking the second hemistich **אֲנִי הֵיחָלֵם וְגוֹ** as dependent upon the first half of the verse, for which it assigns the reason, and then interpreting v. 7 as a further development of v. 6*b*, and commencing a new period with v. 8 (Hitzig, Kliefoth, and others).

But it is decidedly wrong to connect together the two halves of the sixth verse, if only for the simple reason that the formula **וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה**, which occurs so frequently elsewhere in Ezekiel, invariably closes a train of thought, and is never followed by the addition of a further reason. Moreover, a sentence commencing with **וְ** is just as invariably followed by an apodosis introduced by **לָכֵן**, of which we have an example just below in vv. 9b and 10a. For both these reasons it is absolutely necessary that we should regard **וְאֵן הַיְהוּתָם וְגו'** as the beginning of a protasis, the apodosis to which commences with **לָכֵן** in v. 8. The correctness of this construction is established beyond all doubt by the fact that from v. 6b onwards it is no longer Pharaoh who is spoken of, as in vv. 3-5, but Egypt; so that **וְ** introduces a new train of thought. But v. 7 is clearly shown, both by the contents and the form, to be an explanatory intermediate clause inserted as a parenthesis. And inasmuch as the protasis is removed in consequence to some distance from its apodosis, Ezekiel has introduced the formula "thus saith the Lord Jehovah" at the commencement of the apodosis, for the purpose of giving additional emphasis to the announcement of the punishment. V. 7 cannot in any case be regarded as the protasis, the apodosis to which commences with the **לָכֵן** in v. 8, and Hävernäck maintains. The suffix attached to **הַיְהוּתָם**, to which Hitzig takes exception, because he has misunderstood the construction, and which he would conjecture away, refers to **מִצְרַיִם** as a land or kingdom. Because the kingdom of Egypt was a reed-staff to the house of Israel (a figure drawn from the physical character of the banks of the Nile, with its thick growth of tall, thick rushes, and recalling to mind Isa. 36: 6), the Lord would bring the sword upon it and cut off from it both man and beast. But before this apodosis the figure of the reed-staff is more clearly defined: "when they (the Israelites) take thee by thy branches, thou breakest," etc. This explanation is not to be taken as referring to any particular facts either of the past or future, but indicates the deceptive nature of Egypt as the standing characteristic of that kingdom. At the same time, to give greater vivacity to the description, the words concerning Egypt are changed into a direct address to the Egyptians, i.e., not to Pharaoh, but to the Egyptian people regarded as a single individual. The expression **בַּכַּפ** causes some difficulty, since the ordinary meaning of **כַּף** (hand) is apparently unsuitable, inasmuch as the verb **תִּרְוֹץ**, from **רָצַץ**, to break or crack (not to break in pieces, i.e., to break quite through), clearly shows that the figure of the reed is still continued. The *Keri* **בַּכַּף** is a bad emendation, based upon the rendering "to grasp with the hand," which is grammatically inadmissible. **תִּפְשׂ** with **ב** does not mean to grasp with something, but to seize upon something, to take hold of a person (Isa. 3: 6; Deu. 9:17), so that **בַּכַּף** can only be an explanatory apposition to **בַּד**. The

meaning grip, or grasp of the hand, is also unsuitable and cannot be sustained, as the plural **בַּפּוֹת** alone is used in this sense in Son. 5: 5. The only meaning appropriate to the figure is that of branches, which is sustained, so far as the language is concerned, by the use of the plural **בַּפּוֹת** for palm-branches in Lev. 23:40, and of the singular **בִּפְהַ** for the collection of branches in Job. 15:32, and Isa. 9:13; 19:15; and this is apparently in perfect harmony with natural facts, since the tall reed of the Nile, more especially the papyrus, is furnished with hollow, sword-shaped leaves at the lower part of the stalk. When it cracks, the reed-staff pierces the shoulder of the man who has grasped it, and tears it; and if a man lean upon it, it breaks in pieces and causes all the loins to tremble. **הָעֵמִיד** cannot mean to cause to stand, or to set upright, still less render stiff and rigid. The latter meaning cannot be established from the usage of the language, and would be unsuitable here. For if a stick on which a man leans should break and penetrate his loins, it would inflict such injury upon them as to cause him to fall, and not to remain stiff and rigid. **הָעֵמַד** cannot have any other meaning than that of **הָמַעַד**, to cause to tremble or relax, as in Psa. 69:24, to shake the firmness of the loins, so that the power to stand is impaired.

In the apodosis the thought of the land gives place to that of the people; hence the use of the feminine suffixes **עֲלֵיָהּ** and **מִמֶּנָּהּ** in the place of the masculine suffixes **בָּהּ** and **עֲלֵיהָ** in v. 7. Man and beast shall be cut off, and the land made into a desert waste by the sword, i.e., by war. This is carried out still further in vv. 9b -12; and once again in the protasis 9b (cf. v. 3b) the inordinate pride of the king is placed in the foreground as the reason for the devastation of his land and kingdom. The Lord will make of Egypt the most desolate wilderness. **חֶרְבַּת שְׂמֹמָה** is intensified into a superlative by the double genitive **חֶרְבַּת שְׂמֹמָה**, desolation of the wilderness. Throughout its whole extent from *Migdol*, i.e., Magdolo, according to the *Itiner. Anton.* p. 171 (ed. Wessel), twelve Roman miles from Pelusium; in the Coptic *Meshtol*, Egyptian *Ma'ktr* (Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschr.* I pp. 261f.), the most northerly place in Egypt. **סִוְנֵה**, to Syene (for the construction see Eze. 30: 6 and 21: 3), **Σουήνη**, *Sun* in the inscriptions, according to Brugsch (*Geogr. Inschr.* I. p. 155), probably the profane designation of the place (Coptic *Souan*), the most southerly border town of Egypt in the direction of Cush, i.e., Ethiopia, on the eastern bank of the Nile, some ruins of which are still to be seen in the modern *Assvan* (*Assuan*, Arab. *aswân*), which is situated to the north-east of them (vid., Brugsch, *Reiseber. aus. Aegypten*, p. 247, and Leyrer in Herzog's *Encyclopaedia*). The additional clause, "and to the border of Cush," does not give a fresh terminal point, still further advanced, but simply defines with still greater clearness the boundary

toward the south, viz., to Syene, where Egypt terminates and Ethiopia beings. In v. 11a the desolation is more fully depicted. לֹא יִשָּׁב, it will not dwell, poetical for “be inhabited,” as in Joe. 4 (3):20, Isa. 13:20, etc. This devastation shall last for forty years, and so long shall the people of Egypt be scattered among the nations. But after the expiration of that time they shall be gathered together again (v. 13). The number forty is neither a round number (Hitzig) nor a very long time (Ewald), but is a symbolical term denoting a period appointed by God for punishment and penitence (see the comm. on Eze. 4: 6), which is not to be understood in a chronological sense, or capable of being calculated.

*Eze. 29:13-16.* Restoration of Egypt. —

V. 13. *For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians out of the nations, whither they were scattered. V. 14. And I will turn the captivity of Egypt, and will bring them back into the land of Pathros, into the land of their origin, and they shall be a lowly kingdom there. V. 15. Lowlier than the kingdoms shall it be, and exalt itself no more over the nations; and I will make them small, so that they shall rule no more over the nations. V. 16. And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing iniquity to remembrance when they incline towards it, and they shall learn that I am the Lord Jehovah.*

The turning of the period of Egypt’s punishment is connected by כִּי, which refers to the time indicated, viz., “forty years.” For forty years shall Egypt be utterly laid waste; for after the expiration of that period the Lord will gather the Egyptians again from their dispersion among the nations, turn their captivity, i.e., put an end to their suffering (see the comm. on Eze. 16:53), and lead them back into the land of their birth, i.e., of their origin (for מְבוֹרָה, see Eze. 16: 3), namely, to Pathros. פְּתָרוֹס, the Egyptian *Petorēs* (Παθούρης, LXX Jer. 44: 1), or south land, i.e., Upper Egypt, the Thebais of the Greeks and Romans. The designation of Upper Egypt as the mother country of the Egyptians, or the land of their nativity, is confirmed not only by the accounts given by Herodotus (ii. 4 and 15) and Diodorus Sic. (i. 50), but also by the Egyptian mythology, according to which the first king who reigned after the gods, viz., *Menes* or *Mena*, sprang from the city of *Thinis* (*Thynis*), Egypt. *Tenj*, in the neighbourhood of Abydos in Upper Egypt, and founded the city of *Memphis* in Lower Egypt, which became so celebrated in later times (vid., Brugsch, *Histoire d’Egypte*, I p. 16). But Egypt shall not attain to its former power any more. It will be and continue a lowly kingdom, that it may not again become a ground of confidence to Israel, a power upon which Israel can rely, so as to fall into guilt and punishment. The subject to וְלֹא יִדְהָה is Egypt as a nation, notwithstanding the fact that it has previously been construed in the feminine as a land or kingdom, and in אֲחֵרֵיהֶם the Egyptians are spoken of in the plural number. For it is out of the question to take מְזַכֵּיר עוֹן as the subject to יִדְהָה

לֹא in the sense of “no more shall one who calls guilt to remembrance inspire the house of Israel with confidence,” as Kliefoth proposes, not only because of the arrangement of the words, but because the more precise definition of עֹן מְזִבִּיר as בְּפִנְיֹתֵם אֵחַ clearly shows that Egypt is the subject of the sentence; whereas, in order to connect this definition in any way, Kliefoth is compelled to resort to the interpolation of the words, “which it committed.” עֹן מְזִבִּיר is in apposition to מִבְּטָח; making Egypt the ground of confidence, brings into remembrance before God the guilt of Israel, which consists in the fact that the Israelites turn to the Egyptians and seek salvation from them, so that He is obliged to punish them (vid., Eze. 21:28, 29). — The truth of the prediction in vv. 13-16 has been confirmed by history, inasmuch as Egypt never recovered its former power after the Chaldean period. — Moreover, if we compare the Messianic promise for Egypt in Isa. 19:18-25 with the prediction in vv. 13-15, we are struck at once with the peculiarity of Ezekiel, already referred to in the introductory remarks on Eze. 25-32, namely, that he leaves entirely out of sight the Messianic future of the heathen nations.

## CH. 29:17-21. CONQUEST AND PLUNDERING OF EGYPT BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR

### *Eze. 29:17-21.*

V. 17. *In the seven and twentieth year, in the first (moon), on the first of the moon, the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 18. Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, has made his army perform hard work at Tyre: every head is bald, and every shoulder grazed, and no wages have been given to him and to his army from Tyre for the work which he performed against it. V. 19. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I give Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the land of Egypt, that he may carry away its possessions, and plunder its plunder, and make booty of its booty, and this may be the wages of his army. V. 20. As the pay for which he worked, I give him the land of Egypt, because they did it for me, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 21. In that day will I cause a horn to sprout to the house of Israel, and I will open the mouth for thee in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.*

This brief prophecy concerning Egypt was uttered about seventeen years after the preceding word of God, and was the latest of all the predictions of Ezekiel that are supplied with dates. But notwithstanding its brevity, it is not to be taken in connection with the utterance which follows in Eze. 30: 1-19 so as to form one prophecy, as Hitzig supposes. This is at variance not only with the formula in Eze. 30: 1, which is the usual introduction to a new word of God, but also with v. 21 of the present chapter, which is obviously intended to bring the previous word of God to a close. This termination, which is analogous to the closing words of the prophecies against Tyre and Sidon in Eze. 28:25, 26,

also shows that the present word of God contains the last of Ezekiel's prophecies against the Egyptian world-power, and that the only reason why the prophet did not place it at the end when collecting his prophecies — that is to say, after Eze. 32 — was, that the promise in v. 30, that the Lord would cause a horn to bud to the house of Israel, contained the correlate to the declaration that Egypt was henceforth to be but a lowly kingdom. Moreover, this threat of judgment, which is as brief as it is definite, was well fitted to prepare the way and to serve as an introduction for the more elaborate threats which follow. The contents of the prophecy, namely, the assurance that God would give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as spoil in return for the hard labour which he and his army had performed at Tyre, point to the time immediately following the termination of the thirteen years' siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. If we compare with this the date given in v. 17, the siege was brought to a close in the twenty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, i.e., B.C. 572, and must therefore have commenced in the year B.C. 586, or about two years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and with this the extract given by Josephus (*c. Ap. i. 21*) from the Tyrian annals agrees. <sup>89</sup> **הָעֵבִיד עֲבָדָה**, to cause a work to be executed, or service to be rendered. This labour was so severe, that every head was bald and every shoulder grazed. These words have been correctly interpreted by the commentators, even by Ewald, as referring to the heavy burdens that had to be carried in order to fill up the strait which separated Insular Tyre from the mainland. They confirm what we have said above, in the remarks on Eze. 26:10 and elsewhere, concerning the capture of Tyre.

But neither he nor his army had received any recompense for their severe toil. This does not imply that Nebuchadnezzar had been unable to accomplish the work which he had undertaken, i.e., to execute his design and conquer the city, but simply that he had not received the recompense which he expected after this severe labour; in other words, had not found the booty he hoped for when the city was taken (see the introductory remarks on Eze. 26-28). To compensate him for this, the Lord will give him the land of Egypt with its possessions as booty, **וְנָשָׂא הַמְּנָה**, that he may carry off the abundance of its possessions, its wealth; not that he may lead away the multitude of its people (De Wette, Kliefoth, etc.), for “**נָשָׂא** is not the appropriate expression for this” (Hitzig). **הַמּוֹן**, abundance of possessions, as in Isa. 60: 5, Psa. 37:16, etc. **פְּעֵלָה**, the doing of a thing; then that which is gained by working, the recompense for labour, as in Lev. 19:13 and other passages. **אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ לִי** is taken by Hitzig as referring to the Egyptians, and rendered, “in consequence of that which they have done to me.” But although **אֲשֶׁר** may be taken in this sense (vid., Isa. 65:18), the arguments employed by Hitzig in opposition to the ordinary rendering — “for they (Nebuchadnezzar and his army) have done it for me,”



i.e., have performed their hard work at Tyre for me and by my commission — have no force whatever. This use of עֲשָׂה לִי is thoroughly established by Gen. 30:30; and the objection which he raises, namely, that “the assertion that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre in the service of Jehovah could only have been properly made by Ezekiel in the event of the city having been really conquered,” is out of place, for this simple reason, that the assumption that the city was not taken is a mere conjecture; and even if the conjecture could be sustained, the siege itself might still be a work undertaken in the service of Jehovah. And the principal argument, namely, “that we should necessarily expect עֲשָׂה (instead of עָשׂוּ), inasmuch as with עָשׂוּ every Hebrew reader would inevitably take אֲשֶׁר as referring to מִצְרַיִם,” is altogether wide of the mark; for מִצְרַיִם does not signify the Egyptians in this passage, but the land of Egypt alone is spoken of both in the verse before us and throughout the oracle, and for this עָשׂוּ is quite unsuitable, whereas the context suggests in the most natural way the allusion to Nebuchadnezzar and his army. But what is absolutely decisive is the circumstance that the thought itself, “in consequence of what the Egyptians have done to me,” i.e., what evil they have done, is foreign to, if not at variance with, all the prophecies of Ezekiel concerning Egypt. For the guilt of Egypt and its Pharaoh mentioned by Ezekiel is not any crime against Jehovah, but simply Pharaoh’s deification of himself, and the treacherous nature of the help which Egypt afforded to Israel. לִיהוָה = עֲשָׂה לִי is not the appropriate expression for this, in support of which assertion we might point to עָשׂוּ לִי in Eze. 23:38. — V. 21. On that day, namely, when the judgment upon Egypt is executed by Nebuchadnezzar, the Lord will cause a horn to sprout or grow to the house (people) of Israel. The horn is a symbol of might and strength, by which the attacks of foreigners are warded off. By the overthrow of Judah the horn of Israel was cut off (Lam. 2: 3; compare also Jer. 48:25). In אֲצַמִּיחַ קַרְנִי the promise coincides, so far as the words are concerned, with Psa. 132:17; but it also points back to the prophetic words of the godly Hannah in 1Sa. 2: 1, “My horn is exalted in Jehovah, my mouth hath opened itself wide over my enemies,” and is Messianic in the broader sense of the word. The horn which the Lord will cause to sprout to the people of Israel is neither Zerubbabel nor the Messiah, but the Messianic salvation. The reason for connecting this promise of salvation for Israel with the overthrow of the power of Egypt, as Hävernick has observed, is that “Egypt presented itself to the prophet as the power in which the idea of heathenism was embodied and circumscribed.” In the might of Egypt the world-power is shattered, and the overthrow of the world-power is the dawn of the unfolding of the might of the kingdom of God. Then also will the Lord give to His prophet an opening of the mouth in the midst of Israel. These words are unquestionably connected with the promise of

God in Eze. 24:26, 27, that after the fall of Jerusalem the mouth of Ezekiel should be opened, and also with the fulfilment of that promise in Eze. 33:22; but they have a much more comprehensive meaning, namely, that with the dawn of salvation in Israel, i.e., in the church of the Lord, the word of prophecy would sound forth in the richest measure, inasmuch as, according to Joel (Joe. 2), a universal outpouring of the Spirit of God would then take place. In this light Theodoret is correct in his remark, that “through Ezekiel He signified the whole band of prophets.” But Kliefoth has quite mistaken the meaning of the words when he discovers in them the thought that “God would then give the prophet a new word of God concerning both Egypt and Israel, and that this is contained in the oracle in Eze. 30: 1-19.” Such a view as this is proved at once to be false, apart from other grounds, by the expression **בְּתוֹכְכֶם** (in the midst of them), which cannot be taken as applying to Egypt and Israel, but can only refer to **בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל**, the house of Israel.

### CH. 30: 1-19. THE DAY OF JUDGMENT UPON EGYPT

*Eze. 30: 1-19.* Commencing with a call to lamentation, the prophet announces that the Lord’s day of judgment upon the nations is near at hand, and will burst upon Egypt, and the nations in alliance with it (vv. 2-5). He then depicts in three strophes, with the introductory words **כֹּה אָמַר יְיָ**, the execution for this judgment, namely: (a) the destruction of the might of Egypt and the devastation of the land (vv. 6-9); (b) the enemy by whom the judgment will be accomplished (vv. 10-12); and (c) the extermination of the idols of Egypt, the conquest and demolition of its fortresses, the slaughter of its male population, and the captivity of the daughters of the land (vv. 13-19).

The heading does not contain any chronological information; and the contents furnish no definite *criteria* for determining with precision the date of the prophecy. Jerome assigns this oracle to the same period as the prophecy in Eze. 29: 1-16, whilst others connect it more closely with Eze. 29:17-21, and regard it as the latest of all Ezekiel’s prophecies. The latter is the conclusion adopted by Rosenmüller, Hävernick, Hitzig, Kliefoth, and some others. The principal argument adduced for linking it on to Eze. 29:17ff. is, that in v. 3 the day of judgment upon Egypt is threatened as near at hand, and this did not apply to the tenth year (Eze. 29: 1), though it was perfectly applicable to the twenty-seventh (Eze. 29:17), when the siege of Tyre was ended, and Nebuchadnezzar was on the point of attacking Egypt. But the expression, “the day of the Lord is near at hand,” is so relative a chronological phrase, that nothing definite can be gathered from it as to the date at which an oracle was composed. Nor does the fact that our prophecy stands after the prophecy in Eze. 29:17-21, which is furnished with a date, prove anything; for the other

prophecies which follow, and are furnished with dates, all belong to a much earlier period. It is very evident from this that Eze. 29:17-21 is inserted without regard to chronological sequence, and consequently Eze. 30: 1-19 may just as well belong to the period between the tenth month of the tenth year (Eze. 29: 1) and the first month of the eleventh year (Eze. 30:20), as to the twenty-seventh year (Eze. 29:17), since all the reasons assigned for the closer connection of our prophecy with the one immediately preceding (Eze. 29:17-21), which is supposed to indicate similarity of date, are invalid; whilst, on the other hand, the resemblance of vv. 6 and 17 to Eze. 29:10 and 12 is not sufficient to warrant the assumption of a contemporaneous origin.

*Eze. 30: 1-5.* Announcement of the judgment upon Egypt and its allies.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,* V. 2. *Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Howl ye! Woe to the day!* V. 3. *For the day is near, the day of Jehovah near, a day of cloud, the time of the heathen will it be.* V. 4. *And the sword will come upon Egypt, and there will be pangs in Ethiopia, when the slain fall in Egypt, and they take her possessions, and her foundations are destroyed.* V. 5. *Ethiopians and Libyans and Lydians, and all the rabble, and Chub, and the sons of the covenant land, will fall by the sword with them.*

In the announcement of the judgment in vv. 2*b* and 3, Ezekiel rests upon Joe. 1:13, 15, and 2: 2, where the designation already applied to the judgment upon the heathen world by Obadiah, viz., “the day of Jehovah” (Obad. 1:15), is followed by such a picture of the nearness and terrible nature of that day, that even Isaiah (Isa. 13: 6, 9) and Zephaniah (Zep. 1: 7, 14) appropriate the words of Joel. Ezekiel also does the same, with this exception, that he uses **יְהוָה** instead of **יְהוָה**, and adds to the force of the expression by the repetition of **יְהוָה יוֹם**. In v. 3*b*, the words from **יְהוָה יוֹם עָנָן** to **יְהוָה יוֹם** are not to be taken together as forming one sentence, “a day of cloud will the time of the nations be” (De Wette), because the idea of a “time of the nations” has not been mentioned before, so as to prepare the way for a description of its real nature here. **יְהוָה יוֹם** and **עַתְּ גּוֹיִם** contain two co-ordinate affirmations concerning the day of Jehovah. It will be a day of cloud, i.e., of great calamity (as in Joe. 2: 2), and a time of the heathen, i.e., when heathen (**גּוֹיִם** without the article) are judged, when their might is to be shattered (cf. Isa. 13:22). This day is coming upon Egypt, which is to succumb to the sword. Ethiopia will be so terrified at this, that it will writhe convulsively with anguish (**הִלְחָלָה**), as in Nah. 2:11 and Isa. 21: 3). **לְקַח הַמְּנָה** signifies the plundering and removal of the possessions of the land, like **נָשָׂא הַמְּנָה** in Eze. 29:19. The subject to **לְקַח** is indefinite, “they,” i.e., the enemy. The foundations of Egypt, which are to be destroyed, are not the foundations of its buildings, but may be understood in a figurative

sense as relating to persons, after the analogy of Isa. 19:10; but the notion that Cush, Phut, etc. (v. 9), i.e., the mercenary troops obtained from those places, which are called the props of Egypt in v. 6, are intended, as Hitzig assumes, is not only extremely improbable, but decidedly erroneous. The announcement in v. 6, that Cush, Phut, etc., are to fall by the sword along with the Egyptians (אֲשֵׁר), is sufficient of itself to show that these tribes, even if they were auxiliaries or mercenaries of Egypt, did not constitute the foundations of the Egyptian state and kingdom; but that, on the contrary, Egypt possessed a military force composed of native troops, which was simply strengthened by auxiliaries and allies. We there interpret יְסֻדֵי־הָאָרֶץ, after the analogy of Psa. 11: 3 and 82: 5, as referring to the real foundations of the state, the regulations and institutions on which the stability and prosperity of the kingdom rest.

The neighbouring, friendly, and allied peoples will also be smitten by the judgment together with the Egyptians. *Cush*, i.e., the Ethiopians, *Phut* and *Lud*, i.e., the Libyans and African Lydians (see the comm. on Eze. 27:10), are mentioned here primarily as auxiliaries of Egypt, because, according to Jer. 46: 9, they served in Necho's army. By בְּלִי־הָעָרֹב, the whole of the mixed crowd (see the comm. on 1Ki. 10:15, — πάντες οἱ ἐπίμικτοι, LXX), we are then to understand the mercenary soldiers in the Egyptian army, which were obtained from different nations (chiefly Greeks, Ionians, and Carians, οἱ ἐπικούροισι, as they are called by Herodotus, iii. 4, etc.). In addition to these, כּוּב (אֲפ. לֵאמָר.) is also mentioned. Hävernick connects this name with the people of *Kufa*, so frequently met with on the Egyptian monuments. But, according to Wilkinson (*Manners*, etc., I 1, pp. 361ff.), they inhabited a portion of Asia farther north even than Palestine; and he ranks them (p. 379) among the enemies of Egypt. Hitzig therefore imagines that *Kufa* is probably to be found in *Kohistan*, a district of Media, from which, however, the Egyptians can hardly have obtained mercenary troops. And so long as nothing certain can be gathered from the advancing Egyptological researches with regard to the name *Cub*, the conjecture that כּוּב is a mis-spelling for לוּב is not to be absolutely set aside, the more especially as this conjecture is naturally suggested by the לוּבִים of Nah. 3: 9 and 2Ch. 16: 8, and the form לוּב by the side of לוּבִים is analogous to לוּד by the side of לוּדִים in Jer. 46: 9, whilst the *Liby-Aegyptii* of the ancients, who are to be understood by the term לוּבִים (see the comm. on Gen. 10:13), would be quite in keeping here. On the other hand, the conjecture offered by Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 664), viz., נוּב, *Nubia*, has but a very weak support in the Arabic translator; and the supposition that לוּב may have been the earlier Hebrew form for Nubia (Hitzig), is destitute of any solid foundation.

Maurer suggests *Cob*, a city (*municipium*) of Mauretania, in the *Itiner. Anton.* p. 17, ed. Wessel. — The following expression, “sons of the covenant land,” is also obscure. Hitzig has correctly observed, that it cannot be synonymous with **בְּעָלֵי בְרִיתָם**, their allies. But we certainly cannot admit that the covenant land (made definite by the article) is Canaan, the Holy Land (Hitzig and Kliefoth); although Jerome writes without reserve, *de filiis terrae foederis*, i.e., *de populo Judaeorum*; and the LXX in their translation, **καὶ τῶν υἱῶν τῆς διαθήκης μου**, undoubtedly thought of the Jews, who fled to Egypt, according to Theodoret’s exposition, along with Jeremiah after the destruction of Jerusalem and the murder of the governor Gedaliah, for fear of the vengeance of the Chaldeans (Jer. 42, 43, and 44). For the application of the expression “land of the covenant” to the Holy Land is never met with either in the Old or New Testament, and cannot be inferred, as Hitzig supposes, from Psa. 74:20 and Dan. 11:28, or supported in any way from either the epithet “the land of promise” in Heb. 11: 9, or from Act. 3:25, where Peter calls the Jews “the children of the prophets and of the covenant.” We therefore agree with Schmieder in regarding **אֶרֶץ הַבְּרִית** as signifying a definite region, though one unknown to us, in the vicinity of Egypt, which was inhabited by a tribe that was independent of the Egyptians, yet bound to render help in time of war.

**Eze. 30: 6-9.** All the supports and helpers of Egypt will fall, and the whole land with its cities will be laid waste.

*V. 6. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Those who support Egypt will fall, and its proud might will sink; from Migdol to Syene will they fall by the sword therein, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 7. And they will lie waste in the midst of waste lands, and its cities be in the midst of desolate cities. V. 8. They shall learn that I am Jehovah, when I bring fire into Egypt, and all its helpers are shattered. V. 9. In that day will messengers go forth from me in ships to terrify the confident Ethiopia, and there will be writing among them as in the day of Egypt; for, behold, it cometh.*

“Those who support Egypt” are not the auxiliary tribes and allies, for they are included in the term **עֹזְרֵיהָ** in v. 8, but the idols and princes (v. 13), the fortified cities (v. 15), and the warriors (v. 17), who formed the foundation of the might of the kingdom. **גִּאּוֹן עֶזָּה**, “the pride of its might,” which is an expression applied in Eze. 24:21 to the temple at Jerusalem, is to be taken here in a general sense, and understood not merely of the temples and idols of Egypt, but as the sum total of all the things on which the Egyptians rested the might of their kingdom, and on the ground of which they regarded it as indestructible. For **מִמְּגִדֵּל וְגוֹ'**, see the comm. on Eze. 29:10. The subject to **יִפְּלוּ בָּהּ** is the **סִמְכֵי מִצְרַיִם**. V. 7 is almost a literal repetition of Eze. 29:12; and the subject to **נִשְׁמָו** is **מִצְרַיִם** regarded as a country, though the number and gender of the verb have both been regulated by the form of the noun. The fire which God will

bring into Egypt (v. 8) is the fire of war. V. 9. The tidings of this judgment of God will be carried by messengers to Ethiopia, and there awaken the most terrible dread of a similar fate. In the first hemistich, the prophet has Isa. 18: 2 floating before his mind. The messengers, who carry the tidings thither, are not the warlike forces of Chaldea, who are sent thither by God; for they would not be content with performing the service of messengers alone. We have rather to think of Egyptians, who flee by ship to Ethiopia. The messengers go, מִלִּפְנֵי, from before Jehovah, who is regarded as being present in Egypt, while executing judgment there (cf. Isa. 19: 1). צִיִּים, as in Num. 24:24 = צִיִּים (Dan. 11:30), ships, *trieres*, according to the Rabbins, in Hieron. *Symm.* on Isa. 33:21, and the Targum on Num. (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 1156). בְּטַח is attached to בּוֹשׁ, Cush secure or confident, equivalent to the confident Cush (Ewald, § 287c). וְהִיָּתָה חִלָּה, repeated from v. 4. בְּהֵם, among the Ethiopians. מִצָּרִים, as in the day of Egypt, i.e., not the present day of Egypt's punishment, for the Ethiopians have only just heard of this from the messengers; but the ancient, well-known day of judgment upon Egypt (Exo. 15:12ff.). Ewald and Hitzig follow the LXX in taking בְּיוֹם for בְּיוֹם; but this is both incorrect and unsuitable, and reduces בְּיוֹם מִצָּרִים into a tame repetition of בְּיוֹם הַהוּא. The subject to הִנֵּה בָּאָה is to be taken from the context, viz., that which is predicted in the preceding verses (vv. 6-8).

*Eze. 30:10-12.* The executors of the judgment.

V. 10. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, And I will put an end to the tumult of Egypt through Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.* V. 11. *He and his people with him, violent of the nations, will be brought to destroy the land; they will draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with slain.* V. 12. *And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of wicked men, and lay waste the land and its fulness by the hand of foreigners; I Jehovah have spoken it.*

הַמִּוֶּן cannot be understood as signifying either the multitude of people only, or the abundance of possessions alone; for הַשְּׁבִית is not really applicable to either of these meanings. They are evidently both included in the הַמִּוֶּן, which signifies the tumult of the people in the possession and enjoyment of their property (cf. Eze. 26:13). The expression is thus specifically explained in vv. 11 and 12. Nebuchadnezzar will destroy the land with his men of war, slaying the people with its possessions. עֲרִיצֵי גוֹיִם, as in Eze. 28: 7. מוֹבְאִים, as in Eze. 23:42. הַרְיִק וְגוֹי, cf. Eze. 12:14, 28:7. הָלֵל ... מְלֵאוֹ, as in Eze. 11: 6. יְאֻרִים, the arms and canals of the Nile, by which the land was watered, and on which the fertility and prosperity of Egypt depended. The drying up of the arms of the Nile must not be restricted, therefore, to the fact that God would clear away the

hindrances to the entrance of the Chaldeans into the land, but embraces also the removal of the natural resources on which the country depended. **מָכַר**, to sell a land or people into the hand of any one, i.e., to deliver it into his power (cf. Deu. 32:30; Jud. 2:14, etc.). For the fact itself, see Isa. 19: 4-6. For **וְגֹרֵי הַשְּׂמֵרָי**, see Eze. 19: 7.

*Eze. 30:13-19.* Further description of the judgment.

V. 13. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will exterminate the idols and cut off the deities from Noph, and there shall be no more a prince from the land of Egypt, and I put terror upon the land of Egypt.* V. 14. *And I lay Pathros waste, and bring fire into Zoan, and execute judgments upon No; V. 15. And I pour out my fury upon Sin, the stronghold of Egypt, and cut off the multitude of No; V. 16. And I put fire in Egypt, Sin will writhe in pain, and No will be broken open, and Noph — enemies by day.* V. 17. *The men of On and Bubastus will fall by the sword, and they themselves will go into captivity.* V. 18. *At Tachpanches the day will be darkened when I shatter the yokes of Egypt there, and an end will be put to its proud haughtiness; cloud will cover it, and its daughters till go into captivity.* V. 19. *And thus I execute judgments upon Egypt, that they may know that I am Jehovah.*

Egypt will lose its idols and its princes (cf. Jer. 46:25). **אֱלִילִים** and **גִּלּוּלִים** are synonymous, signifying not the images, but the deities; the former being the ordinary epithet applied to false deities by Ezekiel (see the comm. on Eze. 6: 4), the latter traceable to the reading of Isa. 19: 1. **נָךְ**, contracted from **מִנְךָ**, *Manoph* or *Menoph* = **מֵךְ** in Hos. 9: 6, is *Memphis*, the ancient capital of Lower Egypt, with the celebrated temple of *Ptah*, one of the principal seats of Egyptian idolatry (see the comm. on Hos. 9: 6 and Isa. 19:13). In v. 13b **מִצְרַיִם מִצְרַיִם** belongs to **נְשִׂיא**, there shall be no more a prince from the land of Egypt, i.e., a native prince. **נָתַן יְרֵאָה**, to put fear upon (cf. Eze. 26:17b). From Lower Egypt Ezekiel passes in v. 14 to Upper Egypt (*Pathros*, see the comm. on Eze. 29:14), which is also to be laid waste, and then names several more of the principal cities of Lower Egypt along with the chief city of Upper Egypt. **צַאן**, Egypt. *Zane*, Copt. *Jane*, is the **Τανίς**, *Tanis*, of the Greeks and Romans, on the Tanitic arm of the Nile, an ancient city of Lower Egypt; see the comm. on Num. 13:22 and Isa. 19:11. **נַס** = **נַסִּימֹן** in Nah. 3: 8, probably “abode of Amon,” Egypt. *P-amen*, i.e., house of Amon, the sacred name of *Thebes*, the celebrated royal city of Upper Egypt, the **Διὸς πόλις ἡ μεγάλη** of the Greeks (see the comm. on Nah. 3: 8). **סִיַּן** (literally, mire; compare the Aram. **סִיַּן**) is **Πηλοῦσιον**, *Pelusium*, which derives its name from **πηλός, ὠνόμασται ἀπὸ τοῦ πελοῦ πηλός**, Strab. xvii. p. 802), because there were swamps all round. It was situated on the eastern arm of the Nile, to which it gave its name, at a distance of twenty stadia from the sea. The Egyptian name *Pehromi* also signifies dirty, or muddy. From this the Arabs have made *Elfarama*; and in the vicinity of the

few ruins of the ancient Pelusium there is still a castle called Arab. *f-nh*, Tineh (compare the Chaldee **טִינָה**, clay, in Dan. 2:41). Ezekiel calls it the “fortress or bulwark of Egypt,” because, as Strabo (*l.c.*) observes, “Egypt is difficult of access here from places in the East;” for which reason Hirtius (*de bell. Al. c.* 27) calls it “the key of Egypt,” and Suidas (*s.v.*) “the key both of the entrance and exit of Egypt.” On the history of this city, see Leyrer in Herzog’s *Encyclopaedia*. In **הַמִּזְוֵן נָא** many of the commentators find a play upon the name of the god **אַמוֹן** (Jer. 46:25), the chief deity of Thebes, which is possible, but not very probable, as we should not expect to find a god mentioned again here after v. 13; and **הַכְּרָתִי** would be inappropriate. — In v. 16 *Sin* (= *Pelusium*) is mentioned again as the border fortress, *No* (= *Memphis*) as the capital of Upper Egypt, as all falling within the range of the judgment. The expression **נָף צָרִי יִזְמַם** has caused some difficulty and given occasion to various conjectures, none of which, however, commend themselves as either simple or natural explanations. <sup>40</sup>

As Hitzig has correctly observed, **צָרִי יִזְמַם** is the same as **שָׂדֶד בְּצֹהְרִים** in Jer. 15: 8, and is the opposite of **שָׂדֶדִי לַיְלָה** in Obad. 1: 5. The enemy who comes by day, not in the night, is the enemy who does not shun open attack. The connection with **נָף** is to be explained by the same rule as Jer. 24: 2, “the one basket — very good figs.” Memphis will have enemies in broad daylight, i.e., will be filled with them. **אַוֹן** = **אֹן**, **אֵן**, in Gen. 41:45, 50 (Egyptian *An*, or *Anu*), is the popular name of *Heliopolis* in Lower Egypt (see the comm. on Gen. 41:45); and the form **אַוֹן** (a vain thing, or idol) is probably selected intentionally in the sense of an idol-city (see the comm. on Hos. 4:15), because *On-Heliopolis* (**בֵּית־שֶׁמֶשׁ** in Jer. 43:13) was from time immemorial one of the principal seats of the Egyptian worship of the sun, and possessed a celebrated temple of the sun, with a numerous and learned priesthood (see the comm. on Gen. 41:45, ed. 2). **פִּי־בַסְט**, i.e., **βουβαστός** (LXX), or **βουβαστίς** (Herod. ii. 59), Egyptian *Pi-Pasht*, i.e., the place of *Pasht*, so called from the cat-headed *Bubastis* or *Pasht*, the Egyptian *Diana*, which was worshipped there in a splendid temple. It was situated on the royal canal leading to Suez, which was begun by Necho and finished under Ptolemy II, not far from its junction with the Pelusiatic arm of the Nile. It was the chief seat of the *Nomos Bubastites*, was destroyed by the Persians, who demolished its walls (Diod. Sic. xvi. 51), and has entirely disappeared, with the exception of some heaps of ruins which still bear the name of *Tel Bastah*, about seven hours’ journey from the Nile (compare Ges. *Thes.* pp. 1101ff., and Leyrer in Herzog’s *Encyclopaedia*, *s.v.*). The *Nomos* of Bubastis, according to Herod. ii. 166, was assigned to the warrior-caste of Calasirians. The **בַּחֲוָרִים**, the young military men, will fall by



the sword; and **הָרָה**, not *αἱ γυναῖκες* (LXX and others), but the cities themselves, i.e., their civil population as distinguished from the military garrison, shall go into exile. This explanation of **הָרָה** is commended by **בְּנִוְרִיָּה** in v. 18. **תַּחְפְּנִיחַס** or **תַּחְפְּנִיחַ** (Jer. 43: 7ff., 44: 1; 46:14), and **תַּחְפְּנִיס** in Jer. 2:16 (*Chetib*), is *Τάφναι*, *Τάφνη* (LXX), or *Δάφναι* (Herod. ii. 30. 107), a frontier city of Egypt in the vicinity of Pelusium, after the time of Psammetichus a fortification with a strong garrison, where a palace of Pharaoh was also to be found, according to Jer. 43: 9. After the destruction of Jerusalem, a portion of the Jews took refuge there, and to them Jeremiah predicted the punishment of God on the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 43: 7ff., 44: 1ff.). In the case of **חֲשֵׁךְ** the reading varies; the printed *Masora* at Gen. 39: 3 giving **חֲשֵׁךְ** as the reading to be found in all the codices examined by the author of the *Masora*; whereas many of the codices and printed editions have **חֲשֵׁךְ**, and this is adopted in all the ancient versions. This is evidently the correct reading, as **חֲשֵׁךְ** does not furnish an appropriate meaning, and the parallel passages, Eze. 32: 8, Isa. 13:10, Joe. 3: 4, Amo. 8: 9, all favour **חֲשֵׁךְ**. The darkening of the day is the phenomenal prognostic of the dawning of the great day of judgment upon the nations (cf. Joe. 2:10; 3: 4; 4:15; Isa. 13:10, etc.). This day is to dawn upon Egypt at Tachpanches, the border fortress of the land towards Syria and Palestine, when the Lord will break the yokes of Egypt. These words point back to Lev. 26:13, where the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt is called the breaking in pieces of its yokes (see also Eze. 34:27). That which took place then is to be repeated here. The yokes which Egypt put upon the nations are to be broken; and all the proud might of that kingdom is to be brought to an end (**גָּאוֹן עָנָה**), as in v. 6). In v. 18b, **הִיא**, which stands at the head in an absolute form, points back to **בְּתַחְפְּנִיחַס**. The city (*Daphne*) will be covered with cloud, i.e., will be overthrown by the judgment; and her daughters, i.e., the smaller cities and hamlets dependent upon her (cf. Eze. 16:46 and 26: 6), will go into captivity in the persons of their inhabitants. It follows from this that *Daphne* was the chief city of a *Nomos* in Lower Egypt; and this is confirmed by the circumstance that there was a royal palace there. If we compare the threat in this verse, that in Tachpanches an end is to be put to the proud might of Pharaoh, with the threatening words of Jer. 43: 9ff., to the effect that Nebuchadnezzar would set up his throne at Tachpanches and smite Egypt, it is evident that the situation of *Daphne* must at that time have been such that the war between Egypt and Babylonia would necessarily be decided in or near this city. These prophetic utterances cannot be explained, as Kliefoth supposes, from the fact that many Jews had settled in *Daphne*; nor do the contents of this verse furnish any proof that Ezekiel did not utter this prophecy

of his till after the Jews had settled there (Jer. 43 and 44). V. 19 serves to round off the prophecy.

### CH. 30:20-26. DESTRUCTION OF THE MIGHT OF PHARAOH BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR

According to the heading in v. 20, “*In the eleventh year, in the first (month), on the seventh of the month, the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,*” this short word of threatening against Egypt falls in the second year of the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and, as v. 21 clearly shows, after the army of Pharaoh Hophra, which marched to the relief of Jerusalem, had been defeated by the Chaldeans who turned to meet it (Jer. 37: 5, 7). If we compare with this the date of the first prophecy against Egypt in Eze. 29: 1, the prophecy before us was separated from the former by an interval of three months. But as there is no allusion whatever in Eze. 29 to Pharaoh’s attempt to come to the relief of the besieged city of Jerusalem, or to his repulse, the arrival of the Egyptian army in Palestine, its defeat, and its repulse by the Chaldeans, seems to have occurred in the interval between these two prophecies, towards the close of the tenth year.

#### *Eze. 30:21-26.*

*V. 21. son of man, the arm of Pharaoh the king of Egypt have I broken; and, behold, it will no more be bound up, to apply remedies, to put on a bandage to bind it up, that it may grow strong to grasp the sword. V. 22. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and will break both his arms, the strong one and the broken one, and will cause the sword to fall out of his hand. V. 23. And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them in the lands, V. 24. And will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and give my sword into his hand, and will break the arms of Pharaoh, so that he shall groan the groanings of a pierced one before him. V. 25. I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh will fall; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I give my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, that he may stretch it against the land of Egypt. V. 26. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them in the lands; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.*

The perfect **שִׁבַּרְתִּי** in v. 21 is not a prophetic utterance of the certainty of the future, but a pure preterite. This may be seen “both from the allusion in v. 21*b* to the condition resulting from the **שִׁבַר**, and also to the obviously antithetical relation of v. 22, in which future events are predicted” (Hitzig). The arm is a figurative expression for power, here for military power, as it wields the sword. God broke the arm of Pharaoh by the defeat which the Chaldeans inflicted upon Pharaoh Hophra, when he was marching to the relief of besieged Jerusalem.

**חִבְּשָׁה** is a present, as is apparent from the infinitive clauses (**לְתַתּוּ וּגְרוּ**) which follow, altogether apart from **הִנֵּה**; and **חִבַּשׁ** signifies to bind up, for the

purpose of healing a broken limb, that remedies may be applied and a bandage put on. **לְחַזְקָהּ**, that it may become strong or sound, is subordinate to the preceding clause, and governs the infinitive which follows. The fact that the further judgment which is to fall upon Pharaoh is introduced with **לְכֵן** (therefore) here (v. 22), notwithstanding the fact that it has not been preceded by any enumeration of the guilt which occasioned it, may be accounted for on the ground that the causal **לְכֵן** forms a link with the concluding clause of v. 21: the arm shall not be healed, so as to be able to grasp or hold the sword. Because Pharaoh is not to attain any more to victorious power, therefore God will shatter both of his arms, the strong, i.e., the sound one and the broken one, that is to say, will smite it so completely, that the sword will fall from his hand. The Egyptians are to be scattered among the nations, as is repeated in v. 23 *verbatim* from Eze. 29:12. God will give the sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and equip and strengthen him to destroy the might of Pharaoh, that the latter may groan before him like one who is pierced with the sword. This thought is repeated in vv. 25 and 26 with an intimation of the purpose of this divine procedure. That purpose it: that men may come to recognise Jehovah as God the Lord. The subject to **יִדְעוּ** is indefinite; and the rendering of the LXX is a very good one, *καὶ γνώσονται πάντες*.

### CH. 31. THE GLORY AND FALL OF ASSHUR A TYPE OF EGYPT

*Eze. 31.* In two months *minus* six days from the time when the preceding word of God was uttered, Ezekiel received another threatening word against the king and the people of Egypt, in which the former announcement of the destruction of the might of Egypt was confirmed by a comparison drawn between the power of Egypt and that of Asshur. Ezekiel having opened his prophecy with the question, whom does Pharaoh with his might resemble (v. 2), proceeds to depict Asshur as a mighty towering cedar (vv. 3-9) which has been felled and cast down by the prince of the nations on account of its height and pride (vv. 10-14), so that everything mourned over its fall, because many nations went down with it to hell (vv. 15-17). The question, whom Pharaoh resembles, is then repeated in v. 18; and from the preceding comparison the conclusion is drawn, that he will perish like that lofty cedar. — The reminiscence of the greatness of the Assyrian empire and of its destruction was well adapted to overthrow all reliance upon the might and greatness of Egypt. The fall of that great empire was still so fresh in the mind at the time, that the reminiscence could not fail to make a deep impression upon the prophet's hearers.

*Eze. 31: 1-9.* The might of Pharaoh resembles the greatness and glory of Asshur. —

V. 1. *In the eleventh year, in the third (month), on the first of the month, the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, say to Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and to his tumult, Whom art thou like in thy greatness? V. 3. Behold, Asshur was a cedar-tree upon Lebanon, beautiful in branches, a shadowing thicket, and its top was high in growth, and among the clouds. V. 4. Water brought him up, the flood made him high, its streams went round about its plantation, and it sent its channels to all the trees of the field. V. 5. Therefore its growth became higher than all the trees of the field, and its branches became great, and its boughs long from many waters in its shooting out. V. 6. In its branches all the birds of the heaven made their nests, and under its boughs all the beasts of the field brought forth, and in its shadow sat great nations of all kinds. V. 7. And he was beautiful in his greatness, in the length of his shoots; for his root was by many waters. V. 8. Cedars did not obscure him in the garden of God, cypresses did not resemble his branches, and plane-trees were not like his boughs; no tree in the garden of God resembled him in his beauty. V. 9. I had made him beautiful in the multitude of his shoots, and all the trees of Eden which were in the garden of God envied him.*

The word of God is addressed to King Pharaoh and to **הַמּוֹנוֹ**, his tumult, i.e., whoever and whatever occasions noise and tumult in the land. We must not interpret this, however, as Hitzig has done, as signifying the ruling classes and estates in contrast with the quiet in the land, for no such use of **הַמּוֹנוֹ** is anywhere to be found. Nor must we regard the word as applying to the multitude of people only, but to the people with their possessions, their riches, which gave rise to luxury and tumult, as in Eze. 30:10. The inquiry, whom does Pharaoh with his tumult resemble in his greatness, is followed in the place of a reply by a description of Asshur as a glorious cedar (vv. 3-9). It is true that Ewald has followed the example of Meibom (*vanarum in Cod. Hebr. interpret. spec.* III p. 70) and J. D. Michaelis, and endeavours to set aside the allusion to Asshur, by taking the word **אֲשׁוּר** in an appellative sense, and understanding **אֲשׁוּר אֶרֶז** as signifying a particular kind of cedar, namely, the tallest species of all. But apart altogether from there being no foundation whatever for such an explanation in the usage of the language, there is nothing in the fact to justify it. For it is not anywhere affirmed that Pharaoh resembled this cedar; on the contrary, the question, whom does he resemble? is asked again in v. 18 (Hitzig). Moreover, Michaelis is wrong in the supposition that “from v. 10 onwards it becomes perfectly obvious that it is not Assyria but Egypt itself which is meant by the cedar-tree previously described.” Under the figure of the felling of a cedar there is depicted the overthrow of a king or monarchy, which has already taken place. Compare vv. 12 and 16, where the past is indicated quite as certainly as the future in v. 18. And as v. 18 plainly designates the overthrow of Pharaoh and his power as still in the future, the cedar, whose destruction is not only threatened in vv. 10-17, but declared to have already taken place, can only be Asshur, and not Egypt at all.

The picture of the glory of this cedar recalls in several respects the similar figurative description in Eze. 17. Asshur is called a cedar upon Lebanon, because it was there that the most stately cedars grew. חֲרֹשׁ מִצֵּל, a shade-giving thicket (מִצֵּל is a *Hiphil* participle of צָלַל), belongs to יִפֶּה עֲנָף as a further expansion of עֲנָף, corresponding to the further expansion of קָמָה גִבָּהּ by “its top was among the clouds.” If we bear this in mind, the reasons assigned by Hitzig for altering חֲרֹשׁ into an adjective חָרֵשׁ, and taking מִצֵּל as a substantive formation after the analogy of מִסָּב, lose all their force. Analogy would only require an adjective in the construct state in the event of the three statements יִפֶּה עֲנָף, חֲרֹשׁ מִצֵּל, and גִּבָּהּ קָמָה being co-ordinate with one another. But what is decisive against the proposed conjecture is the fact that neither the noun מִצֵּל nor the adjective חָרֵשׁ is ever met with, and that, in any case, מִצֵּל cannot signify foliage. The rendering of the Vulgate, “*frondibus nemorosus*,” is merely guessed at, whilst the Seventy have omitted the word as unintelligible to them. For עֲבֹתִים, thicket of clouds, see the comm. on Eze. 19:11; and for צִמְרֵת, that on Eze. 17: 3. The cedar grew to so large a size because it was richly watered (v. 4). A flood poured its streams round about the place where the cedar was planted, and sent out brooks to all the trees of the field. The difficult words אֶת־נִהַרְתִּיהָ וְגוֹ are to be taken literally thus: as for its (the flood’s) streams, it (the flood) was going round about its plantation, i.e., round about the plantation belonging to the flood or the place situated near it, where the cedar was planted. אֶת is not to be taken as a preposition, but as a sign of the accusative, and אֶת־נִהַרְתִּיהָ as an accusative used for the more precise definition of the manner in which the flood surrounded the plantation. It is true that there still remains something striking in the masculine הַלֵּךְ, since תְּהוֹם, although of common gender, is construed throughout as a feminine, even in this very verse. But the difficulty remains even if we follow Ewald, and take הַלֵּךְ to be a defectively written or irregular form of the *Hiphil* הוֹלִיךְ; a conjecture which is precluded by the use of הוֹלִיךְ, to cause to run = to cause to flow away, in Eze. 32:14. מִמְּעָה, its (the flood’s) plantation, i.e., the plantation for which the flood existed. תְּהוֹם is used here to signify the source of starting-point of a flood, as in Deu. 8: 7, where תְּהוֹמוֹת are co-ordinate with עֵינֹת. — While the place where the cedar was planted was surrounded by the streams of the flood, only the brooks and channels of this flood reached to the trees of the field. The cedar therefore surpassed all the trees of the field in height and luxuriance of growth (v. 5). גִּבְבָּהּ, an Aramean mode of spelling for גִּבְבָּהּ; and סְרָאֲפַת, ἀπ. λεγ., an Aramean formation with ר inserted, for סְרָאֲפַת, branches. For פְּאֲרֵת, see the comm. on Eze. 17: 6. בְּשִׁלְחוֹ cannot mean “since it (the

stream) sent out the water” (Ewald); for although **תְּהוֹם** in v. 4 is also construed as a masculine, the suffix cannot be taken as referring to **תְּהוֹם**, for this is much too far off. And the explanation proposed by Rosenmüller, Hävernicks, Kliefoth, and others, “as it (the tree) sent them (the branches) out,” is open to this objection, that **בְּשִׁלְחוֹ** would then contain a spiritless tautology; since the stretching out of the branches is already contained in the fact of their becoming numerous and long. the tautology has no existence if the object is left indefinite, “in its spreading out,” i.e., the spreading not only of the branches, but also of the roots, to which **שִׁלַּח** is sometimes applied (cf. Jer. 17: 8). By the many waters which made the cedar great, we must not understand, either solely or especially, the numerous peoples which rendered Assyria great and mighty, as the Chaldee and many of the older commentators have done. It must rather be taken as embracing everything which contributed to the growth and greatness of Assyria. It is questionable whether the prophet, when describing the flood which watered the cedar plantation, had the description of the rivers of Paradise in Gen. 2:10ff. floating before his mind. Ewald and Hävernicks think that he had; but Hitzig and Kliefoth take a decidedly opposite view. There is certainly no distinct indication of any such allusion. We meet with this for the first time from v. 8 onwards.

In vv. 6-9 the greatness and glory of Asshur are still further depicted. Upon and under the branches of the stately tree, all creatures, birds, beasts, and men, found shelter and protection for life and increase (v. 6; cf. Eze. 17:23 and Dan. 4: 9). In **בְּלִגְנוֹת רַבִּים**, all kinds of great nations, the fact glimmers through the figure. The tree was so beautiful (**יָפָה** from **יָפַר**) in its greatness, that of all the trees in the garden of God not one was to be compared with it, and all envied it on that account; that is to say, all the other nations and kingdoms in God’s creation were far inferior to Asshur in greatness and glory. **גַּן אֱלֹהִים** is the garden of Paradise; and consequently **עֵדֶן** in vv. 9, 16, and 18 is also Paradise, as in Eze. 28:13. There is no ground for Kliefoth’s objection, that if **עֵדֶן** be taken in this sense, the words “which are in the garden of God” will contain a superfluous pleonasm, a mere tautology. In Gen. 2: 8 a distinction is also made between **עֵדֶן** and the garden in *Eden*. It was not all Eden, but the garden planted by Jehovah in Eden, which formed the real paradisaical creation; so that the words “which are in the garden of God” give intensity to the idea of the “trees of Eden.” Moreover, as Hävernicks has correctly pointed out, there is a peculiar emphasis in the separation of **בְּגַן אֱלֹהִים** from **אֲרָזִים** in v. 8: “cedars...even such as were found in the garden of God.” Not one even of the other and most glorious trees, viz., cypresses and planes, resembled the cedar Asshur, planted by God by many waters, in its boughs and branches. It is not

stated in so many words in vv. 8 and 9 that the cedar Asshur stood in the garden of God; but it by no means follows from this, that by the garden of God we are to understand simply the world and the earth as the creation of God, as Kliefoth imagines, and in support of which he argues that “as all the nations and kingdoms of the world are regarded as trees planted by God, the world itself is quite consistently called a garden or plantation of God.” The very fact that a distinction is made between trees of the field (vv. 4 and 5) and trees of Eden in the garden of God (vv. 8 and 9), shows that the trees are not all regarded here as being in the same sense planted by God. If the garden of God stood for the world, where should we then have to look for the field (הַשָּׂדֶה)? The thought of vv. 8 and 9 is not that “not a single tree in all God’s broad earth was to be compared to the cedar Asshur,” but that even of the trees of Paradise, the garden in Eden, there was not one so beautiful and glorious as the cedar Asshur, planted by God by many waters.

*Eze. 31:10-14.* The felling of this cedar, or the overthrow of Asshur on account of its pride.

*V. 10. Therefore thus said the Lord Jehovah, Because thou didst exalt thyself in height, and he stretched his top to the midst of the clouds, and his heart exalted itself in its height, V. 11. I will give him into the hand of the prince of the nations; he shall deal with him: for his wickedness I rejected him. V. 12. And strangers cut him down, violent ones of the nations, and cast him away: upon the mountains and in all the valleys his shoots fell, and his boughs were broken in pieces into all the deep places of the earth; and all the nations of the earth withdrew from his shadow, and let him lie. V. 13. Upon his fallen trunk all the birds of the heaven settle, and all the beasts of the field are over his branches: V. 14. That no trees by the water may exalt themselves on account of their height, or stretch their top to the midst of the clouds, and no water-drinkers stand upon themselves in their exaltation: for they are all given up to death into hell, in the midst of the children of men, to those that go into the grave.*

In the description of the cause of the overthrow of Asshur which commences with **אֲנִי אֲשֶׁר**, the figurative language changes in the third clause into the literal fact, the towering of the cedar being interpreted as signifying the lifting up of the heart in his height, — that is to say, in his pride. In the first clause the tree itself is addressed; but in the clauses which follow, it is spoken of in the third person. The direct address in the first clause is to be explained from the vivid manner in which the fact presented itself. The divine sentence in vv. 10 and 11 is not directed against Pharaoh, but against the Assyrian, who is depicted as a stately cedar; whilst the address in v.10a, and the imperfect (future) in v. 11a, are both to be accounted for from the fact that the fall of Asshur is related in the form in which it was denounced on the part of Jehovah upon that imperial kingdom. The perfect **אָמַר** is therefore a preterite here: the

Lord said...for His part: because Asshur has exalted itself in the pride of its greatness, I give it up. The form **וְאֶתְנָהוּ** is not to be changed into **וְאֶתְנָהוּ**, but is defended against critical caprice by the imperfect **יַעֲשֶׂה** which follows. That the penal sentence of God is not to be regarded as being first uttered in the time then present, but belongs to the past, — and therefore the words merely communicate what God had already spoken, — is clearly shown by the preterites commencing with **גִּרְשָׁתִּיהוּ**, the historical tenses **וַיִּכְרַתְהוּ** and **וַיִּמְשָׁהוּ**, and the preterite **נָפְלוּ**, which must not be turned into futures in violation of grammar. **גָּבַהּ בַּקְּנֻמָּה** does not mean, to be high in its height, which would be a tautology; but to exalt itself (be proud) in, or on account of, its height. And in the same way is **רוּם** also affirmed of the heart, in the sense of exultation from pride. For the fact itself, compare Isa. 10: 5ff. **אֵל גּוֹיִם** does not mean God, but a powerful one of the nations, i.e., Nebuchadnezzar. **אֵל** is a simple appellative from **אוּל**, the strong one; and is neither a name of God nor a defective form for **אֵיל**, the construct state of **אֵיל**, a ram. For this defective form is only met with once in the case of **אֵיל**, a ram, namely, in Job. 42: 8, where we have the plural **אֵילִים**, and nowhere else; whereas, in the case of **אֵל**, **אֵלִים**, in the sense of a strong one, the *scriptio plena* very frequently alternates with the *defectiva*. Compare, for example, Job. 42: 8, where both readings occur just as in this instance, where many MSS have **אֵיל** (vid., de Rossi, *variae lectt. ad h. l.*); also Exo. 15:15 and Eze. 17:13, **אֵילֵי**, compared with **אֵילֵי** in Eze. 32:21, after the analogy of **נִירֵי**, 2Sa. 22:29, and **גִּירִים**, 2Ch. 2:16. **לוּ עָשׂוּ יַעֲשֶׂה** is not a relative clause, “who should treat him ill,” nor is the **ו** *relat.* omitted on account of the preceding **עָשׂוּ**, as Hitzig imagines; but it is an independent sentence, and **יַעֲשֶׂה** is a forcible expression for the imperative: he will deal with him, equivalent to, “let him deal with him.” **עָשָׂה לְ** to do anything to a person, used here as it frequently is in an evil sense; compare Psa. 56: 5. **בְּרָשָׁעוּ** — or **בְּרָשָׁעוּ**, which Norzi and Abarbanel (in de Rossi, *variae lectt. ad h. l.*) uphold as the reading of many of the more exact manuscripts and editions — belongs to **גִּרְשָׁתִּיהוּ**: for, or according to, his wickedness, I rejected him.

In v. 12 the figure of the tree is resumed; and the extinction of the Assyrian empire is described as the cutting down of the proud cedar. **זָרִים עָרִיצֵי גּוֹיִם** as in Eze. 28: 7 and 30:11, 12. **וַיִּמְשָׁהוּ**: they cast him away and let him lie, as in Eze. 29: 5; 32: 4; so that in the first sentence the idea of casting away predominates, and in the second that of letting lie. By the casting away, the tree became so shattered to atoms that its boughs and branches fell upon the



mountains and on the low ground and valleys of the earth, and the nations which had sat under its shadow withdrew. **וַיֵּרְדוּ** (they descended) is to be explained from the idea that the three had grown upon a high mountain (namely Lebanon); and Hitzig is mistaken in his conjecture that **וַיֵּרְדוּ** was the original reading, as **וַיִּפְּרוּ**, to fly, is not an appropriate expression for **אֲמִים**. On the falling of the tree, the birds which had made their nests in its branches naturally flew away. If, then, in v. 13, birds and beasts are said to settle upon the fallen trunk, as several of the commentators have correctly observed, the description is based upon the idea of a corpse, a **מַפְלֵת** (Jud. 14: 8), around which both birds and beasts of prey gather together to tear it in pieces (cf. Eze. 32: 4 and Isa. 18: 6). **הָיָה אֵלָיו**, to come towards or over any one, to be above it. The thought expressed is, that many nations took advantage of the fall of Asshur and rose into new life upon its ruins. — V. 14. This fate was prepared for Asshur in order that henceforth no tree should grow up to the sky any more, i.e., that no powerful one of this earth (no king or prince) should strive after superhuman greatness and might. **לִמְאֵן אֲשֶׁר** is dependent upon **וַיִּרְשָׁתִּיהוּ** in v. 11; for vv. 12 and 13 are simply a further expansion of the thought expressed in that word. **עֵצֵי מַיִם** are trees growing near the water, and therefore nourished by water. For **לֹא יִגְבְּהוּ וְגוֹ'**, see v. 10. The words **וְלֹא יִאָּמְרוּ אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וְגוֹ'** are difficult. As **אֱלֹהֵיהֶם**, with *Tzere* under **א**, to which the *Masora* calls attention, cannot be the preposition **אֵל** with the suffix, many have taken **אֱלֹהֵיהֶם** to be a noun, in the sense of *fortes, principes, or terebinthi* (vid., Isa. 61: 3), and have rendered the clause either *ut non perstent terebinthi eorum in altitudine sua, omnes (ceterae arbores) bibentes aquam* (Vatabl., Starck, Maurer, and Kliefoth), or, that their princes may not lift themselves up in their pride, all the drinkers of water (Hävernick). But both renderings founder on the simple fact that they leave the suffix **הֶם** in **אֱלֹהֵיהֶם** either unnoticed or unexplained. As only the trees of the water have been spoken of previously, the suffix must be taken as referring to them. But the water-trees have neither terebinths nor princes; on the contrary, these are what they must either be, or signify. Terebinths, or princes of the water-trees, would be senseless ideas. Ewald has therefore taken **אֱלֹהֵיהֶם** as the object, and rendered it thus: “and (that) no water-drinkers may contend with their gods in their pride.” He has not proved, however, but has simply asserted, that **עָמַד** is to endure = to contend (!). The only remaining course is to follow the LXX, Targum, and many commentators, and to take **אֱלֹהֵיהֶם** as a pronoun, and point it **אֵל עָמַד אֵל**: to station oneself against, or upon = **עָמַד אֵל** (Eze. 33:26), in the sense of resting, or relying upon anything. The suffix is to be taken in a reflective sense, as in Eze. 34: 2, etc. (vid., Ewald, § 314c), and precedes the noun to which it

refers, as in Pro. 14:20 for example. **בַּגְבוּהָם**, as in v. 10, referring to pride. **מִים** **בְּלִעְצֵי מִים**, the subject of the sentence, is really synonymous with **בְּלִשְׁתֵּי**, except that the figure of the tree falls into the background behind the fact portrayed. The rendering of the Berleburg Bible is very good: “and no trees abounding in water stand upon themselves (rely upon themselves) on account of their height.” The water-drinkers are princes of this earth who have attained to great power through rich resources. “As a tree grows through the moisture of water, so men are accustomed to become proud through their abundance, not reflecting that these waters have been supplied to them by God” (Starck). The reason for this warning against proud self-exaltation is given in v. 14b in the general statement, that all the proud great ones of this earth are delivered up to death. **בְּכָלֵם**, all of them, the water-drinkers or water-trees already named, by whom kings, earthly potentates, are intended. **אֲרָץ פְּחַתִּיּוֹת = אֲרָץ פְּחַתִּית** (Eze. 26:20). **בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי אָדָם**: in the midst of the children of men, i.e., like all other men. “Thus the prophet teaches that princes must die as well as the people, that death and decomposition are common to both. Hence he takes all ground of proud boasting away” (Starck).

**Eze. 31:15-18.** Impression made upon the nations by the fall of Asshur; and its application to Pharaoh.

V. 15. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, In the day that he went down to hell I caused a mourning: covered the flood for his sake, and stopped its streams, and the great waters were held back: I caused Lebanon to blacken itself for him, and all the trees of the field pined for him.* V. 16. *I made the nations tremble at the noise of his fall, when I cast him down to hell to those who go into the grave: and they comforted themselves in the nether world, even all the trees of Eden, the choice and most beautiful of Lebanon, all the water-drinkers.* V. 17. *They also went with him into hell, to those pierced with the sword, who sat as his helpers in his shade among the nations.* V. 18. *Whom dost thou thus resemble in glory and greatness among the trees of Eden? So shalt thou be thrust down to the trees of Eden into the nether world, and lie among uncircumcised ones with those pierced with the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his tumult, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

In order that the overthrow of the Assyrian, i.e., the destruction of the Assyrian empire, may be placed in the clearest light, a picture is drawn of the impression which it made upon the whole creation. There is no necessity to understand **כִּה אָמַר** in a past sense, as in v. 10. What God did on the overthrow of Asshur He may even now, for the first time, make known through the prophet, for a warning to Pharaoh and the people of Israel. That this is the way in which the words are to be interpreted, is evident from the use of the perfect **הִאֲבִלְתִּי**, followed by the historical imperfects, which cannot be taken in a prophetic sense, as Kliefoth supposes, or turned into futures. It is contrary to Hebrew

usage to connect **הַאֲבֵלְתִי** and **בַּסֵּתִי** together as *asyndeton*, so as to form one idea, viz., “to veil in mourning” as Ewald and Hävernick propose. The circumstances under which two verbs are joined together to form one idea are of a totally different kind. In this instance **הַאֲבֵלְתִי** is placed first as an absolute; and in the sentences which follow, it is more specifically defined by a detail of the objects which were turned into mourning. **בָּסָה עָלָיו אֶת־תְּהוֹמוֹ** cannot mean her, “to cover the flood upon (over) him” (after Eze. 24: 7 and 26:19); for this is altogether unsuitable to either the more remote or the more immediate context. The tree Asshur was not destroyed by a flood, but cut down by strangers. The following clauses, “I stopped its streams,” etc., show very plainly that the connection between the flood (**תְּהוֹמוֹ**) and the tree which had been felled is to be understood in accordance with v. 4. A flood, which poured its **נְהִירוֹת** round about its plantation, made the cedar-tree great; and now that the tree has been felled, God covers the flood on its account. **בָּסָה** is to be explained from **בָּסָה שֵׁק**, to veil or wrap in mourning, as Raschi, Kimchi, Vatablus, and many others have shown. The word **שֵׁק** is omitted, because it appeared inappropriate to **תְּהוֹמוֹ**. The mourning of the flood is to be taken as equivalent to drying up, so that the streams which issued from it were deprived of their water. Lebanon, i.e., the cedar-forest (Isa. 10:34), and all the other trees, mourned over the fall of the cedar Asshur. **הִקְדִּיר**, to clothe in black, i.e., to turn into mourning. **עֲלָפָה** is regarded by Ewald as a *Pual* formed after the Aramean mode, that is to say, by attaching the syllable *ae* instead of doubling the middle radical; whilst Hitzig proposes to change the form into **עֲלָפָה**. In any case the word must be a perfect *Pual*, as a *nomen verbale* appears unsuitable; and it must also be a third person feminine, the termination **הָ** being softened into **הָ**, as in **זוֹנְרָה** (Isa. 59: 5), and the doubling of the **ל** being dropped on account of the *Sheva*; so that the plural is construed with the singular feminine (Ewald, § 317a). **עָלָה**, to faint with grief (cf. Isa. 51:20). The thought is the following: all nature was so painfully affected by the fall of Asshur, that the whole of the resources from which its prosperity and might had been derived were dried up. To interpret the different figures as specially relating to princes and nations appears a doubtful procedure, for the simple reason that in v. 16 the trembling of the nations is expressly named.

Whilst all the nations on the surface of the earth tremble at the fall of Assyria, because they are thereby warned of the perishable nature of all earthly greatness and of their own destruction, the inhabitants of the nether world console themselves with the thought that the Assyrian is now sharing their fate (for this thought, compare Eze. 32:31 and Isa. 14: 9, 10). “All the trees of Eden” are all the powerful and noble princes. The idea itself, “trees of Eden,” is explained by

the apposition, “the choice and beautiful ones of Lebanon,” i.e., the picked and finest cedars, and still further strengthened by the expression **כָּל־שְׁתֵּי מַיִם** (cf. v. 14). **מִבְּחָר וְטוֹב** are connected, as in 1Sa. 9: 2; and both words are placed side by side in the construct state, as in Dan. 1: 4 (cf. Ewald, § 339*b*). They comfort themselves because they have gone down with him into Sheol, so that he has no advantage over them. They come thither to those pierced with the sword, i.e., to the princes and peoples whom Asshur slew in wars to establish his imperial power. **וַיִּזְרְעוּ** might also belong to **יָרְדוּ** as a second subject. In that case **יָשְׁבוּ בְצֵלוֹ** should be taken in a relative sense: “and his arm,” i.e., his resources, “which sat in his shadow among the nations.” With this explanation **וַיִּזְרְעוּ** would be different from **הֵם**, and could only denote the army of the Assyrian. But this does not harmonize with the sitting in his shadow among the nations, for these words obviously point back to v. 6; so that **וַיִּזְרְעוּ** is evidently meant to correspond to **כָּל־גּוֹיִם רַבִּים** (v. 6), and is actually identical with **הֵם**, i.e., with all the trees of Eden. We therefore agree with Osiander, Grotius, and others, in regarding the whole of the second hemistich as more precisely determining the subject, — in other words, as a declaration of the reason for their descending into hell along with the Assyrians, — and render the passage thus: “for as his arm (as his might) they sat in his shadow among the nations;” so that the cop. **ו** is used in place of a causal particle. In any case, the conjecture which Ewald has adopted from the LXX and the Syriac, viz., **וַיִּזְרְעוּ**, and his seed, in support of which appeal might be made to Isa. 14:21, is unsuitable, for the simple reason that the statement, that it sat in his shadow among the nations, does not apply. — After this description of the greatness and the destruction of the imperial power of Assyria, Ezekiel repeats in v. 18 the question already asked in v. 3: to whom is Pharaoh like? **בְּכֵהָ**, so, i.e., under such circumstances, when the glorious cedar Asshur has been smitten by such a fate (Hitzig). The reply to this question is really contained in the description given already; so that it is immediately followed by the announcement, “and thou wilt be thrust down,” etc. **עֲרֵלִים**, uncircumcised, equivalent to ungodly heathen **הוּא פֶּ**, not “he is,” as that would require **הוּא הַפְּרָעָה**; but **הוּא** is the predicate: this is (i.e., so does it happen to) Pharaoh. **הַמּוֹנֵה**, as in v. 3

## CH. 32. LAMENTATIONS OVER THE RUIN OF PHARAOH AND HIS PEOPLE

*Eze. 32.* The chapter contains two lamentations composed at different times: the first, in vv. 1-16, relating to the fall of Pharaoh, which rests upon the

prophecy contained in Eze. 29: 1-16 and Eze. 30:20-26; the second, in vv. 17-32, in which the prophecy concerning the casting down of this imperial power into hell (Eze. 31:14-17) is worked out in elegiac form.

*Eze. 32: 1-16.* Lamentation over the King of Egypt. — Pharaoh, a sea-monster, is drawn by the nations out of his waters with the net of God, and cast out upon the earth. His flesh is given to the birds and beasts of prey to devour, and the earth is saturated with his blood (vv. 2-6). At his destruction the lights of heaven lose their brightness, and all the nations will be amazed thereat (vv. 7-10). The king of Babel will come upon Egypt, will destroy both man and beast, and will make the land a desert (vv. 11-16). — The date given in v. 1 — *"In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first of the month, the word of Jehovah came to me, saying"* — agrees entirely with the relation in which the substance of the ode itself stands to the prophecies belonging to the tenth and eleventh years in Eze. 29: 1-16 and Eze. 30:20-26; whereas the different date found in the Septuagint cannot come into consideration for a moment.

*Eze. 32: 2-6.* The destruction of Pharaoh.

V. 2. *Son of man, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and say to him, Thou wast compared to a young lion among the nations, and yet wast like a dragon in the sea; thou didst break forth in thy streams, and didst trouble the waters with thy feet, and didst tread their streams.* V. 3. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Therefore will I spread out my net over thee in the midst of many nations, that they may draw thee up in my yarn;* V. 4. *And will cast thee upon the land, hurl thee upon the surface of the field, and will cause all the birds of the heaven to settle upon thee, and the beasts of the whole earth to satisfy themselves with thee.* V. 5. *Thy flesh will I put upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy funeral heap.* V. 6. *I will saturate the earth with thine outflow of thy blood even to the mountains, and the low places shall become full of thee.*

This lamentation begins, like others, with a picture of the glory of the fallen king. Hitzig objects to the ordinary explanation of the words גִּוִּים נְדָמָה גִּוִּים נְדָמָה, λέοντι ἔθνῶν ὁμοιωθήs (LXX), *leoni gentium assimilatus es* (Vulg.), on the ground that the frequently recurring נְדָמָה would only have this meaning in the present passage, and that נִמְשָׁל, which would then be synonymous, is construed in three other ways, but not with the nominative. For these reasons he adopts the rendering, "lion of the nations, thou belongest to death." But it would be contrary to the analogy of all the קִינֹה to commence the lamentation with such a threat; and Hitzig's objections to the ordinary rendering of the words will not bear examination. The circumstance that the *Niphal* נְדָמָה is only met with here in the sense of ὁμοιοῦσθαι, proves nothing; for נְדָמָה has this meaning in the *Kal*, *Piel*, and *Hithpael*, and the construction of the *Niphal* with the accusative (not nominative, as Hitzig says) may be derived without

difficulty from the construction of the synonymous **נִמְשַׁל** with **כ**. But what is decisive in favour of this rendering is the fact that the following clause is connected by means of the adversative **וְאַתָּה** (but thou), which shows that the comparison of Pharaoh to a **תַּנִּים** forms an antithesis to the clause in which he is compared to a young lion. If **נִדְמִיתָ גַּם כַּפִּיר** contained a declaration of destruction, not only would this antithesis be lost, but the words addressed to it as a lion of the nations would float in the air and be used without any intelligible meaning. The lion is a figurative representation of a powerful and victorious ruler; and **כַּפִּיר גִּוִּים** is really equivalent to **אֵל גִּוִּים** in Eze. 31:11.

Pharaoh was regarded as a mighty conqueror of the nations, “though he was rather to be compared to the crocodile, which stirs up the streams, the fresh waters, and life-giving springs of the nations most perniciously with mouth and feet, and renders turbid all that is pure” (Ewald). **תַּנִּים**, as in Eze. 29: 3. Ewald and Hitzig have taken offence at the words **תִּגַּח בְּנַחְרֵי־תֵידֶךָ**, “thou didst break forth in thy streams,” and alter **בְּנַחְרֵי־תֵידֶךָ** into **בְּנִחְרֵי־תֵידֶךָ**, with thy nostrils (Job. 41:12); but they have not considered that **תִּגַּח** would be quite out of place with such an alteration, as **גִּיַח** in both the *Kal* and *Hiphil* (Jud. 20:33) has only the intransitive meaning to break out. The thought is simply this: the crocodile lies in the sea, then breaks occasionally forth in its streams, and makes the waters and their streams turbid with its feet. Therefore shall Pharaoh also end like such a monster (vv. 3-6). The guilt of Pharaoh did not consist in the fact that he had assumed the position of a ruler among the nations (Kliefoth); but in his polluting the water-streams, stirring up and disturbing the life-giving streams of the nations. God will take him in His net by a gathering of nations, and cause him to be drawn out of his element upon the dry land, where he shall become food to the birds and beasts of prey (cf. Eze. 29: 4, 5; 31:12, 13). The words **רְמֵה בְּקֶהֱל אַמִּים** are not to be understood as referring to the nations, as spectators of the event (Hävernick); but **ב** denotes the instrument, or medium employed, here the persons by whom God causes the net to be thrown, as is evident from the **וְהֵעֲלוּךָ** which follows. According to the *parallelismus membrorum*, the **ἀπ. λεγ. רַמּוֹת** can only refer to the carcase of the beast, although the source from which this meaning of the word is derived has not yet been traced. There is no worth to be attached to the reading **רַמָּה** in some of the codices, as **רַמָּה** does not yield a suitable meaning either in the sense of reptile, or in that of putrefaction or decomposed bodies, which has been attributed to it from the Arabic. Under these circumstances we adhere to the derivation from **רום**, to be high, according to which **רַמּוֹת** may signify a height or a heap, which the context defines as a funeral-pile. **צִוְףָה**, strictly speaking, a participle from **צוּף**,

to flow, that which flows out, the outflow (Hitzig), is not to be taken in connection with אֲרֵץ, but is a second object to הַשְּׁקִיטִי; and the appended word מִדְּמַךְ indicates the source whence the flowing takes place, and of what the outflow consists. אֶל הַהָרִים, to the mountains, i.e., up to the top of the mountains. The thought in these verses is probably simply this, that the fall of Pharaoh would bring destruction upon the whole of the land of Egypt, and that many nations would derive advantage from his fall.

*Eze. 32: 7-10.* His overthrow fills the whole world with mourning and terror.

*V. 7. When I extinguish thee, I will cover the sky and darken its stars; I will cover the sun with cloud, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. V. 8. All the shining lights in the sky do I darken because of thee, and I bring darkness over thy land, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 9. And I will trouble the heart of many nations when I bring out thine overthrow among the nations into lands which thou knowest not, V. 10. And I will make many nations amazed at thee, and their kings shall shudder at thee when I brandish my sword before their face; and they shall tremble every moment, every one for his life on the day of his fall.*

The thought of vv. 7 and 8 is not exhausted by the paraphrase, “when thou art extinguished, all light will be extinguished, so far as Egypt is concerned,” accompanied with the remark, that the darkness consequent thereupon is a figurative representation of utterly hopeless circumstances (Schmieder). The thought on which the figure rests is that of the day of the Lord, the day of God’s judgment, on which the lights of heaven lose their brightness (cf. Eze. 30: 3 and Joe. 2:10, etc.). This day bursts upon Egypt with the fall of Pharaoh, and on it the shining stars of heaven are darkened, so that the land of Pharaoh becomes dark. Egypt is a world-power represented by Pharaoh, which collapses with his fall. But the overthrow of this world-power is an omen and prelude of the overthrow of every ungodly world-power on the day of the last judgment, when the present heaven and the present earth will perish in the judgment-fire. Compare the remarks to be found in the commentary on Joe. 3: 4 upon the connection between the phenomena of the heavens and great catastrophes on earth. The contents of both verses may be fully explained from the biblical idea of the day of the Lord and the accompanying phenomena; and for the explanation of בְּכַבּוֹתֶיךָ, there is no necessity to assume, as Dereser and Hitzig have done, that the sea-dragon of Egypt is presented here under the constellation of a dragon; for there is no connection between the comparison of Egypt to a *tannim* or sea-dragon, in v. 2 and Eze. 29: 3 (= רָהַב, Isa. 51: 9), and the constellation of the dragon (see the comm. on Isa. 51: 9 and 30: 7). In בְּכַבּוֹתֶיךָ Pharaoh is no doubt regarded as a star of the first magnitude in the sky; but in this conception Ezekiel rests upon Isa. 14:12, where the king of Babylon is designated as a bright morning-star. That this passage was in the

prophet's mind, is evident at once from the fact that v. 7 coincides almost *verbatim* with Isa. 13:10. — The extinction and obscuration of the stars are not merely a figurative representation of the mourning occasioned by the fall of Pharaoh; still less can vv. 9 and 10 be taken as an interpretation in literal phraseology of the figurative words in vv. 7 and 8. For vv. 9 and 10 do not relate to the mourning of the nations, but to anxiety and terror into which they are plunged by God through the fall of Pharaoh and his might. **הַכְּעִים לֵב**, to afflict the heart, does not mean to make it sorrowful, but to fill it with anxiety, to deprive it of its peace and cheerfulness. “When I bring thy fall among the nations” is equivalent to “spread the report of thy fall.” Consequently there is no need for either the arbitrary alteration of **שְׁבַרְךָ** into **שְׁבַרְךָ**, which Ewald proposes, with the imaginary rendering announcement or report; nor for the marvellous assumption of Hävernick, that **שְׁבַרְךָ** describes the prisoners scattered among the heathen as the ruins of the ancient glory of Egypt, in support of which he adduces the rendering of the LXX **αἰγμαλωσίαν σου**, which is founded upon the change of **שְׁבַרְךָ** into **שְׁבִיךָ**. For v. 10a compare Eze. 27:35. **עוֹפֵף**, to cause to fly, to brandish. The sword is brandished before their face when it falls time after time upon their brother the king of Egypt, whereby they are thrown into alarm for their own lives. **לְרִנְעִים**, by moments = every moment (see the comm. on Isa. 27: 3).

**Eze. 32:11-16.** The judgment upon Egypt will be executed by the king of Babylon.

V. 11. *For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, The sword of the king of Babylon will come upon thee.* V. 12. *By swords of heroes will I cause thy tumult to fall, violent ones of the nations are they all, and will lay waste the pride of Egypt, and all its tumult will be destroyed.* V. 13. *And I will cut off all its cattle from the great waters, that no foot of man may disturb them any more, nor any hoof of cattle disturb them.* V. 14. *Then will I cause their waters to settle and their streams to flow like oil, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah,* V. 15. *When I make the land of Egypt a desert, and the land is made desolate of its fulness, because I smite all the inhabitants therein, and they shall know that I am Jehovah.* V. 16. *A lamentation (mournful ode) is this, and they will sing it mournfully; the daughters of the nations will sing it mournfully, over Egypt and over all its tumult will they sing it mournfully, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

In this concluding strophe the figurative announcement of the preceding one is summed up briefly in literal terms; and toward the close (v. 14) there is a slight intimation of a better future. The destruction of the proud might of Egypt will be effected through the king of Babylon and his brave and violent hosts. **גוֹיִם עָרִיצִי**, as in Eze. 31:12 (see the comm. on Eze. 28: 7). **הַמֶּזְזִי** in vv. 12 and 13 must not be restricted to the multitude of people. It signifies tumult, and



embraces everything in Egypt by which noise and confusion were made (as in Eze. 31: 2 and 18); although the idea of a multitude of people undoubtedly predominates in the use of **הַמִּוֶּן** in v. 12a. **גִּאֲוֹן מִצְרַיִם**, the pride of Egypt, is not that of which Egypt is proud, but whatever is proud or exalts itself in Egypt. The utter devastation of Egypt includes the destruction of the cattle, i.e., of the numerous herds which fed on the grassy banks of the Nile and were driven to the Nile to drink (cf. Gen. 47: 6; 41: 2ff.; Exo. 9: 3); and this is therefore specially mentioned in v. 13, with an allusion to the consequence thereof, namely, that the waters of the Nile would not be disturbed any more either by the foot of man or hoof of beast (compare v. 13b with Eze. 29:11). The disturbing of the water is mentioned with evident reference to v. 2, where Pharaoh is depicted as a sea-monster, which disturbs the streams of water. The disturbance of the water is therefore a figurative representation of the wild driving of the imperial power of Egypt, by which the life-giving streams of the nations were stirred up.

Ver. 14. Then will God cause the waters of Egypt to sink. Hitzig and Kliefoth understand this as signifying the diminution of the abundance of water in the Nile, which had previously overflowed the land and rendered it fertile, but for which there was no further purpose now. According to this explanation, the words would contain a continued picture of the devastation of the land. But this is evidently a mistake, for the simple reason that it is irreconcilable with the **וַאֲזַי**, by which the thought is introduced. **וַאֲזַי**, *tunc*, is more precisely defined by **וַגַּרְוּ בַתְּתִי** in v. 15 as the time when the devastation has taken place; whereas Kliefoth takes the 15th verse, in opposition both to the words and the usage of the language, as the sequel to v. 14, or in other words, regards **בַתְּתִי** as synonymous with **וַנְתַתִּי**. The verse contains a promise, as most of the commentators, led by the Chaldee and Jerome, have correctly assumed. <sup>441</sup> **הַשְׁקִי־אֵ**, to make the water sink, might no doubt signify in itself a diminution of the abundance of water. But if we consider the context, in which reference is made to the disturbance of the water through its being trodden with the feet (v. 13), **הַשְׁקִיעַ** can only signify to settle, i.e., to become clear through the sinking to the bottom of the slime which had been stirred up (cf. Eze. 34:18). The correctness of this explanation is confirmed by the parallel clause, to make their streams flow with oil. To understand this as signifying the slow and gentle flow of the diminished water, would introduce a figure of which there is no trace in Hebrew. Oil is used throughout the Scriptures as a figurative representation of the divine blessing, or the power of the divine Spirit. **כְּשֶׁמֶן**, like oil, according to Hebrew phraseology, is equivalent to “like rivers of oil.” And oil-rivers are not rivers which flow quietly like oil, but rivers which contain oil instead of water (cf. Job. 29: 6), and are symbolical of the rich blessing of God (cf.

Deu. 32:13). The figure is a very appropriate one for Egypt, as the land is indebted to the Nile for all its fertility. Whereas its water had been stirred up and rendered turbid by Pharaoh; after the fall of Pharaoh the Lord will cause the waters of the stream, which pours its blessings upon the land, to purify themselves, and will make its streams flow with oil. The clarified water and flowing oil are figures of the life-giving power of the word and Spirit of God. But this blessing will not flow to Egypt till its natural power is destroyed. Ewald has therefore given the following as the precise meaning of v. 14: “The Messianic times will then for the first time dawn on Egypt, when the waters no more become devastating and turbid, that is to say, through the true knowledge to which the chastisement leads.” V. 16 “rounds off the passage by turning back to v. 2” (Hitzig). The daughters of the nations are mentioned as the singers, because mourning for the dead was for the most part the business of women (cf. Jer. 9:16). The words do not contain a summons to the daughters of the nations to sing the lamentation, but the declaration that they will do it, in which the thought is implied that the predicted devastation of Egypt will certainly occur.

*Eze. 32:17-32.* Funeral-Dirge for the Destruction of the Might of Egypt. — This second lamentation or mourning ode, according to the heading in v. 17, belongs to the same year as the preceding, and to the 15th of the month, no doubt the 12th month; in which case it was composed only fourteen days after the first. The statement of the month is omitted here, as in Eze. 26: 1; and the omission is, no doubt, to be attributed to a copyist in this instance also. In the ode, which Ewald aptly describes as a “dull, heavy lamentation,” we have six regular strophes, preserving the uniform and monotonous character of the lamentations for the dead, in which the thought is worked out, that Egypt, like other great nations, is cast down to the nether world. The whole of it is simply an elegiac expansion of the closing thought of the previous chapter (Eze. 31).

*Eze. 32:18-21.* Introduction and first strophe.

V. 18. *Son of man, lament over the tumult of Egypt, and hurl it down, her, like the daughters of glorious nations, into the nether world, to those who go into the pit!* V. 19. *Whom dost thou surpass in loveliness? Go down and lay thyself with the uncircumcised.* V. 20. *Among those slain with the sword will they fall; the sword is handed, draw her down and all her tumult.* V. 21. *The strong ones of the heroes say of it out of the midst of hell with its helpers: they are gone down, they lie there, the uncircumcised, slain with the sword.* —

**נִיְהָה**, utter a lamentation, and **נְהוֹרְדָהּ**, thrust it (the tumult of Egypt) down, are co-ordinate. With the lamentation, or by means thereof, is Ezekiel to thrust down the tumult of Egypt into hell. The lamentation is God’s word; and as such it has the power to accomplish what it utters. **אֲנִיְהָה** is not intended as a

repetition of the suffix **—הו**, but resumes the principal idea contained in the object already named, viz., **מִצְרַיִם**, Egypt, i.e., its population. **אֲנֹתָהּ** and the daughters of glorious nations are co-ordinate. **בָּנוֹת**, as in the expression, daughter of Tyre, daughter Babel, denotes the population of powerful heathen nations. The **גּוֹיִם אֲדָרָם** can only be the nations enumerated in vv. 22, 24ff., which, according to these verses, are already in Sheol, not about to be thrust down, but thrust down already. Consequently the copula **ו** before **בָּנוֹת** is to be taken in the sense of a comparison, as in 1Sa. 12:15 (cf. Ewald, § 340b). All these glorious nations have also been hurled down by the word of God; and Egypt is to be associated with them. By thus placing Egypt on a level with all the fallen nations, the enumeration of which fills the middle strophes of the ode, the lamentation over Egypt is extended into a funeral-dirge on the fall of all the heathen powers of the world. For **אֶרֶץ פְּתִיחוֹת** and **יִוְרְדֵי בֹר**, compare Eze. 276:20. The ode itself commences in v. 19, by giving prominence to the glory of the falling kingdom. But this prominence consists in the brief inquiry **מִמִּי נִאֻמָּה**, before whom art thou lovely? i.e., art thou more lovely than any one else? The words are addressed either to **הַמּוֹן מִצְרַיִם** (v. 18), or what is more probable, to Pharaoh with all his tumult (cf. v. 32), i.e., to the world-power, Egypt, as embodied in the person of Pharaoh; and the meaning of the question is the following: — Thou, Egypt, art indeed lovely; but thou art not better or more lovely than other mighty heathen nations; therefore thou canst not expect any better fate than to go down into Sheol, and there lie with the uncircumcised. **עֲרֻלִים**, as in Eze. 31:18. This is carried out still further in v. 20, and the ground thereof assigned. The subject to **יִפְלוּ** is the Egyptians, or Pharaoh and his tumult. They fall in the midst of those pierced with the sword. The sword is already handed to the executor of the judgment, the king of Babel (Eze. 31:11). Their destruction is so certain, that the words are addressed to the bearers of the sword: “Draw Egypt and all its tumult down into Sheol” (**מִשְׁכּוֹ** is imperative for **מִשְׁכּוּ** in Exo. 12:21), and, according to v. 21, the heathen already in Sheol are speaking of his destruction. **לֹו יִדְבְּרוּ** is rendered by many, “there speak to him, address him, greet him,” with an allusion to Isa. 14: 9ff., where the king of Babel, when descending into Sheol, is greeted with malicious pleasure by the kings already there. But however obvious the fact may be that Ezekiel has this passage in mind, there is no address in the verse before us as in Isa. 14:10, but simply a statement concerning the Egyptians, made in the third person. Moreover, **אֶת־עֲזָרָיו** could hardly be made to harmonize with **לֹו יִדְבְּרוּ**, if **לֹו** signified *ad eum*. For it is not allowable to connect **עֲתֵעֲזָרָיו** (taken in the sense of along with their helpers) with **אֱלֵי גְבוּרִים** as a noun in apposition, for the simple reason that the two are separated by **מֵתוֹךְ שְׂאוֹל**.

Consequently **אֶת־עֲזָרָיו** can only belong to **יְדַבְּרוּ**: they talk (of him) with his helpers. **עֲזָרָיו**, his (Pharaoh's) helpers are his allies, who have already gone down before him into hell (cf. Eze. 30: 8). The singular suffix, which has offended Hitzig, is quite in order as corresponding to **לוֹ**. The words, "they have gone down, lie there," etc., point once more to the fact that the same fate has happened to the Egyptians as to all the rest of the rulers and nations of the world whom God has judged. For **אֱלֵי גִבּוֹרִים**, strong ones of the heroes, compare the comm. on Eze. 31:11. **שְׂאוּל**, hell = the nether world, the gathering-place of the dead; not the place of punishment for the damned. **חָרֵב חֲלָלִי** without the article is a predicate, and not in apposition to **הַעֲרָלִים**. On the application of this epithet to the Egyptians, Kliefoth has correctly observed that "the question whether the Egyptians received circumcision is one that has no bearing upon this passage; for in the sense in which Ezekiel understands circumcision, the Egyptians were uncircumcised, even if they were accustomed to circumcise their flesh."

In the four following strophes (vv. 22-30) a series of heathen nations is enumerated, whom the Egyptian finds already in hell, and with whom he will share the same fate. There are six of these — namely, Asshur, Elam, Meshech-Tubal, Edom, the princes of the north, and Sidon. The six are divisible into two classes — three great and remote world-powers, and three smaller neighbouring nations. In this no regard is paid to the time of destruction. With the empire of Asshur, which had already fallen, there are associated Elam and Meshech-Tubal, two nations, which only rose to the rank of world-powers in the more immediate and more remote future; and among the neighbouring nations, the Sidonians and princes of the north, i.e., The Syrian kings, are grouped with Edom, although the Sidonians had long ago given up their supremacy to Tyre, and the Aramean kings, who had once so grievously oppressed the kingdom of Israel, had already been swallowed up in the Assyrian and Chaldean empire. It may, indeed, be said that "in any case, at the time when Ezekiel prophesied, princes enough had already descended into Sheol both of the Assyrians and Elamites, etc., to welcome the Egyptians as soon as they came" (Kliefoth); but with the same justice may it also be said that many of the rulers and countrymen of Egypt had also descended into Sheol already, at the time when Pharaoh, reigning in Ezekiel's day, was to share the same fate. It is evident, therefore, that "any such reflection upon chronological relations is out of place in connection with our text, the intention of which is merely to furnish an exemplification" (Kliefoth), and that Ezekiel looks upon Egypt more in the light of a world-power, discerning in its fall the overthrow of all the heathen power of the world, and predicting it under the prophetic picture, that Pharaoh and his

tumult are expected and welcomed by the princes and nations that have already descended into Sheol, as coming to share their fate with them.

*Eze. 32:22, 23.* Second strophe.

*V. 22. There is Asshur and all its multitude, round about it their graves, all of them slain, fallen by the sword V. 23. Whose graves are made in the deepest pit, and its multitude is round about its grave; all slain, fallen by the sword, who spread terror in the land of the living.*

The enumeration commences with Asshur, the world-power, which had already been overthrown by the Chaldeans. It is important to notice here, that **אַשּׁוּר**, like **עֵלָם** in v. 24, and **מִשְׁךְ תְּבַל** in v. 26, is construed as a feminine, as **הַמְּנוּחָה** which follows in every case plainly shows. It is obvious, therefore, that the predominant idea is not that of the king or people, but that of the kingdom or world-power. It is true that in the suffixes attached to **סְבִיבוֹתָיו קְבֵרָתָיו** in v. 22, and **סְבִיבוֹתָיו** in vv. 25 and 26, the masculine alternates with the feminine, and Hitzig therefore proposes to erase these words; but the alternation may be very simply explained, on the ground that the ideas of the kingdom and its king are not kept strictly separate, but that the words oscillate from one idea to the other. It is affirmed of Asshur, that as a world-power it lies in Sheol, and the graves of its countrymen are round about the graves of its ruler. They all lie there as those who have fallen by the sword, i.e., who have been swept away by a judgment of God. To this is added in v. 23 the declaration that the graves of Asshur lie in the utmost sides, i.e., the utmost or deepest extremity of Sheol; whereas so long as this power together with its people was in the land of the living, i.e., so long as they ruled on earth, they spread terror all around them by their violent deeds. From the loftiest height of earthly might and greatness, they are hurled down to the lowest hell. The higher on earth, the deeper in the nether world. Hävernick has entirely misunderstood the words “round about Asshur are its graves” (v. 22), and “its multitude is round about its grave” (the grave of this world-power), when he finds therein the thought that the graves and corpses are to be regarded as separated, so that the dead are waiting near their graves in deepest sorrow, looking for the honour of burial, but looking in vain. There is not a word of this in the text, but simply that the graves of the people lie round about the grave of their ruler.

*Eze. 32:24, 25.* Third strophe.

*V. 24. There is Elam, and all its multitude round about its grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised into the nether world, who spread terror before them in the land of the living, and bear their shame with those who went into the pit. V. 25. In the midst of the slain have they made it a bed with all its multitude, round about it are their graves; all of them uncircumcised, pierced with*

*the sword; because terror was spread before them in the land of the living, they bear their shame with those who have gone into the pit. In the midst of slain ones is he laid.*

Asshur is followed by עֵילָם, Elam, the warlike people of Elymais, i.e., Susiana, the modern Chusistan, whose archers served in the Assyrian army (Isa. 22: 6), and which is mentioned along with the Medes as one of the conquerors of Babylon (Isa. 21: 2), whereas Jeremiah prophesied its destruction at the commencement of Zedekiah's reign (Jer. 49:34ff.). Ezekiel says just the same of Elam as he has already said of Asshur, and almost in the same words. The only difference is, that his description is more copious, and that he expresses more distinctly the thought of shameful destruction which is implied in the fact of lying in Sheol among the slain, and repeats it a second time, and that he also sets the bearing of shame into Sheol in contrast with the terror which Elam had spread around it during its life on earth. נָשָׂא כְלִמָּה, as in Eze. 16:52. The ב in בְּכַל־הַמִּוֶּנֶה is either the "with of association," or the fact of being in the midst of a crowd. לָהּ refers to עֵילָם; and נָתַנוּ has an indefinite subject, "they gave" = there was given. מְשָׁכָב, the resting-place of the dead, as in 2Ch. 16:14. The last clause in v. 25 is an emphatic repetition of the leading thought: he (Elam) is brought or laid in the midst of the slain.

*Eze. 32:26-28.* Fourth strophe.

*V. 26. There is Meshech-Tubal and all its multitude, its graves round about it; all of them uncircumcised, slain in with the sword, because they spread terror before them in the land of the living. V. 27. They lie not with the fallen heroes of uncircumcised men, who went down into hell with their weapons of war, whose swords they laid under their heads; their iniquities have come upon their bones, because they were a terror of the heroes in the land of the living. V. 28. Thou also wilt be dashed to pieces among uncircumcised men, and lie with those slain with the sword.*

מְשָׁךְ and תְּבַל, the Moschi and Tibareni of the Greeks (see the comm. on Eze. 27:13), are joined together ἄσυνδεῶς here as one people or heathen power; and Ewald, Hitzig, and others suppose that the reference is to the Scythians, who invaded the land in the time of Josiah, and the majority of whom had miserably perished not very long before (Herod. i. 106). But apart from the fact that the prophets of the Old Testament make no allusion to any invasion of Palestine by the Scythians (see *Minor Prophets*, vol. ii. p. 124, Eng. transl.), this view is founded entirely upon the erroneous supposition that in this funeral-dirge Ezekiel mentions only such peoples as had sustained great defeats a longer or shorter time before. Meshech-Tubal comes into consideration here, as in Eze. 38, as a northern power, which is overcome in its conflict with the kingdom of God, and is prophetically exhibited by the prophet as having already fallen under the judgment of death. In v. 26 Ezekiel makes the same

announcement as he has already made concerning Asshur in vv. 22, 23, and with regard to Elam in vv. 24, 25. But the announcement in v. 27 is obscure. Rosenmüller, Ewald, Hävernick, and others, regard this verse as a question (אלא in the sense of הלא): “and should they not lie with (rest with) other fallen heroes of the uncircumcised, who...?” i.e., they do lie with them, and could not possibly expect a better fate. But although the interrogation is merely indicated by the tone where the language is excited, and therefore אלא might stand for הלא, as in Exo. 8:22, there is not the slightest indication of such excitement in the description given here as could render this assumption a probable one. On the contrary, אלא at the commencement of the sentence suggests the supposition that an antithesis is intended to the preceding verse. And the probability of this conjecture is heightened by the allusion made to heroes, who have descended into the nether world with their weapons of war; inasmuch as, at all events, something is therein affirmed which does not apply to all the heroes who have gone down into hell. The custom of placing the weapons of fallen heroes along with them in the grave is attested by Diod. Sic. xviii. 26; Arrian, i. 5; Virgil, *Ane.* vi. 233 (cf. Dougltaei *Analectt.* ss. i. pp. 281, 282); and, according to the ideas prevailing in ancient times, it was a mark of great respect to the dead. But the last place in which we should expect to meet with any allusion to the payment of such honour to the dead would be in connection with Meshech and Tubal, those wild hordes of the north, who were only known to Israel by hearsay. We therefore follow the Vulgate, the Rabbins, and many of the earlier commentators, and regard the verse before us as containing a declaration that the slain of Meshech-Tubal would not receive the honour of resting in the nether world along with those fallen heroes whose weapons were buried with them in the grave, because they fell with honour. <sup>142</sup>

בְּיָמֵי מִלְחָמָה, instruments of war, weapons, as in Deu. 1:41. The text leaves it uncertain who they were who had been buried with such honours. The Seventy have confounded מַעֲרָלִים with מַעֲזָלִים, and rendered נַפְלִים מַעֲרָלִים, τῶν πεπτωκότων ἀπ’ αἰῶνος possibly thinking of the *gibborim* of Gen. 6: 4. Dathe and Hitzig propose to alter the text to this; and even Hävernick imagines that the prophet may possibly have had such passages as Gen. 6: 4 and 10: 9ff. floating before his mind. But there is not sufficient ground to warrant an alteration of the text; and if Ezekiel had had Gen. 6: 4 in his mind, he would no doubt have written הַגְּבוּרִים. The clause וַתְּהִי עֲוֹנוֹתָם is regarded by the more recent commentators as a continuation of the preceding וַיִּתְּנוּ וְגוֹ', which is a very natural conclusion, if we simply take notice of the construction. But if we consider the sense of the words, this combination can hardly be sustained. The words, “and so were their iniquities upon their bones” (or they came upon them), can well be understood as an explanation of the reason for their

descending into Sheol with their weapons, and lying upon their swords. We must therefore regard **נָתַדוּ עֲוֹנוֹתָם** as a continuation of **יִשְׁכְּבוּ**, so that their not resting with those who were buried with their weapons of war furnishes the proof that their guilt lay upon their bones. The words, therefore, have no other meaning than the phrase **יִשְׁאוּ כְּלִמָּתָם** in vv. 24 and 30. Sin comes upon the bones when the punishment consequent upon it falls upon the bones of the sinner. In the last clause we connect **גִּבּוֹרִים** with **הַתִּית**, terror of the heroes, i.e., terrible even to heroes on account of their savage and cruel nature. In v. 28 we cannot take **אֲתָהּ** as referring to Meshech-Tubal, as many of the commentators propose. A direct address to that people would be at variance with the whole plan of the ode. Moreover, the declaration contained in the verse would contradict what precedes. As Meshech-Tubal is already lying in Sheol among the slain, according to v. 26, the announcement cannot be made to it for the first time here, that it is to be dashed in pieces and laid with those who are slain with the sword. It is the Egyptian who is addressed, and he is told that this fate will also fall upon him. And through this announcement, occurring in the midst of the list of peoples that have already gone down to Sheol, the design of that list is once more called to mind.

*Eze. 32:29, 30.* Fifth strophe.

*V. 29. There are Edom, its kings and all its princes, who in spite of their bravery are associated with those that are pierced with the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised and with those that have gone down into the pit. V. 30. There are princes of the north, all of them, and all the Sidonians who have gone down to the slain, been put to shame in spite of the dread of them because of their bravery; they lie there as uncircumcised, and bear their shame with those who have gone into the pit.*

In this strophe Ezekiel groups together the rest of the heathen nations in the neighbourhood of Israel; and in doing so, he changes the **שָׁם** of the preceding list for **שָׁמָּה**, thither. This might be taken prophetically: thither will they come, “to these they also belong” (Hävernick), only such nations being mentioned here as are still awaiting their destruction. But, in the first place, the perfects **נָתְנוּ**, **אֲשֶׁר יָרְדוּ**, in vv. 29, 30, do not favour this explanation, inasmuch as they are used as preterites in vv. 22, 24, 25, 26, 27; and, secondly, even in the previous strophes, not only are such peoples mentioned as have already perished, but some, like Elam and Meshech-Tubal, which did not rise into historical importance, or exert any influence upon the development of the kingdom of God till after Ezekiel’s time, whereas the Edomites and Sidonians were already approaching destruction. We therefore regard **שָׁמָּה** as simply a variation of expression in the sense of “thither have they come,” without discovering any allusion to the future. — In the case of Edom, kings and



נְשִׂאִים, i.e., tribe-princes, are mentioned. The allusion is to the *'alluphim* or phylarchs, literally chiliarchs, the heads of the leading families (Gen. 36:15ff.), in whose hands the government of the people lay, inasmuch as the kings were elective, and were probably chosen by the phylarchs (see the comm. on Gen. 36:31ff.). בְּגִבּוֹרָתָם, in, or with their bravery, i.e., in spite of it. There is something remarkable in the allusion to princes of the north (נְסִיכֵי, lit., persons enfeoffed, vassal-princes; see the comm. on Jos. 13:21 and Mic. 5:4) in connection with the Sidonians, and after Meshech-Tubal the representative of the northern nations. The association with the Sidonians renders the conjecture a very natural one, that allusion is made to the north of Palestine, and more especially to the Aram of Scripture, with its many separate states and princes (Hävernick); although Jer. 25:26, “the kings of the north, both far and near,” does not furnish a conclusive proof of this. So much, at any rate, is certain, that the princes of the north are not to be identified with the Sidonians. For, as Kliefoth has correctly observed, “there are six heathen nations mentioned, viz., Asshur, Elam, Meshech-Tubal, Edom, the princes of the north, and Sidon; and if we add Egypt to the list, we shall have seven, which would be thoroughly adapted, as it was eminently intended, to depict the fate of universal heathenism.” A principle is also clearly discernible in the mode in which they are grouped. Asshur, Elam, and Meshech-Tubal represent the greater and more distant world-powers; Edom the princes of the north, and Sidon the neighbouring nations of Israel on both south and north. בַּחֲתִיתָם מִגִּבּוֹרָתָם, literally, in dread of them, (which proceeded) from their bravery, i.e., which their bravery inspired. וַיִּשְׂאוּ וְגוֹ', as in v. 24.

*Eze. 32:31, 32.* Sixth and last strophe.

V. 31. *Pharaoh will see them, and comfort himself over all his multitude. Pharaoh and all his army are slain with the sword, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.* V. 32. *For I caused him to spread terror in the land of the living, therefore is he laid in the midst of uncircumcised, those slain with the sword. Pharaoh and all his multitude, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

In these verses the application to Egypt follows. Pharaoh will see in the nether world all the greater and smaller heathen nations with their rulers; and when he sees them all given up to the judgment of death, he will comfort himself over the fate which has fallen upon himself and his army, as he will perceive that he could not expect any better lot than that of the other rulers of the world. אֵל נָחַם, to comfort oneself, as in Eze. 31:16 and 14:22. Hitzig's assertion, that אֵל נָחַם never signifies *to comfort oneself*, is incorrect (see the comm. on Eze. 14:22). נָתַתִּי אֶת־הַחֲתִיתוֹ, I have given terror of him, i.e., I have made him an instrument of terror. The *Keri חֲתִיתִי* arose from a misunderstanding. The

*Chetib* is confirmed by vv. 24 and 26. In v. 32*b* the ode is brought to a close by returning even in expression to vv. 19 and 20*a*.

If, now, we close with a review of the whole of the contents of the words of God directed against Egypt, in all of them is the destruction of the might of Pharaoh and Egypt as a world-power foretold. And this prophecy has been completely fulfilled. As Kliefoth has most truly observed, “one only needs to enter the pyramids of Egypt and its catacombs to see that the glory of the Pharaohs has gone down into Sheol. And it is equally certain that this destruction of the glory of ancient Egypt dates from the times of the Babylonio-Persian empire. Moreover, this destruction was so thorough, that even to the New Egypt of the Ptolemies the character of the Old Egypt was a perfect enigma, a thing forgotten and incomprehensible.” But if Ezekiel repeatedly speaks of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon as executing this judgment upon Egypt, we must bear in mind that here, as in the case of Tyre (see the comm. on Eze. 28: 1-19), Ezekiel regards Nebuchadnezzar as the instrument of the righteous punishment of God in general, and discerns in what he accomplishes the sum of all that in the course of ages has been gradually fulfilling itself in history. At the same time, it is equally certain that this view of the prophet would have no foundation in truth unless Nebuchadnezzar really did conquer Egypt and lay it waste, and the might and glory of this ancient empire were so shattered thereby, that it never could recover its former greatness, but even after the turning of its captivity, i.e., after its recovery from the deadly wounds which the imperial monarchy of Babylonia and afterwards of Persia inflicted upon it, still remained a lowly kingdom, which could “no more rule over the nations” (Eze. 29:13-16). Volney, however, in his *Recherch. nouv. sur l’hist. anc.* (III pp. 151ff.), and Hitzig (*Eze.* p. 231), dispute the conquest and devastation of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, because the Greek historians, with Herodotus (ii. 161ff.) at their head, make no allusion whatever to an invasion of Egypt; and their statements are even opposed to such an occurrence. But the silence of Greek historians, especially of Herodotus, is a most “miserable” argument. The same historians do not say a word about the defeat of Necho by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish; and yet even Hitzig accepts this as an indisputable fact. Herodotus and his successors derived their accounts of Egypt from the communications of Egyptian priests, who suppressed everything that was humiliating to the pride of Egypt, and endeavoured to cover it up with their accounts of glorious deeds which the Pharaohs had performed. But Hitzig has by no means proved that the statements of the Greeks are at variance with the assumption of a Chaldean invasion of Egypt, whilst he has simply rejected but not refuted the attempts of Perizonius, Vitringa, Hävernick, and others, to reconcile the biblical narrative of the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar with the accounts given by Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and other Greeks,

concerning the mighty feats of Necho, and his being slain by Amasis. The remark that, in the description given by Herodotus, Amasis appears as an independent king by the side of Cambyses, only less powerful than the Persian monarch, proves nothing more, even assuming the correctness of the fact, than that Amasis had made Egypt once more independent of Babylonia on the sudden overthrow of the Chaldean monarchy.

The conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, after the attitude which Pharaoh Necho assumed towards the Babylonian empire, and even attempted to maintain in the time of Zedekiah by sending an army to the relief of Jerusalem when besieged by the Chaldeans, is not only extremely probable in itself, but confirmed by testimony outside the Bible. Even if no great importance can be attached to the notice of Megasthenes, handed down by Strabo (xv. 1. 6) and Josephus (*c. Ap.* i. 20): “he says that he (Nebuchadnezzar) conquered the greater part of Libya and Iberia;” Josephus not only quotes from Berosus (*l.c.* i. 19) to the effect that “the Babylonian got possession of *Egypt*, Syria, Phoenicia, Arabia,” but, on the ground of such statements, relates the complete fulfilment of the prophecies of Scripture, saying, in *Antt.* x. 9. 7, with reference to Nebuchadnezzar, “he fell upon Egypt to conquer it. And the reigning king he slew; and having appointed another in his place, made those Jews prisoners who had hitherto resided there, and led them into Babylon.” And even if Josephus does not give his authority in this case, the assertion that he gathered this from the prophecies of Jeremiah is untrue; because, immediately before the words we have quoted, he says that what Jeremiah had prophesied (Jer. 43 and 44) had thus come to pass; making a distinction, therefore, between prophecy and history. And suspicion is not to be cast upon this testimony by such objections as that Josephus does not mention the name of the Egyptian king, or state precisely the time when Egypt was conquered, but merely affirms in general terms that it was after the war with the Ammonites and Moabites.

## Second Half

### THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF SALVATION

#### CH. 33-48

**Eze. 33-48.** In the first half of his book, Ezekiel has predicted severe judgments, both to the covenant nation and to the heathen nations. But to the people of Israel he has also promised the turning of its captivity, after the judgment of the destruction of the kingdom and the dispersion of the refractory generation in the heathen lands; not merely their restoration to their own land, but the setting up of the covenant made with the fathers, and the renewing of the restored nation by the Spirit of God, so that it will serve the Lord upon His

holy mountain with offerings acceptable to Him (compare Eze. 11:16-21; 16:60, and 20:40ff.). On the other hand, he has threatened the heathenish peoples and kingdoms of the world with devastation and everlasting destruction, so that they will be remembered no more (compare Eze. 21:36, 37; 25: 7, 10, 16; 26:21; 27:36, and 28:19), or rather with the lasting humiliation and overthrow of their glory in the nether world (compare Eze. 29:13ff., 31:15ff., and 32:17ff.); whilst God will create a glorious thing in the land of the living, gather Israel from its dispersion, cause it to dwell safely and happily in the land given to His servant Jacob, and a horn to grow thereto (Eze. 26:20; 28:25ff., and 29:21). — This announcement is carried out still further in the second half of the book, where first of all the pardon, blessing, and glorification promised to the covenant nation, after its sifting by the judgment of exile, are unfolded according to their leading features, and the destruction of its foes is foretold (Eze. 34-39); and then, secondly, there is depicted the establishment of the renovated kingdom of God for everlasting continuance (Eze. 40-48). The prophet's mouth was opened to make the announcement when a fugitive brought the tidings of the destruction both of Jerusalem and of the kingdom to the captives by the Chaboras; and this constitutes the second half of the prophetic ministry of Ezekiel. The introduction to this is contained in Eze. 33, whilst the announcement itself is divisible into two parts, according to its contents, as just indicated, — namely, first, the promise of the restoration and glorification of Israel (Eze. 34-39); and secondly, the apocalyptic picture of the new constitution of the kingdom of God (Eze. 40-48).

### **Ch. 33. The Calling of the Prophet, and His Future Attitude towards the People**

*Eze. 33.* This chapter is divided into two words of God of an introductory character, which are separated by the historical statement in vv. 21 and 22, though substantially they are one. The first (vv. 1-20) exhibits the calling of the prophet for the time to come; the second (vv. 23-33) sets before him his own attitude towards the people, and the attitude of the people towards his further announcement. The first precedes the arrival of the messenger, who brought to the prophet and the exiles the tidings of the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (v. 21). The second was uttered afterwards. The fall of the holy city formed a turning-point in the prophetic work of Ezekiel. Previous to this catastrophe, God had appointed him to be a watchman over Israel: to show the people their sins, and to proclaim the consequent punishment, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah, together with the dispersion of the people among the heathen. But after the city had fallen, and the judgment predicted by him had taken place, the object to be aimed at was to inspire those who were desponding and despairing of salvation with confidence

and consolation, by predicting the restoration of the fallen kingdom of God in a new and glorious form, to show them the way to new life, and to open the door for their entrance into the new kingdom of God. The two divisions of our chapter correspond to this, which was to be henceforth the task imposed upon the prophet. In the first (vv. 1-20), his calling to be the spiritual watchman over the house of Israel is renewed (vv. 2-9), with special instructions to announce to the people, who are inclined to despair under the burden of their sins, that the Lord has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but will give life to him who turns from his iniquity (vv. 10-20). The kernel and central point of this word of God are found in the lamentation of the people: "Our transgressions and sins lie upon us, and we are pining away through them; how then can we live?" (v. 10), together with the reply given by the Lord: "By my life, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked...turn ye, turn yourselves; why do ye wish to die?" (v. 11). The way is prepared for this by vv. 2-9, whilst vv. 12-20 carry out this promise of God still further, and assign the reason for it. — The thoughts with which the promise of the Lord, thus presented as an antidote to despair, is introduced and explained are not new, however, but repetitions of earlier words of God. The preparatory introduction in vv. 2-9 is essentially a return to the word in Eze. 3:17-21, with which the Lord closes the prophet's call by pointing out to him the duty and responsibility connected with his vocation. And the reason assigned in vv. 12-20, together with the divine promise in v. 11, is taken from Eze. 18, where the prophet unfolds the working of the righteousness of God; and more precisely from vv. 20-32 of that chapter, where the thought is more fully expanded, that the judgments of God can be averted by repentance and conversion. From all this it is indisputably evident that the first section of this chapter contains an introduction to the second half of the prophecies of Ezekiel; and this also explains the absence of any date at the head of the section, or the "remarkable" fact that the date (vv. 21 and 22) is not given till the middle of the chapter, where it stands between the first and second of the words of God contained therein. — The word of God in vv. 23ff. was no doubt addressed to the prophet after the fugitive had arrived with the tidings of the fall of Jerusalem; whereas the word by which the prophet was prepared for his further labours (vv. 1-20) preceded that event, and coincided in point of time with the working of God upon the prophet on the evening preceding the arrival of the fugitive, through which his mouth was opened for further *speaking* (v. 22); and it is placed before this historical statement because it was a renewal of his call.

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## VV. 1-20. CALLING OF THE PROPHET FOR THE FUTURE

*Eze. 33: 1-9.* The prophet's office of watchman.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, speak to the sons of thy people, and say to them, When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their company and set him for a watchman, V. 3. And he seeth the sword come upon the land, and bloweth the trumpet, and warneth the people; V. 4. If, then, one should hear the blast of the trumpet and not take warning, so that the sword should come and take him away, his blood would come upon his own head. V. 5. He heard the blast of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood will come upon him: whereas, if he had taken warning, he would have delivered his soul. V. 6. But if the watchman seeth the sword come, and bloweth not the trumpet, and the people is not warned; and the sword should come and take away a soul from them, he is taken away through his guilt, but his blood will I demand from the watchman's hand. V. 7. Thou, then, son of man, I have set thee for the watchman to the house of Israel; thou shalt hear the word from my mouth, and warn them for me. V. 8. If I say to the sinner, Sinner, thou wilt die the death; and thou speakest not to warn the sinner from his way, he, the sinner, will die for his iniquity, and his blood I will demand from thy hand. V. 9. But if thou hast warned the sinner from his way, to turn from it, and he does not turn from his way, he will die for his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.*

Vv. 7-9, with the exception of slight deviations which have little influence upon the sense, are repeated *verbatim* from Eze. 3:17-19. The repetition of the duty binding upon the prophet, and of the responsibility connected therewith, is introduced, however, in vv. 2-6, by an example taken from life, and made so plain that every one who heard the words must see that Ezekiel was obliged to call the attention of the people to the judgment awaiting them, and to warn them of the threatening danger, and that this obligation rested upon him still. In this respect the expansion, which is wanting in Eze. 3, serves to connect the following prophecies of Ezekiel with the threats of judgment contained in the first part. The meaning of it is the following: As it is the duty of the appointed watchman of a land to announce to the people the approach of the enemy, and if he fail to do this he is deserving of death; so Ezekiel also, as the watchman of Israel appointed by God, not only is bound to warn the people of the approaching judgment, in order to fulfil his duty, but has already warned them of it, so that whoever has not taken warning has been overtaken by the sword because of his sin. As, then, Ezekiel has only discharged his duty and obligation by so doing, so has he the same duty still further to perform. — In v. 2 אָרַץ is placed at the head in an absolute form; and כִּי אָבִיא וְגו', "if I bring the sword upon a land," is to be understood with this restriction: "so that the enemy is on the way and an attack may be expected" (Hitzig). מִקְצֵיהֶם, from the end of the people of the land, i.e., one taken from the whole body of the people, as in Gen. 47: 2 (see the comm. on Gen. 19: 4). Blowing the trumpet is a signal of alarm on the approach of an enemy (compare Amo. 3: 6; Jer. 4: 5). נִזְהָר in v. 5b is a participle; on the other hand, both before and afterwards it is a perfect,

pointed with *Kametz* on account of the tone. For vv. 7-9, see the exposition of Eze. 3:17-19.

*Eze. 33:10-20.* As watchman over Israel, Ezekiel is to announce to those who are despairing of the mercy of God, that the Lord will preserve from destruction those who turn from their sin, and lead them into life.

V. 10. *Thou then, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Ye rightly say, Our transgressions and our sins lie upon us, and in them we vanish away; how, then, can we live?* V. 11. *Say to them, As truly as I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but when the sinner turneth from his way, he shall live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways! for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* V. 12. *And thou, son of man, say to the sons of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous man will not deliver him in the day of his transgression, and the sinner will not fall through his sin in the day that he turneth from his sin, and the righteous man will not be able to live thereby in the day that he sinneth.* V. 13. *If I say to the righteous man that he shall live, and he relies upon his righteousness and does wrong, all his righteousnesses will not be remembered; and for his wrong that he has done, he will die.* V. 14. *If I say to the sinner, Thou shalt die, and he turns from his sin, and does justice and righteousness,* V. 15. *So that the wicked returns the pledge, restores what has been robbed, walks in the statutes of life without doing wrong, he will live, not die.* V. 16. *All his sins which he has committed shall not be remembered against him; he has done justice and righteousness, he will live.* V. 17. *And the sons of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not right, but they — their way is not right.* V. 18. *If the righteous man turneth from his righteousness and doeth wrong, he shall die thereby;* V. 19. *But if the wicked man turneth from his wickedness and doeth right and righteousness, he will live thereby.* V. 20. *And yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not right. I will judge you every one according to his ways, O house of Israel.*

In v. 10 and 11 the prophet's calling for the future is set before him, inasmuch as God instructs him to announce to those who are in despair on account of their sins the gracious will of the Lord. The threat contained in the law (Lev. 26:39), **יִמְקוּ בְעֵוֹנָם**, of which Ezekiel had repeatedly reminded the people with warning, and, last of all, when predicting the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (compare Eze. 4:17 and 24:23), had pressed heavily upon their heart, when the threatened judgment took place, so that they quote the words, not "in self-defence," as Hävernick erroneously supposes, but in despair of any deliverance. Ezekiel is to meet this despair of little faith by the announcement that the Lord has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but desires his conversion and his life. Ezekiel had already set this word of grave before the people in Eze. 18:23, 32, accompanied with the summons to salvation for them to lay to heart: there, it was done to overthrow the delusion that the present generation had to atone for the sins of the fathers; but here, to lift up the hearts of those who were despairing of salvation; and for this reason it is accompanied with the asseveration (wanting in Eze. 18:23 and 32): "as

truly as I live, saith the Lord,” and with the urgent appeal to repent and turn. But in order to preclude the abuse of this word of consolation by making it a ground of false confidence in their own righteousness, Ezekiel repeats in vv. 12-20 the principal thoughts contained in that announcement (Eze. 18:20-32) — namely, first of all, in vv. 12-16, the thought that the righteousness of the righteous is of no avail to him if he gives himself up to the unrighteousness, and that the sinner will not perish on account of his sin if he turns from his wickedness and strives after righteousness (יִבְשֵׁל בָּהּ, v. 12, as in Hos. 5: 5, Jer. 6:15; compare Eze. 18:24, 25, and 21, 22; and for vv. 14 and 15, more especially Eze. 18: 5 and 7); and then, secondly, in vv. 17-20, the reproof of those who find fault with the way of the Lord (compare Eze. 18:25, 27, 29, 30).

**Eze. 33:21, 22.** Tidings of the fall of Jerusalem, and the consequences with regard to the prophet.

*V. 21. And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the tenth (month), on the fifth of the month after our being taken captive, there came to me a fugitive from Jerusalem, and said, The city is smitten. V. 22. And the hand of Jehovah had come upon me in the evening before the arrival of the fugitive, and He opened my mouth, till he came to me in the morning; and so was my mouth opened, and I was silent no more.*

In these verses the fulfilment of the promise made by God to the prophet in Eze. 24:25-27, after the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, is recorded. The chronological datum, as to the precise time at which the messenger arrived with the account of the destruction of Jerusalem, serves to mark with precision the point of time at which the obstacle was removed, and the prophet was able to speak and prophesy without restraint. — The fact that the tidings of the destruction of Jerusalem, which took place in the fifth month of the eleventh year, are said to have only reached the exiles in the tenth month of the twelfth year, that is to say, nearly a year and a half after it occurred, does not warrant our following the Syriac, as Doederlein and Hitzig have done, calling in question the correctness of the text and substituting the eleventh year for the twelfth. With the distance at which Ezekiel was living, namely, in northern Mesopotamia, and with the fearful confusion which followed the catastrophe, a year and a half might very easily pass by before a fugitive arrived with the information. But Hitzig's assertion, that Ezekiel would contradict himself, inasmuch as, according to Eze. 26: 1, 2, he received intelligence of the affair in the eleventh year, is founded upon a misinterpretation of the passage quoted. It is not stated there that Ezekiel received this information through a fugitive or any man whatever, but simply that God had revealed to him the fall of Jerusalem even before it occurred. לְגִלוֹתֵינוּ, after our being led away (v. 21 and Eze. 40: 1), coincides with לְגִלוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ יִיכִיָּן in Eze. 1: 2. הַבְּתָהּ, smitten, i. e., conquered and destroyed, exterminated. In the clause יִהְיֶה וְגו'.



וַיִּד, the verb הִתְחַלַּק is a pluperfect, and אֵלַי stands for עָלַי, according to the later usage. The formula indicates the translation of the prophet into an ecstatic state (see the comm. on Eze. 1: 3), in which his mouth was opened to speak, that is to say, the silence imposed upon him was taken away. The words, “till he came to me in the morning,” etc., are not to be understood as signifying that the prophet’s mouth had only been opened for the time from evening till morning; for this would be opposed to the following sentence. They simply affirm that the opening of the mouth took place before the arrival of the fugitive, the night before the morning of his arrival. וַיִּפְתָּח פִּי, which follows, is an emphatic repetition, introduced as a link with which to connect the practically important statement that from that time forward he was not speechless any more. — It was in all probability shortly afterwards that Ezekiel was inspired with the word of God which follows in vv. 23-33, as we may infer from the contents of the word itself, which laid the foundation for the prophet’s further prophesying. But nothing can be gathered from v. 22 with regard to the time when this and the following words of God (as far as Eze. 39), of which no chronological data are given, were communicated to the prophet and uttered by him. His being “silent no more” by no means involves immediate or continuous speaking, but simply recalls the command to be speechless. There is no ground for the assumption that all these words of God were communicated to him in one night (Hävernick, Hengstenberg, and others), either in v. 22 or in the contents of these divine revelations.

## **VV. 23-33. PREACHING OF REPENTANCE AFTER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM**

The first word of God, which Ezekiel received after the arrival of the fugitive with the intelligence of the destruction of Jerusalem, was not of a consolatory, but of a rebuking nature, and directed against those who, while boasting in an impenitent state of mind of the promise given to the patriarchs of the everlasting possession of the Holy Land, fancied that they could still remain in possession of the promised land even after the destruction of Jerusalem and of the kingdom of Judah. This delusion the prophet overthrows by the announcement that the unrighteous are to have no share in the possession of the land of Israel, but are to perish miserably, and that the land is to be utterly waste and without inhabitants (vv. 23-29). The Lord then shows him that his countrymen will indeed come to him and listen to his words, but will only do that which is pleasant to themselves; that they will still seek after gain, and not do his words; and that it will not be till after his words have been fulfilled that they will come to the knowledge of the fact that he really was a prophet (vv. 30-33). We perceive from these last verses that the threat uttered in vv. 24-29 was to form the basis for Ezekiel’s further prophecies, so that the whole of this word of God

has only the force of an introduction to his further labours. But however the two halves of this word of God may appear to differ, so far as their contents are concerned, they are nevertheless closely connected. The state of heart disclosed in the first half, with reference to the judgment that has already fallen upon the land and kingdom, is to preclude the illusion, that the fact of the people's coming to the prophet to hear his words is a sign of penitential humiliation under the punishing hand of God, and to bring out the truth, that the salvation which he is about to foretell to the people is only to be enjoyed by those who turn with sincerity to the Lord.

*Eze. 33:23-29.* False reliance upon God's promises.

*V. 23. And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 24. Son of man, the inhabitants of these ruins in the land of Israel speak thus: Abraham was one, and received the land for a possession; but we are many, the land is given to us for a possession. V. 25. Therefore say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Ye eat upon the blood, and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood, and would ye possess the land? V. 26. Ye rely upon your sword, do abomination, and one defileth another's wife, and would ye possess the land? V. 27. Speak thus to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, By my life, those who are in the ruins shall fall by the sword, and whoever is in the open field him do I give to the beasts to devour, and those who are in the fortresses and caves shall die of the pestilence. V. 28. And I make the land devastation and waste, and its proud might shall have an end, and the mountains of Israel shall be waste, so that no one passeth through. V. 29. And they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I make the land devastation and waste because of all the abominations which they have done.*

This threat is directed against the people who remained behind in the land of Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem. **יְשִׁבֵי הַחֲרָבוֹת** are the Israelites who dwelt amidst the ruins of the Holy Land, the remnant of the people left behind in the land. For it is so evident as to need no proof that Kliefoth is wrong in asserting that by **הַחֲרָבוֹת** we are to understand the district bordering on the Chaboras, which was not properly cultivated; and by the inhabitants thereof, the exiles who surrounded Ezekiel. It is only by confounding **אָמַר** and **דָּבַר** that Kliefoth is able to set aside the more precise definition of the inhabitants of these ruins contained in the words **אֵל אֲדַמַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל**, and to connect **אֲדַ** **יִשׁ** **אֵל** with **אֲמָרִים**, "they speak concerning the land of Israel;" and in v. 27 it is only in a forced manner that he can generalize **הַחֲרָבוֹת** and take it as referring to the waste places both in the Holy Land and on the Chaboras. The fact, moreover, that vv. 30-33 treat of the Israelites by the Chaboras, is no proof whatever that they must also be referred to in vv. 24-29. For the relation in which the two halves of this word of God stand to one another is not that "vv. 30-33 depict the impression made upon the hearers by the words contained in vv. 24-29," so that "the persons alluded to in vv. 30-33 must necessarily be the

hearers of vv. 24-29.” Vv. 30-33 treat in quite a general manner of the attitude which the prophet’s countrymen would assume towards his words — that is to say, not merely to his threats, but also to his predictions of salvation; they would only attend to that which had a pleasant sound to them, but they would not do his words (vv. 31, 32). It is quite in harmony with this, that in vv. 23-29 these people should be told of the state of heart of those who had remained behind on the ruins of the Holy Land, and that it should be announced to them that the fixed belief in the permanent possession of the Holy Land, on which those who remained behind in the land relied, was a delusion, and that those who were victims of this delusion should be destroyed by sword and pestilence. Just as in the first part of this book Ezekiel uttered the threatened prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah in the presence of his countrymen by the Chaboras, and addressed them to these, because they stood in the same internal relation to the Lord as their brethren in Jerusalem and Judah; so here does he hold up this delusion before them as a warning, in order that he may disclose to them the worthlessness of such vain hope, and preach repentance and conversion as the only way to lie.

The meaning of the words spoken by these people, “Abraham was one,” etc., is, that if Abraham, as one solitary individual, received the land of Canaan or a possession by the promise of God, the same God could not take this possession away from them, the many sons of Abraham. The antithesis of the “one” and the “many” derived its significance, in relation to their argument, from the descent of the many from the one, which is taken for granted, and also from the fact, which is assumed to be well known from the book of Genesis, that the land was not promised and given to the patriarch for his own possession, but for his seed or descendants to possess. They relied, like the Jews of the time of Christ (Joh. 8:33, 39), upon their corporeal descent from Abraham (compare the similar words in Eze. 11:15). Ezekiel, on the other hand, simply reminds them of their own sinful conduct (vv. 25, 26), for the purpose of showing them that they have thereby incurred the loss of this possession. Eating upon the blood, is eating flesh in which the blood is still lying, which has not been cleansed from blood, as in Lev. 19:26 and 1Sa. 14:32, 33; an act the prohibition of which was first addressed to Noah (Gen. 9: 4), and is repeatedly urged in the law (cf. Lev. 7:26, 27). This is also the case with the prohibition of idolatry, lifting up the eyes to idols (cf. Eze. 18: 6), and the shedding of blood (cf. Eze. 18:10; 22: 3, etc.). **עָמַד אֶל חַרְבּוֹ**, to support oneself, or rely (**עָמַד**, used as in Eze. 31:14) upon the sword, i.e., to put confidence in violence and bloodshed. In this connection we are not to think of the use of the sword in war. To work abomination, as in Eze. 18:12. **עֲשִׂיתֶן** is not a feminine, “ye women,” but **ן** is written in the place of **ם** on account of the **ת** which follows, after the analogy of

פְּדִיּוֹן for פְּדִיּוֹם (Hitzig). On the defiling of a neighbour's wife, see the comm. on Eze. 18: 6. Such daring sinners the Lord would destroy wherever they might be. In v. 37 the punishment is individualized (cf. Eze. 14:21). Those in the חֲרָבוֹת shall fall by the חֶרֶב (the play upon the word is very obvious); those in the open country shall perish by wild beasts (compare 2Ki. 17:25; Exo. 23:19; Lev. 26:22); those who are in mountain fastnesses and caves, where they are safe from the sword and ravenous beasts, shall perish by plague and pestilence. This threat is not to be restricted to the acts of the Chaldeans in the land after the destruction of Jerusalem, but applies to all succeeding times. Even the devastation and utter depopulation of the land, threatened in v. 28, are not to be taken as referring merely to the time of the Babylonian captivity, but embrace the devastation which accompanied and followed the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. For נִאֲוֵן עֵזָה, see the comm. on Eze. 7:24. For v. 29, compare Eze. 6:14.

*Eze. 33:30-33.* Behaviour of the people towards the prophet. —

*V. 30. And thou, son of man, the sons of thy people converse about thee by the walls and in the house-doors; one talketh to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come and let us hear what kind of word goeth out from Jehovah. V. 31. And they will come to thee, like an assembly of the people, and sit before thee as my people, and will hear thy words, but not do them; but that which is pleasant in their mouth they do; their heart goeth after their gain. V. 32. And, behold, thou art unto them like a pleasant singer, beautiful in voice and playing well; they will hear thy words, but they will not do them. V. 33. But when it cometh — behold, it cometh — they will know that a prophet was in the midst of them.*

This addition to the preceding word of God, which is addressed to Ezekiel personally, applies to the whole of the second half of his ministry, and stands in obvious connection with the instructions given to the prophet on the occasion of his first call (Eze. 3:16ff.), and repeated, so far as their substance is concerned, in vv. 7-9, as Kliefoth himself acknowledges, in opposition to his assumption that vv. 1-20 of this chapter belong to the prophecies directed against the foreign nations. As God had directed the prophet's attention, on the occasion of his call, to the difficulties connected with the discharge of the duties of a watchman with which he was entrusted, by setting before him the object and the responsibility of his vocation, and had warned him not to allow himself to be turned aside by the opposition of the people; so here in vv. 30-33, at the commencement of the second section of his ministry, another word is addressed to him personally, in order that he may not be influenced in the further prosecution of his calling by either the pleasure or displeasure of men.

His former utterances had already induced the elders of the people to come to him to hear the word of God (cf. Eze. 14: 1 and 20: 1). But now that his

prophecies concerning Jerusalem had been fulfilled, the exiles could not fail to be still more attentive to his words, so that they talked of him both secretly and openly, and encouraged one another to come and listen to his discourses. God foretells this to him, but announces to him at the same time that this disposition on the part of his countrymen to listen to him is even now no sign of genuine conversion to the word of God, in order that he may not be mistaken in his expectations concerning the people. Kliefoth has thus correctly explained the contents, design, and connection of these verses as a whole. In v. 30 the article before the participle **נִדְבָרִים** takes the place of the relative **אֲשֶׁר**, and the words are in apposition to **בְּנֵי אָמֶךְ**, the sons of thy people who converse about thee. **נִדְבָר** is reciprocal, as in Mal. 3:13, 16, and Psa. 119:12. But **ב** is to be understood, not in a hostile sense, as in the passage cited from the Psalms, but in the sense of concerning, like **בְּדָבָר ב** in 1Sa. 19: 3 as contrasted with **בְּדָבָר** in Num. 21: 7, to speak against a person. The participle is continued by the finite **וְדָבַר**, and the verb belonging to **בְּנֵי אָמֶךְ** follows, in the **וַיָּבֵאוּ** of v. 31, in the form of an apodosis. There is something monstrous in Hitzig's assumption, that the whole passage from v. 30 to v. 33 forms but one clause, and that the predicate to **בְּנֵי אָמֶךְ** does not occur till the **וַיְדַעֵי** of v. 33. — **אֶצֶל הַקִּירוֹת**, by the side of the walls, i.e., sitting against the walls, equivalent to secretly; and in the doors of the houses, in other words publicly, one neighbour conversing with another. **חָד**, Aramean for **אֶחָד**, and **אִישׁ** by the side of **אֶחָד**, every one; not merely one here or there, but every man to his neighbour. **בְּמִבֹּאוֹעַם**, lit., as the coming of a people, i.e., as when a crowd of men flock together in crowds or troops. **אִמִּי** is a predicate, as my people, i.e., as if they wished, like my people, to hear my word from thee. But they do not think of doing thy words, i.e., what thou dost announce to them as my word. **עֲגָבִים** are things for which one cherishes an eager desire, pleasant things in their mouth, i.e., according to their taste (cf. Gen. 25:28). Hävernick is wrong in taking **עֲגָבִים** to mean illicit love. The word **בְּפִיהֶם** is quite inapplicable to such a meaning. The rendering, they do it with their mouth, is opposed both to the construction and the sense. **בְּצַעֲמָם**, their gain, the source from which they promise themselves advantage or gain. In v. 32 a clearer explanation is given of the reason why they come to the prophet, notwithstanding the fact that they do not wish to do his words. "Thou art to them **בְּשִׁיר עֲגָבִים**;" this cannot mean like a pleasant song, but, as **יָמֵט בְּנֵן** (one who can play well) clearly shows, like a singer of pleasant songs. The abstract **שִׁיר** stands for the concrete **שָׂר**, a singer, a man of song (Hitzig). In v. 32b, "they hear thy words, but do them not," is repeated with emphasis, for the purpose of attaching the threat in v. 33. But when it cometh, — namely, what thou sayest, or prophesiest, — behold, it

cometh, i.e., it will come as surely as thy prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem; then will they know that a prophet was among them (cf. Eze. 2: 5), that is to say, that he proclaimed God's word to them. Therefore Ezekiel is not to be prevented, by the misuse which will be made of his words, from preaching the truth. — This conclusion of the word of God, which points back to Eze. 2: 5, also shows that it forms the introduction to the prophecies which follow.

## **Ch. 34-39 — The Restoration of Israel, and Destruction of Gog and Magog**

The promise of the salvation, which is to blossom for the covenant nation after the judgment, commences with the announcement that the Lord will deliver Israel out of the hand of its evil shepherds, who only feed themselves and destroy the flock, and will take care of His own flock, gather them together, feed and tend them on a good meadow, protect the weak sheep against the strong, and through His servant David bring security and blessing to the whole of the flock (Eze. 34). This comprehensive promise is carried out still further in the following chapters in various phases. Because Edom cherishes perpetual enmity against the sons of Israel, and has sought to take possession of their land, in which Jehovah was, the mountains of Seir shall become a perpetual desert (Eze. 35); whereas the devastated land of Israel shall be rebuilt, and sown once more, bear fruit, and be filled with man and beast (Eze. 36: 1-15). The Lord will do this for His holy name's sake, will cleanse His people from their sins, when gathered out of the nations, by sprinkling them with pure water, and renew them by His Spirit in heart and mind, that they may walk in His commandments, and multiply greatly in their land, when it has been glorified into a garden of God (Eze. 36:16-38). The house of Israel, which has been slain with the sword, and has become like a field full of dry bones of the dead, the Lord will awaken to new life, and bring in peace into the land of Israel (Eze. 37: 1-14); the two divided peoples and kingdoms of Israel He will unite into one people and kingdom, will liberate them from their sins, cause them to dwell in the land given to His servant Jacob under the sovereignty of His servant David, will make with them a covenant of peace for ever, and dwell above them as their God for ever in the sanctuary, which He will establish in the midst of them (Eze. 37:15-28). And, finally, in the last time, when Israel is dwelling in its own land in security and peace, the Lord will bring Gog from the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, with a powerful army of numerous peoples, into the land that has been restored from the sword; but when he has come to plunder and prey, the Lord will destroy him with all his army, and by this judgment display His glory among the nations, and so have compassion upon the whole house of Israel, and because He has poured out His

Spirit upon it, will hide His face from it no more (Eze. 38 and 39). — From this general survey it is evident that the words of God contained in Eze. 34-37 announce the restoration and exaltation of Israel to be the sanctified people of God, and Eze. 38 and 39 the lasting establishment of this salvation, through the extermination of those enemies who rise up against the restored people of God.

### **CH. 34. DEPOSITION OF THE BAD SHEPHERDS; COLLECTING AND TENDING OF THE FLOCK; AND APPOINTMENT OF THE ONE GOOD SHEPHERD**

*Eze. 34.* The shepherds, who have fed themselves and neglected the flock, so that it has been scattered and has become a prey to wild beasts, will be deprived by the Lord of their office of shepherd (vv. 1-10). And He will take charge of His own flock, gather it together from its dispersion in the lands, feed and tend it on good pasture in the land of Israel, and sift it by the extermination of the fat and violent ones (vv. 11-22). He will appoint His servant David shepherd over His flock, make a covenant of peace with His people, and bless the land with fruitfulness, so that Israel may dwell there in security, and no more be carried off either as booty for the nations or by famine, and may acknowledge Jehovah as its God (vv. 23-31).

This word of God is a repetition and further expansion of the short prophecy of Jeremiah in Jer. 23: 1-8. The threat against the bad shepherds simply forms the foil for the promise, that the flock, which has been plunged into misery by bad shepherds, shall be gathered and tended by the Lord and His servant David, whom Jehovah will appoint prince over His people, so that it is essentially a prophecy of salvation for Israel. — The question in dispute among the commentators, whether we are to understand by the shepherds, out of whose hand and tyranny the Lord will rescue Israel His flock, the priests and kings (Ephr., Syr., and Theodoret), or the false prophets and false teachers of the people (Glass and others), or simply the kings (Hengst., Häv., and others), or all those who, by reason of their office, were leaders of the people, rulers, priests, and prophets, “the whole body of official persons charged with the direction of the nation” (Kliefoth), may be settled by the simple conclusion, that only the rulers of the nation are intended. This is proved not only by the biblical idea of the shepherd generally, which (probably in distinction from the idea of the bell-wether) is everywhere employed to denote rulers alone, but more particularly by the primary passage already referred to (Jer. 23: 1-8), where we are to understand by the shepherds, kings and princes, to the exclusion of priests and prophets, against whom Jeremiah first prophesies from v. 9 onwards; and, lastly, by the antithesis to the good shepherd, David, who is to feed the flock of Jehovah as prince (דָּוִד), and not as priest or prophet (vv. 23,

24). Only we must not take the term rulers as applying to the kings alone, but must understand thereby all the persons entrusted with the government of the nation, or the whole body of the civil authorities of Israel, among whom priests and prophets come into consideration, not on account of their spiritual calling and rank, but only so far as they held magisterial offices. And apart from other grounds, we are not warranted in restricting the idea of shepherds to the kings alone; for the simple reason that our prophecy, which dates from the time succeeding the destruction of Jerusalem, does not apply to the former rulers only, i.e., the kings who had fallen along with the kingdom of Judah, but although treating of shepherds, who had scattered Israel among the nations, assumes that the rule of these shepherds is still continuing, and announces their removal, or the deliverance of the flock out of their hand, as something to be effected in the future (cf. vv. 8-10); so that it also refers to the civil rulers who governed Israel after the overthrow of the monarchy, and even after the captivity until the coming of the Messiah, the promised Prince of David.

*Eze. 34: 1-10.* Woe to the bad shepherds.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, prophesy concerning the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, to the shepherds, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Woe to the shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves; should not the shepherds feed the flock? V. 3. Ye eat the fat, and clothe yourselves whit the wool; ye slay the fatted; the flock ye do not feed. V. 4. The weak ones ye do not strengthen, and that which is sick ye do not cure, the wounded one ye bind not up, the scattered ye bring not back, and the lost one ye do not seek; and ye rule over them with violence and with severity. V. 5. Therefore they were scattered, because without shepherd, and became food to all the beasts of the field, and were scattered. V. 6. My sheep wander about on all the mountains, and on every high hill; and over all the land have my sheep been scattered, and there is no one who asks for them, and no one who seeks them. V. 7. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear ye the word of Jehovah: V. 8. As I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, because my sheep become a prey, and my sheep become food to all the beasts of the field, because there is no shepherd, and my shepherds do not inquire after my sheep, and the shepherds feed themselves, but do not feed the sheep, V. 9. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear ye the word of Jehovah, V. 10. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with the shepherds, and will demand my sheep from their hand, and cause them to cease to feed my flock, that they may feed themselves no more; and I will deliver my sheep from their mouth, that they may be food to them no more.*

In v. 2 **לְרֵעִים** is an explanatory apposition to **אֱלִיָּהֶם**, and is not to be taken in connection with **כִּה אָמַר יי**, in opposition to the constant use of this formula, as Kliefoth maintains. The reason for the woe pronounced is given in the apposition, who fed themselves, whereas they ought to have fed the flock; and the charge that they only care for themselves is still further explained by a description of their conduct (vv. 3 and 4), and of the dispersion of the flock



occasioned thereby (vv. 5 and 6). Observe the periphrastic preterite **הָיוּ רָעִים**, they were feeding, which shows that the woe had relation chiefly to the former shepherds or rulers of the nation. **אֶזְתֶּם** is reflective, *se ipsos* (cf. Gesen. § 124. 1b). The disgracefulness of their feeding themselves is brought out by the question, “Ought not the shepherds to feed the flock?” V. 3 shows how they fed themselves, and v. 4 how they neglected the flock. **הַלֵּב**, the fat, which Bochart and Hitzig propose to alter into **הַחֵלֶב**, the milk, after the Septuagint and Vulgate, is not open to any objection. The fat, as the best portion of the flesh, which was laid upon the altar, for example, in the case of the sacrifices, as being the flower of all the flesh, is mentioned here as *pars melior pro toto*. Hävernick has very properly pointed, in vindication of the reading in the text, to Zec. 11:16, where the two clauses, ye eat the fat, and slay the fattened, are joined together in the one clause, “the flesh of the fattened one will he eat.” There is no force in the objection raised by Hitzig, that “the slaughtering of the fat beasts, which ought to be mentioned first, is not introduced till afterwards;” for this clause contains a heightening of the thought that they use the flock to feed themselves: they do not even kill the leaner beasts, but those that are well fattened; and it follows very suitably after the general statement, that they make use of both the flesh and the wool of the sheep for their own advantage. They care nothing for the wellbeing of the flock: this is stated in the last clause of v. 3, which is explained in detail in v. 4. **נַחְלוֹת** is the *Niphal* participle of **חָלָה**, and is a contracted form of **נַחְלוֹת**, like **נַחֲלָה** in Isa. 17:11. The distinction between **נַחְלוֹת** and **חֲזָלָה** is determined by the respective predicates **חֲזָק** and **רַפָּא**. According to these, **נַחֲלָה** signifies that which is weak in consequence of sickness, and **חֲלָה** that which is weak in itself. **נִשְׁבְּרָתָהּ**, literally, that which is broken, an animal with a leg or some other member injured. **נָדָה**, scattered, as in Deu. 22: 1.

In the last clause of v. 4, the neglect of the flock is summed up in the positive expression, to rule over them with violence and severity. **רָדָה בְּפָרְךָ** is taken from Lev. 25:43, 46; but there as well as here it points back to Exo. 1:13, 14, where **בְּפָרְךָ** is applied to the tyrannical measures adopted by Pharaoh for the oppression of the Israelites. The result of this (vv. 5, 6) was, that the sheep were scattered, and became food to the beasts of prey. **מִבְּלֵי רֵעָה**, on account of there not being a shepherd, i.e., because there was no shepherd worthy of the name. This took place when Israel was carried away into exile, where it became a prey to the heathen nations. When we find this mournful fate of the people described as brought about by the bad shepherds, and attributable to faults of theirs, we must not regard the words as applying merely to the mistaken policy of the kings with regard to external affairs (Hitzig); for this was in itself simply

a consequence of their neglect of their theocratic calling, and of their falling away from the Lord into idolatry. It is true that the people had also made themselves guilty of this sin, so that it was obliged to atone not only for the sins of its shepherds, but for its own sin also; but this is passed by here, in accordance with the design of this prophecy. And it could very properly be kept out of sight, inasmuch as the rulers had also occasioned the idolatry of the people, partly by their neglect of their duty, and partly by their bad example.

**וְהַפְּזִינָהּ** is repeated with emphasis at the close of v. 5; and the thought is still further expanded in v. 6. The wandering upon all the mountains and hills must not be understood as signifying the straying of the people to the worship on high places, as Theodoret and Kliefoth suppose. The fallacy of this explanation is clearly shown by the passage on which this figurative description rests (1Ki. 22:17), where the people are represented as scattered upon the mountains in consequence of the fall of the king in battle, like a flock that had no shepherd. The words in the next clause, corresponding to the mountains and hills, are **בְּלִפְנֵי הָאָרֶץ**, the whole face of the land, not “of the earth” (Kliefoth). For although the dispersion of the flock actually consisted in the carrying away of the people into heathen lands, the actual meaning of the figure is kept in the background here, as is evident from the fact that Ezekiel constantly uses the expression **הֲאֲרָצוֹת** (plural) when speaking of the dispersion among the heathen (cf. Eze. 13). The distinction between **דָּרַשׁ** and **בָּקַשׁ** is, that **דָּרַשׁ** signifies rather to ask, inquire for a thing, to trouble oneself about it, whereas **בָּקַשׁ** means to seek for that which has strayed or is lost. In vv. 7-10, the punishment for their unfaithfulness is announced to the shepherds themselves; but at the same time, as is constantly the case with Ezekiel, their guilt is once more recapitulated as an explanation of the threatening of punishment, and the earnest appeal to listen is repeated in v. 9. The Lord will demand His sheep of them; and because sheep have been lost through their fault, He will dispose them from the office of shepherd, and so deliver the poor flock from their violence. If we compare with this Jer. 23: 2: “Behold, I will visit upon you the wickedness of your doings,” the threat in Ezekiel has a much milder sound. There is nothing said about the punishment of the shepherd, but simply that the task of keeping the sheep shall be taken from them, so that they shall feed themselves no more. This distinction is to be explained from the design of our prophecy, which is not so much to foretell the punishment of the shepherds, as the deliverance from destruction of the sheep that have been plunged into misery. The repetition of **צֹאֲנִי**, *my flock* (vv. 8 and 10, as before in v. 6), is also connected with this. The rescue of the sheep out of the hand of the bad shepherds had already commenced with the overthrow of the monarchy on the destruction of Jerusalem. If, then it is here described as only to take place in the future, justice is not done to these words by explaining them, as Hitzig does, as

signifying that what has already actually taken place is now to be made final, and not to be reversed. For although this is implied, the words clearly affirm that the deliverance of the sheep out of the hand of the shepherds has not yet taken place, but still remains to be effected, so that the people are regarded as being at the time in the power of bad shepherds, and their rescue is predicted as still in the future. How and when it will be accomplished, by the removal of the bad shepherds, is shown in the announcement, commencing with v. 11, of what the Lord will do for His flock.

*Eze. 34:11-22.* Jehovah Himself will seek His flock, gather it together from the dispersion, lead it to good pasture, and sift it by the destruction of the bad sheep.

V. 11. *For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I myself, I will inquire after my flock, and take charge thereof.* V. 12. *As a shepherd taketh charge of his flock in the day when he is in the midst of his scattered sheep, so will I take charge of my flock, and deliver them out of all the places whither they have been scattered in the day of cloud and cloudy night.* V. 13. *And I will bring them out from the nations, and gather them together out of the lands, and bring them into their land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel, in the valleys, and in all the dwelling-places of the land.* V. 14. *I will feed them in a good pasture, and on the high mountains of Israel will their pasture-ground be: there shall they lie down in a good pasture-ground, and have fat pasture on the mountains of Israel.* V. 15. *I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.* V. 16. *That which is lost will I seek, and that which is driven away will I bring back; that which is wounded will I bind up, and that which is sick will I strengthen: but that which is fat and strong will I destroy, and feed them according to justice.* V. 17. *And you, my sheep, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will judge between sheep and sheep, and the rams and the he-goats.* V. 18. *Is it too little for you, that ye eat up the good pasture, and what remains of your pasture ye tread down with your feet? and the clear water ye drink, and render muddy what remains with your feet?* V. 19. *And are my sheep to have for food that which is trodden down by your feet, and to drink that which is made muddy by your feet?* V. 20. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah to them, Behold, I, I will judge between fat sheep and lean.* V. 21. *Because ye press with side and shoulder, and thrust all the weak with your horns, till ye have driven them out;* V. 22. *I will help my sheep, so that they shall no more become a prey; and will judge between sheep and sheep.*

All that the Lord will do for His flock is summed up in v. 11, in the words **דֹרֵשׁ וְגִנֵּי** **דִרְשֵׁנִי אֶת-צֹאֲנִי וּבִקְרָתִים**, which stand in obvious antithesis to **וְהִנֵּי אֲנִי**, which stands at the head in an absolute form. The fuller explanation is given in the verses which follow, from v. 12 onwards. Observe here that **בִּיקֵר** is substituted for **בִּבְשָׁר**. **בִּיקֵר**, to seek and examine minutely, involves the idea of taking affectionate charge. What the Lord does for His people is compared in v. 12a to the care which a shepherd who deserves the name manifests towards

sheep when they are scattered (נִפְרָשׁוֹת) without the article is connected with צֹאֲנוֹ in the form of apposition); and in v. 12b it is still more particularly explained. In the first place, He will gather them from all the places to which they have been scattered. הִצִּיל implies that in their dispersion they have fallen into a state of oppression and bondage among the nations (cf. Exo. 6: 6). בְּיוֹם וַעֲרַפֵּל עֵינַי belongs to the relative clause: whither they have been scattered. The circumstance that these words are taken from Joe. 2: 2 does not compel us to take them in connection with the principal clause, as Hitzig and Kliefoth propose, and to understand them as relating to the time when God will hold His judgment of the heathen world. The notion that the words in Joel signify “God’s day of judgment upon all the heathen” (Kliefoth), is quite erroneous; and even Hitzig does not derive this meaning from Joe. 2: 2, but from the combination of our verse with Eze. 30: 3 and 29:21. The deliverance of the sheep out of the places to which they have been scattered, consists in the gathering together of Israel out of the nations, and their restoration to their own land, and their feeding upon the mountains and all the dwelling-places of the land (מִנְשֵׁב, a place suitable for settlement), and that in good and fat pasture (v. 14); and lastly, in the fact that Jehovah bestows the necessary care upon the sheep, strengthens and heals the weak and sick (vv. 15 and 16), — that is to say, does just what the bad shepherds have omitted (v. 4), — and destroys the fat and strong. In this last clause another side is shown of the pastoral fidelity of Jehovah. אֲשַׁמֵּר has been changed by the LXX, Syr., and Vulg. into אֲשַׁמֹּר, φυλάξω; and Luther has followed them in his rendering, “I will watch over them.” But this is evidently a mistake, as it fails to harmonize with בְּמִשְׁפַּט אֲרַעְנָה. The fat and strong sheep are characterized in vv. 18 and 19 as those which spoil the food and water of the others. The allusion, therefore, is to the rich and strong ones of the nation, who oppress the humble and poor, and treat them with severity. The destruction of these oppressors shows that the loving care of the Lord is associated with righteousness — that He feeds the flock בְּמִשְׁפַּט.

This thought is carried out still further in vv. 17-21, the sheep themselves being directly addressed, and the Lord assuring them that He will judge between sheep and sheep, and put an end to the oppressive conduct of the fat sheep and the strong. בֵּין שֵׂה לְשֵׂה: between the one sheep and the other. לְשֵׂה is extended in the apposition, “the rams and he-goats,” which must not be rendered, “with regard to the rams and he-goats,” as it has been by Kliefoth. The thought is not that Jehovah will divide the rams and he-goats from the sheep, as some have explained it, from an inappropriate comparison with Mat. 25:32; but the division is to be effected in such a manner that sheep will be

separated from sheep, the fat sheep being placed on one side with the rams and he-goats, and kept apart from the lean (רְנָה, v. 20) and the sickly sheep (נַחֲלוֹת, v. 21). It is to the last-named sheep, rams, and he-goats that vv. 18 and 19 are addressed. With regard to the charge brought against them, that they eat up the pasture and tread down the remainder with their feet, etc., Bochart has already correctly observed, that “if the words are not quite applicable to actual sheep, they are perfectly appropriate to the mystical sheep intended here, i.e., to the Israelites, among whom many of the rich, after enjoying an abundant harvest and vintage, grudged the poor their gleaning in either one or the other.” מִשְׁקָע, a substantive formation, like מִרְמָס, literally, precipitation of the water, i.e., the water purified by precipitation; for שָׁקַע, to sink, is the opposite of רָפַשׁ, to stir up or render muddy by treading with the feet (compare Eze. 32:14 and 2). בְּרִיָּה, v. 20 = בְּרָאָה or בְּרִיָּה. V. 22 brings to a close the description of the manner in which God will deliver His flock, and feed it with righteousness. אֲרַעְנָה בְּמִשְׁפָּט וְשִׁפְטֹתַי points back to וְהִצַּלְתִּי in v. 12, and אֲרַעְנָה בְּמִשְׁפָּט וְשִׁפְטֹתַי in v. 16. — To this there is appended in vv. 23ff. a new train of thought, describing how God will still further display to His people His pastoral fidelity.

*Eze. 34:23-31.* Appointment of David as shepherd, and blessing of the people. —

V. 23. *And I will raise up one shepherd over them, who shall feed them, my servant David; he will feed them, and he will be to them a shepherd.* V. 24. *And I, Jehovah, will be God to them, and my servant David prince in the midst of them: I, Jehovah, have spoken it.* V. 25. *And I will make a covenant of peace with them, and destroy the evil beasts out of the land, so that they will dwell safely in the desert and sleep in the forests.* V. 26. *And I will make them and the places round my hill a blessing, and cause the rain to fall in its season: showers of blessing shall there be.* V. 27. *The tree of the field will give its fruit, and the land will give its produce, and they will be safe in their land, and will know that I am Jehovah, when I break their yoke-bars in pieces, and deliver them out of the hand of those who made them servants.* V. 28. *They will be no more a prey to the nations, and the wild beasts will not devour them; but they will dwell safely, and no one will terrify them.* V. 29. *And I will raise up for them a plantation for a name, so that they will no more be swept away by famine in the land, and shall no longer bear the disgrace of the heathen nations.* V. 30. *And they shall know that I, Jehovah, their God, am with them, and they are my people, the house of Israel, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.* V. 31. *And ye are my sheep, the flock of my pasture; ye are men, I am your God, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

God will cause to stand up, raise up, one single shepherd over His flock. הִקִּים, the standing expression for the rising up of a person in history through the interposition of God (cf. Deu. 18:15, 2Sa. 7:12, and other passages). אֶחָד, not *unicus, singularis*, a shepherd unique in his kind, but *one* shepherd, in

contrast not only with the many bad shepherds, but with the former division of the people into two kingdoms, each with its own separate king. Compare Eze. 37:24 with Jer. 28: 6, where it is expressly said that the David to be raised up is to feed Israel and Judah, the two peoples that had been divided before. “My servant David:” Jehovah calls him **אֲדָמִי**, not merely with reference to the obedience rendered (Hävernicks), but also with regard to his election (Isa. 42: 1; Hengstenberg). There is no necessity to refute the assertion of Hitzig, David Strauss, and others, that Ezekiel expected the former King David to be raised from the dead. The reference is to the sprout of David (Jer. 23: 5), already called simply David in Hos. 3: 5 and Jer. 30: 9. In v. 24 the relation of Jehovah to this David is more precisely defined: Jehovah will then be God to His people, and David be prince in the midst of them. The last words point back to 2Sa. 7: 8b. Through the government of David, Jehovah will become in truth God of His people Israel; for David will feed the people in perfect unity with Jehovah, — will merely carry out the will of Jehovah, and not place himself in opposition to God, like the bad shepherds, because, as is therewith presupposed, he is connected with God by unity of nature.

In vv. 25ff. the thought is carried out still further, — how God will become God to His people, and prove Himself to be its covenant God through the pastoral fidelity of the future David. God will fully accomplish the covenant mercies promised to Israel. The making of the covenant of peace need not be restricted, in accordance with Hos. 2:20 (18), to a covenant which God would make with the beasts in favour of His people. The thought is a more comprehensive one here, and, according to Lev. 26: 4-6, the passage which Ezekiel had in his mind involves all the salvation which God had included in His promises to His people: viz., (1) the extermination of everything that could injure Israel, of all the wild beasts, so that they would be able to sleep securely in the deserts and the forests (v. 25, compare Lev. 26: 6); (2) the pouring out of an abundant rain, so that the field and land would yield rich produce (vv. 26, 27; cf. Lev. 26: 4, 5). “I make them, the Israelites, and the surroundings of my hill, a blessing.” **נְבִעְתִּי**, the hill of Jehovah, is, according to Isa. 31: 4, Mount Zion, the temple-mountains, including the city of Jerusalem. The surroundings of this hill are the land of Israel, that lay around it. But Zion, with the land around, is not mentioned in the place of the inhabitants; and still less are we to understand by the surroundings of the hill the heathen nations, as Hengstenberg does, in opposition both to the context and the usage of the language. The thought is simply that the Lord will make both the people and the land a blessing (Hävernicks, Kliefoth). **בְּרִכָּה**, a blessing, is stronger than “blessed” (cf. Gen. 12: 2). The blessing is brought by the rain in its season, which fertilizes the earth. This will take place when the Lord breaks the yokes laid upon His people. These words are from Lev. 26:13, where they refer to the deliverance

of Israel from the bondage of Egypt; and they are transferred by Ezekiel to the future redemption of Israel from the bondage of the heathen. For עֲבָדִים בְּהֵם, compare Exo. 1:14. This thought is carried out still further in v. 28; and then, in v. 29, all that has been said is summed up in the thoughts, “I raise up for them a plantation for a name,” etc. מִמַּטַּע, a plantation, as in Eze. 17: 7; not a land for planting (Hitzig). לְשֵׁם, for a name, i.e., not for the glory of God (De Wette); but the plantation, which the Lord will cause to grow by pouring down showers of blessing (v. 26), is to bring renown to the Israelites, namely, among the heathen, who will see from this that Israel is a people blessed by its God. This explanation of the words is supplied by the following clause: they shall no more be swept away by famine in the land, and no more bear the disgrace of the heathen, i.e., the disgrace which the heathen heaped upon Israel when in distress (compare Zep. 3:19; Jer. 13:11; and the primary passage, Deu. 26:29). From this blessing they will learn that Jehovah their God is with them, and Israel is His people. The promise concludes in v. 31 with these words, which set a seal upon the whole: “Ye are my flock, the flock of my pasture (lit., my pasture-flock; צֹאן מְרֵעִית, Jer. 23: 1, the flock fed by God Himself); men are ye, I am your God.” That these last words do not serve merely as an explanation of the figurative expression “flock,” is a fact of which no proof is needed. The figure of a flock was intelligible to every one. The words “call attention to the depth and greatness of the divine condescension, and meet the objection of men of weak faith, that man, who is taken from the earth הָאָדָמָה, and returns to it again, is incapable of so intimate a connection with God” (Hengstenberg).

If we take another survey, in conclusion, of the contents of our prophecy, the following are the three features of the salvation promised to the people of Israel: —

- (1) The Lord will liberate His people from the hand of the bad shepherds, and He Himself will feed it as His flock;
- (2) He will gather it together from its dispersion, bring it back to the land of Israel and feed it there, will take charge of the sheep in need of help, and destroy the fat and strong sheep by which the weak ones are oppressed;
- (3) He will raise up the future David for a shepherd, and under his care He will bestow upon His people the promised covenant blessings in richest measure.

These saving acts of God for His people, however, are not depicted according to their several details and historical peculiarities, as Kliefoth has correctly observed, nor are they narrated in the chronological order in which they would follow one another in history; but they are grouped together according to their general design and character, and their essential features. If, then, we seek for the fulfilment, the Lord raised up His servant David as a shepherd to Israel, by sending Jesus Christ, who came to seek and to save that which was lost

(Luk. 19:10; Mat. 18:11), and who calls Himself the Good Shepherd with obvious reference to this and other prophetic declarations of a similar kind (Joh. 10:11ff.). But the sending of Christ was preceded by the gathering of Israel out of the Babylonian exile, by which God had already taken charge of His flock, Yet, inasmuch as only a small portion of Israel received the Messiah, who appeared in Jesus, as its shepherd, there fell upon the unbelieving Israel a new judgment of dispersion among all nations, which continues still, so that a gathering together still awaits the people of Israel at some future time. No distinction is made in the prophecy before us between these two judgments of dispersion, which are associated with the twofold gathering of Israel; but they are grouped together as one, so that although their fulfilment commenced with the deliverance of Israel from the Babylonian captivity and the coming of Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd of the family of David, it was only realized in that portion of Israel, numerically the smallest portion, which was willing to be gathered and fed by Jesus Christ, and the full realization will only be effected when that conversion of Israel shall take place, which the Apostle Paul foretells in Rom. 11:25ff. — For further remarks on the ultimate fulfilment, we refer the reader to a later page.

### **CH. 35: 1-36:15. DEVASTATION OF EDOM, AND RESTORATION OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL.**

*Eze. 35: 1-36:15.* The two sections, Eze. 35: 1-15 and Eze. 36: 1-15, form a connected prophecy. This is apparent not only from their formal arrangement, both of them being placed together under the introductory formula, “And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,” but also from their contents, the promise in relation to the mountains of Israel being so opposed to the threat against the mountains of Seir (Eze. 35: 1-15) as to form the obverse and completion of the latter; whilst allusion is evidently made to it in the form of expression employed (compare Eze. 36: 4, 6, with Eze. 35: 8; and Eze. 36: 5a with Eze. 35:15b). The contents are the following: The mountains of Seir shall be laid waste (Eze. 35: 1-4), because Edom cherishes eternal enmity and bloody hatred towards Israel (vv. 5-9), and because it has coveted the land of Israel and blasphemed Jehovah (vv. 10-15). On the other hand, the mountain-land of Israel, which the heathen have despised on account of its devastation, and have appropriated to themselves as booty (Eze. 36: 1-7), shall be inhabited by Israel again, and shall be cultivated and no longer bear the disgrace of the heathen (vv. 8-15). This closing thought (v. 15) points back to Eze. 34:29, and shows that our prophecy is intended as a further expansion of that conclusion; and at the same time, that in the devastation of Edom the overthrow of the heathen world as a whole, with its enmity against God, is predicted, and in the restoration of the land of Israel the re-erection of the fallen kingdom of God.



*Eze.* 35. THE DEVASTATION OF EDOM. —

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, V. 3. And say to it, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with thee, Mount Seir, and will stretch out my hand against thee, and make thee waste and devastation. V. 4. Thy cities will I make into ruins, and thou wilt become a waste, and shalt know that I am Jehovah. V. 5. Because thou cherishest eternal enmity, and gavest up the sons of Israel to the sword at the time of their distress, at the time of the final transgression, V. 6. Therefore, as truly as I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, I will make thee blood, and blood shall pursue thee; since thou hast not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue thee. V. 7. I will make Mount Seir devastation and waste, and cut off therefrom him that goeth away and him that returneth, V. 8. And fill his mountains with his slain; upon thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy low places, those pierced with the sword shall fall. V. 9. I will make thee eternal wastes, and thy cities shall not be inhabited; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. V. 10. Because thou sayest, The two nations and the two lands they shall be mine, and we will take possession of it, when Jehovah was there; V. 11. Therefore, as truly as I live, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, I will do according to thy wrath and thine envy, as thou hast done because of thy hatred, and will make myself known among them, as I shall judge thee. V. 12. And thou shalt know that I, Jehovah, have heard all thy reproaches which thou hast uttered against the mountains of Israel, saying, “they are laid waste, they are given to us for food.” V. 13. Ye have magnified against me with your mouth, and heaped up your sayings against me; I have heard it. V. 14. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will prepare devastation for thee. V. 15. As thou hadst thy delight in the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was laid waste, so will I do to thee; thou shalt become a waste, Mount Seir and all Edom together; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.*

The theme of this prophecy, viz., “Edom and its cities are to become a desert” (vv. 2-4), is vindicated and earnestly elaborated in two strophes, commencing with **וְאֵן וְנָוּ** (vv. 5 and 10), and closing, like the announcement of the theme itself (v. 4b), with **וַיִּדְעָתֶם (וַיִּדְעוּ) כִּי אֲנִי יְיָ**, by a distinct statement of the sins of Edom. — Already, in Eze. 25, Edom has been named among the hostile border nations which are threatened with destruction (vv. 12-14). The earlier prophecy applied to the Edomites, according to their historical relation to the people of Israel and the kingdom of Judah. In the present word of God, on the contrary, Edom comes into consideration, on the ground of its hostile attitude towards the covenant people, as the representative of the world and of mankind in its hostility to the people and kingdom of God, as in Isa. 34 and Isa. 63: 1-6. This is apparent from the fact that devastation is to be prepared for Edom, when the whole earth rejoices (v. 14), which does not apply to Edom as a small and solitary nation, and still more clearly from the circumstance that, in the promise of salvation in Eze. 36, not all Edom alone (v. 5), but the remnant of the heathen nations generally (Eze. 36: 3-7 and 15), are mentioned as the enemies from whose disgrace and oppression Israel is to be delivered. For v. 2,

compare Eze. 13:17. **הַר שְׁעִיר** is the name given to the mountainous district inhabited by the Edomites, between the Dead Sea and the Elanitic Gulf (see the comm. on Gen. 36: 9). The prophecy is directed against the land; but it also applies to the nation, which brings upon itself the desolation of its land by its hostility to Israel. For v. 3, compare Eze. 6:14, etc. **הַרְבָּה**, destruction. The sin of Edom mentioned in v. 5 is eternal enmity toward Israel, which has also been imputed to the Philistines in Eze. 25:15, but which struck deeper root, in the case of Edom, in the hostile attitude of Esau toward Jacob (Gen. 25:22ff. and 27:37), and was manifested, as Amos (Amo. 1:11) has already said, in the constant retention of its malignity toward the covenant nation, so that Edom embraced every opportunity to effect its destruction, and according to the charge brought against it by Ezekiel, gave up the sons of Israel to the sword when the kingdom of Judah fell. **הַגִּיר אֶל יְדֵי הַרְב**, lit., to pour upon (— into) the hands of the sword, i.e., to deliver up to the power of the sword (cf. Psa. 63:11; Jer. 18:21). **בַּיּוֹם אֵינָם בַּעַת אֵינָם** recalls to mind **בַּיּוֹם אֵינָם** in Obad. 1:13; but here it is more precisely defined by **בַּעַת עֵוֹן קָץ**, and limited to the time of the overthrow of the Israelites, when Jerusalem was taken and destroyed by the Chaldeans. **בַּעַת עֵוֹן קָץ**, as in Eze. 21:30. On account of this display of its hostility, the Lord will make Edom blood (v. 6). This expression is probably chosen for the play upon the words **דָּם** and **אֵדָם**. Edom shall become what its name suggests. Making it blood does not mean merely filling it with bloodshed, or reddening the soil with blood (Hitzig); but, as in Eze. 16:38, turning it as it were into blood, or causing it to vanish therein. Blood shall pursue thee, “as blood-guiltiness invariably pursues a murderer, cries for vengeance, and so delivers him up to punishment” (Hävernick). **אִם לֹא** cannot be the particle employed in swearing, and dependent upon **הִיאֲנִי**, since this particle introduces an affirmative declaration, which would be unsuitable here, inasmuch as **דָּם** in this connection cannot possibly signify blood-relationship. **אִם לֹא** means “if not,” in which the conditional meaning of **אִם** coincides with the causal, “if” being equivalent to “since.” The unusual separation of the **לֹא** from the verb is occasioned by the fact that **דָּם** is placed before the verb to avoid collision with **וְדָם**. To hate blood is the same as to have a horror of bloodshed or murder. This threat is carried out still further in vv. 7 and 8. The land of Edom is to become a complete and perpetual devastation; its inhabitants are to be exterminated by war. The form **שִׁמְמָה** stands for **שְׁמָמָה**, and is not to be changed into **מִשְׁמָה**. Considering the frequency with which **מִשְׁמָה** occurs, the supposition that we have here a copyist’s error is by no means a probable one, and still less probable is the perpetuation of such an error. **עֵבֶר וְשֵׁב**, as in Zec. 7:14. For v. 8 compare Eze. 32: 5, 6 and Eze. 31:12. The *Chetib* **תִּשְׁבְּנָה**

is *scriptio plena* for תִּשְׁבְּנָה, the imperfect *Kal* of יָשַׁב in the intransitive sense to be inhabited. The *Keri* תִּשְׁבְּנָה, from שׁוּב, is a needless and unsuitable correction, since שׁוּב does not mean *restitui*.

In the second strophe, vv. 10-15, the additional reason assigned for the desolation of Edom is its longing for the possession of Israel and its land, of which it desired to take forcible possession, although it knew that they belonged to Jehovah, whereby the hatred of Edom toward Israel became contempt of Jehovah. The two peoples and the two lands are Israel and Judah with their lands, and therefore the whole of the holy people and land. אֵת is the sign of the accusative: as for the two peoples, they are mine. The suffix appended to יְרִשְׁנוּהָ is neuter, and is to be taken as referring generally to what has gone before. וַיְהִי שָׁם הָיָה is a circumstantial clause, through which the desire of Edom is placed in the right light, and characterized as an attack upon Jehovah Himself. Jehovah was there — namely, in the land of which Edom wished to take possession. Kliefoth's rendering, "and yet Jehovah *is* there," is opposed to Hebrew usage, by changing the preterite הָיָה into a present; and the objection which he offers to the only rendering that is grammatically admissible, viz., "when Jehovah was there," to the effect "that it attributes to Ezekiel the thought that the Holy Land had once been the land and dwelling-place of God, but was so no longer," calls in question the actual historical condition of things without the slightest reason. For Jehovah had really forsaken His dwelling-place in Canaan before the destruction of the temple, but without thereby renouncing His right to the land; since it was only for the sins of Israel that He had given up the temple, city, and land to be laid waste by the heathen. "But Edom had acted as if Israel existed among the nations without God, and Jehovah had departed from it for ever" (Hävernick); or rather as if Jehovah were a powerless and useless Deity, who had not been able to defend His people against the might of the heathen nations. The Lord will requite Edom for this, in a manner answering to its anger and envy, which had both sprung from hatred. נִדְרַעְתִּי בָם, "I will make myself known among them (the Israelites) when I judge thee;" i.e., by the fact that He punishes Edom for its sin, He will prove to Israel that He is a God who does not suffer His people and His possession to be attacked with impunity. From this shall Edom learn that He is Jehovah, the omniscient God, who has heard the revilings of His enemies (vv. 12, 13), and the almighty God, who rewards those who utter such proud sayings according to their deeds (vv. 14 and 15). נְאֻצוֹת has retained the *Kametz* on account of the guttural in the first tone, in contrast with נְאֻצוֹת in Neh. 9:18, 26 (cf. Ewald, § 69*b*). — The expression "mountains of Israel," for the land of Israel, in v. 12 and Eze. 36: 1, is occasioned by the antithesis "mountain (mountain-range) of Seir." The *Chetib*

שממה is to be pronounced שִׁמְמָה, and to be retained in spite of the *Keri*. The singular of the neuter gender is used with emphasis in a broken and emotional address, and is to be taken as referring *ad sensum* to the land. הַגְדִּיל בִּפֶּה, to magnify or boast with the mouth, i.e., to utter proud sayings against God, in other words, actually to deride God (compare הַגְדִּיל פֶּה in Obad. 1:12, which has a kindred meaning). הֶעֱתִיר, used here according to Aramean usage for הֶעֱשִׂיר, to multiply, or heap up. In בְּשִׁמְחָה, in v. 14, בִּ is a particle of time, as it frequently is before infinitives (e.g., Jos. 6:20), when all the earth rejoices, not “over thy desolation” (Hitzig), which does not yield any rational thought, but when joy is prepared for all the world, I will prepare devastation for thee. Through this antithesis כָּל-הָאָרֶץ is limited to the world, with the exception of Edom, i.e., to that portion of the human race which stood in a different relation to God and His people from that of Edom; in other words, which acknowledged the Lord as the true God. It follows from this, that Edom represents the world at enmity against God. In כְּשִׂמְחָתְךָ (v. 15) כִּ is a particle of comparison; and the meaning of v. 15 is: as thou didst rejoice over the desolation of the inheritance of the house of Israel, so will I cause others to rejoice over thy desolation. In v. 15b we agree with the LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, and others, in taking תִּהְיֶה as the second person, not as the third. כְּלָה כָּל-אֲדוֹם serves to strengthen הִרְרֵשְׁעִיר (compare Eze. 11:15 and 36:10).

### *Eze. 36: 1-15.* THE RESTORATION AND BLESSING OF ISRAEL.

V. 1. *And thou, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say, Mountains of Israel, hear the word of Jehovah:* V. 2. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because the enemy saith concerning you, Aha! the everlasting heights have become ours for a possession:* V. 3. *Therefore prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because, even because they lay you waste, and pant for you round about, so that ye have become a possession to the remnant of the nations, and have come to the talk of the tongue and gossip of the people:* V. 4. *Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to the mountains and hills, to the low places and valleys, and to the waste ruins and the forsaken cities, which have become a prey and derision to the remnant of the nations round about;* V. 5. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Truly in the fire of my jealousy I have spoken against the remnant of the nations, and against Edom altogether, which have made my land a possession for themselves in all joy of heart, in contempt of soul, to empty it out for booty.* V. 6. *Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, to the low places and valleys, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, in my jealousy and fury have I spoken, because ye have borne the disgrace of the nations.* V. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I, I have lifted up my hand; truly the nations round about you, they shall bear their disgrace.* V. 8. *But ye, ye mountains of Israel, shall put forth your branches, and bear your fruit to my people Israel; for they will soon come.* V. 9. *For, behold, I will deal with you, and turn toward you, and ye shall be tilled and sown.* V. 10. *I will multiply men*

*upon you, all the house of Israel at once; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the ruins built. V. 11. And I will multiply upon you man and beast; they shall multiply and be fruitful: and I will make you inhabited as in your former time, and do more good to you than in your earlier days; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. V. 12. I will cause men, my people Israel, to walk upon you, and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be an inheritance to them, and make them childless no more. V. 13. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because they say to you, "Thou art a devourer of men, and hast made thy people childless;" V. 14. Therefore thou shalt no more devour men, and no more cause thy people to stumble, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 15. And I will no more cause thee to hear the scoffing of the nations, and the disgrace of the nations thou shalt bear no more, and shalt no more cause thy people to stumble, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

This prophecy is uttered concerning the land of Israel, as is plainly declared in v. 6; whereas in vv. 1 and 4 the mountains of Israel are mentioned instead of the land, in antithesis to the mountains of Seir (Eze. 35; see the comm. on Eze. 35:12). The promise takes throughout the form of antithesis to the threat against Edom in Eze. 35. Because Edom rejoices that the Holy Land, which has been laid waste, has fallen to it for a possession, therefore shall the devastated land be cultivated and sown again, and be inhabited by Israel as in the former time. The heathen nations round about shall, on the other hand, bear their disgrace; Edom, as we have already observed, being expanded, so far as the idea is concerned, into all the heathen nations surrounding Israel (vv. 3-7). In v. 2, **הָאֹיִב**, the enemy, is mentioned in quite a general manner; and what has already been stated concerning Edom in Eze. 35: 5 and 10, is her predicted of the enemy. In vv. 3 and 4 this enemy is designated as a remnant of the heathen nations; and it is not till v. 5 that it is more precisely defined by the clause, "and all Edom altogether." The **גוֹיִם** round about (**אֲשֶׁר מִסָּבִיב**), v. 4, compared with v. 3) are the heathen nations which are threatened with destruction in Eze. 25 and 26, on account of their malicious rejoicing at the devastation of Jerusalem and Judah. This serves to explain the fact that these nations are designated as **שְׂאֵרֵי הַגּוֹיִם**, the rest, or remnant of the heathen nations, which presupposes that the judgment has fallen upon them, and that only a remnant of them is left, which remnant desires to take possession of the devastated land of Israel. The epithet applied to this land, **בְּמִוֶּת עוֹלָם**, everlasting, i.e., primeval heights, points back to the **גְּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם** of Gen. 49:26 and Deu. 33:15, and is chosen for the purpose of representing the land as a possession secured to the people of Israel by primeval promises, in consequence of which the attempt of the enemy to seize upon this land has become a sin against the Lord God. The indignation at such a sin is expressed in the emotional character of the address. As Ewald has aptly observed, "Ezekiel is seized with unusual fire, so that after the brief statement in v. 2 'therefore' is repeated five times, the charges brought against these foes forcing themselves in again and again, before the prophecy

settles calmly upon the mountains of Israel, to which it was really intended to apply.” For **אֵן בַּאֵן**, see the comm. on Eze. 13:10. **שְׁמוֹת** is an infinitive *Kal*, formed after the analogy of the verbs **לִה** (cf. Ewald, § 238e), from **שָׁמַם**, to be waste, to devastate, as in Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 12:11, and is not to be taken in the sense of **נָשַׁם**, after Isa. 42:14, as Hitzig supposes. **שָׂאָף**, to pant for a thing; here it is equivalent to snapping at anything. This is required by a comparison with v. 4b, where **הָיָה לְבוֹ** corresponds to **שְׁמוֹת וְשָׂאָף**, and **לְלֹאג** to **וּגְוֹ**. **תַּעֲלוּ אֶל שִׁפְתַּי**. In the connection **שִׁפְתַּי לְשׁוֹן**, **שִׁפְתַּי** signifies the lip as an organ of speech, or, more precisely, the words spoken; and **לְשׁוֹן**, the tongue, is personified, and stands for **אִישׁ לְשׁוֹן** (Psa. 140:12), a tongue-man, i.e., a talker.

In v. 4 the idea expressed in “the mountains of Israel” is expanded into mountains, hills, lowlands, and valleys (cf. Eze. 31:12; 32: 5, 6); and this periphrastic description of the land is more minutely defined by the additional clause, “waste ruins and forsaken cities.” **אִם לֹא** in v. 5 is the particle used in oaths (cf. Eze. 5:11, etc.); and the perfect **דִּבַּרְתִּי** is not merely prophetic, but also a preterite. God has already uttered a threatening word concerning the nations round about in Eze. 25, 26, and 35; and here He once more declares that they shall bear their disgrace. **אֵשׁ קִנְיָהּ** is the fiery jealousy of wrath. **בְּלֵא** is an Aramean form for **בְּלֵה** (Eze. 35:15). For **בְּשֹׂאֵם נִפְשׁוּ**, see Eze. 25: 6. In the expression **לְמֵאן מִגְרָשָׁהּ לְבוֹ**, which has been rendered in various ways, we agree with Gesenius and others in regarding **מִגְרָשׁ** as an Aramean form of the infinitive of **גָּרַשׁ**, with the meaning to empty out, which is confirmed by the Syriac; for **מִגְרָשׁ** cannot be a substantive, on account of the **לְמֵאן**; and Hitzig’s conjecture, that **לְבוֹ** should be pointed **לְבוֹ**, and the clause rendered “to plunder its produce,” is precluded by the fact that the separation of the preposition **לְמֵאן** by the insertion of a word between, is unexampled, to say nothing of the fact that **מִגְרָשׁ** does not mean produce at all. The thought expressed in vv. 6 and 7 is the following: because Israel has hitherto borne the contempt of the heathen, the heathen shall now bear their own contempt. The lifting of the hand is a gesture employed in taking an oath, as in Eze. 20: 6, etc. But the land of Israel is to receive a blessing. This blessing is described in v. 8 in general terms, as the bearing of fruit by the mountains, i.e., by the land of Israel; and its speedy commencement is predicted. It is then depicted in detail in vv. 9ff. In the clause **כִּי קָרְבוּ לְבוֹא**, the Israelites are not to be regarded as the subject, as Kliefoth supposes, in which case their speedy return from exile would be announced. The **כִּי** shows that this cannot be the meaning; for it is immediately preceded by **לְאָמֵי יִשׁׁ**, which precludes the supposition that, when

speaking of the mountains, Ezekiel had the inhabitants in his mind. The promised blessings are the subject, or the branches and fruits, which the mountains are to bear. Nearly all the commentators have agreed in adopting this explanation of the words, after the analogy of Isa. 56: 1. With the כִּי in v. 9 the carrying out of the blessing promised is appended in the form of a reason assigned for the general promise. The mountains shall be cultivated, the men upon them, viz., all Israel, multiplied, the desolated cities rebuilt, so that Israel shall dwell in the land as in the former time, and be fruitful and blessed. This promise was no doubt fulfilled in certain weak beginnings after the return of a portion of the people under Zerubbabel and Ezra; but the multiplying and blessing, experienced by those who returned from Babylon, did not take place till long after the salvation promised here, and more especially in vv. 12-15.

According to v. 12, the land is to become the inheritance of the people Israel, and will no more make the Israelites childless, or (according to v. 14) cause them to stumble; and the people are no more to bear the contempt of the heathen. But that portion of the nation which returned from exile not only continued under the rule of the heathen, but had also in various ways to bear the contempt of the heathen still; and eventually, because Israel not only stumbled, but fell very low through the rejection of its Saviour, it was scattered again out of the land among the heathen, and the land was utterly wasted...until this day. In v. 12 the masculine suffix attached to יִרְשׁוּךָ refers to the land regarded as אֶרֶץ, which is also the subject to הָיְיָתָה and הוֹסִיף. It is not till vv. 13, 14, where the idea of the land becomes so prominent, that the feminine is used. שִׁבְלָם, to make them (the Israelites) childless, or bereaved, is explained in vv. 13, 14 by אֲכָלָת אָדָם, devouring men. That the land devours its inhabitants, is what the spies say of the land of Canaan in Num. 13:32; and in 2Ki. 2:19 is it affirmed of the district of Jericho that it causes מִשְׁבַּלָת, i.e., miscarriages, on account of its bad water. The latter passage does not come into consideration; but the former (Num. 13:32) probably does, and Ezekiel evidently refers to this. For there is no doubt whatever that he explains or expands שִׁבְלָם by אֲכָלָת אָדָם. Although, for example, the charge that the land devours men is brought against it by the enemies or adversaries of Israel (אֲמָרִים לָכֶם, they say to you), the truth of the charge is admitted, since it is said that the land shall henceforth no more devour men, though without a repetition of the שִׁבַל. But the sense in which Ezekiel affirms of the land that it had been אֲכָלָת אָדָם, and was henceforth to be so no more, is determined by וְגִנְיָךְ לֹא תִכְשַׁל אֹדָם, thou wilt no more cause thy people to stumble, which is added in v. 14b in the place of מִשְׁבַּלָת גִּנְיָךְ הָיְיָתָה in v. 14a. Hence the land became a devourer of men by the fact that it caused its people to stumble, i.e., entangled them in sins (the תִּכְשַׁלִּי for תִּכְשַׁלָּה).

is a bad conjecture, the incorrectness of which is placed beyond all doubt by the **לֹא-תִכְשְׁלֵי עוֹד** of v. 15). Consequently we cannot understand the “devouring of men,” after Num. 13:32, as signifying that, on account of its situation and fruitfulness, the land is an apple of discord, for the possession of which the nations strive with one another, so that the inhabitants are destroyed, or at all events we must not restrict the meaning to this; and still less can we agree with Ewald and Hitzig in thinking of the restless hurrying and driving by which individual men were of necessity rapidly swept away. If the sweeping away of the population so connected with the stumbling, the people are devoured by the consequences of their sins, i.e., by the penal judgment, unfruitfulness, pestilence, and war, with which God threatened Israel for its apostasy from Him. These judgments had depopulated the land; and this fact was attributed by the heathen in their own way to the land, and thrown in the teeth of the Israelites as a disgrace. The Lord will henceforth remove this charge, and take away from the heathen all occasion to despise His people, namely, by bestowing upon His land and people the blessing which He promised in the law to those who kept His commandments. But this can only be done by His removing the occasion to stumble or sin, i.e., according to v. 25ff. (compared with Eze. 11:18ff.), by His cleansing His people from all uncleanness and idols, and giving them a new heart and a new spirit. The *Keri* **גִּוְנִיךָ** in vv. 13, 14, and 15 is a needless alteration of the *Chetib* **גִּוְיֶךָ**. — In v. 15 this promise is rounded off and concluded by another summing up of the principal thoughts.

### CH. 36:16-38. THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL FOUNDED UPON ITS SANCTIFICATION

*Eze. 36:16-38.* Because Israel has defiled its land by its sins, God has scattered the people among the heathen; but because they also profaned His name among the heathen, He will exercise forbearance for the sake of His holy name (vv. 16-21), will gather Israel out of the lands, cleanse it from its sins, and sanctify it by the communication of His Spirit, so that it will walk in His ways (vv. 22-28), and will so bless and multiply it, that both the nations around and Israel itself will know that He is the Lord (vv. 29-38). — This promise is shown by the introductory formula in v. 16 and by the contents to be an independent word of God; but it is substantially connected in the closest manner with the preceding word of God, showing, on the one hand, the motive which prompted God to restore and bless His people; and, on the other hand, the means by which He would permanently establish the salvation predicted in Eze. 34 and Eze. 36: 1-15. — The kernel of this promise is formed by vv. 25-28, for which the way is prepared in vv. 17-24, whilst the further extension is contained in vv. 29-38.



*Eze. 36:16-21.* The Lord will extend His forbearance, for the sake of His holy name, to the people who have been rejected on account of their sins.

*V. 16. And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 17. Son of man, the house of Israel dwelt in its land, and defiled it with its way and its doings; like the uncleanness of the unclean woman, was its way before me. V. 18. Then I poured out my fury upon them on account of the blood which they had shed in the land, and because they had defiled it through their idols, V. 19. And scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed in the land; according to their way and their doings I judge them. V. 20. And they came to the nations whither they came, and profaned my holy name, for men said of them, "These are Jehovah's people, and they have come out of His land." V. 21. And so I had pity upon my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations whither they came.*

The address commences with a description of the reasons why God had thrust out His people among the heathen, namely, on account of their sins and idolatrous abominations, by which the Israelites had defiled the land (cf. Lev. 18:28 and Num. 35:34). Their conduct resembled the most offensive uncleanness, namely, the uncleanness of a woman in her menstruation (Lev. 15:19), to which the moral depravity of the people had already been compared in Isa. 64: 5. — In v. 18 the consequence of the defiling of the land by the people is introduced with the impression **וְאֶשְׂפָד וְגו'**. In v. 17, **וַיִּטְמְאוּ** is the continuation of the participle **יֹשְׁבִים**; and the participle is expressive of the condition in the past, as we may see from the words **וְאֶשְׂפָד וְגו'**. The simile in v. 17*b* is an explanatory, circumstantial clause. For v. 18, compare Eze. 7: 8, and for **וְאֶשְׂפָד וְגו'**, Eze. 22: 3, 6. The last clause, "and through their idols they have defiled it," is loosely appended; but it really contains a second reason for the pouring out of the wrath of God upon the people. For v. 19, compare Eze. 22:15. **וַיִּבְאוּ** in v. 20 refers to **בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל**; but there is no necessity to read **וַיִּבְאוּ** on that account. It is perfectly arbitrary to supply the subject proposed by Kliefoth, viz., "the report of what had happened to Israel" came to the heathen, which is quite foreign to the connection; for it was not the report concerning Israel, but Israel itself, which came to the heathen, and profaned the sacred name of God. This is not only plainly expressed in v. 21*b*, but has been already stated in v. 20. The fact that the words of the heathen, by which the name of God was profaned, are quoted here, does not prove that it is the heathen nations who are to be regarded as those who profaned the name of God, as Kliefoth imagines. The words, "these are Jehovah's people, and have come out of His (Jehovah's) land," could only contain a profanation of the holy name of God, if their coming out was regarded as involuntary, i.e., as an exile enforced by the power of the heathen; or, on the other hand, if the Israelites themselves had denied the holiness of the people of God through their behaviour among the heathen. Most of the commentators have decided in

favour of the former view. Vatablus, for example, gives this explanation: “if their God whom they preach had been omnipotent, He would not have allowed them to be expelled from His land.” And we must decide in favour of this exposition, not only because of the parallel passages, such as Num. 14:16 and Jer. 33:24, which support this view; but chiefly on account of the verses which follow, according to which the sanctification of the name of God among the nations consists in the fact that God gathers Israel out of its dispersion among the nations, and leads them back into His own land (vid., vv. 23 and 24). Consequently the profanation of His name can only have consisted in the fact that Israel was carried away out of its own land, and scattered in the heathen lands. For, since the heathen acknowledged only national gods, and regarded Jehovah as nothing more than such a national god of Israel, they did not look upon the destruction of the kingdom of Judah and the carrying away of the people as a judgment of the almighty and holy God upon His people, but concluded that that catastrophe was a sign of the inability of Jehovah to defend His land and save His people. The only way in which God could destroy this delusion was by manifesting Himself to the heathen as the almighty God and Lord of the whole world through the redemption and glorification of His people. **וַיִּחַמֵּל אֱלֹהִים קִי**: so I had pity, compassion upon my holy name. The preterite is prophetic, inasmuch as the compassion consists in the gathering of Israel out of the nations, which is announced in vv. 22ff. as still in the future. The rendering, “I spared (them) for my holy name’s sake” (LXX, Hävernick), is false; for **חַמֵּל** is construed with **אֵל**, governing the person or the thing toward which the compassion is shown (vid., Eze. 16: 5 and 2Ch. 36:15, 17).

**Eze. 36:22-28.** For His holy name’s sake the Lord will bring Israel back from its dispersion into His own land, purify it from its sins, and sanctify it by His Spirit to be His own people.

*V. 22. Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I do it not for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the nations whither ye have come. V. 23. I will sanctify my great name, which is profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them, so that the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, when I prove myself holy upon you before their eyes. V. 24. I will take you out of the nations, and gather you out of all lands, and bring you into your land, V. 25. And will sprinkle clean water upon you, that ye may become clean; from all your uncleannesses and from all your idols will I cleanse you, V. 26. And I will give you a new heart, and give a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh. V. 27. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and keep my rights, and do them. V. 28. And ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to your fathers, and shall become my people, and I will be your God.*

These verses show in what way the Lord will have compassion upon His holy name, and how He will put an end to the scoffing thereat, and vindicate His honour in the sight of the heathen. “Nor for your sake,” i.e., not because you have any claim to deliverance on account of your behaviour (cf. Isa. 48:11 and Deu. 9: 6), but for my holy name’s sake, i.e., to manifest as holy the name which has been profaned among the heathen, I do it, namely, what follows from v. 23 onwards. The Lord will sanctify His name, i.e., show it to be holy by proving Himself to be holy upon Israel. **קִדַּשׁ** is not equivalent to glorify, although the holiness of God involves the idea of glory. Sanctifying is the removing or expunging of the blots and blemishes which adhere to anything. The giving up of His people was regarded by the heathen as a sign of the weakness of Jehovah. This blot through which His omnipotence and glory were dishonoured, God would remove by gathering Israel out of the heathen, and glorifying it. Instead of **לְעֵינֵיכֶם**, the ancient versions have rendered **לְעֵינֵיהֶם**. This reading is also found in many of the *codices* and the earliest editions, and is confirmed by the great Masora, and also commended by the parallel passages, Eze. 20:41 and 28:25, so that it no doubt deserves the preference, although **לְעֵינֵיכֶם** can also be justified. For inasmuch as Israelites had despaired in the midst of their wretchedness through unbelief, it was necessary that Jehovah should sanctify His great name in their sight as well. The great name of Jehovah is His almighty exaltation above all gods (cf. Mal. 1:11, 12). The first thing that Jehovah does for the sanctification of His name is to bring back Israel from its dispersion into its own land (v. 24, compare Eze. 11:17 and 20:41, 42); and then follows the purifying of Israel from its sins. The figurative expression, “to sprinkle with clean water,” is taken from the lustrations prescribed by the law, more particularly the purifying from defilement from the dead by sprinkling with the water prepared from the ashes of a red heifer (Num. 19:17-19; compare Psa. 51: 9). Cleansing from sins, which corresponds to justification, and is not to be confounded with sanctification (Schmieder), is followed by renewal with the Holy Spirit, which takes away the old heart of stone and puts within a new heart of flesh, so that the man can fulfil the commandments of God, and walk in newness of life (vv. 26-28; compare Eze. 11:18-20, where this promise has already occurred, and the necessary remarks concerning its fulfilment have been made). — With regard to the construction **עָשָׂה אֶת אֲשֶׁר וְגוֹ**, to make or effect your walking, compare Ewald, § 337b.

**Eze. 36:29-38.** The Lord will richly bless, multiply, and glorify His people, when thus renewed and sanctified. —

V. 29. *And I will save you from all your uncleannesses, and will call the corn, and multiply it, and no more bring famine upon you; V. 30. But I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, so that ye will no more bear the reproach of*

*famine among the nations. V. 31. But ye will remember your evil ways, and your deeds which were not good, and will loathe yourselves on account of your iniquities and your abominations. V. 32. Not for your sake do I this, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, be this known to you; be ye ashamed and blush for your ways, O house of Israel! V. 33. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, In the day when I shall cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will make the cities inhabited, and the ruins shall be built, V. 34. And the devastated land shall be tilled instead of being a desert before the eyes of every one who passed by. V. 35. And men will say, This land, which was laid waste, has become like the garden of Eden, and the desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited. V. 36. And the nations, which have been left round about you, shall know that I Jehovah build up that which is destroyed, and plant that which is laid waste. I, Jehovah, have said it, and do it. V. 37. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will still let myself be sought by the house of Israel in this, to do it for them; I will multiply them, like a flock, in men; V. 38. Like a flock of holy sacrifices, like the flock of Jerusalem on its feast-days, so shall the desolate cities be full of flocks of men; and they shall know that I am Jehovah. —*

The words **הוֹשַׁעְתִּי וְגוֹ'**, I help or save you from all your uncleannesses, cannot be understood as relating to their purification from the former uncleannesses; for they have already been cleansed from these, according to v. 25. The **מִמְאֹת** can only be such defilements as are still possible even after the renewing of the people; and **הוֹשַׁע**, to help, means to guard them against any further recurrence of such defilements (cf. Eze. 37:23), and not to deliver them from the consequences of their former pollutions. But if God preserves His people from these, there is no longer any occasion for a fresh suspension of judgments over them, and God can bestow His blessing upon the sanctified nation without reserve. It is in this way that the further promises are appended; and, first of all, in vv. 29b and 30, a promise that He will bless them with an abundant crop of fruits, both of the orchard and the field. "I call to the corn," i.e., I cause it to come or grow, so that famine will occur no more (for the fact, compare Eze. 34:29).

In consequence of this blessing, Israel will blush with shame at the thought of its former sins, and will loathe itself for those abominations (v. 31); compare Eze. 20:43, where the same thought has already occurred. To this, after repeating what has been said before in v. 22, namely, that God is not doing all this for the sake of the Israelites themselves, the prophet appends the admonition to be ashamed of their conduct, i.e., to repent, which is so far inserted appropriately in the promise, that the promise itself is meant to entice Israel to repent and return to God. Then, secondly, in two strophes introduced with **כֹּה אָמַר יְיָ**, the promise is still further expanded. In vv. 33-36, the prophet shows how the devastated land is to be restored and rebuilt, and to become a paradise; and in vv. 37 and 38, how the people are to be blessed through a large increase in their numbers. Both of these strophes are simply a

further elaboration of the promise contained in vv. 9-12. הוֹשִׁיב, causative of יָשַׁב, to cause to be inhabited, to populate, as in Isa. 54: 3. לְעֵינַי כָּל-עוֹבֵר, as in Eze. 5:14. The subject to וְאֹמְרֵי in v. 35 is, “those who pass by.” For the comparison to the garden of Eden, see Eze. 31: 9. בְּצוּרוֹת is a circumstantial word belonging to יָשַׁבוּ: they shall be inhabited as fortified cities, that is to say, shall afford to their inhabitants the security of fortresses, from which there is no fear of their being expelled. In v. 36 the expression, “the heathen nations which shall be left round about you,” presupposes that at the time of Israel’s redemption the judgment will have fallen upon the heathen (compare Eze. 30: 3 with Eze. 29:21), so that only a remnant of them will be still in existence; and this remnant will recognise the work of Jehovah in the restoration of Israel. This recognition, however, does not involve the conversion of the heathen to Jehovah, but is simply preparatory to it. For the fact itself, compare Eze. 17:24. הִדְרִישׁ, to let oneself be asked or entreated, as in Eze. 14: 3. זֹאת, with regard to this, is explained by לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהֶם. What God will do follows in אֲרֵבָה וְתוֹ. God will multiply His people to such an extent, that they will resemble the flock of lambs, sheep, and goats brought to Jerusalem to sacrifice upon the feast days. Compare 2Ch. 35: 7, where Josiah is said to have given to the people thirty thousand lambs and goats for the feast of the passover. כְּצֹאן אֲדָם does not mean, like a flock of men. אֲדָם cannot be a genitive dependent upon צֹאן, on account of the article in כְּצֹאן, but belongs to אֲרֵבָה, either as a supplementary apposition to אֲנִתָם, or as a second object, so that אֲרֵבָה would be construed with a double accusative, after the analogy of verbs of plenty, to multiply them in men. Kliefoth’s rendering, “I will multiply them, so that they shall be the flock of men” (of mankind), is grammatically untenable. קִדְּשִׁים צֹאן, a flock of holy beasts, i.e., of sacrificial lambs. The flock of Jerusalem is the flock brought to Jerusalem at the yearly feasts, when the male population of the land came to the sanctuary (Deu. 16:16): So shall the desolate cities be filled again with flocks of men (compare Mic. 2:12).

### CH. 37. RESURRECTION OF ISRAEL AND REUNION AS ONE NATION

*Eze. 37.* This chapter contains two revelations from God (vv. 1-14 and vv. 15-28). In the first, the prophet is shown in a vision the resurrection of Israel to a new life. In the second, he is commanded to exhibit, by means of a symbolical act, the reunion of the divided kingdoms into a single nation under one king. Both of these he is to announce to the children of Israel. The substantial connection between these two prophecies will be seen from the exposition.

## VV. 1-14. RESURRECTION OF ISRAEL TO NEW LIFE

### *Eze. 37: 1-14.*

V. 1. *There came upon me the hand of Jehovah, and Jehovah led me out in the spirit, and set me down in the midst of the valley; this was full of bones.* V. 2. *And He led me past them round about; and, behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and, behold, they were very dry.* V. 3. *And He said to me, Son of man, will these bones come to life? and I said, Lord, Jehovah, thou knowest.* V. 4. *Then He said to me, Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, Ye dry bones, hear ye the word of Jehovah.* V. 5. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to these bones, Behold, I bring breath into you, that ye may come to life.* V. 6. *I will create sinews upon you, and cause flesh to grow upon you, and cover you with skin, and bring breath into you, so that ye shall live and know that I am Jehovah.* V. 7. *And I prophesied as I was commanded; and there was a noise as I prophesied, and behold a rumbling, and the bones came together, bone to bone.* V. 8. *And I saw, and behold sinews came over them, and flesh grew, and skin drew over it above; but there was no breath in them.* V. 9. *Then He said to me, Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Come from the four winds, thou breath, and blow upon these slain, that they may come to life.* V. 10. *And I prophesied as I was commanded; then the breath came into them, and they came to life, and stood upon their feet, a very, very great army.* V. 11. *And He said to me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, our bones are dried, and our hope has perished; we are destroyed!* V. 12. *Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will open you graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, my people, and bring you into the land of Israel.* V. 13. *And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, my people.* V. 14. *And I will put my Spirit into you, and will place you in your land, and ye shall know that I, Jehovah, have spoken and do it, is the saying of Jehovah.*

This revelation divides itself into two sections. Vv. 1-10 contain the vision, and vv. 11-14 give the interpretation. There are no particular difficulties in the description of the vision, so far as the meaning of the words is concerned. By a supernatural intervention on the part of God, Ezekiel is taken from his own home in a state of spiritual ecstasy into a valley which was full of dead men's bones. For the expression **וַיָּבֵא אֱלֹהִים אֶתְּיָדִי**, see the comm. on Eze. 1: 3. In the second clause of v. 1 **וַיְהִי** is the subject, and is not to be taken as a genitive in connection with **בְּרוּחַ**, as it has been by the Vulgate and Hitzig in opposition to the accents. **בְּרוּחַ** stands for **בְּרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים** (Eze. 11:24), and **אֱלֹהִים** is omitted simply because **וַיְהִי** follows immediately afterwards. **וַיִּשְׁמַע**, to set down, here and Eze. 40: 2; whereas in other cases the form **וַיִּשְׁמַע** is usually employed in this sense. The article prefixed to **הַבְּקָעָה** appears to point back to Eze. 3:22, to the valley where Ezekiel received the first revelation concerning the fate of Jerusalem and its inhabitants. That **עַצְמוֹת** are dead men's bones is

evident from what follows. **הֶעֱבִירֵנִי עֲלֵיהֶם**, not “He led me over them round about,” but past them, in order that Ezekiel might have a clear view of them, and see whether it were possible for them to come to life again. They were lying upon the surface of the valley, i.e., not under, but upon the ground, and not piled up in a heap, but scattered over the valley, and they were very dry. The question asked by God, whether these bones could live, or come to life again, prepares the way for the miracle; and Ezekiel’s answer, “Lord, Thou knowest” (cf. Rev. 7:14), implies that, according to human judgment, it was inconceivable that they could come to life any more, and nothing but the omnipotence of God could effect this.

After this introduction there follows in vv. 4ff. the miracle of the raising to life of these very dry bones, accomplished through the medium of the word of God, which the prophet addresses to them, to show to the people that the power to realize itself is inherent in the word of Jehovah proclaimed by Ezekiel; in other words, that Jehovah possesses the power to accomplish whatever He promises to His people. The word in v. 5, “Behold, I bring breath into you, that ye may come to life,” announces in general terms the raising of them to life, whilst the process itself is more minutely described in v. 6. God will put on them (clothe them with) sinews, flesh, and skin, and then put **רוּחַ** in them. **רוּחַ** is the animating spirit or breath = **רוּחַ חַיִּים** (Gen. 6:17; 7:17). **קָרַם**, **ἀπ. λεγ.** in Syriac *incrustare, obducere*. When Ezekiel prophesied there arose or followed a sound (**קוֹל**), and then a shaking (**רָאשׁ**), and the bones approached one another, every bone to its own bone. Different explanations have been given of the words **קוֹל** and **רָאשׁ**. **קוֹל** signifies a sound or voice, and **רָאשׁ** a trembling, and earthquake, and also a rumbling or a loud noise (compare Eze. 3:12 and Isa. 9: 4). The relation between the two words as they stand here is certainly not that the sound (**קוֹל**) passes at once into a loud noise, or is continued in that form; whilst **רָאשׁ** denotes the rattling or rustling of bones in motion. The fact that the moving of the bones toward one another is represented by **וַתִּקְרְבוּ** (with *Vav consec.*), as the sequel to **רָאשׁ**, is decisive against this. Yet we cannot agree with Kliefoth, that by **קוֹל** we are to understand the trumpet-blast, or voice of God, that wakes the dead from their graves, according to those passages of the New Testament which treat of the resurrection, and by **רָאשׁ** the earthquake which opens the graves. This explanation is precluded, not only by the philological difficulty that **קוֹל** without any further definition does not signify either the blast of a trumpet or the voice of God, but also by the circumstance that the **קוֹל** is the result of the prophesying of Ezekiel; and we cannot suppose that God would make His almighty call dependent upon a prophet’s prophesying. And even in the case of **רָאשׁ**, the reference to

Eze. 38:19 does not prove that the word must mean earthquake in this passage also, since Ezekiel uses the word in a different sense in Eze. 12:18 and 3:12. We therefore take קול in the general sense of a loud noise, and רָאָשׁ in the sense of shaking (sc., of the bones), which was occasioned by the loud noise, and produced, or was followed by, the movement of the bones to approach one another.

The coming together of the bones was followed by their being clothed with sinews, flesh, and skin; but there was not yet any breath in them (v. 8). To give them this the prophet is to prophesy again, and that to the breath, that it come from the four winds or quarters of the world and breathe into these slain (v. 9). Then, when he prophesied, the breath came into them, so that they received life, and stood upright upon their feet. In vv. 9 and 10 רוּחַ is rendered by some “wind,” by others “spirit;” but neither of these is in conformity with what precedes it. רוּחַ does not mean anything else than the breath of life, which has indeed a substratum in the wind, perceptible to the senses, but it not identical with it. The wind itself brings no life into dead bodies. If, therefore, the dead bodies become living, receive life through the blowing of the רוּחַ into them, what enters into them by the blowing cannot be a symbol of the breath of life, but must be the breath of life itself — namely, that divine breath of life which pervades all nature, giving and sustaining the life of all creatures (cf. Psa. 104:29, 30). The expression פָּחַי בְּהַרְוִיגִים points back to Gen. 2: 7. The representation of the bringing of the dead bones to life in two acts may also be explained from the fact that it is based upon the history of the creation of man in Gen. 2, as Theodoret <sup>44</sup> has observed, and serves plainly to depict the creative revivification here, like the first creation there, as a work of the almighty God. For a correct understanding of the vision, it is also necessary to observe that in v. 9 the dead bones, clothed with sinews, flesh, and skin, are called הַרְוִיגִים, slain, killed, and not merely dead. It is apparent at once from this that our vision is not intended to symbolize the resurrection of all the dead, but simply the raising up of the nation of Israel, which has been slain. This is borne out by the explanation of the vision which God gives to the prophet in vv. 1-14, and directs him to repeat to the people. The dead bones are the “whole house of Israel” that has been given up to death; in other words, Judah and Ephraim. “These bones” in v. 11 are the same as in vv. 3 and 5, and not the bodies brought to life in v. 10; though Hitzig maintains that they are the latter, and then draws the erroneous conclusion that vv. 11-14 do not interpret the vision of the first ten verses, but that the bones in the valley are simply explained in these verses as signifying the dead of Israel. It is true that the further explanation in v. 12ff. of what is described in vv. 5-10 as happening to the dead bones is not given in the form of an exposition of the separate details



of that occurrence, but is summed up in the announcement that God will open their graves, bring them out of their graves, and transport them to their own land. But it does not follow from this that the announcement is merely an application of the vision to the restoration of Israel to new life, and therefore that something different is represented from what is announced in vv. 12-14. Such a view is at variance with the words, “these bones are the whole house of Israel.” Even if these words are not to be taken so literally as that we are to understand that the prophet was shown in the vision of the bones of the slain and deceased Israelites, but simply mean: these dead bones represent the house of Israel, depict the nation of Israel in its state of death, — they express so much in the clearest terms concerning the relation in which the explanation in vv. 12-14 stands to the visionary occurrence in vv. 4-10, namely, that God has shown to Ezekiel in the vision what He commands him to announce concerning Israel in vv. 12-14; in other words, that the bringing of the dead bones to life shown to him in the vision was intended to place visibly before him the raising of the whole nation of Israel to new life out of the death into which it had fallen. This is obvious enough from the words: these bones are the whole house of Israel. **בְּלִבְיַת יִשְׂרָאֵל** points forward to the reunion of the tribes of Israel that are severed into two nations, as foretold in vv. 15ff. It is they who speak in v. 11b. The subject to **אֶמְרִים** is neither the bones nor the dead of Israel (Hitzig), but the **בְּלִבְיַת יִשְׂרָאֵל** already named, which is also addressed in v. 12. All Israel says: our bones are dried, i.e., our vital force is gone. The bones are the seat of the vital force, as in Psa. 32: 3; and **יָבֵשׁ**, to dry up, applied to the marrow, or vital sap of the bones, is substantially the same as **בָּלָה** in the psalm (*l.c.*). Our hope has perished (cf. Eze. 19: 5). **תִּקְוָה** is here the hope of rising into a nation once more. **נִגְזְרֵנוּ לָנוּ**: literally, we are cut off for ourselves, sc. from the sphere of the living (cf. Lam. 3:54; Isa. 53: 8), equivalent to “it is all over with us.”

To the people speaking thus, Ezekiel is to announce that the Lord will open their graves, bring them out of them, put His breath of life into them, and lead them into their own land. If we observe the relation in which vv. 12 and 13 stand to v. 14, namely, that the two halves of the 14th verse are parallel to the two verses 12 and 13, the clause **וַיִּדְעֶתֶם כִּי אֲנִי יְיָ** in v. 14b to the similar clause in v. 13, there can be no doubt that the contents of v. 14a also correspond to those of v. 12 — that is to say, that the words, “I put my breath (Spirit) into you, that ye may live, and place you in your own land” (bring you to rest therein), affirm essentially the same as the words, “I bring you out of your graves, and lead you into the land of Israel;” with this simple difference, that the bringing out of the graves is explained and rendered more emphatic by the more definite idea of causing them to live through the breath or Spirit of

God put into them, and the **הָנִיחַ** by **יְהוָה**, the leading into the land by the transporting and bringing them to rest therein. Consequently we are not to understand by **נָתַתִּי רוּחִי בְכֶם** either a divine act differing from the raising of the dead to life, or the communication of the Holy Spirit as distinguished from the imparting of the breath of life. **רוּחִי**, the Spirit of Jehovah, is identical with the **רוּחַ**, which comes, according to vv. 9 and 10, into the bones of the dead when clothed with sinews, flesh, and skin, i.e., is breathed into them. This spirit or breath of life is the creative principle both of the physical and of the ethical or spiritual life. Consequently there are not three things announced in these verses, but only two:

- (1) The raising to life from a state of death, by bringing out of the graves, and communicating the divine Spirit of life;
- (2) the leading back to their own land to rest quietly therein.

When, therefore, Kliefoth explains these verses as signifying that for the consolation of Israel, which is mourning hopelessly in its existing state of death, “God directs the prophet to say

- (1) That at some future time it will experience a resurrection in the literal sense, that its graves will be opened, and that all its dead, those deceased with those still alive, will be raised up out of their graves;
- (2) that God will place them in their own land; and
- (3) that when He has so placed them in their land, He will put His Spirit within them that they may live: in the first point the idea of the future resurrection, both of those deceased and of those still living, is interpolated into the text; and in the third point, placing them in their land before they are brought to life by the Spirit of God, would be at variance with the text, according to which the giving of the Spirit precedes the removal to their own land.

The repetition of **אֲנִי** in vv. 12 and 13 is also worthy of notice: you who are my people, which bases the comforting promise upon the fact that Israel is the people of Jehovah.

If, therefore, our vision does not set forth the resurrection of the dead in general, but simply the raising to life of the nation of Israel which is given up to death, it is only right that, in order still further to establish this view, we should briefly examine the other explanations that have been given. — The Fathers and most of the orthodox commentators, both of ancient and modern times, have found in vv. 1-10 a *locus classicus* for the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and that quite correctly. But their views differ widely as to the strict meaning and design of the vision itself; inasmuch as some regard the vision as a direct and immediate prophecy of the general resurrection of the dead at the last day, whilst others take the raising of the dead to life shown to the prophet in the vision to be merely a figure or type of the waking up to new life of the Israel

which is now dead in its captivity. The first view is mentioned by Jerome; but in later times it has been more especially defended by Calov, and last of all most decidedly by Kliefoth. Yet the supporters of this view acknowledge that vv. 11-14 predict the raising to life of the nation of Israel. The question arises, therefore, how this prediction is to be brought into harmony with such an explanation of the vision. The persons noticed by Jerome, who supported the view that in vv. 4-10 it is the general resurrection that is spoken of, sought to remove the difficulties to which this explanation is exposed, by taking the words, "these bones are the whole house of Israel," as referring to the resurrection of the saints, and connecting them with the first resurrection in Rev. 20: 5, and by interpreting the leading of Israel back to their own land as equivalent to the inheriting of the earth mentioned in Mat. 5: 5. Calov, on the other hand, gives the following explanation of the relation in which vv. 11-14 stand to vv. 1-10: "in this striking vision there was shown by the Lord to the prophet the resurrection of the dead; but the *occasion*, the *cause*, and the *scope* of this vision were the *resurrection of the Israelitish people*, not so much into its earlier political form, as for the restoration of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the establishment of the worship of God, both of which were indeed restored in the time of Zerubbabel, but were first brought to perfection at the coming of Jesus Christ." He also assumes that the raising of the dead is represented in the vision, "because God would have this representation exhibited for a *figure and confirmation* of the restitution of the people." And lastly, according to Kliefoth, vv. 11-14 do not furnish a literal exposition of the vision, but simply make an application of it to the bringing of Israel to life. — We cannot regard either of these views as correct, because neither of them does justice to the words of the text. The idea of the Fathers, that vv. 11-14 treat of the resurrection of the saints (believers), cannot be reconciled either with the words or with the context of our prophecy, and has evidently originated in perplexity. And the assumption of Calov and Kliefoth, that vv. 11-14 contain simply an application of the general resurrection of the dead exhibited in vv. 1-10 to the resurrection of Israel, by no means exhausts the meaning of the words, "these bones are the whole house of Israel," as we have already observed in our remarks on v. 11. Moreover, in the vision itself there are certain features to be found which do not apply to the general resurrection of the dead. In proof of this, we will not lay any stress upon the circumstance that Ezekiel sees the resurrection of the dead within certain limits; that it is only the dead men's bones lying about in one particular valley, and not the dead of the whole earth, though a very great army, that he sees come to life again; but, on the other hand, we must press the fact that in v. 9 those who are to be raised to life are called **מֵתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, a word which does not signify the dead of all kinds, but simply those who have been slain, or have perished by the sword, by famine, or by other violent deaths, and which indisputably proves that Ezekiel was not shown the resurrection of all the dead,

but simply the raising to life of Israel, which had been swept away by a violent death. Kliefoth would account for this restriction from the purpose for which the vision was shown to the prophet. Because the design of the vision was to comfort Israel concerning the wretchedness of its existing condition, and that wretchedness consisted for the most part in the fact that the greater portion of Israel had perished by sword, famine, and pestilence, he was shown the resurrection of the dead generally and universally, as it would take place not in the case of the Israelites alone, but in that of all the dead, though here confined within the limits of one particular field of dead; and stress is laid upon the circumstance that the dead which Ezekiel saw raised to life *instar omnium*, were such as had met with a violent death. This explanation would be admissible, if only it had been indicated or expressed in any way whatever, that the bones of the dead which Ezekiel saw lying about in the **בְּקֵעָה** represented all the dead of the whole earth. But we find no such indication; and because in the whole vision there is not a single feature contained which would warrant any such generalization of the field of the dead which Ezekiel saw, we are constrained to affirm that the dead men's bones seen by Ezekiel in the valley represent the whole house of Israel alone, and not the deceased and slain of all mankind; and that the vision does not set forth the resurrection of all the dead, but only the raising to life of the nation of Israel which had been given up to death.

Consequently we can only regard the figurative view of the vision as the correct one, though this also has been adopted in very different ways. When Jerome says that Ezekiel "is prophesying of the restoration of Israel through the parable of the resurrection," and in order to defend himself from the charge of denying the dogma of the resurrection of the dead, adds that "the similitude of a resurrection would never have been employed to exhibit the restoration of the Israelitish people, if that resurrection had been a delusion, and it had not been believed that it would really take place; because no one confirms uncertain things by means of things which have no existence;" — Hävernick very justly replies, that the resurrection of the dead is not to be so absolutely regarded as a dogma already completed and defined, or as one universally known and having its roots in the national belief; though Hävernick is wrong in affirming in support of this that the despair of the people described in v. 11 plainly shows that so general a belief cannot possibly be presupposed. For we find just the same despair at times when faith in the resurrection of the dead was a universally accepted dogma. The principal error connected with this view is the assumption that the vision was merely a parable formed by Ezekiel in accordance with the dogma of the resurrection of the dead. If, on the contrary, the vision was a spiritual intuition produced by God in the soul of the prophet, it might set forth the resurrection of the dead, even if the belief in this dogma

had no existence as yet in the consciousness of the people, or at all events was not yet a living faith; and God might have shown to the prophet the raising of Israel to life under this figure, for the purpose of awakening this belief in Israel.

f45

In that case, however, the vision was not merely a parable, but a symbolical representation of a real fact, which was to serve as a pledge to the nation of its restoration to life. Theodoret comes much nearer to the truth when he gives the following as his explanation of the vision: that “on account of the unbelief of the Jews in exile, who were despairing of their restoration, the almighty God makes known His might; and the resurrection of the dead bodies, which was much more difficult than their restoration, is shown to the prophet, in order that all the nation may be taught thereby that everything is easy to His will;”<sup>f46</sup> and when, accordingly, he calls what occurs in the vision “a type not of the calling to life of the Jews only, but also of the resurrection of all men.” The only defect in this is, that Theodoret regards the dead bones which are brought to life too much as a figurative representation of any dead whatever, and thereby does justice neither to the words, “these bones are the whole house of Israel,” which he paraphrases by *τύπος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ταῦτα*, nor to the designation applied to them as *הַרְוּגִים*, though it may fairly be pleaded as a valid excuse so far as *הַרְוּגִים* is concerned, that the force of this word has been completely neutralized in the Septuagint, upon which he was commenting, by the rendering *τοὺς νεκροὺς τούτους*. — Hävernack has interpreted the vision in a much more abstract manner, and evaporated it into the general idea of a symbolizing of the creative, life-giving power of God, which can raise even the bones of the dead to life again. His exposition is the following: “There is no express prediction of the resurrection in these words, whether of a general resurrection or of the particular resurrection of Israel; but this is only thought of here, inasmuch as it rests upon the creative activity of God, to which even such a conquest of death as this is possible.”<sup>f47</sup>

The calling to life of the thoroughly dried dead bones shown to the prophet in the vision, is a figure or visible representation of that which the Lord announces to him in vv. 11-14, namely, that He will bring Israel out of its graves, give it life with His breath, and bring it into its own land; and consequently a figure of the raising of Israel to life from its existing state of death. The opening of the graves is also a figure; for those whom the Lord will bring out of their graves are they who say, “Our bones are dried,” etc. (v. 11), and therefore not those who are deceased, nor even the spiritually dead, but those who have lost all hope of life. We are not, however, to understand by this merely *mors civilis* and *vita civilis*, as Grotius has done. For Israel was destroyed, not only politically as a nation, but spiritually as a church of the Lord, through the destruction of its

two kingdoms and its dispersion among the heathen; and in a very large number of its members it had also been given up to the power of physical death and sunk into the grave. Even then, if we keep out of sight those who were deceased, Israel, as the people of God was slain (אֶרְרָא), without any hope of coming to life again, or a resurrection to new life. But the Lord now shows the prophet this resurrection under the figure of the raising to life of the very dry bones that lie scattered all around. This is fulfilled through the restoration of Israel as the people of Jehovah, to which the leading of the people back into the land of Israel essentially belongs. The way was opened and prepared for this fulfilment by the return of a portion of the people from the Babylonian captivity under Zerubbabel and Ezra, which was brought to pass by the Lord, by the rebuilding of the cities of Judah and the temple which had been destroyed, and by the restoration of political order. But all this was nothing more than a pledge of the future and complete restoration of Israel. For although the Lord still raised up prophets for those who had returned and furthered the building of His house, His glory did not enter the newly erected temple, and the people never attained to independence again, — that is to say, not to permanent independence, — but continued in subjection to the imperial power of the heathen. And even if, according to Ezra, very many more of the exiles may have returned to their native land, by whom, for example, Galilee was repopulated and brought into cultivation again, the greater portion of the nation remained dispersed among the heathen. The true restoration of Israel as the people of the Lord commenced with the founding of the new kingdom of God, the “kingdom of heaven,” through the appearing of Christ upon the earth. But inasmuch as the Jewish nation as such, or in its entirety, did not acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Messiah foretold by the prophets and sent by God, but rejected its Saviour, there burst afresh upon Jerusalem and the Jewish nation the judgment of dispersion among the heathen; whereas the kingdom of God founded by Christ spread over the earth, through the entrance of believers from among the Gentiles. This judgment upon the Jewish people, which is hardened in unbelief, still continues, and will continue until the time when the full number of the Gentiles has entered into the kingdom of God, and Israel as a people shall also be converted to Christ, acknowledge the crucified One as its Saviour, and bow the knee before Him (Rom. 11:25, 26). Then will “all Israel” be raised up out of its graves, the graves of its political and spiritual death, and brought back into its own land, which will extend as far as the Israel of God inhabits the earth. Then also will the hour come in which all the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth out of their graves to the resurrection (Dan. 12: 2; Joh. 5:25-29); when the Lord shall appear in His glory, and descend from heaven with the trump of God (1Th. 4:16), to call all the dead to life, and through the judgment upon all the nations to perfect His kingdom in glory, and

bring the righteous into the Canaan of the new earth, into the heavenly Jerusalem, to the imperishable life of everlasting blessedness.

All these several factors in the restoration of Israel, which has been given up to the death of exile on account of its sins, though far removed from one another, so far as the time of their occurrence is concerned, are grouped together as one in the vision of the coming to life of the dead bones of the whole house of Israel. The two features which are kept distinct in the visionary description — namely,

- (1) the coming together of the dry bones, and their being clothed with sinews, flesh, and skin; and
- (2) the bringing to life of the bones, which have now the form of corpses, through the divine breath of life — are not to be distinguished in the manner proposed by Hengstenberg, namely, that the first may be taken as referring to the restoration of the civil condition — the external *restitutio in integrum*; the second, to the giving of new life through the outpouring of the Spirit of God.

Even according to our view, the vision contains a prophecy of the resurrection of the dead, only not in this sense, that the doctrine of the general resurrection of the dead is the premiss, or the design, or the direct meaning of the vision; but that the figurative meaning constitutes the foreground, and the full, literal meaning of the words the background of the prophetic vision, and that the fulfilment advances from the figurative to the literal meaning, — the raising up of the people of Israel out of the civil and spiritual death of exile being completed in the raising up of the dead out of their graves to everlasting life at the last day.

## **VV. 15-28. REUNION OF ISRAEL AS ONE NATION UNDER THE FUTURE KING DAVID**

This word of God directs the prophet to represent by a sign the reunion of the tribes of Israel, which have been divided into two kingdoms (vv. 15-17), and to explain this sign to the people (vv. 18-21), and predict its sanctification and blessedness under the reign of the future David (vv. 22-28). What is new in this word of God is the express prediction embodied in a symbolical action, of the reunion of the divided tribes of Israel into one single people of God, which has been already hinted at in the promise of the raising to life of “the whole house of Israel” (v. 11). This brief indication is here plainly expressed and more fully developed.

*Eze. 37:15-28.*

V. 15. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 16. And thou, son of man, take to thyself a piece of wood, and write upon it: Of Judah, and the sons of Israel, his associates; and take another piece of wood, and write upon it: Of Joseph, the*

wood of Ephraim, and the whole house of Israel, his associates; V. 17. And put them together, one to the other, into one piece of wood to thee, that they may be united in thy hand. V. 18. And when the sons of thy people say to thee, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by this? V. 19. Say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will take the wood of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his associates, which I put thereon, with the wood of Judah, and will make them into one stick, that they may be one in my hand. V. 20. And the pieces of wood upon which thou hast written shall be in thy hand before their eyes. V. 21. And say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will take the sons of Israel out of the nations among whom they walk, and will gather them from round about, and lead them into their land. V. 22. I will make them into one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king over them all; and it shall not become two nations any more, and they shall not henceforth be divided into two kingdoms any more; V. 23. And shall not defile themselves by their idols and their abominations, and by all their transgressions; but I will help them from all their dwelling-places, in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so that they shall be my people, and I will be their God. V. 24. And my servant David will be king over them, and be a shepherd for them all; and they will walk in my rights, and keep my statutes and do them. V. 25. And they will dwell in the land which I gave to my servant Jacob, in which their fathers dwelt; there will they dwell, and their children's children for ever; and my servant David will be a prince to them for ever. V. 26. And I make a covenant of peace with them for ever, an everlasting covenant shall be with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and put my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever. V. 27. And my dwelling will be over them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. V. 28. And the nation shall know that I am Jehovah, who sanctifieth Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever.

The symbolical action commanded in vv. 16 and 17, which the prophet no doubt performed in all its external reality (cf. vv. 19 and 20), is easily understood, and expresses the thing to be represented in the the clearest manner. The writing of the names of the tribes composing the two kingdoms recalls to mind the similar act on the part of Moses (Num. 17:17ff.). But the act itself is a different one here, and neither the passage referred to nor Eze. 21:15 furnishes any proof that עֵץ signifies a staff or rod. Ezekiel would undoubtedly have used מַטֵּה for a staff. Nor have we even to think of flat boards, but simply of pieces of wood upon which a few words could be written, and which could be held in one hand. The לְ before the names to be written upon each piece of wood is the sign of the genitive, indicating to whom it belongs, as in the case of the heading to David's psalms (לְדָוִד). This is evident from the fact that in אֵץ אֶפְרַיִם the construct state is used instead. The name is to indicate that the piece of wood belongs to Judah or Ephraim, and represents it. The command to Ezekiel to write upon one piece of wood, not only Judah, but "the sons of Israel, his associates," arose from the circumstance that the kingdom of Judah included, in addition to the tribe of Judah, the greater portion of Benjamin and



Simeon, the tribe of Levi and those pious Israelites who emigrated at different times from the kingdom of the ten tribes into that of Judah, who either were or became associates of Judah (2Ch. 11:12ff., 15: 9; 30:11, 18; 31: 1). In the writing upon the second piece of wood, **אֵין אֶפְרַיִם** is an explanatory apposition to **לְיוֹסֵף**, and an accusative governed by **כְּתַב**. But the command is not to be understood as signifying that Ezekiel was to write the words **אֶפְרַיִם עַץ** upon the piece of wood; all that he was to write was, “Joseph and the whole house of Israel, his associates.” The name of Joseph is chosen, in all probability, not as the more honourable name, as Hävernick supposes, but because the house of Joseph, consisting of the two powerful tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, formed the trunk of the kingdom of the ten tribes (Klieföth). The “whole house of Israel, his associates,” are the rest of the tribes belonging to that kingdom. The two pieces of wood, with these inscriptions upon them, Ezekiel is to put together, and hold in his hand bound together in one. **לֵךְ מִה־אֵלֶּה**, what these (two pieces of wood) are to thee, is equivalent to, what thou meanest to indicate by them. For the rest, compare Eze. 24:19. In the word of God explaining the action (v. 19), the wood of Joseph is not the piece of wood with Joseph’s name written upon it, but the kingdom represented by this piece of wood which was in Ephraim’s hand, inasmuch as the hegemony was with the tribe of Ephraim. Instead of the wood, therefore, the tribes (not staffs) of Israel, i.e., the Israelites who constituted these tribes, are mentioned as his associates. God will put these upon the wood of Joseph (**עָלָיו**), i.e., will join them together, and then place them with the wood of Judah, i.e., the kingdom of Judah, and unite them into one wood (or nation). **אֶת־עֵץ יְהוּדָה**, the construction of which has been misunderstood by Hitzig, is neither in apposition to **עָלָיו**, nor governed by **נָתַתִּי**: “and will put them thereupon, upon the wood of Judah” (Hitzig and Klieföth), or, “I add them to it, (namely) with the wood of Judah” (De Wette); but it is dependent upon **לִקְחֵם**, “I take the wood of Joseph...and the tribes of Israel, his associates, which I put thereon, along with the wood of Judah, and make them into one wood.” The construction is rendered obscure simply by the fact that the relative clause, “which I put thereon,” is attached to the principal clause **וְאֵין לִקְחֵם וְגוֹ** by *Vav consec.* In **בְּיַדִּי**, “they shall be one *in my hand*,” there is probably an antithesis to **בְּיַד אֶפְרַיִם**, those who have come into Ephraim’s hand, the tribes severed by Ephraim from the kingdom of God, will God once more bring together with Judah, and hold in His hand as an undivided nation. — In v. 20 the description of the sign is completed by the additional statement, that the pieces of wood on which the prophet has written are to be in his hand before their eyes, and consequently that the prophet is to perform the act in such a way that his countrymen may see it; from which it follows that he performed it in its

outward reality. The fulfilment of the instructions is not specially mentioned, as being self-evident; but in vv. 21-28 the further explanation of the symbolical action is given at once; and the interpretation goes beyond the symbol, inasmuch as it not only describes the manner in which God will effect the union of the divided tribes, but also what He will do for the preservation of the unity of the reunited people, and for the promotion of their blessedness. This explanation is arranged in two strophes through the repetition of the concluding thought: "they will be my people," etc., in vv. 23 and 27. Each of these strophes contains a twofold promise.

The first (vv. 21-23) promises (a) the gathering of the Israelites out of their dispersion, their restoration to their own land, and their union as one nation under the rule of David (vv. 21, 22); (b) their purification from all sins, and sanctification as the true people of the Lord (v. 23). The second strophe (vv. 24-27) promises (a) their undisturbed eternal abode in the land, under David their prince (v. 25); (b) the blessedness conferred upon them through the conclusion of an everlasting covenant of peace (vv. 26 and 27). This second promise, therefore, constitutes the completion of the first, securing to the nation of Israel its restoration and sanctification for all time. The whole promise, however, is merely a repetition of that contained in Eze. 34:11-31 and 36:22-30. — The three factors — the gathering out of the nations, restoration to the land of Israel, and reunion as one people — form the first act of divine grace. The union of the Israelites, when brought back to their land, is accomplished by God giving them in David a king who will so rule the reunited people that they will not be divided any more into two peoples and two kingdoms. The *Chetib* **יְהוָה** is not to be altered into the plural **יְהוָה**, as in the *Keri*; but **נָוִי** is to be supplied in thought, from the preceding clause, as the subject to the verb. The division of the nation into two kingdoms had its roots, no doubt, in the ancient jealousy existing between the two tribes Ephraim and Judah; but it was primarily brought to pass through the falling away of Solomon from the Lord. Consequently it could only be completely and for ever terminated through the righteous government of the second David, and the purification of the people from their sins. This is the way in which v. 23 is attached to v. 22. For v. 23a compare Eze. 14:11 and 36:25. Different interpretations have been given of the words, "I help them from all their dwelling-places, in which they have sinned." They recall to mind Eze. 36:29, "I help them from all their uncleannesses." As **הוֹשִׁיעַ מֵן** signifies, in that case, "to preserve therefrom," so in the present instance the thought can only be, "God will preserve them from all the dwelling-places in which they have sinned." Hengstenberg is of opinion that the redemption from the dwelling-places does not take place locally, but spiritually, through the cleansing away of all traces of sin, first from the hearts, and then, in consequence, from all around. In this way is the land changed, through the

power of the Lord, into another land, from a sinful to a holy one; just as before it had been changed from a holy to a sinful one through the guilt of the people. But if this were the only thought which the words contained, Ezekiel would certainly have placed the **וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי וְגו'** before **וְמִהַרְתִּי אֲנִתֶם**. As the words read, the deliverance of the people from their sinful dwelling-places is to precede their purification, to prepare the way for it and bring it to pass, and not to follow after it. The dwelling-places, at or in which they have sinned, cannot be the settlements in foreign lands, as Hitzig supposes, but only the dwelling-places in Canaan, to which the Lord would bring them after gathering them from their dispersion. **וְהוֹשַׁע** does not signify, "leading out from these dwelling-places," which is the explanation given by Kliefoth, who consequently thinks that we must understand the words as denoting the leading over of Israel from the present Canaan, or the Canaan of this life, to which its sins adhere, to the glorified, new, and eternal Canaan. This view is utterly irreconcilable both with the words themselves and also with the context. Even if **וְהוֹשַׁע** meant to lead out, it would not be allowable to transform the "leading out" from the sinful Canaan into a "leading in" to the glorified and heavenly Canaan. Moreover, the further development of this promise in v. 25 also shows that it is not in the glorified, eternal Canaan that Israel is to dwell, but in the earthly Canaan in which its fathers dwelt. It is obvious from this, that in all the promise here given there is no allusion to a transformation and glorification of Canaan itself. The helping or saving from all dwelling-places in which they have sinned would rather consist in the fact, therefore, that God would remove from their dwelling-places everything that could offer them an inducement to sin. For although sin has its seat, not in the things without us, but in the heart, the external circumstances of a man do offer various inducements to sin. Before the captivity, Canaan offered such an inducement to the Israelites through the idolatry and moral corruption of the Canaanites who were left in the land. And with reference to this the Lord promises that in future, when His people are brought back to Canaan, He will preserve them from the sinful influence of their dwelling-places. But this preservation will only be effected with complete success when God purifies Israel itself, and, by means of its renovation, eradicates all sinful desire from the heart (cf. Eze. 36:26, 27). In this way **וְמִהַרְתִּי** is appended in the most fitting way to **וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי וְגו'**. — Through the removal of all sinful influences from around them, and the purifying of the heart, Israel will then become in truth the people of God, and Jehovah the God of Israel (v. 23).

Israel, when thus renewed, will walk in the rights of the Lord and fulfil His commandments, under the protection of its one shepherd David, i.e., of the Messiah (v. 24, cf. Eze. 36:27, and 34:23); and its children and children's

children will dwell for ever in its own land, David being its prince for ever (v. 25, and cf. Eze. 36:28 and 34:24). What is new in this promise, which is repeated from Eze. 34 and 36, is contained in **לְעֹלָם**, which is to be taken in the strict sense of the word. Neither the dwelling of Israel in Canaan, nor the government of the David-Messiah, will ever have an end. **לְעֹלָם** is therefore repeated in v. 26 in the promise of the covenant which the Lord will make with His people. The thought itself has already been expressed in Eze. 34:25, and **בְּרִית שְׁלוֹם** is to be understood, both here and there, as comprehending all the saving good which the Lord will bestow upon all His sanctified people. There are only two factors of this salvation mentioned here in vv. 26b and 27, namely, the multiplication of the people, as the earthly side of the divine blessing, and the establishing of His eternal sanctuary in the midst of them as the spiritual side. These two points refer back to the former acts of God, and hold up to view the certain and full realization in the future of what has hitherto been neither perfectly nor permanently accomplished on account of the sins of the people. **וַיַּרְבֵּיתִי אֹתָם**, in v. 26, is not to be taken in connection with **וַיַּנְתֵּתִים**, so as to form one idea in the sense of *dabo eos multiplicatos* (Venema and Hengstenberg), for we have no analogies of such a mode of combination; but **וַיַּנְתֵּתִים**, I make, or place them, is to be taken by itself, and completed from the context, “I make them into a nation, and I multiply them (cf. Eze. 36:10, 11, 37). Ezekiel has here Lev. 26: 9 and 11 in his mind, as we may see from the fact that the words, “I give my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever,” are obviously formed after Lev. 26:11, “I give my dwelling in the midst of them;” in such a manner, however, that by the substitution of **מִקְדָּשִׁי** for **מִשְׁכְּנִי**, and the addition of **לְעֹלָם**, the promise is both deepened and strengthened. In the change of **מִשְׁכְּנִי** into **מִקְדָּשִׁי**, he may indeed have had the words of Exo. 25: 8 floating before his mind, “they shall make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them;” nevertheless he deliberately selected the expression “my sanctuary,” to indicate that the Lord would dwell in the midst of Israel as the Holy One, and the Sanctifier of His people. Moreover, the words are not, “my dwelling will be in the midst of them, or among them” (**בְּתוֹכְכֶם**), but **עֲלֵיהֶם**, over them. This expression is transferred from the site of the temple, towering above the city (Psa. 68:30), to the dwelling of God among His people, to give prominence to the protective power and saving grace of the God who rules in Israel (cf. Hengstenberg on Psa. 68:30). The sanctuary which Jehovah will give in Israel for ever, i.e., will found and cause to endure, that He may dwelling the midst of it to shelter and bless, is the temple, but not the temple built by Zerubbabel. As an objection to this Jewish interpretation, Jerome has justly said: “but how could it be said to stand *for ever,*’ when that temple which was built in the time of Zerubbabel, and afterwards restored by many others, was

consumed by Roman fire? All these things are to be taken as referring to the church in the time of the Saviour, when His tabernacle was placed in the church.” There is no reference whatever here to the rebuilding of the temple by Zerubbabel; not because that temple did not stand for ever and was destroyed by the Romans, but chiefly because God did not make it His abode, or fill this temple with His gracious presence (Shechinah). The sanctuary which God will place for ever among His people is the sanctuary seen by Ezekiel in Eze. 40ff.; and this is merely a figurative representation of the “dwelling of God in the midst of His people through His Son and Holy Spirit” (cf. Vitranga, *Observ.* I. p. 161), which began to be realized in the incarnation of the Logos, who is set forth in Joh. 1:14 as the true **בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים**, in the words **ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν**, and is continued in the spiritual dwelling of God in the heart of believers (1Co. 3:16; 6:19), and will be completed at the second coming of our Lord in the “tabernacle (**σκηνή**) of God with men” of the new Jerusalem, of which the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple, since Israel will then first have become in truth the people of God, and Jehovah (God with them) their God (Rev. 21: 3, 22). — The promise concludes in v. 28 with an allusion to the impression which these acts of God in Israel will make upon the heathen (cf. Eze. 36:36). From the fact that Jehovah erects His sanctuary in the midst of Israel for ever, they will learn that it is He who sanctifieth Israel. **קָדַשׁ**, to sanctify, means, “to remove from all connection either with sin or with its consequences. Here the reference is to the latter, because these alone strike the eyes of the heathen; but the former is presupposed as the necessary foundation” (Hengstenberg). The words rest upon the promises of the Pentateuch, where God describes Himself as He who will and does sanctify Israel (compare Exo. 31:13; Lev. 22:31-33). This promise, which has hitherto been only imperfectly fulfilled on account of Israel’s guilt, will be perfectly realized in the future, when Israel will walk in the ways of the Lord, renewed by the Spirit of God.

Thus does this prophecy of Ezekiel span the whole future of the people of God even to eternity. But the promise in which it culminates, namely, that the Lord will erect His sanctuary in the midst of His restored people, and there take up His abode above them for ever (Eze. 37:26ff.), is of importance as helping to decide the question, how we are to understand the fulfilment of the restoration to Canaan into the land given to the fathers, which is promised to all Israel; whether, in a literal manner, by the restoration of the Israelites to Palestine; or spiritually, by the gathering together of the Israelites converted to the Lord their God and Saviour, and their introduction into the kingdom of God founded by Christ, in which case Canaan, as the site of the Old Testament kingdom of God, would be a symbolical or typical designation of the earthly soil of the heavenly kingdom, which has appeared in the Christian church. — These two different

views have stood opposed to one another from time immemorial, inasmuch as the Jews expect from the Messiah, for whose advent they still hope, not only their restoration to Palestine, but the erection of the kingdom of David and the rebuilding of the temple upon Mount Zion, together with the sacrificial worship of the Levitical law; whereas in the Christian church, on the ground of the New Testament doctrine, that the old covenant has been abolished along with the Levitical temple-worship through the perfect fulfilment of the law by Christ and the perpetual efficacy of His atoning sacrifice, the view has prevailed that, with the abolition of the Old Testament form of the kingdom of God, even Palestine has ceased to be the chosen land of the revelation of the saving grace of God, and under the new covenant Canaan extends as far as the Israel of the new covenant, the church of Jesus Christ, is spread abroad over the earth, and that Zion or Jerusalem is to be sought wherever Christendom worships God in spirit and in truth, wherever Christ is with His people, and dwells in the hearts of believers through the Holy Spirit. It was by J. A. Bengel and C. F. Oetinger that the so-called “realistic” interpretation of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament — according to which, after the future conversion to Christ of the Jewish people who are hardened still, the establishment of the kingdom of God in Palestine and its capital Jerusalem is to be expected — has been revived and made into one of the leading articles of Christian hope. By means of this “realistic” exposition of the prophetic word the chiliastic dogma of the establishment of a kingdom of glory before the last judgment and the end of the world is then deduced from the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse; and many of the theologians of our day regard this as the certain resultant of a deeper study of the Scriptures. In the more precise definition of the dogma itself, the several supporters diverge very widely from one another; but they all agree in this, that they base the doctrine chiefly upon the prophetic announcement of the eventual conversion and glorification of all Israel. — As Ezekiel then stands out among all the prophets as the one who gives the most elaborate prediction of the restoration of Israel under the government of the Messiah, and he not only draws in Eze. 40-48 a detailed picture of the new form of the kingdom of God, but also in Eze. 38 and 39, in the prophecy concerning Gog and Magog, foretells an attack on the part of the heathen world upon the restored kingdom of God, which appears, according to Rev. 20: 7-9, to constitute the close of the thousand years’ reign; we must look somewhat more closely at this view, and by examining the arguments *pro* and *con*, endeavour to decide the question as to the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the future of Israel. In doing this, however, we shall fix our attention exclusively upon the exegetical arguments adduced in support of the chiliastic view by its latest supporters. <sup>148</sup>

The prophetic announcement, that the Lord will one day gather together again the people of Israel, which has been thrust out among the heathen for its unfaithfulness, will bring it back into the land given to the fathers, and there bless and greatly multiply it, has its roots in the promises of the law. If the stiff-necked transgressors of the commandments of God — these are the words of Lev. 26:40-45 — bear the punishment of their iniquity in the land of their enemies, and confess their sins, and their uncircumcised heart is humbled, then will the Lord remember His covenant with the patriarchs, and not cast them off even in the land of their enemies, to destroy them, and to break His covenant with them; but will remember the covenant which He made with their ancestors, when He brought them out of Egypt before the eyes of the nations to be their God. He will, as this is more precisely defined in Deu. 30: 3ff., gather them together again out of the heathen nations, lead them back into the land which their fathers possessed, and multiply Israel more than its fathers. On the ground of this promise, of which Moses gives a still further pledge to the people in his dying song (Deu. 32:36-43), all the prophets announce the restoration and ultimate glorification of Israel. This song, which closes with the promise, “Rejoice, ye nations, over His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and repay vengeance to His adversaries, and expiate His land, His people,” continues to resound — to use the words of Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, II 2, pp. 89, 90) — ”through all the Old Testament prophecy. Not only when Obadiah (Oba. 1:17) and Joel (Joe. 3: 5) promise good to their nation do they call Mount Zion and the city of Jerusalem the place where there is protection from the judgment upon the nations of the world; but Micah also, who foretells the destruction of the temple and the carrying away of his people to Babylon, beholds Mount Zion exalted at last above all the seats of worldly power, and his people brought back to the land of their fathers (Mic. 4: 1; 7:14). The same Isaiah, who was sent to harden his people with the word of his prophecy, is nevertheless certain that at last a holy nation will dwell in Jerusalem, a remnant of Israel (Isa. 4: 3; 10:21); and the holy mountain of Jehovah, to which His scattered people return from all the ends of the world, is that abode of peace where even wild beasts do no more harm under the rule of the second David (Isa. 11: 9, 11). After all the calamities which it was the mournful lot of Jeremiah to foretell and also to witness, Jehovah showed this prophet the days when He would restore His people, and bring them back to the land which He gave to their fathers (Jer. 30: 3)... And the same promise is adhered to even after the return. In every way is the assurance given by Zechariah, that Judah shall be God’s holy possession in God’s holy land.”<sup>149</sup>

This restoration of Israel Ezekiel describes, in harmony with Jer. 31, though in a much more detailed picture, in the following way: — ”The condition of things in the future will differ from that in the past, simply in the fact that Israel will

then have a heart converted to fidelity and obedience by the Spirit of God (Eze. 11:19; 36:27), and will live in good peace and prosperity under the shelter of its God, who is known and acknowledged by all the world (Eze. 36:23). The land to which it is restored, a land most decidedly represented by Ezekiel as the same as that in which its fathers lived (Eze. 37:25), appears throughout merely as a happy earthly dwelling-place, and the promise of its possession as an assurance given to a nation continuing to propagate itself in peace” (Hofmann, p. 576). This manner of depicting the condition of the Israel restored and glorified by the Messiah, as a peaceful settlement and a happy life in the land of the fathers, a life rich in earthly possessions, is not confined, however, to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but stands out more or less conspicuously in the Messianic pictures of all the prophets. What follows, then, from this in relation to the mode in which these prophecies are to be fulfilled? Is it that the form assumed by the life of the people of Israel when restored will be only a heightened repetition of the conditions of its former life in Palestine, undisturbed by sin? By no means. On the contrary, it follows from this that the prophets have depicted the glorious restoration of Israel by the Messiah by means of figures borrowed from the past and present of the national life of Israel, and therefore that their picture is not to be taken literally, but symbolically or typically, and that we are not to expect it to be literally fulfilled.

We are forced to this conclusion by the fact that, through the coming of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven which began with Him, the idea of the people of God has been so expanded, that henceforth not the lineal descendants of Abraham, or the Jewish nation merely, but the church of confessors of Jesus Christ, gathered together out of Israel and the Gentiles, has become the people of God, and the economy of the Old Testament has ceased to constitute the divinely appointed form of the church of God. If, therefore, the Jewish people, who have rejected the Saviour, who appeared in Jesus Christ, and have hardened themselves against the grace and truth revealed in Him, are not cast off for ever, but, according to the promises of the Old Testament and the teaching of the Apostle Paul (Rom. 11), will eventually repent, and as a people turn to the crucified One, and then also realize the fulfilment of the promises of God; there is still lacking, with the typical character of the prophetic announcement, any clear and unambiguous biblical evidence that all Israel, whose salvation is to be looked for in the future, will be brought back to Palestine, when eventually converted to Christ the crucified One, and continue there as a people separated from the rest of Christendom, and from the earthly centre of the church of the Lord gathered out of all nations and tongues. For, however well founded the remark of Hofmann (*ut sup.* p. 88) may be, that “holy people and holy land are demanded by one another;” this proves nothing more than that the holy people, gathered out of all the families of the earth through



the believing reception of the gospel, will also have a holy land for its dwelling-place; in other words, that, with the spread of the church of the Lord over all the quarters of the globe, the earth will become holy land or Canaan, so far as it is inhabited by the followers of Christ. The Apostle Paul teaches this in the same Epistle in which he foretells to Israel, hardened in unbelief, its eventual restoration and blessedness; when he explains in Rom. 4: 9-13 that to Abraham or his seed the promise that he was to be the heir of the world was not fulfilled through the law, but through the righteousness of the faith, which Abraham had when still uncircumcised, that he might become a father of all those who believe, though they be not circumcised, and a father of the circumcision, not merely of those who are of the circumcision, but of those also who walk in the footsteps of his faith. And the apostle, when developing this thought, interprets the promise given to the patriarch in Gen. 12: 7 and 15:18: “to thy seed will I give this land” (i.e., the land of Canaan), by κληρονομῆν κόσμον (inheriting the world), he regards Canaan as a type of the world or of the earth, which would be occupied by the children born of faith to the patriarch.

This typical interpretation of the promise, given in the Old Testament to the seed of Abraham, of the everlasting possession of the land of Canaan, which is thus taught by the Apostle Paul, and has been adopted by the church on his authority, corresponds also to the spirit and meaning of the Old Testament word of God. This is evident from Gen. 17, where the Lord God, when instituting the covenant of circumcision, gives not to Abraham only, but expressly to Sarah also, the promise to make them into peoples (לְגוֹיִם), that king of nations (מֶלֶךְ אֲמִים) shall come from them through the son, whom they are to receive (vv. 6 and 16), and at the same time promises to give to the seed of Abraham, thus greatly to be multiplied, the land of his pilgrimage, the whole land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession (v. 8). This promise the Lord, as the “almighty God,” has not carried into effect by making Abraham and Sarah into nations through the lineal posterity of Isaac, but only through the spiritual seed of Abraham, believers out of all nations, who have become, and still will become, children of Abraham in Christ. It was only through these that Abraham became the father of a multitude of nations (לְאַבְרָהָם הָיוּ גוֹיִם, v. 5). For although two peoples sprang from Isaac, the Israelites through Jacob, and the Edomites through Esau, and Abraham also became the ancestor of several tribes through Ishmael and the sons of Keturah, the divine promise in question refers to the people of Israel alone, because Esau was separated from the seed of the promise by God Himself, and the other sons of Abraham were excluded by the fact that they were not born of Sarah. The twelve tribes, however, formed but one people; and although Ezekiel calls them two peoples (Eze. 35:10 and 37:22), having in view their division into two kingdoms, they

are never designated or described in the Old or New Testament as **הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם**. To this one people God did indeed give the land of Canaan for a possession, according to the boundaries described in Num. 34, so that it dwelt therein until it was driven out and scattered among the heathen for its persistent unfaithfulness. But inasmuch as that portion of the promise which referred to the multiplication of the seed of Abraham into peoples was only to receive its complete fulfilment in Christ, according to the counsel and will of God, through the grafting of the believing Gentile nations into the family of Abraham, and has so received it, we are not at liberty to restrict the other portion of this promise, relating to the possession of the land of Canaan, to the lineal posterity of the patriarch, or the people of Israel by lineal descent, but must assume that in the promise of the land to be given to the seed of Abraham God even then spoke of Canaan as a type of the land which was to be possessed by the posterity of Abraham multiplied into nations.

This typical phraseology runs through all the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, and that both with regard to the promised seed, which Abraham received through Isaac (Gen. 21:12) in the people of Israel, and also with reference to the land promised to this seed for an inheritance, although, while the old covenant established at Sinai lasted, Israel according to the flesh was the people of God, and the earthly Canaan between the Euphrates and the river of Egypt was the dwelling-place of this people. For inasmuch as Abraham received the promise at the very time of his call, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, and the germs of the universal destination of the people and kingdom of God were deposited, according to Gen. 17, in the subsequent patriarchal promises, the prophets continued to employ the names of Israel and Canaan more and more in their Messianic prophecies as symbolical terms for the two ideas of the people and kingdom of God. And from the time when the fortress of Jerusalem upon Mount Zion was exalted by David into the capital of his kingdom and the seat of his government over Israel, and was also made the site of the dwelling of Jehovah in the midst of His people, by the removal of the ark of the covenant to Zion, and the building of the temple which was planned by David, though only carried into execution by Solomon his son, they employed Zion and Jerusalem in the same typical manner as the seat and centre of the kingdom of God; so that, in the Messianic psalms and the writings of the prophets, Zion or Jerusalem is generally mentioned as the place from which the king (David-Messiah), anointed by Jehovah as prince over His people, extends His dominion over all the earth, and whither the nations pour to hear the law of the Lord, and to be instructed as to His ways and their walking in His paths.

Consequently neither the prominence expressly given to the land in the promises contained in Lev. 26:42 and Deu. 32:43, upon which such stress is laid by

Auberlen (*die messianische Weissagungen*, pp. 827 and 833), nor the fact that Mount Zion or the city of Jerusalem is named as the place of judgment upon the world of nations and the completion of the kingdom of God, to which both Hofmann and Auberlen appeal in the passages already quoted, furnishes any valid evidence that the Jewish people, on its eventual conversion to Christ, will be brought back to Palestine, and that the Lord, at His second coming, will establish the millennial kingdom in the earthly Jerusalem, and take up His abode on the material Mount Zion, in a temple built by human hands.

Even the supporters of the literal interpretation of the Messianic prophecies cannot deny the symbolico-typical character of the Old Testament revelation. Thus Auberlen, for example, observes (*die mess. Weiss.* p. 821) that, “in their typical character, the sacrifices furnish us with an example of the true signification of *all the institutions* of the Old Testament kingdom of God, while *the latter* exhibit to us in external symbol and type the truly holy people and the Messianic kingdom in its perfection, just as the former set forth the sacrifice of the Messiah.” But among these institutions the Israelitish sanctuary (tabernacle or temple) undoubtedly occupied a leading place as a symbolico-typical embodiment of the kingdom of God established in Israel, as is now acknowledged by nearly all the expositors of Scripture who have any belief in revelation. It is not merely the institutions of the old covenant, however, which have a symbolico-typical signification, but this is also the case with the history of the covenant nation of the Old Testament, and the soil in which this history developed itself. This is so obvious, that Auberlen himself (*ut sup.* p. 827) has said that “it is quite a common thing with the prophets to represent the approaching dispersion and enslaving of Israel among the heathen as a renewal of their condition in Egypt, and the eventual restoration of both the people and kingdom as a new exodus from Egypt and entrance into Canaan (Hos. 2: 1, 2 and 16, 17, 9: 3 and 6, 11: 5, 11; Mic. 2:12, 13; 7:15, 16; Isa. 10:24, 26; 11:11; Jer. 16:14, 15, and other passages).” And even Hofmann, who sets aside this typical phraseology of the prophets in Isa. 11:11-15, where the restoration of Israel from its dispersion throughout all the world is depicted as a repetition of its deliverance from Egypt through the miraculous division of the Red Sea, with the simple remark, “that the names of the peoples mentioned in the 14th as well as in the 11th verse, and the obstacles described in the 15th verse, merely serve to elaborate the thought” (*Schriftbeweis*, II 2, p. 548), cannot help admitting (at p. 561) “that in Isa. 34: 5 אֲדוֹם is not to be understood as a special prophecy against the Edomitish people, but as a symbolical designation of the world of mankind in its enmity against God.” But if *Edom* is a type of the human race in its hostility to God in this threatening of judgment, “the ransomed of Jehovah” mentioned in the corresponding announcement of salvation in Isa. 35, who are to “return to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads,” cannot be

the rescued remnant of the Jewish people, or the Israel of the twelve tribes who will ultimately attain to blessedness, nor can the Zion to which they return be the capital of Palestine. If *Edom* in this eschatological prophecy denotes the world in its enmity against God, the ransomed of Jehovah who return to Zion are the people of God gathered from both Gentiles and Jews, who enter into the blessedness of the heavenly Jerusalem. By adopting this view of *Edom*, Hofmann has admitted the typical use of the ideas, both of the people of Jehovah (Israel) and of Zion, by the prophets, and has thereby withdrawn all firm foundation from his explanation of similar Messianic prophecies when the Jewish nation is concerned. The same rule which applies to Edom and Zion in Isa. 34 and 35 must also be applicable in Isa. 40-56. The prophecy concerning Edom in Isa. 35 has its side-piece in Isa. 63: 1-6; and, as Delitzsch has said, the announcement of the return of the ransomed of Jehovah to Zion in Eze. 36, "as a whole and in every particular, both in thought and language, is a prelude of this book of consolation for the exiles (i.e., the one which follows in Isa. 40-66)." Ezekiel uses Edom in the same way, in the prediction of the everlasting devastation of Edom and the restoration of the devastated land of Israel, to be a lasting blessing for its inhabitants. As Edom in this case also represents the world in its hostility to God (see the comm. on Eze. 35: 1-36:15), the land of Israel also is not Palestine, but the kingdom of the Messiah, the boundaries of which extend from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the world (Psa. 73: 8 and Zec. 9:10). It is true that in the case of our prophet there is no express mention made of the spread of the kingdom of God over the lands, inasmuch as he is watchman over the house of Israel, and therefore, for the most part, principally speaks of the restoration of Israel; but it is also obvious that this prophetic truth was not unknown to him, from the fact that, according to Eze. 47:22, 23, in the fresh division of the land among the tribes by lot, the foreigners as well as the natives are to be reckoned among the children of Israel, and to receive their portion of the land as well, which plainly abolishes the difference in lineal descent existing under the old covenant. Still more clearly does he announce the reception of the heathen nations into the kingdom of God in Eze. 16:53ff., where he predicts the eventual turning of the captivity, not of Jerusalem only, but also of Samaria and Sodom, as the goal of the ways of God with His people. If, therefore, in His pictures of the restoration and glorification of the kingdom of God, he speaks of the land of Israel alone, the reason for this mode of description is probably also to be sought in the fact that he goes back to the fundamental prophecies of the Pentateuch more than other prophets do; and as, on the one hand, he unfolds the fulfilment of the threats in Lev. 26 and Deu. 28-32 in his threatenings of judgments, so, on the other hand, does he display the fulfilment of the promises of the law in his predictions of salvation. If we bear this in mind, we must not take his prophecy of the very numerous multiplication of Israel and of the eternal possession of Canaan and

its blessings in any other sense than in that of the divine promise in Gen. 17; that is to say, we must not restrict the numerous multiplication of Israel to the literal multiplication of the remnant of the twelve tribes, but must also understand thereby the multiplication of the seed of Abraham into peoples in the manner explained above, and interpret in the same way the restoration of Israel to the land promised to the fathers.

This view of the Old Testament prophecy concerning the eventual restoration of Israel on its conversion to Christ is confirmed as to its correctness by the New Testament also; if, for example, we consider the plain utterances of Christ and His apostles concerning the relation of the Israel according to the flesh, i.e., of the Jewish nation, to Christ and His kingdom, and do not adhere in a one-sided manner to the literal interpretation of the eschatological pictures contained in the language of the Old Testament prophecy. For since, as Hofmann has correctly observed in his *Schriftbeweis* (II 2, pp. 667, 668), “the apostolical doctrine of the end of the present condition of things, namely, of the reappearance of Christ, of the glorification of His church, and the resurrection of its dead, or even of the general resurrection of the dead, of the glorification of the material world, the destruction of the present and the creation of a new one, stands in this relation to the Old Testament prophecy of the end of things, that it is merely a repetition of it under the new point of view, which accompanied the appearing and glorification of Jesus and the establishment of His church of Jews and Gentiles;” these eschatological pictures are also clothed in the symbolico-typical form peculiar to the Old Testament prophecy, the doctrinal import of which can only be determined in accordance with the unambiguous doctrinal passages of the New Testament. Of these doctrinal passages the first which presents itself is Rom. 11, where the Apostle Paul tells the Christians at Rome as a **μυστήριον**, that hardness in part has happened to Israel, till the *pleroma* of the Gentiles has entered into the kingdom of God, and so (i.e., after this has taken place) all Israel will be rescued or saved (vv. 25, 26). He then supports this by a scriptural quotation formed from Isa. 59:20 and 27: 9 (LXX), with an evident allusion to Jer. 31:34 (?33) also: “there shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” etc.; whilst he has already shown how, as the fall of Israel, or its **ὑποβολή**, is the riches of the Gentiles and reconciliation of the world, the **πρόσληψις** will not nothing else than life from the dead (**ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν**, vv. 11-15). The apostle evidently teaches here that the partial hardening of Israel, in consequence of which the people rejected the Saviour, who appeared in Jesus, and were excluded from the salvation in Christ, is not an utter rejection of the old covenant nation; but that the hardening of Israel will cease after the entrance of the *pleroma* of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, and so all Israel (**πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ** in contrast with **ἐκ μέρους**, i.e., the people of Israel as a whole) will

attain to salvation, although this does not teach the salvation of every individual Jew. <sup>150</sup>

But Auberlen (*die mess. Weissagungen*, pp. 801 ff.) puts too much into these words of the apostle when he combines them with Exo. 19: 5, 6, and from the fact that Israel in the earlier ages of the Old Testament was once a people and kingdom, but not really a holy and priestly one, and that in the first ages of the New Testament it was once holy and priestly, though not as a people and kingdom, draws the conclusion, not only that the Jewish nation must once more become holy as a people and kingdom, but also that the apostle of the Gentiles here declares “that the promise given to the people of Israel, that it is to be a holy people, will still be fulfilled in its experience, and that in connection with this, after the present period of the kingdom of God, there is a new period in prospect, when the converted and sanctified Israel, being called once for all to be a priestly kingdom, will become the channel of the blessing of fellowship with God to the nations in a totally different and far more glorious manner than before.” For if the apostle had intended to teach the eventual accomplishment of this promise in the case of the Israel according to the flesh, he would certainly have quoted it, or at all events have plainly hinted at it, and not merely have spoken of the *σώζεσθαι* of the Israel which was hardened then. There is nothing to show, even in the remotest way, that Israel will eventually be exalted into the holy and priestly people and kingdom for the nations, either in the assurance that “all Israel shall be saved,” or in the declaration that the “receiving” (*πρόσληψις*) of Israel will work, or be followed by, “life from the dead” (v. 15); and the proposition from which Paul infers the future deliverance of the people of Israel — viz., “if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches” (v. 16) — shows plainly that it never entered the apostle’s mind to predict for the branches that were broken off the olive tree for a time an exaltation to even greater holiness than that possessed by the root and beginning of Israel when they should be grafted in again.

There is also another way in which Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, II 2, pp. 96 and 668) makes insertions in the words of the apostle, — namely, when he draws the conclusion from the prophetic quotation in vv. 25, 26, that the apostle takes the thought from the prophetic writings, that Zion and Israel are the place where the final revelation of salvation will be made, and then argues in support of this geographical exposition of the words, “shall come out of Zion,” on the ground that in these words we have not to think of the first coming of the Saviour alone, but the apostle extends to the second coming with perfect propriety what the Old Testament prophecy generally affirms with regard to the coming of Christ, and what had already been verified at His first coming. This argument is extremely weak. Even if one would or could insist upon the fact

that, when rendering the words **וְבָא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל** (there will come *for* Zion a Redeemer), in Isa. 59:20, by **ἤξει ἐκ Σιῶν ὁ ρυόμενος** (the Redeemer will come *out of* Zion), the apostle designedly adopted the expression **ἐκ Σιῶν**, it would by no means follow “that he meant the material Zion or earthly Jerusalem to be regarded as the final site of the New Testament revelation.” For if the apostle used the expression “come out of Zion,” with reference to the second coming of the Lord, because it had been verified at the first coming of Jesus, although Jesus did not then come out of Zion, but out of Bethlehem, according to the prophecy of Mic. 5: 1 (cf. Mat. 1: 5, 6), he cannot have meant the material Mount Zion by **ἐκ Σιῶν**, but must have taken *Zion* on the propheticotypical sense of the central seat of the kingdom of God; a meaning which it also has in such passages in the Psalms as Psa. 14: 7; 53: 7, and 110: 2, which he appears to have had floating before his mind. It was only by taking this view of Zion that Paul could use **ἐκ Σιῶν** for the **לְצִיּוֹן** of Isaiah, without altering the meaning of the prophecy, that the promised Redeemer would come for Zion, i.e., for the citizens of Zion, the Israelites. The apostle, when making this quotation from the prophets, had no more intention of giving any information concerning the place where Christ would appear to the now hardened Israel, and prove Himself to be the Redeemer, than concerning the land in which the Israel scattered among the nations would be found at the second coming of our Lord. And there is nothing whatever in the New Testament to the effect that “the Lord will not appear again till He has prepared both Israel and Zion for the scene of His reappearing” (Hofmann, p. 97). All that Christ says is, that the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world for a witness concerning all nations, and then will the end come (Mat. 24:14). And if, in addition to this, on His departing for ever from the temple, He exclaimed to the Jews who rejected Him, “Your house will be left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, Ye will not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Mat. 23:38, 39), all that He means is, that He will not appear to them or come to them before they receive Him with faith, “greet Him as the object of their longing expectation;” and by no means that He will not come till they have been brought back from their dispersion to Palestine and Jerusalem.

Even Mat. 27:53 and Rev. 11: 2, where Jerusalem is called the holy city, do not furnish any tenable proof of this, because it is so called, not with regard to any glorification to be looked for in the future, but as the city in which the holiest events in the world’s history had taken place; just as Peter (2Pe. 1:18) designates the Mount of Transfiguration the holy mount, with reference to that event, and not with any anticipation of a future glorification of the mountain; and in 1Ki. 19: 8 Horeb is called the Mount of God, because in the olden time God revealed Himself there. “The old Jerusalem is even now the holy city still

to those who have directed their hopeful eyes to the new Jerusalem alone” (Hengstenberg). This also applies to the designation of the temple as the “holy place” in Mat. 24:15, by which Hofmann (p. 91) would also, though erroneously, understand Jerusalem.

And the words of Christ in Luk. 21:24, that Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, ἄχρι πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν, cannot be used as furnishing a proof that the earthly Jerusalem will be occupied by the converted Jews before or at the second coming of the Lord. For if stress be laid upon the omission of the article, and the appointed period be understood in such a manner as to lead to the following rendering, viz.: “till Gentile periods shall be fulfilled,” i.e., “till certain periods which have been appointed to Gentile nations for the accomplishment of this judgment of wrath from God shall have elapsed” (Meyer), we may assume, with Hengstenberg (*die Juden und die christl. Kirche*, 3 art.), that these times come to an end when the overthrow of the might of the Gentiles is effected through the judgment of God, and the Christian church takes their place; and we may still further say with him, that “the treading down of Jerusalem by the heathen, among whom, according to the Christian view, the Mahometans also are to be reckoned, has ceased twice already, — namely, in the reign of Constantine, and in the time of the Crusades, when a Christian kingdom existed in Jerusalem. And what then happened, though only in a transient way, will eventually take place again, and that definitively, on the ground of this declaration of the Lord. Jerusalem will become the possession of the Israel of the Christian church.” If, on the other hand, we adopt Hofmann’s view (pp. 642, 643), that by καιροὶ ἐθνῶν we are to understand the times of the nations, when the world belongs to them, in accordance with Dan. 8:14, in support of which Rev. 11: 2 may also be adduced, these times “come to an end when the people of God obtain the supremacy;” and, according to this explanation, it is affirmed “that this treading down of the holy city will not come to an end till the filling up of the time, during which the world belongs to the nations, and therefore not till the end of the present course of this world.” But if the treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles lasts till then, even the converted Jews cannot recover possession of it at that time; for at the end of the present course of this world the new creation of the heaven and earth will take place, and the perfected church of Christ, gathered out of Israel and the Gentile nations, will dwell in the heavenly Jerusalem that has come down upon the new earth. — However, therefore, we may interpret these words of the Lord, we are not taught in Luk. 21:24 any more than in Mat. 24:15 and 27:53, or Rom. 11:26, that the earthly Jerusalem will come into the possession of the converted Jews after its liberation from the power of the Gentiles, that it will hold a central position in the world, or that the temple will be erected there again.



And lastly, a decisive objection to these Jewish, millenarian hopes, and at the same time to the literal interpretation of the prophetic announcements of the restoration of Israel, is to be found in the fact that the New Testament says nothing whatever concerning the building of the Jerusalem temple and a restoration of the Levitical worship; but that, on the contrary, it teaches in the most decided manner, that, with the completion of the reconciliation of men with God through the sacrifice of Christ upon Golgotha, the sacrificial and temple service of the Levitical law was fulfilled and abolished (Heb. 7-10), on the ground of the declaration of Christ, that the hour cometh, and now is, when men shall worship neither upon Gerizim nor at Jerusalem; but the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth (Joh. 4:21-24), in accordance with the direction given by the apostle in Rom. 12: 1. But the prophets of the Old Testament do not merely predict the return of the Israelites to their own land, and their everlasting abode in that land under the rule of the Messiah; but this prediction of theirs culminates in the promise that Jehovah will establish His sanctuary, i.e., His temple, in the midst of His redeemed people, and dwell there with them and above them for ever (Eze. 37:27, 28), and that all nations will come to this sanctuary of the Lord upon Zion year by year, to worship before the King Jehovah of hosts, and keep the Feast of tabernacles (Zec. 14:16; cf. Isa. 66:23). If, then, the Jewish people should receive Palestine again for its possession either at or after its conversion to Christ, in accordance with the promise of God, the temple with the Levitical sacrificial worship would of necessity be also restored in Jerusalem. But if such a supposition is at variance with the teaching of Christ and the apostles, so that this essential feature in the prophetic picture of the future of the kingdom of God is not to be understood literally, but spiritually or typically, it is an unjustifiable inconsistency to adhere to the literal interpretation of the prophecy concerning the return of Israel to Canaan, and to look for the return of the Jewish people to Palestine, when it has come to believe in Jesus Christ.

## **CH. 38 AND 39. DESTRUCTION OF GOG WITH HIS GREAT ARMY OF NATIONS**

*Eze. 38-39.* Gog, in the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, will invade the restored land of Israel from the far distant northern land by the appointment of God in the last times, and with a powerful army of numerous nations (Eze. 38: 1-9), with the intention of plundering Israel, now dwelling in security, that the Lord may sanctify Himself upon him before all the world (vv. 10-16). But when Gog, of whom earlier prophets have already prophesied, shall fall upon Israel, he is to be destroyed by a wrathful judgment from the Lord, that the nations may know that God is the Lord (vv. 17-23). On the mountains of Israel will Gog with all his hosts and nations succumb to the judgment of

God (Eze. 39: 1-8). The inhabitants of the cities of Israel will spend seven years in burning the weapons of the fallen foe, and seven months in burying the corpses in a valley, which will receive its name from this, so as to purify the land (vv. 9-16); whilst in the meantime all the birds and wild beasts will satiate themselves with the flesh and blood of the fallen (vv. 17-20). By this judgment will all the nations as well as Israel know that it was on account of its sins that the Lord formerly gave up Israel into the power of the heathen, but that now He will no more forsake His redeemed people, because He has poured out His Spirit upon it (vv. 21-29).

**Eze. 38: 1-9.** Introduction. Preparation of Gog and his army for the invasion of the restored land of Israel.

V. 1. *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, V. 2. Son of man, set thy face toward Gog in the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, V. 3. And say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with thee, Gog, thou prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, V. 4. And will mislead thee, and will put rings in thy jaws, and lead thee out, and all thine army, horses, and riders, all clothed in perfect beauty, a great assembly, with buckler and shield, all wielding swords; V. 5. Persian, Ethiopian, and Libyan with them, all of them with shield and helmet, V. 6. Gomer and all his hosts, the house of Togarmah in the uttermost north with all his hosts; many peoples with thee. V. 7. Be prepared and make ready, thou and all thine assembly, who have assembled together to thee, and be thou their guard. V. 8. After many days shalt thou be visited, at the end of the years shalt thou come into the land, which is brought back from the sword, gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which were constantly laid waste, but now it is brought out of the nations, and they dwell together in safety; V. 9. And thou shalt come up, come like a storm, like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy hosts and many peoples with thee.*

Vv. 1 and 2. Command to prophesy against God. גֹּג, Gog, the name of the prince against whom the prophecy is directed, is probably a name which Ezekiel has arbitrarily formed from the name of the country, *Magog*; although *Gog* does occur in 1Ch. 5: 4 as the name of a Reubenite, of whom nothing further is known. The construction גֹּג אֶרֶץ מָגוֹג, Gog of the land of Magog, is an abbreviated expression for “Gog from the land of Magog;” and אֶרֶץ מָגֹג is not to be taken in connection with שָׁיִם פְּנִיךָ, as the local object (“toward Gog, to the land of Magog”), as Ewald and Hävernick would render it; since it would be very difficult in that case to explain the fact that גֹּג is afterwards resumed in the apposition נְשִׂיא וְגֹרֹ.

מָגוֹג, *Magog*, is the name of a people mentioned in Gen. 10: 2 as descended from Japhet, according to the early Jewish and traditional explanation, the great Scythian people; and here also it is the name of a people, and is written with the

article (הַמְּגוֹג), to mark the people as one well known from the time of Genesis, and therefore properly the land of the Magog (-people). Gog is still further described as the prince of *Rosh*, *Meshech*, and *Tubal*. It is true that Ewald follows Aquila, the Targum, and Jerome, and connects נְשִׂיאֵי רֹאשׁ with נְשִׂיאֵי as an appellative in the sense of *princeps capitibus*, chief prince. But the argument used in support of this explanation, namely, that there is no people of the name of *Rosh* mentioned either in the Old Testament or by Josephus, is a very weak one; whilst, on the other hand, the appellative rendering, though possible, no doubt, after the analogy of הַכְּהֵן רֹאשׁ in 1Ch. 27: 5, is by no means probable, for the simple reason that the נְשִׂיאֵי רֹאשׁ occurs again in v. 3 and Eze. 39: 1, and in such repetitions circumstantial titles are generally abbreviated. The Byzantine and Arabic writers frequently mention a people called Ρῶς, Arab. *Rûs*, dwelling in the country of the Taurus, and reckoned among the Scythian tribes (for the passages, see Ges. *Thesaurus*, p. 1253), so that there is no reason to question the existence of a people known by the name of *Rosh*; even though the attempt of Bochart to find a trace of such a people in the Ρωξάλανοι (Ptol. iii. 5) and *Roxalani* (Plin. *h. n.* iv. 12), by explaining this name as formed from a combination of *Rhos* (*Rhox*) and *Alani*, is just as doubtful as the conjecture, founded upon the investigations of Frähn (Ibn Foszlán, *u. a. Araber Berichte über die Russen älterer Zeit*, St. Petersburg 1823), that the name of the Russians is connected with this Ρῶς, Arab. *rûs*, and our רֹאשׁ. *Meshech* and *Tubal* (as in Eze. 27:13 and 32:26), the *Moschi* and *Tibareni* of classical writers (see the comm. on Gen. 10: 2), dwelt, according to the passage before us, in the neighbourhood of Magog. There were also found in the army of Gog, according to v. 5, *Pharas* (Persians), *Cush*, and *Phut* (Ethiopians and Libyans, see the comm. on Eze. 30: 5 and 27:10), and, according to v. 6, *Gomer* and the house of *Togarmah*. From a comparison of this list with Gen. 10: 2, Kliefoth draws the conclusion that Ezekiel omits all the peoples mentioned in Gen. 10: 2 as belonging to the family of Japhet, who had come into historical notice in his time, or have done so since, namely, the Medes, Greeks, and Thracians; whilst, on the other hand, he mentions all the peoples enumerated, who have never yet appeared upon the stage of history. But this remark is out of place, for the simple reason that Ezekiel also omits the Japhetic tribes of Ashkenaz and Riphath (Gen. 10: 3), and still more from the fact that he notices not only the פְּרָס, or Persians, who were probably related to the מְדַי, but also the Hamitic peoples *Cush* and *Phut*, two African families. Consequently the army of Gog consisted not only of wild Japhetic tribes, who had not yet attained historical importance, but of Hamitic tribes also, that is to say, of peoples living at the extreme north (יְרֵכְתֵי צָפוֹן, v. 6) and east (Persians) and south (Ethiopians), i.e., on the borders of the then known world. These are all summoned by Gog, and gathered together for an attack upon the people of God. This points to a

time when their former foes, Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistines, and Syrians, and the old imperial powers, Egypt, Asshur, Babel, Javan, will all have passed away from the stage of history, and the people of God will stand in the centre of the historical life of the world, and will have spread so widely over the earth, that its foes will only be found on the borders of the civilised world (compare Rev. 20: 8).

Vv. 3-9 contain in general terms the determinate counsel of God concerning Gog. — Vv. 3-6. Jehovah is about to mislead Gog to a crusade against His people Israel, and summons him to prepare for the invasion of the restored land of Israel. The announcement of the purpose for which Jehovah will make use of Gog and his army, and the summons addressed to him to make ready, form two strophes, which are clearly marked by the similarity of the conclusion in vv. 6 and 9. — V. 3. God will deal with Gog, to sanctify Himself upon him by means of judgment (cf. v. 10). He therefore misleads him to an attack upon the people of Israel. **שׁוּבֹב**, an intensive form from **שׁוּב**, may signify, as *vox media*, to cause to return (Eze. 39:27), and to cause to turn away, to lead away from the right road or goal, to lead astray (Isa. 47:10). Here and in Eze. 39: 2 it means to lead or bring away from his previous attitude, i.e., to mislead or seduce, in the sense of enticing to a dangerous enterprise; according to which the Chaldee has rendered it correctly, so far as the actual sense is concerned, **אֲשַׁדְּלִנָּךְ**, *alliciam te*. In the words, “I place rings in thy jaws” (cf. Eze. 29: 4), Gog is represented as an unmanageable beast, which is compelled to follow its leader (cf. Isa. 37:29); and the thought is thereby expressed, that Gog is compelled to obey the power of God against his will. **הוֹצִיאֵהוּ**, to lead him away from his land, or natural soil. The passage in Rev. 20: 8, “to deceive the nations (**πλανῆσαι τὰ ἔθνη**), Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle,” corresponds to these words so far as the material sense is concerned; with this exception, that Satan is mentioned as the seducer of the nations in the Apocalypse, whereas Ezekiel gives prominence to the leading of God, which controls the manifestations even of evil, “so that these two passages stand in the same relation to one another as 2Sa. 24: 1 and 1Ch. 21: 1” (Häv.). In vv. 4b -6 the army is depicted as one splendidly equipped and very numerous. For **מִכְלֹל לְבַשֵׁי**, see the comm. on Eze. 23:12, where the Assyrian satraps are so described. **קַדְדֵל רָב**, as in Eze. 17:17. The words buckler and shield are loosely appended in the heat of the discourse, without any logical subordination to what precedes. Besides the defensive arms, the greater and smaller shield, they carried swords as weapons of offence. In the case of the nations in v. 5, only the shield and helmet are mentioned as their equipment, for the sake of variation, as in Eze. 27:10; and in v. 6 two other nations of the extreme north with their hosts are added. *Gomer*: the Cimmerians; and *the house of Togarmah*: the

Armenians (see the comm. on Eze. 27:14). For אֲנַפִּים, see the comm. on Eze. 12:14. The description is finally rounded off with אֲמִים רַבִּים אֶתְדָּ. In v. 7, the *infin. abs. Niphal* הִכּוֹן, which occurs nowhere else except in Amo. 4:12, is used emphatically in the place of the imperative. The repetition of the same verb, though in the imperative *Hiphil*, equip, i.e., make ready, sc. everything necessary (cf. Eze. 7:14), also serves to strengthen the thought. Be thou to them לְמַשְׁמָר, for heed, or watch, i.e., as *abstr. pro concr.*, one who gives heed to them, keeps watch over them (cf. Job. 7:12 and Neh. 4: 3, 16), in actual fact their leader.

Vv. 8 and 9 indicate for what Gog was to hold himself ready. The first clause reminds so strongly of מְרוֹב יָמִים יִפְקְדוּ in Isa. 24:22, that the play upon this passage cannot possibly be mistaken; so that Ezekiel uses the words in the same sense as Isaiah, though Hävernick is wrong in supposing that הִפְקֵד is used in the sense of being missed or wanting, i.e., of perishing. The word never has the latter meaning; and to be missed does not suit the context either here or in Isaiah, where יִפְקֵד means to be visited, i.e., brought to punishment. And here also this meaning, *visitari* (Vulg.), is to be retained, and that in the sense of a penal visitation. The objection raised, namely, that there is no reference to punishment here, but that this is first mentioned in v. 16 or 18, loses all its force if we bear in mind that visiting is a more general idea than punishing; and the visitation consisted in the fact of God's leading Gog to invade the land of Israel, that He might sanctify Himself upon him by judgment. This might very fittingly be here announced, and it also applies to the parallel clause which follows: thou wilt come into the land, etc., with which the explanation commences of the way in which God would visit him. The only other meaning which could also answer to the parallelism of the clauses, viz., to be commanded, to receive command (Hitzig and Kliefoth), is neither sustained by the usage of the language, nor in accordance with the context. In the passages quoted in support of this, viz., Neh. 7: 1 and 12:44, נִפְקֵד merely signifies to be charged with the oversight of a thing; and it never means only to receive command to do anything. Moreover, Gog has already been appointed leader of the army in v.7, and therefore is not "to be placed in the supreme command" for the first time after many days.

מֵיָמִים רַבִּים, after many days, i.e., after a long time (cf. Jos. 23: 1), is not indeed equivalent in itself to בְּאַחֲרֵית הַשָּׁנִים, but signifies merely the lapse of a lengthened period; yet this is defined here as occurring in the אַחֲרֵית הַשָּׁנִים.

— אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים (v. 16), is the end of days, the last time, not the future generally, but the final future, the Messianic time of the completing of the kingdom of God (see the comm. on Gen. 49: 1). This meaning is also applicable here. For Gog is to come up to the mountains of

Israel, which have been laid waste **תָּמִיד**, continually, i.e., for a long time, but are now inhabited again. Although, for example, **תָּמִיד** signifies a period of time relatively long, it evidently indicates a longer period than the seventy or fifty years' desolation of the land during the Babylonian captivity; more especially if we take it in connection with the preceding and following statements, to the effect that Gog will come into the land, which has been brought back from the sword and gathered out of many peoples. These predicates show that in **אֶרֶץ** the idea of the population of the land is the predominant one; for this alone could be gathered out of many nations, and also brought back from the sword, i.e., not from the consequences of the calamity of war, viz., exile (Rosenmüller), but restored from being slain and exiled by the sword of the enemy. **מִשְׁנוּבֶּבֶת**, passive participle of the *Pilel* **שׁוּבֵב**, to restore (cf. Isa. 58:12); not turned away from the sword, i.e., in no expectation of war (Hitzig), which does not answer to the parallel clause, and cannot be sustained by Mic. 2: 8. **מֵאֲמִים רַבִּים**, gathered out of *many* peoples, points also beyond the Babylonian captivity to the dispersion of Israel in all the world, which did not take place till the second destruction of Jerusalem, and shows that **תָּמִיד** denotes a much longer devastation of the land than the Chaldean devastation was. **וְהִיא** introduces a circumstantial clause; and **הִיא** points back to **אֶרֶץ**, i.e., to the inhabitants of the land. These are now brought out of the nations, i.e., at the time when Gog invades the land, and are dwelling in their own land upon the mountains of Israel in untroubled security. **עָלָה** signifies the advance of an enemy, as in Isa. 7: 1, etc. **שָׁאָה**, a tempest, as in Pro. 1:27, from **שָׁאָה**, to roar. The comparison to a cloud is limited to the covering; but this does not alter the signification of the cloud as a figurative representation of severe calamity.

**Eze. 38:10-16.** Account of the motive by which Gog was induced to undertake his warlike expedition, and incurred guilt, notwithstanding the fact that he was led by God, and in consequence of which he brought upon himself the judgment of destruction that was about to fall upon him.

V. 10. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, It shall come to pass in that day, that things will come up in thy heart, and thou wilt devise an evil design,* V. 11. *And say, I will go up into the open country, I will come upon the peaceful ones, who are all dwelling in safety, who dwell without walls, and have not bars and gates,* V. 12. *To take plunder and to gather spoil, to bring back thy hand against the ruins that are inhabited again, and against a people gathered out of the nations, carrying on trade and commerce, who dwell on the navel of the earth.* V. 13. *Sabaea and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, and all her young lions, will say to thee, Dost thou come to take plunder? Hast thou gathered thy multitude of people to take spoil? Is it to carry away gold and silver, to take possession and gain, to plunder a great spoil?* V. 14. *Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Is it*

*not so? On that day, when my people Israel dwelleth in security, thou wilt observe it, V. 15. And come from thy place from the extreme north, thou and many peoples with thee, all riding upon horses, a great crowd and a numerous army, V. 16. And wilt march against my people Israel, to cover the land like a cloud; at the end of the days it will take place; then shall I lead thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I sanctify myself upon thee before their eyes, O Gog.*

In v. 10 **דְּבָרִים** are not words, but things which come into his mind. What things these are, we learn from vv. 11 and 12; but first of all, these things are described as evil thoughts or designs. Gog resolves to fall upon Israel, now living in peace and security, and dwelling in open unfortified places, and to rob and plunder it. **אֶרֶץ פְּרוּזוֹת**, literally, land of plains, i.e., a land which has no fortified towns, but only places lying quite exposed (see the comm. on Zec. 2: 8); because its inhabitants are living in undisturbed peace and safe repose, and therefore dwell in places that have no walls with gates and bars (cf. Jud. 18: 7; Jer. 49:31). This description of Israel's mode of life also points beyond the times succeeding the Babylonian captivity to the Messianic days, when the Lord will have destroyed the horses and war-chariots and fortresses (Mic. 5: 9), and Jerusalem will be inhabited as an open country because of the multitude of the men and cattle, and the Lord will be a wall of fire round about her (Zec. 2: 8, 9). For v. 12a, compare Isa. 10: 6. **לְהָשִׁיב יָדָךְ** is not dependent upon **אֲעֲלֶה**, like the preceding infinitives, but is subordinate to **וּגְוִי אֲמַרְתָּ**: "thou sayest, I will go up...to turn thy hand." **הָשִׁיב**, to bring back, is to be explained from the fact that the heathen had already at an earlier period turned their hand against the towns of Israel, and plundered their possessions and goods. **חֲרָבוֹת נֹשְׁבוֹת** in this connection are desolate places which are inhabited again, and therefore have been rebuilt (cf. Eze. 12:20; 26:19). **מִקְנֶה** and **קִנְיָן** are synonyms; and **מִקְנֶה** does not mean flocks or herds, but gain, possession (cf. Gen. 36: 6; 31:18; 34:23). One motive of Gog for making the attack was to be found in the possessions of Israel; a second is given in the words: who dwell upon the navel of the earth. This figurative expression is to be explained from Eze. 5: 5: "Jerusalem in the midst of the nations." This navel is not a figure denoting the high land, but signifies the land situated in the middle of the earth, and therefore the land most glorious and most richly blessed; so that they who dwell there occupy the most exalted position among the nations. A covetous desire for the possessions of the people of God, and envy at his exalted position in the centre of the world, are therefore the motives by which Gog is impelled to enter upon his predatory expedition against the people living in the depth of peace. This covetousness is so great, that even the rich trading populations of Sabaea, Dedan, and Tarshish (cf. Eze. 27:22, 20, and 12) perceive it, and declare that it is this alone which has determined Gog to undertake his expedition. The words of these peoples (v. 13) are not to be

taken as expressing their sympathies (Kliefoth), but serve to give prominence to the obvious thirst for booty which characterizes the multitude led by Gog.

**בְּפִירֵיהֶם**, their young lions, are the rapacious rulers of these trading communities, according to Eze. 19: 3 and 32: 2. — V. 14 introduces the announcement of the punishment, which consists of another summary account of the daring enterprise of Gog and his hosts (cf. vv. 14, 15, and 16a with vv. 4-9), and a clear statement of the design of God in leading him against His people and land. **תִּדְעַ** (v. 14, close), of which different renderings have been given, does not mean, thou wilt experience, or be aware of, the punishment; but the object is to be taken from the context: thou wilt know, or perceive, sc. that Israel dwells securely, not expecting any hostile invasion. The rendering of the LXX (**εγερθήσῃ**) does not furnish any satisfactory ground for altering **תִּדְעַ** into **תַּעַר** = **תַּעֹרֹר** (Ewald, Hitzig). With the words **וַהֲבִיאֹתִיךָ וְגו'** (v. 16b) the opening thought of the whole picture (v. 4a) is resumed and defined with greater precision, for the purpose of attaching to it the declaration of the design of the Lord in bringing Gog, namely, to sanctify Himself upon him before the eyes of the nations (cf. v. 23 and Eze. 36:23).

**Eze. 38:17-23.** Announcement of the wrathful judgment upon Gog, as a proof of the holiness of the Lord.

V. 17. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Art thou he of whom I spoke in the former days through my servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days, that I would bring thee over them?* v. 18. *And it cometh to pass in that day, in the day when Gog cometh into the land of Israel, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, that my wrath will ascend into my nose.* V. 19. *And in my jealousy, in the fire of my anger, have I spoken, Truly in that day will a great trembling come over the land of Israel;* V. 20. *The fishes of the sea, and the birds of heaven, and the beasts of the field, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the ground, and all the men that are upon the ground, will tremble before me; and the mountains will be destroyed, and the rocky heights fall, and every wall will fall to the ground.* V. 21. *I will call the sword against him to all my holy mountains, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah: the sword of the one will be against the other.* V. 22. *And I will strive with him by pestilence and by blood, and overflowing rain-torrents and hailstones; fire and brimstone will I rain upon him and all his hosts, and upon the many peoples that are with him;* V. 23. *And will prove myself great and holy, and will make myself known before the eyes of many nations, that they may know that I am Jehovah.*

The announcement of the way in which the Lord will sanctify Himself upon Gog (v. 16) commences with the statement in v. 17, that Gog is he of whom God has already spoken by the earlier prophets. This assertion is clothed in the form of a question: **הֲאֵתָהּ**, not **הֲלֹא אֵתָהּ**, which is the interrogative form used for an emphatic assurance; whereas **הֲאֵתָהּ** does not set down the point in question as indisputably certain, but suggests the inquiry for the purpose of



giving a definite answer. The affirmative reply to the question asked is contained in the last clause of the verse: “to bring *thee* upon them;” so that **הוּא הַאֱלֹהִים** really means, thou art truly he. The statement, that Gog is he of whom God had already spoken by the earlier prophets, does not mean that those prophets had actually mentioned Gog, but simply that Gog was the enemy of whose rising up against the people of God the prophets of the former time had prophesied, as well as of his destruction by a wrathful judgment of the Lord. **שָׁנִים** (for years, or years long) is an accusative of measure, not asyndeton to **בְּיָמִים**, as the LXX and many of the commentators down to Hävernick have taken it to be. The design of this remark is not to accredit the prophecy by referring to the utterances of earlier prophets, but to show that the attack of the peoples gathered together by Gog, upon the land and people of the Lord, is not an unexpected event, or one at variance with the promise of the restoration of Israel as a kingdom of peace. To what utterances of the older prophets these words refer is a question difficult to answer. Zechariah (Zec. 12: 2, 3; 14: 2, 3) is of course not to be thought of, as Zechariah himself did not prophesy till after the captivity, and therefore not till after Ezekiel. But we may recall Joe. 4: 2 and 11ff.; Isa. 25: 5, 10ff., 26:21; Jer. 30:23 and 25; and, in fact, all the earlier prophets who prophesied of Jehovah’s day of judgment upon all the heathen. <sup>51</sup>

Vv. 18 and 19 do not contain words which Jehovah spoke through the ancient prophets, and which Ezekiel now transfers to Gog and the time of his appearing (Hitzig and Kliefoth). The perfect **דִּבַּרְתִּי** in v. 19 by no means warrants such an assumption; for this is purely prophetic, expressing the certainty of the divine determination as a thing clearly proved. Still less can **נָאֵם אֵדָר** in v. 18 be taken as a preterite, as Kliefoth supposes; nor can vv. 18 and 19 be regarded as a thing long predicted, and so be separated from vv. 20-23 as a word of God which is now for the first time uttered. For the anthropopathic expression, “my wrath ascends in my nose,” compare Psa. 18: 9, “smoke ascends in His nose.” The outburst of wrath shows itself in the vehement breath which the wrathful man inhales and exhales through his nose (see the comm. on the Psalm, *l.c.*). The bursting out of the wrath of God is literally explained in v. 19. In the jealousy of His wrath God has spoken, i.e., determined, to inflict a great trembling upon the land of Israel. **בִּקְנָאֲתִי** (cf. Eze. 5:13) is strengthened by **בְּאֵשׁ עֵבַרְתִּי** (cf. Eze. 21:36; 22:21). The trembling which will come upon the land of Israel, so that all creatures in the sea, in the air, and upon the ground, tremble before Jehovah (**מִפְּנֵי**), who appears to judgment, will rise in nature into an actual earthquake, which overthrows mountains, hills, and walls. **מְדַרְגּוֹת** are steep heights, which can only be ascended by steps (Son. 2:14). This picture of the trembling of the whole world, with all the creatures, before

the Lord who is coming to judgment, both here and in Joe. 4:16, Zec. 14: 4, 5, rests upon the fact which actually occurred in connection with the revelation of God upon Sinai, when the whole mountain was made to quake (Exo. 19:16ff.). The inhabitants of the land of Israel tremble at the terrible phenomena attending the revelation of the wrath of God, although the wrathful judgment does not apply to them, but to their enemies, Gog and his hosts. The Lord calls the sword against Gog, that his hosts may wound and slay one another. This feature of the destruction of the enemy by wounds inflicted by itself, which we meet with again in Zec. 14:13, has its typical exemplar in the defeat of the Midianites in the time of Gideon (Jud. 7:22), and also in that of the enemy invading Judah in the reign of Jehoshaphat (2Ch. 20:23). In לְכָל-הָרִי the לְ is not distributive, but indicates the direction: “to all my mountains.” The overthrow of the enemy is intensified by marvellous plagues inflicted by God — pestilence and blood (cf. Eze. 28:23), torrents of rain and hailstones (cf. Eze. 13:11), and the raining of fire and brimstone upon Gog, as formerly upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24). — Thus will Jehovah prove Himself to be the almighty God by judgment upon His enemies, and sanctify Himself before all the nations (v. 23, compare v. 16 and Eze. 36:23).

*Eze. 39: 1-20.* FURTHER DESCRIPTION OF THE JUDGMENT TO FALL UPON GOG AND HIS HOSTS. — Vv. 1-8. General announcement of his destruction.

V. 1. *And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will deal with thee, Gog, thou prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.* V. 2. *I will mislead thee, and conduct thee, and cause thee to come up from the uttermost north, and bring thee to the mountains of Israel;* V. 3. *And will smite thy bow from thy left hand, and cause thine arrows to fall from thy right hand.* V. 4. *Upon the mountains of Israel wilt thou fall, thou and all thy hosts, and the peoples which are with thee: I give thee for food to the birds of prey of every plumage, and to the beasts of the field.* V. 5. *Upon the open field shalt thou fall, for I have spoken it, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.* V. 6. *And I will send fire in Magog, and among those who dwell in security upon the islands, that they may know that I am Jehovah.* V. 7. *I will make known my holy name in the midst of my people Israel, and will not let my holy name be profaned any more, that the nations may know that I am Jehovah, holy in Israel.* V. 8. *Behold, it comes and happens, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah; this is the day of which I spoke.*

The further description of the judgment with which Gog and his hosts are threatened in Eze. 38:21-23, commences with a repetition of the command to the prophet to prophesy against Gog (v. 1, cf. Eze. 38: 2, 3). The principal contents of Eze. 38: 4-15 are then briefly summed up in v. 2. שְׁבַבְתִּיךָ, as in Eze. 38: 4, is strengthened by שֵׁשֶׁת־ךָ, ש, ἕκταξ λεγ., is not connected with שֵׁשׁ in the sense of “I leave a sixth part of thee remaining,” or afflict thee with six punishments; but in the Ethiopic it signifies to proceed, or to climb, and here, accordingly, it is used in the sense of leading on (LXX καθοδηγήσω σε, or,

according to another reading, *κατάξω*; *Vulg. educam*). For v. 2b, compare Eze. 38:15 and 8. In the land of Israel, God will strike his weapons out of his hands, i.e., make him incapable of fighting (for the fact itself, compare the similar figures in Psa. 37:15; 46:10), and give him up with all his army as a prey to death. אִיט, a beast of prey, is more precisely defined by צִפּוֹר, and still further strengthened by the genitive בְּלִ-בְּנֵי: birds of prey of every kind. The judgment will not be confined to the destruction of the army of Gog, which has invaded the land of Israel, but (v. 6) will also extend to the land of Gog, and to all the heathen nations that are dwelling in security. אֵשׁ, fire, primarily the fire of war; then, in a further sense, a figure denoting destruction inflicted directly by God, as in Eze. 38:22, which is therefore represented in Rev. 20: 9 as fire falling from heaven. *Magog* is the population of the land of Magog (Eze. 38: 2). With this the inhabitants of the distant coastlands of the west (the אִיִּם) are associated, as representatives of the remotest heathen nations. Vv. 7, 8. By this judgment the Lord will make known His holy name in Israel, and show the heathen that He will not let it be blasphemed by them any more. For the fact itself, compare Eze. 36:20. For v. 8, compare Eze. 21:12, and for הַיּוֹם, see Eze. 38:18, 19.

### *Eze. 39: 9-20.* Total destruction of Gog and his hosts.

V. 9. *Then will the inhabitants of the cities of Israel go forth, and burn and heat with armour and shield and target, with bow and arrows and hand-staves and spears, and will burn fire with them for seven years; V. 10. And will not fetch wood from the field, nor cut wood out of the forests, but will burn fire with the armour, and will spoil those who spoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 11. And it will come to pass in that day, that I will give Gog a place where his grave in Israel shall be, the valley of the travellers, and there will they bury Gog and all his multitude, and will call it the valley of Gog's multitude. V. 12. They of the house of Israel will bury them, to purify the land for seven months. V. 13. And all the people of the land will bury, and it will be to them for a name on the day when I glorify myself, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 14. And they will set apart constant men, such as rove about in the land, and such as bury with them that rove about those who remain upon the surface of the ground, to cleanse it, after the lapse of seven months will they search it through. V. 15. And those who rove about will pass through the land; and if one sees a man's bone, he will set up a sign by it, till the buriers of the dead bury it in the valley of the multitude of Gog. V. 16. The name of a city shall also be called Hamonah (multitude). And thus will they cleanse the land. V. 17. And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Say to the birds of every plumage, and to all the beasts of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come, gather together from round about to my sacrifice, which I slaughter for you, to a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, and eat flesh and drink blood. V. 18. Flesh of heroes shall ye eat, and drink blood of princes of the earth; rams, lambs, and he-goats, bullocks, all fattened in Bashan. V. 9. And ye shall eat fat to satiety, and drink blood to intoxication, of my sacrifice which I have slaughtered for*

*you. V. 20. And ye shall satiate yourselves at my table with horses and riders, heroes and all kinds of men of war, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

To show how terrible the judgment upon Gog will be, Ezekiel depicts in three special ways the total destruction of his powerful forces. In the *first* place, the burning of all the weapons of the fallen foe will furnish the inhabitants of the land of Israel with wood for firing for seven years, so that there will be no necessity for them to fetch fuel from the field or from the forest (vv. 9 and 10). But Hävernick is wrong in supposing that the reason for burning the weapons is that, according to Isa. 9: 5, weapons of war are irreconcilable with the character of the Messianic times of peace. This is not referred to here; but the motive is the complete annihilation of the enemy, the removal of every trace of him. The prophet therefore crowds the words together for the purpose of enumerating every kind of weapon that was combustible, even to the hand-staves which men were accustomed to carry (cf. Num. 22:27). The quantity of the weapons will be so great, that they will supply the Israelites with all the fuel they need for seven years. The number seven in the seven years as well as in the seven months of burying (v. 11) is symbolical, stamping the overthrow as a punishment inflicted by God, the completion of a divine judgment.

With the gathering of the weapons for burning there is associated the plundering of the fallen foe (v. 10*b*), by which the Israelites do to the enemy what he intended to do to them (Eze. 38:12), and the people of God obtain possession of the wealth of their foes (cf. Jer. 30:16). In the *second* place, God will assign a large burying-place for the army of Gog in a valley of Israel, which is to be named in consequence “the multitude of Gog;” just as a city in that region will also be called *Hamonah* from this event. The Israelites will bury the fallen of Gog there for seven months long, and after the expiration of that time they will have the land explored by men specially appointed for the purpose, and bones that may still have been left unburied will be sought out, and they will have them interred by buriers of the dead, that the land may be thoroughly cleansed (vv. 11-16). **מְקוֹם שָׂם קֶבֶר**, a place where there was a grave in Israel, i.e., a spot in which he might be buried in Israel. There are different opinions as to both the designation and the situation of this place. There is no foundation for the supposition that **גִּי הָעִבְרִים** derives its name from the mountains of *Abarim* in Num. 27:12 and Deu. 32:49 (Michaelis, Eichhorn), or that it signifies valley of the haughty ones (Ewald), or that there is an allusion to the valley mentioned in Zec. 14: 4 (Hitzig), or the valley of Jehoshaphat (Kliefoth). The valley cannot even have derived its name (**הָעִבְרִים**) from the **עִבְרִים**, who passed through the land to search out the bones of the dead that still remained unburied, and have them interred (vv. 14, 15). For **הָעִבְרִים** cannot have any other meaning here than that which it has in the circumstantial

clause which follows, where those who explored the land cannot possibly be intended, although even this clause is also obscure. The only other passage in which **הָסַם** occurs is Deu. 25: 4, where it signifies a muzzle, and in the Arabic it means to obstruct, or cut off; and hence, in the passage before us, probably, to stop the way. **הָעֲבָרִים** are not the Scythians (Hitzig), for the word **עָבַר** is never applied to their invasion of the land, but generally the travellers who pass through the land, or more especially those who cross from Peraea to Canaan. The valley of **הָעֲבָרִים** is no doubt the valley of the Jordan above the Dead Sea. The definition indicates this, viz., **קִדְמַת הַיָּם**, on the front of the sea; not to the east of the sea, as it is generally rendered, for **קִדְמַת** never has this meaning (see the comm. on Gen. 2:14). By **הַיָּם** we cannot understand “the Mediterranean,” as the majority of the commentators have done, as there would then be no meaning in the words, since the whole of the land of Israel was situated to the east of the Mediterranean Sea. **הַיָּם** is the Dead Sea, generally called **הַיָּם הַקָּדְמוֹנִי** (Eze. 47:18); and **קִדְמַת הַיָּם**, “on the front side of the (Dead) Sea,” as looked at from Jerusalem, the central point of the land, is probably the valley of the Jordan, the principal crossing place from Gilead into Canaan proper, and the broadest part of the Jordan-valley, which was therefore well adapted to be the burial-place for the multitude of slaughtered foes. But in consequence of the army of Gog having there found its grave, this valley will in future block up the way to the travellers who desire to pass to and fro. This appears to be the meaning of the circumstantial clause.

From the fact that Gog’s multitude is buried there, the valley itself will receive the name of *Hamon-Gog*. The Israelites will occupy seven months in burying them, so enormously great will be the number of the dead to be buried (v. 12), and this labour will be for a name, i.e., for renown, to the whole nation. This does not mean, of course, “that it will be a source of honour to them to assist in this work;” nor is the renown to be sought in the fact, that as a privileged people, protected by God, they can possess the grave of Gog in their land (Hitzig), — a thought which is altogether remote, and perfectly foreign to Israelitish views; but the burying of Gog’s multitude of troops will be for a name to the people of Israel, inasmuch as they thereby cleanse the land and manifest their zeal to show themselves a holy people by sweeping all uncleanness away. **יוֹם** is an accusative of time: on the day when I glorify myself. — Vv. 14, 15. The effort made to cleanse the land perfectly from the uncleanness arising from the bones of the dead will be so great, that after the great mass of the slain have been buried in seven months, there will be men specially appointed to bury the bones of the dead that still lie scattered here and there about the land. **אֲנָשֵׁי תָמִיד** are people who have a permanent duty to

discharge. The participles **עֹבְרִים** and **מִקְבְּרִים** are co-ordinate, and are written together *asyndetos*, men who go about the land, and men who bury with those who go about. That the words are to be understood in this sense is evident from v. 15, according to which those who go about do not perform the task of burying, but simply search for bones that have been left, and put up a sign for the buriers of the dead. **רָאָה**, with the subject indefinite; if one sees a human bone, he builds (erects) a **צִיּוֹן**, or stone, by the side of it (cf.

2Ki. 23:17). — V. 16. A city shall also receive the name of *Hamonah*, i.e., multitude or tumult. To **שָׁם-עִיר** we may easily supply **יְהִי** from the context, since this puts in the future the statement, “the name of the city is,” for which no verb was required in Hebrew. In the last words, **וְטִהְרוּ הָאָרֶץ**, the main thought is finally repeated and the picture brought to a close. — Vv. 17-20. In the *third* place, God will provide the birds of prey and beasts of prey with an abundant meal from this slaughter. This cannot be understood as signifying that only what remain of the corpses, and have not been cleared away in the manner depicted in vv. 11-16, will become the prey of wild beasts; but the beasts of prey will make their meal of the corpses before it is possible to bury them, since the burying cannot be effected immediately or all at once. — The several features in the picture, of the manner in which the enemies are to be destroyed till the last trace of them is gone, are not arranged in chronological order, but according to the subject-matter; and the thought that the slaughtered foes are to become the prey of wild beasts is mentioned last as being the more striking, because it is in this that their ignominious destruction culminates. To give due prominence to this thought, the birds and beasts of prey are summoned by God to gather together to the meal prepared for them. The picture given of it as a sacrificial meal is based upon Isa. 34: 6 and Jer. 46:10. In harmony with this picture the slaughtered foes are designated as fattened sacrificial beasts, rams, lambs, he-goats, bullocks; on which Grotius has correctly remarked, that “these names of animals, which were generally employed in the sacrifices, are to be understood as signifying different orders of men, chiefs, generals, soldiers, as the Chaldee also observes.”

**Eze. 39:21-29.** The result of this judgment, and the concluding promise.

V. 21. *Then will I display my glory among the nations, and all nations shall see my judgment which I shall execute, and my hand which I shall lay upon them.* V. 22. *And the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God from this day and forward.* V. 23. *And the nations shall know that because of their wickedness the house of Israel went into captivity; because they have been unfaithful toward me, I hid my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their oppressors, so that they all fell by the sword.* V. 24. *According to their uncleanness, and according to their transgressions, I dealt with them, and hid my face from them.* V. 25. *Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have pity*

*upon all the house of Israel, and be jealous for my holy name. V. 26. Then will they bear their reproach and all their faithlessness which they have committed toward me when they dwell in their land in security, and no one alarms them; V. 27. When I bring them back out of the nations, and gather them out of the lands of their enemies, and sanctify myself upon them before the eyes of the many nations. V. 28. And they will know that I, Jehovah, am their God, when I have driven them out to the nations, and then bring them together again into their land, and leave none of them there any more. V. 29. And I will not hide my face from them any more, because I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

The terrible judgment upon Gog will have this twofold effect as a revelation of the glory of God — *first*, Israel will know that the Lord is, and will always continue to be, its God (v. 22); *secondly*, the heathen will know that He gave Israel into their power, and thrust it out of its own land, not from weakness, but to punish it for its faithless apostasy (vv. 23 and 24; compare Eze. 36:17ff.). עֲשָׂה אֲתָם (v. 24), as in Eze. 7:27, etc. But because this was the purpose of the Lord with His judgments, He will now bring back the captives of Israel, and have compassion upon all His people. This turn of the prophecy in v. 25 serves to introduce the promise to Israel with which the prophecy concerning Gog and the whole series of prophecies, contained in Eze. 35: 1 onwards, are brought to a close (vv. 25-29). This promise reverts in אֲתָהּ אֲשִׁיב וְגו' to the prophet's own time, to which Ezekiel had already gone back by mentioning the carrying away of Israel in vv. 23 and 24. The restoration of the captives of Jacob commences with the liberation of Israel from the Babylonian exile, but is not to be restricted to this. It embraces all the deliverances which Israel will experience from the termination of the Babylonian exile till its final gathering out of the nations on the conversion of the remnant which is still hardened and scattered. לְכֹן, therefore, sc. because God will prove Himself to be holy in the sight of the heathen nations by means of the judgment, and will make known to them that He has punished Israel solely on account of its sins, and therefore will He restore His people and renew it by His Spirit (v. 29). — In what the jealousy of God for His holy name consists is evident from v.7, and still more plainly from Eze. 36:22, 23, namely, in the fact that by means of the judgment He manifests Himself as the holy God. וְנָשִׁי is not to be altered into וְנָשִׁי, “they will forget,” as Dathe and Hitzig propose, but is a defective spelling for וְנִשְׂאוּ (like מְלוֹ for מְלֹאוּ in Eze. 28:16): they will bear their reproach. The thought is the same as in Eze. 16:54 and 61, where the bearing of reproach is explained as signifying their being ashamed of their sins and their consequences, and feeling disgust thereat. They will feel this shame when the Lord grants them lasting peace in their own land. Raschi has correctly explained it thus: “When I shall have done them good, and not rewarded them as their iniquity deserved, they will be filled with shame, so that they will not dare to lift up their face.” — V. 27 is only a

further expansion of v. 26*b*. For the fact itself, compare Eze. 36:23, 24; 20:41, etc. And not only will Israel then be ashamed of its sins, but (vv. 28, 29) it will also know that Jehovah is its God from henceforth and for ever, as was affirmed in v. 22, when He shall fully restore to their own land the people that was thrust into exile, and withdraw His favour from it no more, because He has poured out His Spirit upon it, and thereby perfectly sanctified it as His own people (cf. Eze. 36:27).

The promise with which the prophecy concerning the destruction of Gog is brought to a close, namely, that in this judgment all nations shall see the glory of God, and all Israel shall know that henceforth Jehovah will be their God, and will no more hide His face from them, serves to confirm the substance of the threat of punishment; inasmuch as it also teaches that, in the destruction of Gog and his gathering of peoples, the last attack of the heathen world-power upon the kingdom of God will be judged and overthrown, so that from that time forth the people of God will no more have to fear a foe who can disturb its peace and its blessedness in the everlasting possession of the inheritance given to it by the Lord. Gog is not only depicted as the last foe, whom the Lord Himself entices for the purpose of destroying him by miracles of His almighty power (Eze. 38: 3, 4, 19-22), by the fact that his appearance is assigned to the end of the times, when all Israel is gathered out of the nations and brought back out of the lands, and dwells in secure repose in the open and unfortified towns of its own land (Eze. 38: 8, 11, 12); but this may also be inferred from the fact that the gathering of peoples led by Gog against Israel belongs to the heathen nations living on the borders of the known world, since this points to a time when not only will the ancient foes of the kingdom of God, whose destruction was predicted in Eze. 25-32, have departed from the stage of history and perished, but the boundaries of Israel will also stretch far beyond the limits of Palestine, to the vicinity of these hordes of peoples at the remotest extremities on the north, the east, and the south of the globe. — So much may be gathered from the contents of our prophecy in relation to its historical fulfilment. But in order to determine with greater precision what is the heathen power thus rising up in Gog of Magog against the kingdom of God, we must take into consideration the passage in the Apocalypse (Rev. 20: 8 and 9), where our prophecy is resumed. Into this, however, we will not further enter till after the exposition of Eze. 40-48, when we shall take up the question as to the historical realization of the new temple and kingdom of God which Ezekiel saw.

## **Ch. 40-48 — The New Kingdom of God**

*Eze. 40-48.* The last nine chapters of Ezekiel contain a magnificent vision, in which the prophet, being transported in an ecstatic state into the land of Israel, is shown the new temple and the new organization of the service of God,



together with the new division of Canaan among the tribes of Israel, who have been brought back from among the nations. This last section of our book, which is perfectly rounded off in itself, is indeed sharply distinguished by its form from the preceding prophecies; but it is closely connected with them so far as the contents are concerned, and forms the second half of the entire book, in which the announcement of salvation for Israel is brought to its full completion, and a panoramic vision displays the realization of the salvation promised. This announcement (Eze. 34-37) commenced with the promise that the Lord would bring back all Israel from its dispersion into the land of Canaan given to the fathers, and would cause it to dwell there as a people renewed by His Spirit and walking in His commandments; and closed with the assurance that He would make an eternal covenant of peace with His restored people, place His sanctuary in the midst of them, and there dwell above them as their God for ever (Eze. 37:26-28). The picture shown to the prophet in the chapters before us, of the realization of this promise, commences with the description and measuring of the new sanctuary (Eze. 40-42), into which the glory of the Lord enters with the assurance, "This is the place of my throne, where I shall dwell for ever among the sons of Israel" (Eze. 43: 1-12); and concludes with the definition of the boundaries and the division of Canaan among the twelve tribes, as well as of the extent and building of the new Jerusalem (Eze. 47:13-48:35). The central portion of this picture is occupied by the new organization of the service of God, by observing which all Israel is to prove itself to be a holy people of the Lord (Eze. 43:13-46:24), so as to participate in the blessing which flows like a river from the threshold of the temple and spreads itself over the land (Eze. 47: 1-12).

From this brief sketch of these nine chapters, it is evident that this vision does not merely treat of the new temple and the new order of the temple-worship, although these points are described in the most elaborate manner; but that it presents a picture of the new form assumed by the whole of the kingdom of God, and in this picture exhibits to the eye the realization of the restoration and the blessedness of Israel. The whole of it may therefore be divided into three sections: viz., (a) the description of the new temple (Eze. 40-43:12); (b) the new organization of the worship of God (Eze. 43:13-46:24); (c) the blessing of the land of Canaan, and the partition of it among the tribes of Israel (Eze. 47: 1-48:35); although this division is not strictly adhered to, inasmuch as in the central section not only are several points relating to the temple — such as the description of the altar of burnt-offering (Eze. 43:13-17), and the kitchens for the sacrifices (Eze. 46:19-24) — repeated, but the *therumah* to be set apart as holy on the division of the land, and the prince's domain, are also mentioned and defined (Eze. 45: 1-8).

## CH. 40-43:12. THE NEW TEMPLE

*Eze. 40: 1-43:12.* After a short introduction announcing the time, place, and design of the vision (Eze. 40: 1-4), the picture of the temple shown to the prophet commences with a description of the courts, with their gates and cells (Eze. 40: 5-47). It then turns to the description of the temple-house, with the porch and side-building, of the erection upon the separate place (Eze. 40:48-41:26), and also of the cells in the outer court set apart for the sacrificial meals of the priests, and for the custody of their official robes; and proceeds to define the extent of the outer circumference of the temple (Eze. 42). It closes with the consecration of the temple, as the place of the throne of God, by the entrance into it of the glory of the Lord (Eze. 43: 1-12).<sup>152</sup>

### CH. 40: 1-4. INTRODUCTION.

*Eze. 40: 1-4.*

V. 1. *In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was smitten, on this same day the hand of Jehovah came upon me, and He brought me thither.* V. 2. *In visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel, and set me down upon a very high mountain; and upon it there was like a city-edifice toward the south.* V. 3. *And He brought me thither, and behold there was a man, his appearance like the appearance of brass, and a flaxen cord in his hand, and the measuring-rod; and he stood by the gate.* V. 4. *And the man spake to me: Son of man, see with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thy heart upon all that I show thee; for thou art brought hither to show it thee. Tell all that thou seest to the house of Israel.*

The twofold announcement of the time when the prophet was shown the vision of the new temple and the new kingdom of God points back to Eze. 1: 1 and Eze. 33:21, and places this divine revelation concerning the new building of the kingdom of God in a definite relation, not only to the appearance of God by which Ezekiel was called to be a prophet (Eze. 1: 1, 3), but also to the vision in Eze. 8-11, in which he was shown the destruction of the ancient, sinful Jerusalem, together with its temple. The twenty-fifth year of the captivity, and the fourteenth year after the city was smitten, i.e., taken and reduced to ashes, are the year 575 before Christ. There is a difference of opinion as to the correct explanation of **בְּרֵאשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה**, at the beginning of the year; but it is certainly incorrect to take the expression as denoting the beginning of the economical or so-called civil year, the seventh month (*Tishri*). For, in the first place, the custom of beginning the year with the month *Tishri* was introduced long after the captivity, and was probably connected with the adoption of the era of the Seleucidae; and, secondly, it is hardly conceivable that Ezekiel should have deviated from the view laid down in the *Torah* in so important a point as this. The only thing that could render this at all probable would be the assumption

proposed by Hitzig, that the year 575 B.C. was a year of jubilee, since the year of jubilee did commence with the day of atonement on the tenth of the seventh month. But the supposition that a jubilee year fell in the twenty-fifth year of the captivity cannot be raised into a probability. We therefore agree with Hävernicks and Kliefoth in adhering to the view of the older commentators, that **הַשָּׁנָה** **רִאשׁוֹן** is a contracted repetition of the definition contained in Exo. 12: 2, **הַשָּׁנָה** **רִאשׁוֹן** **לְחֹדֶשׁ**, and signifies the opening month of the year, i.e., the month *Abib* (*Nisan*). The tenth day of this month was the day on which the preparations for the Passover, the feast of the elevation of Israel into the people of God, were to commence, and therefore was well adapted for the revelation of the new constitution of the kingdom of God. On that day was Ezekiel transported, in an ecstatic state, to the site of the smitten Jerusalem. For **יָרַד יְיָ עָלַי**, compare Eze. 37: 1 and 1: 3. **שָׁמָּה** evidently points back to **הָעִיר** in v. 2b: thither, where the city was smitten. **מִרְאֹת אֱלֹהִים**, as in Eze. 1: 1. **גָּבַהּ** **אֵל**: he set me down upon (not by) a very high mountain (**אֵל** for **אֵל**, as in many other instances; e.g., Eze. 18: 6 and Eze. 31:12).

The very high mountain is Mount Zion, which is exalted above the tops of all the mountains (Mic. 4: 1; Isa. 2: 2), — the mountain upon which, according to what follows, the new temple seen in the vision stood, and which has already been designated as the lofty mountain of Israel in Eze. 17:22, 23. <sup>153</sup>

Upon this mountain Ezekiel saw something like a city-edifice toward the south (lit., from the south hither). **מִבְּנֵי עִיר** is not the building of the new Jerusalem (Hävernicks, Kliefoth, etc.). For even if what was to be seen *as* a city-edifice really could be one, although no tenable proof can be adduced of this use of **כְּ** *simil.*, nothing is said about the city till Eze. 45: 6 and Eze. 48:156 and 30 ff., and even there it is only in combination with the measuring and dividing of the land; so that Hävernicks's remark, that "the revelation has reference to the sanctuary and the city; these two principal objects announce themselves at once as such in the form of vision," is neither correct nor conclusive. The revelation has reference to the temple and the whole of the holy land, including the city; and the city itself does not come at all into such prominence as to warrant us in assuming that there is already a reference made to it here in the introduction. If we look at the context, the man with the measure, whom Ezekiel saw at the place to which he was transported, was standing at the gate (v. 3). This gate in the wall round about the building was, according to vv. 5, 6, a temple gate. Consequently what Ezekiel saw as a city-edifice can only be the building of the new temple, with its surrounding wall and its manifold court buildings. The expressions **עָלְיוֹ** and **מִגְבֹּה** can both be brought into harmony with this. **עָלְיוֹ** refers to the very high mountain mentioned immediately before, to the summit

of which the prophet had been transported, and upon which the temple-edifice is measured before his eyes. But מִנְּנֹב does not imply, that as Ezekiel looked from the mountain he saw *in the distance*, toward the south, a magnificent building like a city-edifice; but simply that, looking from his standing-place in a southerly direction, or southwards, he saw this building upon the mountain, — that is to say, as he had been transported from Chaldea, i.e., from the north, into the land of Israel, he really saw it before him towards the south; so that the rendering of מִנְּנֹב by ἀπέναντι in the Septuagint is substantially correct, though without furnishing any warrant to alter מִנְּנֹב into מִנְּנֹד. In v. 3a, אֹתִי שָׁמָּה אֲבִי־אֱלֹהִים is repeated from the end of v. 1, for the purpose of attaching the following description of what is seen, in the sense of, “when He brought me thither, behold, there (was) a man.” His appearance was like the appearance of brass, i.e., of shining brass (according to the correct gloss of the LXX χαλκοῦ στίλβοντος = נְהַשֶּׁת קָלִיל, Eze. 1: 7). This figure suggests a heavenly being, an angel, and as he is called Jehovah in Eze. 44: 2, 5, the angel of Jehovah. Kliefoth’s opinion, that in Eze. 44: 2, 5, it is not the man who is speaking, but that the prophet is there addressed directly by the apparition of God (Eze. 43: 2 ff.), is proved to be untenable by the simple fact that the speaker (in Eze. 44) admonishes the prophet in v. 5 to attend, to see, and to hear, in the same words as the man in v. 4 of the chapter before us. This places the identity of the two beyond the reach of doubt. He had in his hand a flaxen cord for measuring, and the measuring rod, — that is to say, two measures, because he had to measure many and various things, smaller and larger spaces, for the former of which he had the measuring rod, for the latter the measuring line. The gate at which this man stood (v. 3) is not more precisely defined, but according to v. 5 it is to be sought for in the wall surrounding the building; and since he went to the east gate first, according to v. 6, it was not the east gate, but probably the north gate, as it was from the north that Ezekiel had come.

## VV. 5-27. THE OUTER COURT, WITH BOUNDARY WALL, GATE-BUILDINGS, AND CELLS

*Eze. 40: 5.* — The Surrounding Wall.

*And, behold, a wall (ran) on the outside round the house; and in the man’s hand was the measuring rod of six cubits, each a cubit and a handbreadth; and he measured the breadth of the building a rod, and the height a rod.*

The description of the temple (for, according to what follows, הַבַּיִת is the house of Jehovah) (cf. Eze. 43: 7) commences with the surrounding wall of the outer court, whose breadth (i.e., thickness) and height are measured (see the illustration, Plate I a a a), the length of the measuring rod having first been

given by way of parenthesis. This was six cubits (sc., measured) by the cubit and handbreadth — that is to say, six cubits, each of which was of the length of a (common) cubit and a handbreadth (cf. Eze. 43:13); in all, therefore, six cubits and six handbreadths. The ordinary or common cubit, judging from the statement in 2Ch. 3: 3, that the measure of Solomon's temple was regulated according to the earlier measure, had become shorter in the course of time than the old Mosaic or sacred cubit. Fro the new temple, therefore, the measure is regulated according to a longer cubit, in all probability according to the old sacred cubit of the Mosaic law, which was a handbreadth longer than the common cubit according to the passage before us, or seven handbreadths of the ordinary cubit. **וְהַבִּנְיָן**, the masonry, is the building of the wall, which was one rod broad, i.e., thick, and the same in height. The length of this wall is not given, and can only be learned from the further description of the whole wall (see the comm. on Eze. 40:27).

**Eze. 40: 6-16.** The Buildings of the East Gate. — (See Plate II 1).

V. 6. *And he went to the gate, the direction of which was toward the east, and ascended the steps thereof, and measured the threshold of the gate one rod broad, namely, the first threshold one rod broad, V. 7. And the guard-room one rod long and one rod broad, and between the guard-rooms five cubits, and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate from the temple hither one rod. V. 8. And he measured the porch of the gate from the temple hither one rod. V. 9. And he measured the porch of the gate eight cubits, and its pillars two cubits; and the porch of the gate was from the temple hither. V. 10. And of the guard-rooms of the gate toward the east there were three on this side and three on that side; all three had one measure, and the pillars also one measure on this side and on that. V. 11. And he measured the breadth of the opening of the gate ten cubits, the length of the gate thirteen cubits. V. 12. And there was a boundary fence before the guard-rooms of one cubit, and a cubit was the boundary fence on that side, and the guard-rooms were six cubits on this side and six cubits on that side. V. 13. And he measured the gate from the roof of the guard-rooms to the roof of them five and twenty cubits broad, door against door. V. 14. And he fixed the pillars at sixty cubits, and the court round about the gate reached to the pillars. V. 15. And the front of the entrance gate to the front of the porch of the inner gate was fifty cubits. V. 16. And there were closed windows in the guard-rooms, and in their pillars on the inner side of the gate round about, and so also in the projections of the walls; there were windows round about on the inner side, and palms on the pillars.*

**וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל שַׁעַר** is not to be rendered, “he went in at the gate.” For although this would be grammatically admissible, it is not in harmony with what follows, according to which the man first of all ascended the steps, and then commenced the measuring of the gate-buildings with the threshold of the gate. The steps (*B* in the illustration) are not to be thought of as in the surrounding wall, but as being outside in front of them; but in the description which follows they are not included in the length of the gate-buildings. The number of steps is not given

here, but they have no doubt been fixed correctly by the LXX at seven, as that is the number given in vv. 22 and 26 in connection with both the northern and southern gates. From the steps the man came to the threshold (*C*), and measured it. “The actual description of the first building, that of the eastern gate, commences in the inside; first of all, the entire length is traversed (vv. 6-9), and the principal divisions are measured on the one side; then (vv. 10-12) the inner portions on both sides are given more definitely as to their character, number, and measure; in vv. 13-15 the relations and measurement of the whole building are noticed; and finally (v. 16), the wall-decorations observed round about the inside. The exit from the gate is first mentioned in v. 17; consequently all that is given in vv. 6-16 must have been visible within the building, just as in the case of the other gates the measurements and descriptions are always to be regarded as given from within” (Böttcher). The threshold (*C*) was a rod in breadth, — that is to say, measuring from the outside to the inside, — and was therefore just as broad as the wall was thick (v. 5). But this threshold was the one, or first threshold, which had to be crossed by any one who entered the gate from the outside, for the gate-building had a second threshold at the exit into the court, which is mentioned in v. 7. Hence the more precise definition **שָׁרְיָה** **וְזוֹת הַבַּיְתָה**, “and that the one, i.e., first threshold,” in connection with which the breadth is given a second time. **זוֹת** is neither *nota nominativi*, nor is it used in the sense of **זוֹת**; but it is *nota accus.*, and is also governed by **וְזוֹת**. And **שָׁרְיָה** is not to be taken in a pregnant sense, “only one, i.e., not broken up, or composed of several” (Böttcher, Hävernick), but is employed, as it frequently is in enumeration, for the ordinal number: *one* for the first (vid., e.g., Gen. 1: 5, 7).

The length of the threshold, i.e., its measure between the two door-posts (from north to south), is not given; but from the breadth of the entrance door mentioned in v. 11, we can infer that it was ten cubits. Proceeding from the threshold, we have next the measurement of the guard-room (*G*), mentioned in v. 7. According to 1Ki. 14:28, **שָׁרְיָה** is a room constructed in the gate, for the use of the guard keeping watch at the gate. This was a rod in length, and the same in breadth. A space of five cubits is then mentioned as intervening between the guard-rooms. It is evident from this that there were several guard-rooms in succession; according to v. 10, three on each side of the doorway, but that instead of their immediately joining one another, they were separated by intervening spaces (*H*) of five cubits each. This required two spaces on each side. These spaces between the guard-rooms, of which we have no further description, must not be thought of as open or unenclosed, for in that case there would have been so many entrances into the court, and the gateway would not be closed; but we must assume “that they were closed by side walls, which

connected the guard-rooms with one another” (Kliefoth). — After the guard-rooms there follows, thirdly, the threshold of the gate on the side of, or near the porch of, the gate “in the direction from the house,” i.e., the second threshold, which was at the western exit from the gate-buildings near the porch (*D*); in other words, which stood as you entered immediately in front of the porch leading out into the court (*C C*), and was also a cubit in breadth, like the first threshold at the eastern entrance into the gate. **מֵהַבַּיִת**, “in the direction from the house,” or, transposing it into our mode of viewing and describing directions, “going toward the temple-house.” This is added to **אֶלֶם הַשָּׂאֵר** to indicate clearly the position of this porch as being by the inner passage of the gate-buildings leading into the court, so as to guard against our thinking of a porch erected on the outside in front of the entrance gate. Böttcher, Hitzig, and others are wrong in identifying or interchanging **מֵהַבַּיִת** with **מִבַּיִת**, inwardly, *intrinsecus* (Eze. 7:15; 1Ki. 6:15), and taking it as referring to **סָף**, as if the intention were to designate this threshold as the inner one lying within the gate-buildings, in contrast to the first threshold mentioned in v. 6.

In vv. 8 and 9 two different measures of this court-porch (*D*) are given, viz., first, one rod = six cubits (v. 8), and then eight cubits (v. 9). The ancient translators stumbled at this difference, and still more at the fact that the definition of the measurement is repeated in the same words; so that, with the exception of the Targumists, they have all omitted the eighth verse; and in consequence of this, modern critics, such as Houbigant, Ewald, Böttcher, and Hitzig, have expunged it from the text as a gloss. But however strange the repetition of the measurement of the porch with a difference in the numbers may appear at the first glance, and however naturally it may suggest the thought of a gloss which has crept into the text through the oversight of a copyists, it is very difficult to understand how such a gloss could have been perpetuated; and this cannot be explained by the groundless assumption that there was an unwillingness to erase what had once been erroneously written. To this must be added the difference in the terms employed to describe the dimensions, viz., first, a rod, and then eight cubits, as well as the circumstance that in v. 9, in addition to the measure of the porch, that of the pillars adjoining the porch is given immediately afterwards. The attempts of the earlier commentators to explain the two measurements of the porch have altogether failed; and Kliefoth was the first to solve the difficulty correctly, by explaining that in v. 8 the measurement of the porch is given in the clear, i.e., according to the length within, or the depth (from east to west), whilst in v. 9 the external length of the southern (or northern) wall of the porch (from east to west) is given. Both of these were necessary, the former to give a correct idea of the inner space of the porch, as in the case of the guard-rooms in v. 8; the latter, to supply the

necessary data for the entire length of the gate-buildings, and to make it possible to append to this the dimensions of the pillars adjoining the western porch-wall. As a portion of the gate-entrance or gateway, this porch was open to the east and west; and toward the west, i.e., toward the court, it was closed by the gate built against it. Kliefoth therefore assumes that the porch-walls on the southern and northern sides projected two cubits toward the west beyond the inner space of the porch, which lay between the threshold and the gate that could be closed, and was six cubits long, and that the two gate-pillars, with their thickness of two cubits each, were attached to this prolongation of the side walls. But by this supposition we do not gain a porch (פֶּתַח), but a simple extension of the intervening wall between the third guard-room and the western gate. If the continuation of the side walls, which joined the masonry bounding the western threshold on the south and north, was to have the character of a porch, the hinder wall (to the east) could not be entirely wanting; but even if there were a large opening in it for the doorway, it must stand out in some way so as to strike the eye, whether by projections of the wall at the north-east and south-east corners, or what may be more probable, by the fact that the southern and northern side walls receded at least a cubit in the inside, if not more, so that the masonry of the walls of the porch was weaker (thinner) than that at the side of the threshold and by the pillars, and the porch in the clear from north to south was broader than the doorway. The suffix attached to אֵילֹן is probably to be taken as referring to אֵלֶם הַשָּׂאֵר, and not merely to שָּׂאֵר, and the word itself to be construed as a plural (אֵילִים): the pillars of the gate-porch (*E*) were two cubits thick, or strong. This measurement is not to be divided between the two pillars, as the earlier commentators supposed, so that each pillar would be but one cubit thick, but applies to each of them. As the pillars were sixty cubits high (according to v. 14), they must have had the strength of at least two cubits of thickness to secure the requisite firmness. At the close of the ninth verse, the statement that the gate-porch was directed towards the temple-house is made for the third time, because it was this peculiarity in the situation which distinguished the gate-buildings of the outer court from those of the inner; inasmuch as in the case of the latter, although in other respects its construction resembled that of the gate-buildings of the outer court, the situation was reversed, and the gate-porch was at the side turned away from the temple toward the outer court, as is also emphatically stated three times in vv. 31, 34, and 37 (Kliefoth).

On reaching the gate-porch and its pillars, the measurer had gone through the entire length of the gate-buildings, and determined the measure of all its component parts, so far as the length was concerned. Having arrived at the inner extremity or exit, the describer returns, in order to supply certain



important particulars with regard to the situation and character of the whole structure. He first of all observes (in v. 10), with reference to the number and relative position of the guard-houses (*G*), that there were three of them on each side opposite to one another, that all six were of the same measure, i.e., one rod in length and one in breadth (v. 7); and then, that the pillars mentioned in v. 9, the measurement of which was determined (*E*), standing at the gate-porch on either side, were of the same size. Many of the commentators have erroneously imagined that by **לְאֵילֹם** we are to understand the walls between the guard-rooms or pillars in the guard-rooms. The connecting walls could not be called **אֵילִים**; and if pillars belonging to the guard-rooms were intended, we should expect to find **לְאֵילָיו**. — In v. 11 there follow the measurements of the breadth and length of the doorway. The breadth of the opening, i.e., the width of the doorway, was ten cubits. “By this we are naturally to understand the breadth of the whole doorway in its full extent, just as the length of the two thresholds and the seven steps, which was not given in vv. 6 and 7, is also fixed at ten cubits” (Kliefoth). — The measurement which follows, viz., “the length of the gate, thirteen cubits,” is difficult to explain, and has been interpreted in very different ways. The supposition of Lyra, Kliefoth, and others, that by the *length* of the gate we are to understand the *height* of the trellised gate, which could be opened and shut, cannot possibly be correct. **אָרְךְ**, length, never stands for **קַנְמוֹה**, height; and **הַשַּׁעַר** in this connection cannot mean the gate that was opened and shut. **הַשַּׁעַר**, as distinguished from **פֶּתַח הַשַּׁעַר**, can only signify either the whole of the gate-building (as in v. 6), or, in a more limited sense, that portion of the building which bore the character of a gate in a conspicuous way; primarily, therefore, the masonry enclosing the threshold on the two sides, together with its roof; and then, generally, the covered doorway, or that portion of the gate-building which was roofed over, in distinction from the uncovered portion of the building between the two gates (Böttcher, Hitzig, and Hävernicks); inasmuch as it cannot be supposed that a gate-building of fifty cubits long was entirely roofed in. Now, as there are two thresholds mentioned in vv. 6 and 7, and the distinction in v. 15 between the (outer) entrance-gate and the porch of the inner gate implies that the gate-building had two gates, like the gate-building of the city of Mahanaim (2Sa. 18:24), one might be disposed to distribute the thirteen cubits’ length of the gate between the two gates, because each threshold had simply a measurement of six cubits. But such a supposition as this, which is not very probable in itself, is proved to be untenable, by the fact that throughout the whole description we never find the measurements of two or more separate portions added together, so that no other course is open than to assume, as Böttcher, Hitzig, and Hävernicks have done, that the length of thirteen cubits refers to one covered doorway, and that, according to the analogy of the measurements of the guard-rooms given in v. 7,

it applies to the second gateway also; in which case, out of the forty cubits which constituted the whole length of the gate-building (without the front porch), about two-thirds (twenty-six cubits) would be covered gateway (*b b*), and the fourteen cubits between would form an uncovered court-yard (*c c*) enclosed on all sides by the gate-buildings. Consequently the roofing of the gate extended from the eastern and western side over the guard-room, which immediately adjoined the threshold of the gate, and a cubit beyond that, over the wall which intervened between the guard-rooms, so that only the central guard-room on either side, together with a portion of the walls which bounded it, stood in the uncovered portion or court of the gate-building.

According to v. 12, there was a גְּבוּל, or boundary, in front of the guard-rooms, i.e., a boundary fence of a cubit in breadth, along the whole of the guard-room, with its breadth of six cubits on either side. The construction of this boundary fence or barrier (*a*) is not explained; but the design of it is clear, namely to enable the sentry to come without obstruction out of the guard-room, to observe what was going on in the gate both on the right and left, without being disturbed by those who were passing through the gate. These boundary fences in front of the guard-rooms projected into the gateway to the extent described, so that there were only eight (10-2) cubits open space between the guard-rooms, for those who were going out and in. In v. 12 we must supply מִפֶּה after the first אֶחָד because of the parallelism. V. 12*b* is a substantial repetition of v. 7*a*. — In v. 13 there follows the measure of the breadth of the gate-building. From the roof of the one guard-room to the roof of the other guard-room opposite (לְגַג הַתֵּיבָה is an abbreviated expression for לְגַג הַתֵּיבָה) the breadth was twenty-five cubits, “door against door.” These last words are added for the sake of clearness, to designate the direction of the measurement as taken right across the gateway. The door of the guard-room, however, can only be the door in the outer wall, by which the sentries passed to and fro between the room and the court. The measurement given will not allow of our thinking of a door in the inner wall, i.e., the wall of the barrier of the gateway, without touching the question in dispute among the commentators, whether the guard-rooms had walls toward the gateway or not, i.e., whether they were rooms that could be closed, or sentry-boxes open in front. All that the measuring from roof to roof presupposes is indisputable is, that the guard-rooms had a roof. The measurement given agrees, moreover, with the other measurements. The breadth of the gateway with its ten cubits, added to that of each guard-room with six; and therefore of both together with twelve, makes twenty-two cubits in all; so that if we add three cubits for the thickness of the two outer walls, or a cubit and a half each, that is to say, according to v. 42, the breadth of one hewn square stone, we obtain twenty-five cubits for the breadth of the whole gate-building, the dimension given in vv. 21, 25, and 29.

There is a further difficulty in v. 14. The **אֵילִים**, whose measurement is fixed in the first clause at sixty cubits, can only be the gate-pillars (**אֵילֵי**) mentioned in v. 9; and the measurement given can only refer to their height. The height of sixty cubits serves to explain the choice of the verb **נִצָּחַ**, in the general sense of *constituit*, instead of **נִמְדָּה**, inasmuch as such a height could not be measured from the bottom to the top with the measuring rod, but could only be estimated and fixed at such and such a result. With regard to the offence taken by modern critics at the sixty cubits, Kliefoth has very correctly observed, that “if it had been considered that our church towers have also grown out of gate-pillars, that we may see for ourselves not only in Egyptian obelisks and Turkish minarets, but in our own hollow factory-chimneys, how pillars of sixty cubits can be erected upon a pedestal of two cubits square; and lastly, that we have here to do with a colossal building seen in a vision, — there would have been no critical difficulties discovered in this statement as to the height.” Moreover, not only the number, but the whole text is verified as correct by the Targum and Vulgate, and defended by them against all critical caprice; whilst the verdict of Böttcher himself concerning the Greek and Syriac texts is, that they are senselessly mutilated and disfigured. — In the second half of the verse **אֵיל** stands in a collective sense: “and the court touched the pillars.” **הַחֲצֵר** is not a court situated within the gate-building (Hitzig, Hävernack, and others), but the outer court of the temple. **הַשָּׂר** is an accusative, literally, with regard to the gate round about, i.e., encompassing the gate-building round about, that is to say, on three sides. These words plainly affirm what is implied in the preceding account, namely, that the gate-building stood within the outer court, and that not merely so far as the porch was concerned, but in its whole extent. — To this there is very suitably attached in v. 15 the account of the length of the whole building. The words, “at the front of the entrance gate to the front of the porch of the inner gate,” are a concise topographical expression for “from the front side of the entrance gate to the front side of the porch of the inner gate.” At the starting-point of the measurement **מִן** (**מֵאֵל**) was unnecessary, as the point of commencement is indicated by the position of the word; and in **לְפָנֵי אֵל**, as distinguished from **אֵל פְּנֵי**, the direction toward the terminal point is shown, so that there is no necessity to alter **אֵל** into **אֶד**, since **אֵל**, when used of the direction in which the object aimed at lies, frequently touches the ordinary meaning of **אֶד** (cf. **אֵל קִצְנָתָם**, Psa. 19: 7, and **אֵל תְּבִלְיָתָם**, Isa. 10:25); whilst here the direction is rendered perfectly plain by the **ל** (in **לְפָנֵי**). The *Chetib* **הַיֵּאֲתוֹן**, a misspelling for **הַיֵּאֲתוֹן**, we agree with Gesenius and others in regarding as a substantive: “entrance.” The entrance gate is the outer gate, at the flight of steps leading into the gate-building. Opposite to this

was the “inner gate” as the end of the gate-building, by the porch leading into the court. The length from the outer to the inner gate was fifty cubits, which is the resultant obtained from the measurements of the several portions of the gate-building, as given in vv. 6-10; namely, six cubits the breadth of the first threshold,  $3 \times 6 = 18$  cubits that of the three guard-rooms,  $2 \times 5 = 10$  cubits that of the spaces intervening between the guard-rooms, 6 cubits that of the inner threshold, 8 cubits that of the gate-porch, and 2 cubits that of the gate-pillars ( $6 + 18 + 10 + 6 + 8 + 2 = 50$ ).

Lastly, in v. 16, the windows and decorations of the gate-buildings are mentioned. חֲלוֹנוֹת אֲטֻמוֹת, closed windows, is, no doubt, a contracted expression for חֲלוֹנֵי שְׁקָפִים אֲטֻמִּים (1Ki. 6: 4), windows of closed bars, i.e., windows, the lattice-work of which was made so fast, that they could not be opened at pleasure like the windows of dwelling-houses. but it is difficult to determine the situation of these windows. According to the words of the text, they were in the guard-rooms and in אֲלֵיהֶמה and also לְאֲלֻמוֹת, and that לְפָנֶיהָ לְשֹׂאֵר into the interior of the gate-building, i.e., going into the inner side of the gateway סָבִיב סָבִיב, round about, i.e., surrounding the gateway on all sides. To understand these statements, we must endeavour, first of all, to get a clear idea of the meaning of the words אֵילִים and אֲלֻמוֹת. The first occurs in the singular אֵיל, not only in vv. 14, 16, and Eze. 41: 3, but also in 1Ki. 6:31; in the plural only in this chapter and in Eze. 41: 1. The second אֵילִים or אֲלֻם is met with only in this chapter, and always in the plural, in the form אֲלֻמוֹת only in vv. 16 and 30, in other cases always אֵילִים, or with a suffix אֵילָמִיו, after the analogy of תְּאוֹת in v. 12 by the side of תְּאִים in vv. 7 and 16, תְּאִי in v. 10, and תְּאִיו or תְּאִו in vv. 21, 29, 33, 36, from which it is apparent that the difference in the formation of the plural (אֵילֻמוֹת and אֵילִים) has no influence upon the meaning of the word. On the other hand, it is evident from our verse (v. 16), and still more so from the expression אֵילֵי וְאֲלָמוֹ, which is repeated in vv. 21, 24, 29, 33, and 36 (cf. vv. 26, 31, and 34), that אֵילִים and אֵילֻמוֹ must signify different things, and are not to be identified, as Böttcher and others suppose. The word אֵיל, as an architectural term, never occurs except in connection with doors or gates. It is used in this connection as early as 1Ki. 6:31, in the description of the door of the most holy place in Solomon’s temple, where הָאֵיל signifies the projection on the door-posts, i.e., the projecting portion of the wall in which the door-posts were fixed. Ezekiel uses אֵיל הַפֶּתַח in Eze. 41: 3 in the same sense in relation to the door of the most holy place, and in an analogous manner applies the term אֵילִים to the pillars which rose up to a colossal height at or by the gates of the courts (vv. 9, 10, 14,

21, 24, etc.), and also of the pillars at the entrance into the holy place (Eze. 41: 1). The same meaning may also be retained in v. 16, where pillars (or posts) are attributed to the guard-rooms, since the suffix in אֱלִיָּהֶמָּה can only be taken as referring to הַתְּאִים. As these guard-rooms had doors, the doors may also have had their posts. And just as in v. 14 אֶל-אֵיל points back to the אֵילִים previously mentioned, and the singular is used in a collective sense; so may the אֵל אֵיל in v. 16 be taken collectively, and referred to the pillars mentioned before.

There is more difficulty in determining the meaning of אֵילָם (plural אֵילָמִים or אֵילָמוֹת), which has been identified sometimes with אֵוָלָם, sometimes with אֵילָיִם. Although etymologically connected with these two words, it is not only clearly distinguished from אֵילָיִם, as we have already observed, but it is also distinguished from אֵוָלָם by the fact that, apart from Eze. 41:15, where the plural אֵוָלָמִי signifies the front porches in all the gate-buildings of the court, אֵוָלָם only occurs in the singular, because every gate-building had only one front porch, whereas the plural is always used in the case of אֵילָמִים. So far as the form is concerned, אֵילָם is derived from אֵיל; and since אֵיל signifies the projection, more especially the pillars on both sides of the doors and gates, it has apparently the force of an abstract noun, projecting work; but as distinguished from the prominent pillars, it seems to indicate the projecting works or portions on the side walls of a building of large dimensions. If, then, we endeavour to determine the meaning of אֵילָם more precisely in our description of the gate-building, where alone the word occurs, we find from v. 30 that there were אֵילָמוֹת round about the gate-buildings; and again from vv. 16 and 25, that the אֵילָמִים had windows, which entered into the gateway; and still further from vv. 22 and 26, that when one ascended the flight of steps, they were לְפָנָי, “in front of them.” And lastly, from vv. 21, 29, and 33, where guard-rooms, on this side and on that side, pillars (אֵילָיִם), and אֵילָמִים are mentioned as constituent parts of the gate-building or gateway, and the length of the gateway is given as fifty cubits, we may infer that the אֵילָמִים, with the guard-rooms and pillars, formed the side enclosures of the gateway throughout its entire length. Consequently we shall not be mistaken, if we follow Kliefoth in understanding by אֵילָמִים those portions of the inner side walls of the gateway which projected in the same manner as the two pillars by the porch, namely, the intervening walls between the three guard-rooms, and also those portions of the side walls which enclosed the two thresholds on either side. For “there was nothing more along the gateway, with the exception of the portions mentioned,” that projected in any way, inasmuch as these projecting portions of

the side enclosures, together with the breadth of the guard-rooms and the porch, along with its pillars, made up the entire length of the gateway, amounting to fifty cubits. This explanation of the word is applicable to all the passages in which it occurs, even to vv. 30 and 31, as the exposition of these verses will show. — It follows from this that the windows mentioned in v. 16 can only be sought for in the walls of the guard-rooms and the projecting side walls of the gateway; and therefore that **וְאֵל אֲלִיהֶמָּה** is to be taken as a more precise definition of **אֲלִיהֶמָּה**: “there were windows in the guard-rooms, and, indeed (that is to say), in their pillars,” i.e., by the side of the pillars enclosing the door. These windows entered into the interior of the gateway. It still remains questionable, however, whether these windows looked out of the guard-rooms into the court, and at the same time threw light into the interior of the gateway, because the guard-rooms were open towards the gateway, as Böttcher, Hitzig, Kliefoth, and others assume; or whether the guard-rooms had also a wall with a door opening into the gateway, and windows on both sides, to which allusion is made here. The latter is by no means probable, inasmuch as, if the guard-rooms were not open towards the gateway, the walls between them would not have projected in such a manner as to allow of their being designated as **אֲלִמֹת**. For this reason we regard the former as the correct supposition.

There is some difficulty also in the further expression **סָבִיב סָבִיב**; for, strictly speaking, there were not windows round about, but simply on both sides of the gateway. But if we bear in mind that the windows in the hinder or outer wall of the guard-rooms receded considerably in relation to the windows in the projecting side walls, the expression **סָבִיב סָבִיב** can be justified in this sense: “all round, wherever the eye turned in the gateway.” **בֵּן לְאֲלִמֹת**, likewise in the projecting walls, sc. there were such windows. **וְכֵן** implies not only that there were windows in these walls, but also that they were constructed in the same manner as those in the pillars of the guard-rooms. It was only thus that the gateway came to have windows round about, which went inwards. Consequently this is repeated once more; and in the last clause of the verse it is still further observed, that **אֵל אֵיל**, i.e., according to v. 15, on the two lofty pillars in front of the porch, there were **הַמָּרִים** added, i.e., ornaments in the form of palms, not merely of palm branches or palm leaves. — This completes the description of the eastern gate of the outer court. The measuring angel now leads the prophet over the court to the other two gates, the north gate and the south gate. On the way, the outer court is described and measured.

*Eze. 40:17-19.* The Outer Court Described and Measured.

*V. 17. And he led me into the outer court, and behold there were cells and pavement made round the court; thirty cells on the pavement. V. 18. And the pavement was by*

*the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates, (namely) the lower pavement. V. 19. And he measured the breadth from the front of the lower gate to the front of the inner court, about a hundred cubits on the east side and on the north side.*

Ezekiel having been led through the eastern gate into the outer court, was able to survey it, not on the eastern side only, but also on the northern and southern sides; and there he perceived cells and רִצְפָה, *pavimentum*, mosaic pavement, or a floor paved with stones laid in mosaic form (2Ch. 7: 3; Est. 1: 6), made round the court; that is to say, according to the more precise description in v. 18, on both sides of the gate-buildings, of a breadth corresponding to their length, running along the inner side of the wall of the court, and consequently not covering the floor of the court in all its extent, but simply running along the inner side of the surrounding wall as a strip of about fifty cubits broad, and that not uniformly on all four sides, but simply on the eastern, southern, and northern sides, and at the north-west and south-west corners of the western side, so far, namely, as the outer court surrounded the inner court and temple (see Plate I *b b b*); for on the western side the intervening space from the inner court and temple-house to the surrounding wall of the outer court was filled by a special building of the separate place. It is with this limitation that we have to take רִצְפָה וְלִשְׁכוֹת וְרִצְפָה עָשׂוּי. סְבִיב סְבִיב may belong either to לִשְׁכוֹת וְרִצְפָה or merely to רִצְפָה, so far as grammatical considerations are concerned; for in either case there would be an irregularity in the gender, and the participle is put in the singular as a neuter. If we look fairly at the fact itself, not one of the reasons assigned by Kliefoth, for taking עָשׂוּי as referring to רִצְפָה only, is applicable throughout. If the pavement ran round by the side of the gate-building on three sides of the court, and the cells were by or upon the pavement, they may have stood on three sides of the court without our being forced to assume, or even warranted in assuming, that they must of necessity have filled up the whole length on every side from the shoulder of the gate-building to the corner, or rather to the space that was set apart in every corner, according to Eze. 46:21-24, for the cooking of the sacrificial meals of the people. We therefore prefer to take עָשׂוּי as referring to the cells and the pavement; because this answers better than the other, both to the construction and to the fact. In v. 18 the pavement is said to have been by the shoulder of the gates. הַשְּׁעָרִים is in the plural, because Ezekiel had probably also in his mind the two gates which are not described till afterwards. בְּתֵרֵי, the shoulder of the agate-buildings regarded as a body, is the space on either side of the gate-building along the wall, with the two angles formed by the longer side of the gate-buildings and the line of the surrounding wall. This is more precisely defined by לְעַמַּת אֶרֶץ הַשֵּׁי, alongside of the length of the gates, i.e., running parallel with it (cf.

2Sa. 16:13), or stretching out on both sides with a breadth corresponding to the length of the gate-buildings. The gates were fifty cubits long, or, deducting the thickness of the outer wall, they projected into the court to the distance of forty-four cubits. Consequently the pavement ran along the inner sides of the surrounding wall with a breadth of forty-four cubits. This pavement is called the lower pavement, in distinction from the pavement or floor of the inner court, which was on a higher elevation.

All that is said concerning the **לְשָׁכוֹת** is, that there were thirty of them, and that they were **אֶל הַרְצֵפָה** (see Plate I C). The dispute whether **אֶל** signifies *by* or *upon* the pavement has no bearing upon the fact itself. As Ezekiel frequently uses **אֶל** for **אֵל**, and *vice versâ*, the rendering *upon* can be defended; but it cannot be established, as Hitzig supposes, by referring to 2Ki. 16:17. If we retain the literal meaning of **אֵל**, *at* or *against*, we cannot picture to ourselves the position of the cells as projecting from the inner edge of the pavement into the unpaved portion of the court; for in that case, to a person crossing the court, they would have stood in front of (**לְפָנָיִם**) the pavement rather than against the pavement. The prep. **אֶל**, *against*, rather suggests the fact that the cells were built near the surrounding wall, so that the pavement ran along the front of them, which faced the inner court in an unbroken line. In this case it made no difference to the view whether the cells were erected upon the pavement, or the space occupied by the cells was left unpaved, and the pavement simply joined the lower edge of the walls of the cells all round. The text contains no account of the manner in which they were distributed on the three sides of the court. But it is obvious from the use of the plural **לְשָׁכוֹת**, that the reference is not to thirty entire buildings, but simply to thirty rooms, as **לְשֻׁבָה** does not signify a building consisting of several rooms, but always a single room or cell in a building. Thus in 1Sa. 9:22 it stands for a room appointed for holding the sacrificial meals, and that by no means a small room, but one which could accommodate about thirty persons. In Jer. 36:12 it is applied to a room in the king's palace, used as the chancery. Elsewhere **לְשֻׁבָה** is the term constantly employed for the rooms in the court-buildings and side-buildings of the temple, which served partly as a residence for the officiating priests and Levites, and partly for the storing of the temple dues collected in the form of tithes, fruits, and money (vid., 2Ki. 23:11; Jer. 35: 4; 36:10; 1Ch. 9:26; Neh. 10:38-40). Consequently we must not think of thirty separate buildings, but have to distribute the thirty cells on the three sides of the court in such a manner that there would be ten on each side, and for the sake of symmetry five in every building, standing both right and left between the gate-building and the corner kitchens. — In v. 19 the size or compass of the outer court is determined. The breadth from the front of the lower gate to the front of the



inner court was 100 cubits. **הַשַּׁאֵר הַתְּחִתּוֹנָה**, the gate of the lower court, i.e., the outer gate, which was lower than the inner. **הַתְּחִתּוֹנָה** is not an adjective agreeing with **שַׁאֵר**, for apart from Isa. 14:31 **שַׁאֵר** is never construed as a feminine; but it is used as a substantive for **הַחֲצֵר הַתְּחִתּוֹנָה**, the lower court, see the comm. on Eze. 8: 3. **מִלְּפָנָי** denotes the point from which the measuring started, and **לְפָנָי הַחֲצֵר** the direction in which it proceeded, including also the terminus: “to before the inner court,” equivalent to “up to the front of the inner court.” The terminal point is more precisely defined by **מִחוּץ**, from without, which Hitzig proposes to erase as needless and unusual, but without any reason. For, inasmuch as the gateways of the inner court were built into the outer court, as is evident from what follows, **מִחוּץ** simply affirms that the measuring only extended to the point where the inner court commenced within the outer, namely, to the front of the porch of the gate, not to the boundary wall of the inner court, as this wall stood at a greater distance from the porch of the outer court-gate by the whole length of the court-gate, that is to say, as much as fifty cubits. From this more precise definition of the terminal point it follows still further, that the starting-point was not the boundary-wall, but the porch of the gate of the outer court; in other words, that the hundred cubits measured by the man did not include the fifty cubits’ length of the gate-building, but this is expressly excluded. This is placed beyond all doubt by vv. 23 and 27, where the distance of the inner court-gate from the gate (of the outer court) is said to have been a hundred cubits. — The closing words **וְהָצִפּוֹן וְהַקְּדָיִם** have been very properly separated by the Masoretes from what precedes, by means of the *Athnach*, for they are not to be taken in close connection with **וַיִּמְד**; nor are they to be rendered, “he measured...toward the east and toward the north” for this would be at variance with the statement, “to the front of the inner court.” They are rather meant to supply a further appositional definition to the whole of the preceding clause: “he measured from...a hundred cubits,” relating to the east side and the north side of the court, and affirm that the measuring took place from gate to gate both on the eastern and on the northern side; in other words, that the measure given, a hundred cubits, applied to the eastern side as well as the northern; and thus they prepare the way for the description of the north gate, which follows from v. 20 onwards.

**Eze. 40:20-27.** The North Gate and the South Gate of the Outer Court (1 Plate I A). — The description of these two gate-buildings is very brief, only the principal portions being mentioned, coupled with the remark that they resembled those of the east gate. The following is the description of the north gate.

V. 20. *And the gate, whose direction was toward the north, touching the outer court, he measured its length and its breadth, V. 21. And its guard-rooms, three on this side and three on that, and its pillars and its wall-projections. It was according to the measure of the first gate, fifty cubits its length, and the breadth five and twenty cubits. V. 22. And its windows and its wall-projections and its palms were according to the measure of the gate, whose direction was toward the east, and by seven steps they went up, and its wall-projections were in front of it. V. 23. And a gate to the inner court was opposite the gate to the north and to the east; and he measured from gate to gate a hundred cubits.*

With the measuring of the breadth of the court the measuring man had reached the north gate, which he also proceeded to measure now. In v. 20 the words **וְהַשָּׂר** **הַחֵיצוֹנָה** are written absolutely; and in v. 21 the verb **הָיָה** does not belong to the objects previously enumerated, viz., guard-rooms, pillars, etc., but these objects are governed by **וַיִּמַד**, and **הָיָה** points back to the principal subject of the two verses, **הַשָּׂר**: it (the gate) was according to the measure... (cf. vv. 15 and 13). For the use of **ב** in definitions of measurement, “**בְּאַמָּה** 25” (by the cubit, sc. measured), as in Exo. 27:18, etc., see Gesenius, § 120. 4, Anm. 2. The “first gate” is the east gate, the one first measured and described. In v. 23b the number of steps is given which the flight leading into the gateway had; and this of course applies to the flight of steps of the east gate also (v. 6). In v. 22, **בַּמִּדָּת** is not to be regarded as doubtful, as Hitzig supposes, or changed into **ב**; for even if the windows of the east gate were not measured, they had at all events a definite measurement, so that it might be affirmed with regard to the windows of the north gate that their dimensions were the same. This also applies to the palm-decorations. With regard to the **אֵילָמִים** (v. 21), however, it is simply stated that they were measured; but the measurement is not given. **לְפָנֶיהָ** (v. 22, end) is not to be altered in an arbitrary and ungrammatical way into **לְפָנֶיהָ**, as Böttcher proposes. The suffix **הָם** refers to the steps. *Before* the steps there were the **אֵילָמִים** of the gate-building. This “before,” however, is not equivalent to “outside the flight of steps,” as Böttcher imagines; for the measuring man did not go out of the inside of the gate, or go down the steps into the court, but came from the court and ascended the steps, and as he was going up he saw in front (*vis-à-vis*) of the steps the **אֵילָמִים** of the gate, i.e., the wall-projections on both sides of the threshold of the gate. In v. 23 it is observed for the first time that there was a gate to the inner court opposite to the northern and the eastern gate of the outer court already described, so that the gates of the outer and inner court stood *vis-à-vis*. The distance between these outer and inner gates is then measured, viz., 100 cubits, in harmony with v. 19b.

In vv. 24-27 the south gate is described with the same brevity.

V. 24. *And he led me toward the south, and behold there was a gate toward the south, and he measured its pillars and its wall-projections according to the same measures.* V. 25. *And there were windows in it and its wall-projections round about like those windows; fifty cubits was the length, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.* V. 26. *And seven steps were its ascent and its wall-projections in the front of them, and it had palm-work, one upon this side and one upon that on its pillars.* V. 27. *And there was a gate to the inner court toward the south, and he measured from gate to gate toward the south a hundred cubits.* —

This gate also was built exactly like the two others. The description simply differs in form, and not in substance, from the description of the gate immediately preceding. **בַּמְדוֹת הָאֵלֶּה**, “like those measures,” is a concise expression for “like the measures of the pillars already described at the north and east gates.” For v. 25, compare vv. 16 and 21*b*; and for v. 26*a*, vid., v. 22*b*. V. 26*b* is clearly explained from v. 16*b*, as compared with v. 9*b*. And lastly, v. 27 answers to the 23rd verse, and completes the measuring of the breadth of the court, which was also a hundred cubits upon the south side, from the outer gate to the inner gate standing opposite, as was the case according to v. 19 upon the eastern side. Hävernicks has given a different explanation of v. 27, and would take the measurement of a hundred cubits as referring to the distance between the gates of the inner court which stood opposite to each other, because in v. 27 we have **מִשְׁאֵר** in the text, and not **מִן הַשְּׂאֵר**; so that we should have to render the passage thus, “he measured from a gate to the gate toward the south a hundred cubits,” and not “from the gate (already described) of the outer court,” but from another gate, which according to the context of the verse must also be a gate of the inner court. But it is precisely the context which speaks decidedly against this explanation. For since, according to v. 18, the measuring man did not take the prophet into the inner court, for the purpose of measuring it before his eyes, till after he had measured from (a) gate to the south gate of the inner court, the distance which he had previously measured and found to be a hundred cubits is not to be sought for within the inner court, and therefore cannot give the distance between the gates of the inner court, which stood opposite to one another, but must be that from the south gate of the outer court to the south gate of the inner. This is the case not only here, but also in v. 23, where the north gate is mentioned. We may see how little importance is to be attached to the omission of the article in **מִשְׁאֵר** from the expression **אֶל שְׂאֵר מִשְׁאֵר** in v. 23, where neither the one gate nor the other is defined, because the context showed which gates were meant. Hävernicks’s explanation is therefore untenable, notwithstanding the fact that, according to v. 47, the size of the inner court was a hundred cubits both in breadth and length. — From the distance between the gates of the outer court and the corresponding gates of the inner, as given in vv. 27, 23, and 19, we find that the outer court covered a space of two hundred cubits on every side, — namely, fifty cubits the distance which the

outer court building projected into the court, and fifty cubits for the projection of the gate-building of the inner court into the outer court, and a hundred cubits from one gate-porch to the opposite one ( $50 + 50 + 100 = 200$ ).

Consequently the full size of the building enclosed by the wall (Eze. 40: 5), i.e., of the temple with its two courts, may also be calculated, as it has been by many of the expositors. If we proceed, for example, from the outer north gate to the outer south gate upon the ground plan (Plate I), we have, to quote the words of Kliefoth, "first the northern breadth of the outer court (*D*) with its two hundred cubits; then the inner court, which measured a hundred cubits square according to Eze. 40:47 (*E*), with its hundred cubits; and lastly, the south side of the outer court with two hundred cubits more (*D*); so that the sanctuary was five hundred cubits broad from north to south. And if we start from the entrance of the east gate of the court (*A*), we have first of all the eastern breadth of the outer court, viz., two hundred cubits; then the inner court (*e*) with its hundred cubits; after that the temple-buildings, which also covered a space of a hundred cubits square according to Eze. 41:13, 14, including the open space around them (*G*), with another hundred cubits; and lastly, the יִרְדֵּן (*J*), which was situated to the west of the temple-buildings, and also covered a space of a hundred cubits square according to Eze. 41:13, 14, with another hundred cubits; so that the sanctuary was also five hundred cubits long from east to west, or, in other words, formed a square of five hundred cubits."

## VV. 28-47. THE INNER COURT, WITH ITS GATES, CELLS, AND SLAUGHTERING-TABLES

*Eze. 40:28-37.* The Gates of the Inner Court. — (Vid., Plate I *B* and Plate II *II*).

V. 28. *And he brought me into the inner court through the south gate, and measured the south gate according to the same measures; V. 29. And its guard-rooms, and its pillars, and its wall-projections, according to the same measures; and there were windows in it and in its wall-projections round about: fifty cubits was the length, and the breadth five and twenty cubits. V. 30. And wall-projections were round about, the length five and twenty cubits, and the breadth five cubits. V. 31. And its wall-projections were toward the outer court; and there were palms on its pillars, and eight steps its ascendings. V. 32. And he led me into the inner court toward the east, and measured the gate according to the same measures; V. 33. And its guard-rooms, and its pillars, and its wall-projections, according to the same measures; and there were windows in it and its wall-projections round about: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits. V. 34. And its wall-projections were toward the outer court; and there were palms on its pillars on this side and on that side, and eight steps its ascent. V. 35. And he brought me to the north gate, and measured it according to the same measures; V. 36. Its guard-rooms, its pillars, and its wall-projections; and there were windows in it round about: the length was fifty cubits,*

*and the breadth five and twenty cubits. V. 37. And its pillars stood toward the outer court; and palms were upon its pillars on this side and on that; and its ascent was eight steps.*

In v. 27 the measuring man had measured the distance from the south gate of the outer court to the south gate of the inner court, which stood opposite to it. He then took the prophet through the latter (v. 28) into the inner court, and measured it as he went through, and found the same measurements as he had found in the gates of the outer court. This was also the case with the measurements of the guard-rooms, pillars, and wall-projections, and with the position of the windows, and the length and breadth of the whole of the gate-building (v. 29); from which it follows, as a matter of course, that this gate resembled the outer gate in construction, constituent parts, and dimensions. This also applied to both the east gate and north gate, the description of which in vv. 32-37 corresponds exactly to that of the south gate, with the exception of slight variations of expression. It is true that the porch is not mentioned in the case of either of these gates; but it is evident that this was not wanting, and is simply passed over in the description, as we may see from v. 39, where the tables for the sacrifices are described as being in the porch (בַּאֲזֹלָם). There are only two points of difference mentioned in vv. 31, 34, and 37, by which these inner gates were distinguished from the outer. In the first place, that the flights of steps to the entrances to these gates had eight steps according to the closing words of the verses just cited, whereas those of the outer gates had only seven (cf. vv. 22 and 26); whilst the expression also varies. מַעְלֵוֹ being constantly used here instead of עֲלֹתָיו (v. 26). עֲלֹת, from עָלָה, the ascending, are literally ascents, i.e., places of mounting, for a flight of steps or staircase. מַעְלֵוֹ, the plural of מַעְלָה, the ascent (not a singular, as Hitzig supposes), has the same meaning.

The second difference, which we find in the first clause of the verses mentioned, as of a more important character. It is contained in the words, “and its אֲלָמִים (the projecting portions of the inner side-walls of the gateway) were directed toward the outer court” (אֶל and לְ indicating the direction). The interpretation of this somewhat obscure statement is facilitated by the fact that in v. 37 אֵילָוִי stands in the place of אֵילָמֹו (vv. 31 and 34). אֵילָוִי are the two lofty gate-pillars by the porch of the gate, which formed the termination of the gate-building towards the inner court in the case of the outer gates. If, then, in the case of the inner gates, these pillars stood toward the outer court, the arrangement of these gates must have taken the reverse direction to that of the outer gates; so that a person entering the gate would not go from the flight of steps across the threshold to the guard-rooms, and then across the second threshold to the porch, but would first of all enter the porch by the pillars in front, and then go

across the threshold to the guard-rooms, and, lastly, proceed across the second threshold, and so enter the inner court. But if this gate-building, when looked at from without, commenced with the porch-pillars and the front porch, this porch at any rate must have been situated outside the dividing wall of the two courts, that is to say, must have been within the limits of the outer court. And further, if the **אֵילִמִּים**, or wall-projections between the guard-rooms and by the thresholds, were also directed toward the outer court, the whole of the gate-building must have been built within the limits of that court. This is affirmed by the first clauses of vv. 31, 34, and 37, which have been so greatly misunderstood; and there is no necessity to alter **וְאֵילָר** in v. 37 into **וְאֵלָמָר**, in accordance with vv. 31 and 34. For what is stated in vv. 31 and 34 concerning the position or direction of the **אֵילִמִּים**, also applies to the **אֵילִים**; and they are probably mentioned in v. 37 because of the intention to describe still further in v. 38 what stood near the **אֵילִים**. Kliefoth very properly finds it incomprehensible, “that not a few of the commentators have been able, in spite of these definite statements in vv. 13, 34, and 37, to adopt the conclusion that the gate-buildings of the inner gates were situated within the inner court, just as the gate-buildings of the outer gates were situated within the outer court. As the inner court measured only a hundred cubits square, if the inner gates had stood within the inner court, the north and south gates of the inner court would have met in the middle, and the porch of the east gate of the inner court would have stood close against the porches of the other two gates. It was self-evident that the gate-buildings of the inner gates stood within the more spacious outer court, like those of the outer gates. Nevertheless, the reason why the situation of the inner gates is so expressly mentioned in the text is evidently, that this made the position of the inner gates the reverse of that of the outer gates. In the case of the outer gates, the first threshold was in the surrounding wall of the outer court, and the steps stood in front of the wall; and thus the gate-building stretched into the outer court. In that of the inner gates, on the contrary the second threshold lay between the surrounding walls of the inner court, and the gate-building stretched thence into the outer court, and its steps stood in front of the porch of the gate. Moreover, in the case of the east gates, for example, the porch of the outer gate stood toward the west, and the porch of the inner gate toward the east, so that the two porches stood opposite to each other in the outer court, as described in vv. 23 and 27.”

In v. 30 further particulars respecting the **אֵילִמִּים** are given, which are apparently unsuitable; and for this reason the verse has been omitted by the LXX, while J. D. Michaelis, Böttcher, Ewald, Hitzig, and Maurer, regard it as an untenable gloss. Hävernicks has defended its genuineness; but inasmuch as he regards **אֵילִמִּים** as synonymous with **אֵילִם**, he has explained it in a most

marvellous and decidedly erroneous manner, as Kliefoth has already proved. The expression **סָבִיב סָבִיב**, and the length and breadth of the **אַלְמוֹת** here given, both appear strange. Neither of the length of the twenty-five cubits nor the breadth of the five cubits seems to tally with the other measures of the gate-building. So much may be regarded as certain, that the twenty-five cubits' length and the five cubits' breadth of the **אַלְמוֹת** cannot be in addition to the total length of the gate-building, namely fifty cubits, or its total breadth of twenty-five cubits, but must be included in them. For the **אַלְמוֹת** were simply separate portions of the side-enclosure of the gateway, since this enclosure of fifty cubits long consisted of wall-projections (**אַלְמוֹת**), three open guard-rooms, and a porch with pillars. The open space of the guard-rooms was  $3 \times 6 = 18$  cubits, and the porch was six cubits broad in the clear (vv. 7 and 8), and the pillars two cubits thick. If we deduct these  $18 + 6 + 2 = 26$  cubits from the fifty cubits of the entire length, there remain twenty-four cubits for the walls by the side of the thresholds and between the guard-rooms, namely,  $2 \times 5 = 10$  cubits for the walls between the three guard-rooms,  $2 \times 6 = 12$  cubits for the walls of the threshold, and 2 cubits for the walls of the porch; in all, therefore, twenty-four cubits for the **אַלְמוֹת**; so that only one cubit is wanting to give us the measurement stated, viz., twenty-five cubits. We obtain this missing cubit if we assume that the front of the wall-projections by the guard-rooms and thresholds was a handbreadth and a half, or six inches wider than the thickness of the walls, that is to say, that it projected three inches on each side in the form of a moulding. — The breadth of the **אַלְמוֹת** in question, namely five cubits, was the thickness of their wall-work, however, or the dimension of the intervening wall from the inside to the outside on either side of the gateway. That the intervening walls should be of such a thickness will not appear strange, if we consider that the surrounding wall of the court was six cubits thick, with a height of only six cubits (v. 5). And even the striking expression **סָבִיב סָבִיב** becomes intelligible if we take into consideration the fact that the projecting walls bounded not only the entrance to the gate, and the passage through it on the two sides, but also the inner spaces of the gate-building (the guard-rooms and porch) on all sides, and, together with the gates, enclosed the gateway on every side. Consequently v. 30 not only as a suitable meaning, but furnishes a definite measurement of no little value for the completion of the picture of the gate-buildings. The fact that this definite measure was not given in connection with the gates of the outer court, but was only supplemented in the case of the south gate of the inner court, cannot furnish any ground for suspecting its genuineness, as several particulars are supplemented in the same manner in this description. Thus, for example, the number of steps in front of the outer gates is first given in v. 22, where the north gate is described. Still less is there to surprise us in the fact that these particulars are not repeated in the case of the

following gates, in which some writers have also discovered a ground for suspecting the genuineness of the verse.

From the south gate the measuring man led the prophet (v. 32) into the inner court toward the east, to measure for him the inner east gate, the description of which (vv. 33 and 34) corresponds exactly to that of the south gate. Lastly, he led him (v. 35) to the inner north gate for the same purpose; and this is also found to correspond to those previously mentioned, and is described in the same manner. The difficulty which Hitzig finds in **הַפְּנִימִי דֶרֶךְ הַקְּדָיִם** **אֶל־הַחֲצֵר** in v. 32, and which drives him into various conjectures, with the assistance of the LXX, vanishes, if instead of taking **הַקְּדָיִם** along with **הַחֲצֵר הַפְּנִימִי** as a further definition of the latter, we connect it with **וַיְבִיאֵנִי** as an indication of the direction taken: he led me into the inner court, the way (or direction) toward the east, and measured the gate (situated there). The words, when taken in this sense, do not warrant the conclusion that he had gone out at the south gate again. — **וַיִּמְדֵּךְ** in v. 35 is an Aramaic form for **וַיִּמְדֵּךְ** in vv. 32 and 28.

**Eze. 40:38-47.** The Cells and Arrangements for the Sacrificial Worship by and in the Inner Court.

V. 38. *And a cell with its door was by the pillars at the gates; there they had to wash the burnt-offering.* V. 39. *And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side and two tables on that, to slay thereon the burnt-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering.* V. 40. *And at the shoulder outside, to one going up to the opening of the gate toward the north, stood two tables; and at the other shoulder, by the porch of the gate, two tables.* V. 41. *Four tables on this side and four tables on that side, at the shoulder of the gate; eight tables on which they were to slaughter.* V. 42. *And four tables by the steps, hewn stone, a cubit and a half long, and a cubit and a half broad, and a cubit high; upon these they were to lay the instruments with which they slaughtered the burnt-offerings and other sacrifices.* V. 43. *And the double pegs, a span long, were fastened round about the house; but the flesh of the sacrifice was placed upon the tables.* V. 44. *And outside the inner gate were two cells in the inner court, one at the shoulder of the north gate, with its front side toward the south; one at the shoulder of the south gate, with the front toward the north.* V. 45. *And he said to me, This cell, whose front is toward the south, is for the priests who attend to the keeping of the house; V. 46. And the cell whose front is toward the north is for the priests who attend to the keeping of the altar. They are the sons of Zadok, who draw near to Jehovah of the sons of Levi, to serve Him.* V. 47. *And he measured the court, the length a hundred cubits, and the breadth a hundred cubits in the square, and the altar stood before the house.*

The opinions of modern commentators differ greatly as to the situation of the cells mentioned in v. 38, since Böttcher and Hitzig had adjusted a text to suit their own liking, founded upon the Septuagint and upon decidedly erroneous



suppositions. The dispute, whether **בְּאֵילִים** is to be rendered *in* or *by* the **אֵילִים**, may be easily set at rest by the simple consideration that the **אֵילִים** in front of the porch of the gate were pillars of two cubits long and the same broad (v. 9), in which it was impossible that a room could be constructed. Hence the **לְשֹׁכָה** could only be by (near) the pillars of the gate. To **בְּאֵילִים** there is also added **הַשְּׁעָרִים** (by the gates) in loose coordination (vid., Ewald, § 293e), not for the purpose of describing the position of the pillars more minutely, which would be quite superfluous after v. 9, but to explain the plural **אֵילִים**, and extend it to the pillars of all the three inner gates, so that we have to assume that there was a **לְשֹׁכָה** by the pillars of all these gates (Plate I O). This is also demanded by the purpose of these cells, viz., “for the cleansing or washing of the burnt-offering.” As the sacrifices were not taken through one gate alone, but through all the gates, the Sabbath-offering of the prince being carried, according to Eze. 46: 1, 2, through the east gate, which was closed during the week, and only opened on the Sabbath, there must have been a cell, not by the north gate alone (Böttcher, Hävernicks), or by the east gate only (Ewald, Hitzig), but by every gate, for the cleansing of the burnt-offering. Hävernicks, Hitzig, and others are wrong in supposing that **הַעֲזָלָה** is a synecdochical designation applied to every kind of animal sacrifice. This is precluded not only by the express mention of the burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, and trespass-offerings (v. 39), and by the use of the word **קִרְבָּן** in this sense in v. 43, but chiefly by the circumstance that neither the Old Testament nor the Talmud makes any allusion to the washing of every kind of flesh offered in sacrifice, but that they merely speak of the washing of the entrails and legs of the animals sacrificed as burnt-offerings (Lev. 1: 9), for which purpose the basins upon the *mechonoth* in Solomon’s temple were used (2Ch. 4: 6, where the term **רְחִץ** used in Lev. 1: 9 is interpreted by the apposition **יְדִיחוּ בָם הַעֲזָלָה אֶת־מַעֲשֵׂה הַעֲזָלָה**). A room at every gate (not by every pillar) was sufficient for this purpose. If there had been a **לְשֹׁכָה** of this kind on each side of the gate, as many have assumed on symmetrical grounds, this would have been mentioned, just as in the case of the slaughtering-tables (vv. 39-42). The text furnishes no information as to the side of the doorway on which it stood, whether by the right or the left pillars. On the ground plan we have placed the one at the east gate, on the right side, and those by the north and south gates on the western side (Plate I O O O).

Moreover, according to vv. 39-41, there were twice two tables on each side, eight therefore in all, which served for slaughtering. Two pairs stood “in the porch of the gate,” i.e., in the inner space of the porch, one pair on this side, the other pair on that, i.e., on the right and left sides to a person entering the porch,

probably near the wall (see Plate II II *f f*). The expression **לְשֹׁחֵט אֲלֵיהֶם**, to slaughter at the tables (vv. 39 and 40), stands for “to use when slaughtering” — that is, for the purpose of laying the slaughtered flesh upon. This is apparent from the fact itself in v. 39. For the slaughtering was not performed within the front porch, but outside, and somewhere near it. The front porch of the gate-building was not a slaughter-house, but the place where those who entered the gate could assemble. The only purpose, therefore, for which the tables standing here could be used was to place the sacrificial flesh upon when it was prepared for the altar, that the priests might take it thence and lay it upon the altar.

**בְּאֵלֶם הַשָּׂאֵר** is to be understood as signifying the inner space of the porch; this is required by the antithesis in v. 40, where two pair of tables outside the porch are mentioned. Two of these stood “by the shoulder outside to one going up to the gate opening, the northern” (Plate II II *d d*). The meaning of these not very intelligible words is apparent from the second half of the verse, which adds the correlative statement as to the two opposite tables. When it is said of these tables that they stood by the other shoulder (**אֶל-הַכֶּתֶף הָאַחֶרֶת**) which the porch of the gate had, not only is **לְפֶתַח הַשָּׂאֵר** of the first hemistich more precisely defined hereby as the gate-porch, but **הַצִּפּוֹנָה** is also rendered intelligible, namely, that as it corresponds to **הָאַחֶרֶת**, it is an adjective belonging to **אֶל הַכֶּתֶף**, “at the northern shoulder outside to a person going up the steps to the opening of the gate” (**מַחוּצָה**, the outer side, in contrast to the inside of the porch, **בְּאֵלֶם**, v. 39). The shoulder of the gate, or rather of the porch of the gate, is the side of it, and that the outer side. Consequently these four tables stood by the outer sides of the porch, two by the right wall and two by the left. In v. 41, what has already been stated concerning the position of the tables mentioned in vv. 39 and 40 is summed up: Four tables stood on each side of the porch, two inside, and two against the outer wall, eight tables in all, which were used for slaughtering purposes. There is nothing strange in **הַשָּׂאֵר לְכֶתֶף** as an abbreviated expression for **לְכֶתֶף אֲשֶׁר לְאֵלֶם הַשָּׂאֵר** in v. 40, as want of clearness was not to be feared after v. 40. In addition to these there were four other tables (**וְאַרְבָּעָה**, and four, v. 42) of stone, from which it may be inferred that the four already mentioned were of wood. The four stone tables stood **לְעֵזְלָה**, i.e., at (near) the flight of steps (cf. **לְפִי קִרְתָּהּ**, at the entrance to the city, Pro. 8: 3), and were of hewn square stones, as no doubt the steps also were (see Plate II II *e e*). It yields no sense whatever to render **לְעֵזְלָה** “for the burnt-offering” (LXX and others); and the expression **עֵלּוֹת** in v. 26 thoroughly warrants our translating **עֵזְלָה**, a flight of steps or staircase). These stone tables served as flesh-benches, on which the slaughtering tools were laid. **וַיִּנְיָחוּ אֲלֵיהֶם** belong together, the **ו** being inserted “as if at the commencement of a

new sentence after a pause in the thought” (cf. Pro. 23:24; 30:28; Gen. 50: 9, Böttcher). It is not expressly stated, indeed, that these four tables were distributed on the two sides of the steps; but this may be inferred with certainty from the position of the other tables. Moreover, the twelve tables mentioned were not merely to be found at one of the gate-porches, but by all three of the inner fates, as was the case with the washing-cells (v. 38), for sacrificial animals were taken to the altar and slaughtered at every gate; so that what is stated in vv. 39-42 with reference to one porch, namely, the porch of the east gate, to judge from **הַצִּפּוֹנָה** in v. 40, is applicable to the porches of the south and north gates also.

In v. 43 another provision for the slaughtering of the sacrificial animals is mentioned, concerning which the opinions of the older translators and commentators are greatly divided. but the only explanation that can be sustained, so far as both the usage of the language and the facts are concerned, is that adopted by the Chaldee, viz., **פֶּשֶׁדַּחַד קָבִיעִין בְּאַמוּדֵי בֵּית מִטְבַּחָא**, **וְעִנְקֵי נִפְקִין**, *et uncini egrediebantur (longitudine) unius palmi defixi in columnis domus macelli*, to which not only Böttcher, but Roediger (*Ges. Thes.* p. 1470) and Dietrich (*Lex.*) have given their adhesion. For **שְׁפָתַיִם**, from **שָׁפַת**, to set or stand (act.), signifies stakes or pegs (in Psa. 68:14, the folds constructed of stakes), here pegs a span long on the wall, into which they were inserted, and from which they projected to the length of a span. In the *dual* it stands for double pegs, forked pegs, upon which the carcasses of the beasts were hung of the purpose of flaying, as Dav. Kimchi has interpreted the words of the Chaldee. The article indicates the kind, viz., the pegs required for the process of slaughtering. This explanation is also in harmony with the verb **מוֹכְנִים**, *Hophal* of **כוּן**, fastened, which by no means suits the rendering originated by the LXX, viz., ledges round the edge or the rim of the table. The only remaining difficulty is the word **בְּבֵית**, which Böttcher interprets as signifying “in the interior of the gate-porch and pillars” (Roediger, *in interiore parte, nempe in ea atrii parte, ubi hostiae mactandae essent*), on the just ground that the interior of the front porch could not be the place for slaughtering, but that this could only be done outside, either in front of or near the porch. But even *in interiore parte atrii* is not really suitable, and at all events is too indefinite for **מוֹכְנִים**. It would therefore be probably more correct to render it “fastened against the house,” i.e., to the outer walls of the gate-porch buildings, so that **בֵּית** would stand for buildings in the sense of **בְּנֵיה**, although I cannot cite any passage as a certain proof of the correctness of this rendering. But this does not render the explanation itself a doubtful one, as it would be still more difficult to interpret **שְׁפָתַיִם** if **בְּבֵית** were explained in any other way. **סָבִיב סָבִיב** refers to the

three outer sides of the porch. The description of the slaughtering apparatus closes in v. 43b with the words, “and upon the tables (mentioned in vv. 39-42) came the flesh of the offering.” קָרְבָּן, the general word for sacrificial offerings, as in Lev. 1: 2 ff.

In vv. 44-46 we have a description of cells for the officiating priests, and in vv. 45 and 46 two such cells are plainly mentioned according to their situation and purpose (vid., Plate I F F). But it is impossible to bring the Masoretic text of v. 44 into harmony with this, without explaining it in an arbitrary manner. For, in the first place, the reference there is to לְשִׁכּוֹת שָׂרִים, cells of the singers; whereas these cells, according to vv. 45 and 46, were intended for the priests who performed the service in the temple-house and at the altar of burnt-offering. The attempt of both the earlier and the more recent supporters of the Masoretic text to set aside this discrepancy, by arguing that the priests who had to attend to the service in the temple and at the altar, according to vv. 45 and 46, were singers, is overturned by the fact that in the Old Testament worship a sharp distinction is made between the Levitical singers and the priests, i.e., the Aaronites who administered the priesthood; and Ezekiel does not abolish this distinction in the vision of the temple, but sharpens it still further by the command, that none but the sons of Zadok are to attend to the priestly service at the sanctuary, while the other descendants of Aaron, i.e., the Aaronites who sprang from Ithamar, are only to be employed in watching at the gate of the house, and other non-priestly occupations (Eze. 44:10 ff.). Consequently Ezekiel could not identify the priests with the singers, or call the cells intended for the officiating priests singers' cells. Moreover, only two cells, or cell-buildings, are mentioned in vv. 45 and 46, and their position is described in the same words as that of the cells mentioned in v. 44, so that there can be no doubt as to the identity of the former and the latter cells. In v. 44 the supposed singers' cells are placed at the north gate, with the front toward the south, which only applies, according to v. 45, to the one cell intended for the priests who attended to the service in the holy place; and again, in v. 44, another cell is mentioned at the east gate, with the front toward the north, which was set apart, according to v. 46, for the priests who attended to the altar service. Consequently, according to our Masoretic text of the 44th verse, there would be first singers' cells (in the plural), and then one cell, at least three cells therefore; whereas, according to vv. 45 and 46, there were only two. And lastly, the אַחֵר in v. 44b can only be understood by our taking it in the sense of “another,” in opposition to the usage of the language. For these reasons we are compelled to alter שָׂרִים into שָׂתִים, and אֲשֶׁר into אַחֵת, after the LXX, and probably also הַקָּדִים into הַדְּרוֹם, and in consequence of this to adopt the pointing לְשִׁכּוֹת, and to read פְּנֵיהֶם instead of פְּנֵיהֶם. Further alterations are not

requisite or indicated by the LXX, as the rest of the deviations in their text are to be explained from their free handling of the original.

According to the text with these alterations, even in v. 44 there are only two cells mentioned. They were situated “outside the inner gate.” This definition is ambiguous, for you are outside the inner gate not only before entering the gate, i.e., while in the outer court, but also after having passed through it and entered the inner court. Hence there follows the more precise definition, “in the inner court.” If, then, we read **אֲשֶׁר** for **אֲחֵת**, there follows, in perfect accordance with the fact, a more precise statement as to the situation of both the one and the other of these cells, **אֲחֵת** and **אֲחֵת** corresponding to one another. The second **אֲחֵת**, instead of **אֲחֵת**, which is grammatically the more correct, is to be attributed to a *constructio ad sensum*, as the **לְשִׁבוֹת** were not separate rooms, but buildings with several chambers. One cell stood by the shoulder (side) of the north gate, with the front (**פְּנִים**) toward the south; the other at the shoulder of the south gate, with the front toward the north. They stood opposite to one another, therefore, with their fronts facing each other. Instead of the *south* gate, however, the Masoretic text has **שַׁאֲר הַקְּדִים**, the east gate; and v. 46 contains nothing that would be expressly at variance with this, so that **הַקְּדִים** could be defended in case of need. But only in case of need — that is to say, if we follow Kliefoth in assuming that it stood on the left of the gateway to persons entering through the east gate, and explaining the fact that its front turned toward the north, on the ground that the priests who resided in it were charged with the duty of inspecting the sacrifices brought through the east gate, or watching the bringing in of the sacrifices, so that this cell was simply a watchman’s cell after all. But this assumption is founded upon a misinterpretation of the formula **שָׁמַר מִשְׁמֶרֶת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ**, to keep the keeping of the altar. This formula does not mean to watch and see that nothing unlawful was taken to the altar, but refers to the altar service itself, the observance of everything devolving upon the servants of the altar in the performance of the sacrificial worship, or the offering of the sacrifices upon the altar according to the precepts of the law. If, then, this duty was binding upon the priests who resided in this cell, it would have been very unsuitable for the front of the cell to be turned toward the north, in which case it would have been absolutely impossible to see the altar from the front of the cell. This unsuitability can only be removed by the supposition that the cell was built at the south gate, with the front toward the north, i.e., looking directly toward the altar. For this reason we must also regard **הַקְּדִים** as a corruption of **הַדְּרוֹם**, and look for this second cell at the south gate, so that it stood opposite to the one built at the north gate. — All that remains doubtful is, whether these two cells were on the east or the west side of the south and north gates, a point

concerning which we have no information given in the text. In our sketch we have placed them on the west side (vid., Plate I *f*), so that they stood in front of the altar and the porch-steps. The concluding words of v. 46, in which **הַמְּזַבְּחִים** refers to the priests mentioned in vv. 45 and 46, state that in the new sanctuary only priests of the sons of Zadok were to take charge of the service at the altar and in the holy place; and this is still further expanded in Eze. 44:10 ff. — Finally, in v. 47 the description of the courts is concluded with the account of the measure of the inner court, a hundred cubits long and the same in breadth, according to which it formed a perfect square surrounded by a wall, according to Eze. 42:10. The only other observation made is, that it was within this space that the altar of burnt-offering stood, the description of which is given afterwards in Eze. 43:13 ff. (see Plate I *H*).

### CH. 40:48-41:26. THE TEMPLE-HOUSE, WITH THE PORCH, SIDE-STOREYS, AND BACK-BUILDING

*Eze. 40:48, 49.* The Temple-Porch (see Plate III *A*). — The measuring angel conducts the prophet still farther to the porch of the temple, and measures its breadth and length.

*V. 48. And he led me to the porch of the house, and measured the pillar of the porch, five cubits on this side and five cubits on that side; and the breadth of the gate, three cubits on this side and three cubits on that side. V. 49. The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits, and that by the steps by which one went up; and columns were by the pillars, one on this side and one on that side.*

**הַבַּיִת** is the temple in the more restricted sense of the word, the temple-house, as in 1Ki. 6: 2, etc.; and **מִזְבֵּחַ**, the porch before the entrance into the holy place (cf. 1Ki. 6: 3). The measurements in vv. 48 and 49, which are apparently irreconcilable with one another, led the LXX to the adoption of arbitrary interpolations and conjectures in v. 49, <sup>154</sup> in accordance with which Böttcher, Hitzig, and others have made corrections in the text, which have a plausible justification in the many artificial and for the most part mistaken interpretations that have been given of the text. The measures in v. 49<sup>a</sup> are perfectly plain, namely, the length of the porch twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; and there is no question that these measurements are to be understood in the clear, that is to say, as referring to the internal space, excluding the side-walls, as in the case of the holy place, the most holy place, and the inner court. The only question is whether the length signifies the dimension from east to west, i.e., the distance which had to be traversed on entering the temple, and therefore the breadth, the extent from north to south; or whether we are to understand by the length the larger dimension, and by the breadth the smaller, in

which case the measurement from north to south, which formed the breadth of the house, would be designated the length of the porch, and that from east to west the breadth. Nearly all the commentators have decided in favour of the latter view, because, in the porch of Solomon's temple, the length of twenty cubits was measured according to the breadth of the house. But the fact has been overlooked, that in 1Ki. 6: 3 the length given is more precisely defined by the clause, "in front of the breadth of the house." There is no such definition here, and the analogy of the building of Solomon's temple is not sufficient in itself to warrant our regarding the construction of the porch in the temple seen by Ezekiel as being precisely the same; since it was only in the essential portions, the form of which was of symbolical significance (the holy place and the most holy), that this picture of a temple resembled the temple of Solomon, whereas in those which were less essential it differed from that temple in various ways. At the very outset, therefore, the more probable assumption appears to be, that just as in the case of the holy place and the holy of holies, so also in that of the porch, we are to understand by the length, the distance to be traversed (from east to west), and by the breadth, the extension on either side (i.e., from south to north).

If, then, we understand the measurements in v. 49 in this way, the measures given in v. 48 may also be explained without any alterations in the text. The measuring of the pillar of the porch on either side, and of the gate on this side and that (v. 48), is sufficient of itself to lead to the conclusion that the front turned toward a person entering is the breadth from south to north. This breadth presented to the eye a pillar on this side and one on that, — two pillars, therefore, each five cubits broad ( $c$   $c$ ), and a breadth of gate of three cubits on this side and three on that, six cubits in all ( $b$ ), that is to say, a total breadth ( $k - k$ ) of  $5 + 3 + 3 + 5 = 16$  cubits. The only thing that can surprise one here is the manner in which the breadth of the gate is defined: three cubits on this side and that, instead of simply six cubits. But the only reason in all probability is, that the pillars on either side are mentioned just before, and the gate of six cubits' breadth consisted of two halves, which had their hinges fastened to the adjoining pillars, so that each half was measured by itself from the pillar to which it was attached. The breadth of front mentioned, viz., sixteen cubits, agrees very well with the breadth of the porch inside, i.e., eleven cubits ( $m - m$ ), for it allows a thickness of two cubits and a half for each side wall ( $a$ ), and this was sufficient for the walls of a porch. The pillars, which were five cubits broad on the outer face, were therefore only half that breadth ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  cubits) in the inner side within the porch, the other two cubits and a half forming the side wall. All the particulars given in v. 48 may be explained in this way without any artifice, and yield a result the proportions of which are in harmony with those of the entire building. For the porch, with an external breadth of sixteen cubits,

was half as broad as the house, which had a breadth of twenty cubits in the clear, and side walls of six cubits in thickness (Eze. 41: 5), so that when measured on the outside it was  $6 + 20 + 6 = 32$  cubits broad. The breadth of the interior also is apparently perfectly appropriate, as the porch was not intended either for the reception of vessels or for the abode of individuals, but was a simple erection in front of the entrance into the holy place, the door of which (*d*) was ten cubits broad (Eze. 41: 2), that is to say, half a cubit narrower on either side than the porch-way leading to it. And lastly, the length of the porch was also in good proportion to the holy place, which followed the porch; the porch being twenty cubits long, and the holy place forty cubits. If we add to this the front wall, with a thickness of two cubits and a half, corresponding to that of the side walls, we obtain an external length of twenty-two cubits and a half for the porch. In front were the steps by which one went up to the porch (*l*). It is generally supposed that there were ten steps, the **בַּמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשֶׁר** being changed into **עֶשְׂרֵי** (ten) after the example of the LXX. But however this alteration may commend itself when the facts of the case are considered, ten steps in front of the porch answering very well to the eight steps before the gateway of the inner court, and to the seven steps in front of the gateway of the outer court, it is not absolutely necessary, and in all probability is merely a conjecture of the Seventy, who did not know what to do with **אֲשֶׁר**, and possibly it is not even correct (see at Eze. 41: 8). The words **וּבַמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשֶׁר** can be attached without difficulty to the preceding account of the breadth: “the breadth was eleven cubits, and that at the steps by which they went up to it,” i.e., when measured on the side on which the flight of steps stood. If the words are taken in this way, they serve to remove all doubt as to the side which is designated as the breadth, with special reference to the fact that the porch of Solomon’s temple was constructed in a different manner. The number of steps, therefore, is not given, as was also the case with the east gate of the outer court (Eze. 40: 6), because it was of no essential importance in relation to the entire building. The last statement, “and there were columns by the pillars on this side and on that,” is free from difficulty, although there is also a difference of opinion among the commentators as to the position of these columns. **הָאֵילִים** points back to **אֵל אֵלָם** (v. 48). The preposition **אֵל** does not imply that the columns stood close to the pillars, and had the form of half-columns, but simply that they stood near the pillars (see Plate III K), like the columns Jachin and Boaz in Solomon’s temple, to which they correspond.

**Eze. 41: 1-4.** The Inner Space of the Temple (see Plate III B and C).

- V. 1. *And he led me into the temple, and measured the pillars, six cubits breadth on this side and six cubits breadth on that side, with regard to the breadth of the tent.*
- V. 2. *And the breadth of the door was ten cubits; and the shoulders of the door, five*



*cubits on this side, and five cubits on that: and he measured its length, forty cubits; and the breadth, twenty cubits. V. 3. And he went within the measured the pillar of the door, two cubits; and the door, six cubits; and the breadth of the door, seven cubits. V. 4. And he measured its length, twenty cubits; and the breadth, twenty cubits, toward the temple; and said to me, This is the holy of holies.*

Vv. 1 and 2 give the measurements of the holy place. **הַיִּבֵּל** is used here in the more restricted sense for the nave of the temple, the holy place (*B*), without the porch and the holy of holies (cf. 1Ki. 6:17). The measuring commences with the front (eastern) wall, in which there was the entrance door. This wall had pillars (*e e*) of six cubits breadth on either side (on the right hand and the left), and between the pillars a door (*d*) ten cubits broad, with door-shoulders (*e e*) of five cubits on this side and that (v. 2a). These measurements (6 + 6 + 10 + 5 + 5) yield for the front wall a total breadth of thirty-two cubits. This agrees with the measurements which follow: twenty cubits, the (internal) breadth of the holy place, and six cubits the thickness of the wall (*e*) on either side (v. 5). The only remaining difficulty is in the very obscure words appended, **רֹחַב הָאֵהָל**, in which Ewald and Hitzig propose to alter **הָאֵהָל** into **הָאֵיִל**, because the LXX have substituted **τοῦ ἀιάμ**, but without making any improvement, as **הָאֵיִל** is still more inexplicable. Kliefoth, after examining the various attempts to explain these words, comes to the conclusion that no other course is left than to take **הָאֵהָל** as signifying the inner space of Ezekiel's temple, consisting of the holy place and the holy of holies, which was the same in the entire building as the tabernacle had been, — viz. the tent of God's meeting with His people, and which is designated as **אֵהָל** to show the substantial identity of this space and the tabernacle. The clause **רֹחַב הָאֵהָל** is thus attached to the preceding double **מִפֶּה** (i.e., to the measurement of the two pillars bounding the holy space), in an elliptical manner, in the following sense: "he measured the breadth of the pillars, on this side and that, which marked off the breadth of the tent, on the outside, that is to say, of the inner space of the holy place which resembled the tabernacle;" so that this clause formed a loose apposition, meaning, "with regard to the breath of the tent." **כְּתִפּוֹת הַפֶּתַח** are the walls on both sides of the door (*e e*), between the door and the boundary pillars. — The internal length and breadth of the holy place are the same as in the holy place of Solomon's temple (1Ki. 6: 2, 17).

Vv. 3 and 4 refer to the holy of holies (*c*). "He went within." We have **וַיָּבֹא** (for **וַיִּבְּאֵ**) and not **וַיִּבְּאֵנִי** (v. 1), because the prophet was not allowed to tread the most holy place, and therefore the angel went in alone. **פְּנִימָה** is defined in v. 4 as the holy of holies. The measurements in v. 3 refer to the partition wall between the holy place and the most holy (*g*). **אֵיל הַפֶּתַח**, the pillar-work of

the door, stands for the pillars on both sides of the door; and the measurement of two cubits no doubt applies to each pillar, denoting, not the thickness, but the breadth which it covered on the wall. There is a difficulty in the double measurement which follows: the door six cubits, and the breadth of the door seven cubits. As the latter is perfectly clear, and also apparently in accordance with the fact, and on measuring a door the height is the only thing which can come into consideration in addition to the breadth, we agree with Kliefoth in taking the six cubits as a statement of the height. The height of six cubits bears a fitting proportion to the breadth of seven cubits, if there were folding-doors; and the seven is significant in the case of the door to the holy of holies, the dwelling of God. The Seventy, however, did not know what to do with this text, and changed **רָחַב הַפֶּתַח שְׁבַע אַמּוֹת** into **τὰς ἐπωμίδας τοῦ θυρώματος πηχῶν ἑπτὰ ἔνθεν καὶ ἔνθεν**, in which they have been followed by Böttcher, Hitzig, and others. But it is obvious at once that the Seventy have simply derived these *data* from the measurements of the front of the holy place (v. 2), and have overlooked the fact, that in the first place, beside the measure of the **בְּתַפּוֹת הַפֶּתַח**, i.e., **ἐπωμίδες τοῦ πυλῶνος**, the **רָחַב הַפֶּתַח**, or *breadth* of the door, is also expressly measured there, whereas here, on the contrary, it is preceded by **הַפֶּתַח** alone, without **רָחַב**; and secondly, as the measurement of the **אַיִלִּים** given in v. 1 indicates their breadth (from south to north), in the present instance also the measure ascribed to the **אַיִל הַפֶּתַח** can only refer to the breadth of the **אַיִל**, and not to its thickness (from east to west). But if we explain the first clause of v. 3 in this manner, as both the language and the fact require, the reading of the LXX is proved to be a false correction, by the fact that it yields a breadth of twenty-two or twenty-four cubits ( $2 + 2 + 6 + 7 + 7$ ), whereas the holy of holies, like the holy place, was only twenty cubits broad. The dimensions of the holy of holies also correspond to the space covered by the holy of holies in Solomon's temple (1Ki. 6:20). The expression **הַהֵיכָל אֶל-פְּנֵי**, "toward the holy place," is to be explained by the supposition that the measuring angel, after he had proceeded to the western end of the holy of holies for the purpose of measuring the length, turned round again to measure the breadth, so that this breadth lay "toward the holy place."

### *Eze. 41: 5-11.* The Wall and the Side-Building.

V. 5. *And he measured the wall of the house six cubits, and the breadth of the side storey four cubits round the house round about.* V. 6. *And of the side-rooms there were room upon room three, and that thirty times, and they came upon the wall, which the house had by the side-rooms round about, so that they were held, and yet they were not held in the wall of the house.* V. 7. *And it spread out, and was surrounded upwards more and more to the side-rooms, for the enclosure of the house went upwards more and more round about the house; therefore the house*

received breadth upwards; and so the lower ascended to the upper after the proportion of the central one. V. 8. And I saw in the house a height round about, with regard to the foundations of the side-rooms a full rod, six cubits to the joint. V. 9. The breadth of the wall, which the side storey had on the outside, was five cubits, and so also what was left free was by the side-chamber building of the house. V. 10. And between the cells was a breadth of twenty cubits round the house round about. V. 11. And the door of the side-chamber building led toward what was left free, one door toward the north and one door toward the south, and the breadth of the space left free was five cubits round about.

From the interior of the sanctuary the measuring man turned to the outer work, and measured, first of all, the wall of the house (v. 5), i.e., the wall commencing with the pillars in the front (v. 1), which surrounded the holy place and the holy of holies on the north, the west, and the south (*e*). This was six cubits thick, He then measured the breadth of the **צִלְע**, i.e., of the building consisting of three storeys of side-rooms, which was erected against the north, west, and south sides of the sanctuary (*h*). For **צִלְע** signifies not only a single side-room, but collectively the whole range of these side-chambers, the entire building against the sides of the temple house, called **צִיּוֹא** in 1Ki. 6: 5, 6, with which **הַצִּלְע** (v. 8) is also used alternately there (see the comm. on 1Ki. 6: 5).; — The breadth of the side-building was four cubits in the clear, that is to say, the space from the temple wall to the outer wall of the side-building (*f*), which was five cubits thick (v. 9), and that uniformly all round the temple. — The further particulars concerning the side-rooms in vv. 6 and 7 are very obscure, so that they can only be made perfectly intelligible by comparing them with the description of the similar building in Solomon's temple. According to this, v. 6*a* is to be taken thus: “and as for the side-rooms, there were room upon room (**אֵל** for **אָל**) three, and (that) thirty times,” and understood as signifying that there were three side-rooms standing one above another, and that this occurred thirty times, so that the side-building had three storeys, each containing thirty rooms (chambers), so that there were thirty times three rooms standing one above another (*h h h*). There is no necessity, therefore, for the transposition of **שְׁלוֹשׁ וְשָׁלִים** into **שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשָׁלוֹשׁ**, which Böttcher, Hitzig, and Hävernick have adopted from the LXX, because of their having taken **אֵל** in the sense of against, room against room thirty, and that three times, which yields the same thought, no doubt, but not so clearly, inasmuch as it remains indefinite whether the three times thirty rooms were above one another or side by side. Nothing is said about the distribution of the thirty rooms in each storey; but it is very probable that the distribution was uniform, so that on each of the longer sides, i.e., against the northern and southern walls of the temple, there were twelve rooms, and six against the shorter western wall. The northern and southern walls were sixty cubits, *plus* six cubits the thickness of the wall, *plus* four cubits the breadth of the side building against the western wall (60 + 6 + 4), in all

therefore seventy cubits, or, deducting five cubits for the thickness of the outer wall at the front of the building, sixty-five cubits long; and the western wall was  $20 + 2 \times 6$  (the thickness of the side wall), i.e., thirty-two cubits long. If, therefore, we fix the length of each side-room at  $4 \frac{1}{2}$  cubits, there remain five cubits against the western wall for the seven party walls required, or five-sevenths of a cubit for each, and against the northern and southern walls eleven cubits for party walls and staircase, and reckoning the party walls at four-sevenths of a cubit in thickness, there are left four cubits and a seventh for the space of the stairs, quite a sufficient space for a winding staircase.

The clauses which follow relate to the connection between these side-rooms and the temple house. **בַּאֲוֹת בְּקִיר**, they were coming (going) upon the wall. **ב** **בֹּא**, generally *intrare in locu*, here, on account of what follows, to tread upon the wall; that is to say, they were built against the wall in such a manner that the beams of the floors of the three storeys rested on the temple wall on the inner side, i.e., were held or borne by it, but not so as to be inserted in the wall and held fast thereby. The only way in which this could be effected was by so constructing the temple wall that it had a ledge at every storey on which the beams of the side-storeys could rest, i.e., by making it recede half a cubit, or become so much thinner on the outer side, so that if the thickness of the wall at the bottom was six cubits, it would be five cubits and a half at the first storey, five cubits at the second, and four and a half at the third. In this way the side-rooms were supported by the temple wall, but not in such a manner that the beams laid hold of the walls of the sanctuary, or were dovetailed into them, which would have done violence to the sanctity of the temple house; and the side storeys appeared as, what they should be, an external building, which did not interfere with the integrity of the sanctuary. That this is the meaning of the words is rendered certain by a comparison with 1Ki. 6: 6, where the ledges on the temple wall are expressly mentioned, and the design of these is said to be **לְבַלְתִּי אָחוּז בְּקִירוֹת**, that the beams might not be fastened in the walls of the house, to which the last words of our verse, **וְלֹא־יָהִיו אָחוּזִים בְּקִיר הַבַּיִת**, refer. Kliefoth's rendering of **בַּאֲוֹת בְּקִיר**, "they went against the wall," is grammatically untenable, as **בֹּא** with **ב** does not mean to go against anything. **אֲשֶׁר לְבַיִת לְצִלְעוֹת**, which the (temple) house had toward the side-rooms. **סָבִיב סָבִיב**, round about, i.e., on all three sides of the temple. The peculiarity of the storeys, arising from this resting upon the temple, is described in v. 7, of which different explanations have been given, but the general meaning of which is that it occasioned a widening of the side-rooms proceeding upwards from storey to storey, as is plainly stated in 1Ki. 6: 6. The words **וַיִּרְחַב וַיִּנְסָב** are not to be taken together, as expressing one idea, viz., "it spread round about" (De Wette), but contain two different assertions, which are more precisely

defined in what follows by the substantives **מוֹסָב** and **רָחַב**. Neither **קִיר** nor **הַצֵּלַע** is to be taken as the subject; but the verbs are to be regarded as impersonal: “there spread out and surrounded,” i.e., a widening and a surrounding took place. The double **לְמַעְלָה** has been correctly explained by Bochart, viz., “by continued ascending,” i.e., the higher one went the more extension and compass did one find, with regard to, i.e., according to the measure of, the side-rooms or side-storeys. **לְצִלְעוֹת** belongs to **לְמַעְלָה**, and is added for the purpose of defining more precisely how the widening took place, not gradually, but at each storey; for “these **צִלְעוֹת** are the three rooms standing one above another, spoken of in v. 6” (Kliefoth).

This statement is explained, and the reason assigned, in the clause introduced with **כִּי**, the meaning of which depends upon the explanation of the word **מוֹסָב**. This word may mean a way round, and a surrounding. The Rabbins, whom Hävernäck follows, understand by **מוֹסָב** a winding staircase, the **לוּלָיִם** mentioned in 1Ki. 6: 8, which led from the lower storey to the upper ones. This is decidedly wrong; for apart from the question whether this meaning can be grammatically sustained, it is impossible to attach any rational meaning to the words, “a winding staircase of the house was upwards more and more round about the house,” since a winding staircase could never run round about a building seventy cubits long and forty cubits broad, but could only ascend at one spot, which would really give it the character of a winding staircase. Böttcher’s explanation is equally untenable: “for the winding round of the interior was upwards more and more round and round inwards.” For, in the first place, **הַבַּיִת** does not mean the interior, and **לְבַיִת** does not mean inwards; and secondly, “winding round” is not equivalent to an alteration of form in the shape of the rooms, through which those in the bottom storey were oblongs running lengthwise, those in the central storey squares, and those in the third oblongs running inwards, which Böttcher imagines to have been the case. It would be much easier to adopt the explanation of Kliefoth and others, who take **מוֹסָב** in the sense of a way round, and regard it as signifying a passage running round the house in the form of a gallery, by which one could walk all round the house, and so reach the rooms in the upper storeys. This, as Kliefoth still further remarks, was the reason why the surrounding of (circuit round) the house was greater the higher one ascended, and also the reason why it became wider up above in the upper storeys, as the words, “therefore the breadth of the house increased upwards,” affirm. In these words Kliefoth finds a distinct assertion “that there is no foundation for the assumption that the widening upwards was occasioned by the receding of the temple walls; but that the widening of the building, which took place above, arose from the passages

round that were attached to the second and third storeys, and that these passages ran round the building, and consequently were attached to the outside in the form of galleries.” But we are unable to see how this can be *distinctly* asserted in the words רָחַב לְבַיִת לְמַעְלָה. Even if הַבַּיִת, in connection with מוֹסָב, signified the side- building, including the temple house, the only thought contained in the words would be, that the side-building became broader at each storey as you ascended, i.e., that the breadth of the side-building increased with each storey. But even then it would not be stated in what manner the increase in breadth arose; whether in consequence of the receding of the temple wall at each storey, or from the fact that the side-rooms were built so as to project farther out, or that the side-storeys were widened by the addition of a passage in the form of a gallery. And the decision in favour of one or other of these possibilities could only be obtained from the preceding clause, where it is stated that מוֹסָב הַבַּיִת went round about the side-building, and that in favour of the last.

But, in the first place, the assumption that הַבַּיִת and לְבַיִת denote the side- building, to the exclusion of the temple house, is extremely harsh, as throughout the whole section הַבַּיִת signifies the temple house; and in v. 6 לְבַיִת is used again in this sense. If we understand, however, by מוֹסָב הַבַּיִת a passage or a surrounding all round the temple house, the words by no means imply that there were outer galleries running round the side-rooms. In the second place, it is extremely harsh to take מוֹסָב in the sense of a passage round, if the preceding נִסְבָּה is to signify surrounded. As מוֹסָב takes up the word נִסְבָּה again, and “precisely the same thing is signified by the two verbs רָחַב וְנִסְבָּה as by the substantives רָחַב and מוֹסָב afterwards,” we cannot render נִסְבָּה by surrounded, and מוֹסָב by a passage round. If, therefore, מוֹסָב signified a passage, a gallery running round the building, this would necessarily be expressed in the verb נִסְבָּה, which must be rendered, “there went round,” i.e., there was a passage round, more and more upwards, according to the measure of the storeys. But this would imply that the passage round existed in the case of the bottom storey also, and merely increased in breadth in the central and upper storeys. Now a gallery round the bottom storey is shown to be out of the question by the measurements which follow. From this we may see that the supposition that there were galleries on the outside round the second and third storeys is not required by the text, and possibly is irreconcilable with it; and there is not even a necessity to adduce the further argument, that Kliefoth’s idea, that the entire building of three storeys was simply upheld by the outer wall, without any support to the beams from the wall of the temple, is most improbable, as such a building would have been very insecure, and useless for

the reception of any things of importance. We therefore take **נָסַב** and **מוֹסַב** in the sense of surrounded and surrounding. In this case, v. 7 simply affirms that the surrounding of the house, i.e., the side-building round about the temple house, became broader toward the top, increasing (more and more) according to the measure of the storeys; for it increased the more in proportion to the height against the temple house, so that the house became broader as you ascended. To this there is appended by means of **וַיִּבֶן** the last statement of the verse: “and so the lower ascended to the upper after the measure of the central one.” This clause is taken by the majority of the commentators to mean: thus they ascended from the lower to the upper after the central one. But many have observed the folly of an arrangement by which they ascended a staircase on the outside from the lower storey to the upper, and went from that into the central one, and have therefore followed the LXX in changing **וַיִּבֶן** into **וַיַּמֵּן** and **לְתִיכּוֹנָה** into **בְּתִיכּוֹנָה**, “and from the lower (they ascended) to the upper through the central one.” But there is no apparent necessity for these alterations of the text, as the reading in the text yields a good sense, if we take **הַתְּחִתּוֹנָה** as the subject to **וַיַּעֲלֶה**: and thus the lower storey ascended to the upper after the measure of the central one, — a rendering to which no decisive objection can be urged on the ground of the difference of gender (the masc. **וַיַּעֲלֶה**). **וַיִּבֶן** affirms that the ascent took place according to the mode of widening already mentioned.

In the 8th verse we have a further statement concerning the side-rooms, as we may see from the middle clause; but it has also been explained in various ways. Böttcher, for example, renders the first clause thus: “and I saw what the height round about was in an inwardly direction;” but this is both grammatically false and senseless, as **לְבַיִת** does not mean inwardly, and “in an inwardly direction” yields no conceivable sense. Kliefoth adopts the rendering: “I fixed my eyes upon the height round about to the house;” but this is also untenable, as **רָצָה** does not mean to fix the eyes upon, in the sense of measuring with the eyes, and in this case also the article could hardly be omitted in the case of **גִּבּוֹהַ**. The words run simply thus: “I saw in the house a height” = an elevation round about. What this means is shown in the following words: the side-rooms had foundations a full rod, i.e., the foundation of the rooms was a full rod (six cubits) high. **מִסְדּוֹת** is not a substantive **מִסְדּוֹת**, but a participle *Pual* **מִסְדּוֹת**; and the *Keri* is substantially correct, though an unnecessary correction; **מָלוּ** for **מְלוֹא** (compare Eze. 28:16, **מָלוּ** for **מְלוֹא**). The side-building did not stand on level ground, therefore, but had a foundation six cubits high. This is in harmony with the statement in Eze. 40:49, that they ascended by steps to the temple porch, so that the temple house with its front

porch was raised above the inner court. As this elevation was a full rod or six cubits, not merely for the side-building, but also for the temple porch, we may assume that there were twelve steps, and not ten after the LXX of Eze. 40:49, as half a cubit of Ezekiel's measurement was a considerable height for steps. — The expression which follows, “six cubits אֲצִילָה,” is obscure, on account of the various ways in which אֲצִילָה may be understood. So much, however, is beyond all doubt, that the words cannot contain merely an explanation of the length of the rod measure: “six cubits (measured) to the wrist,” because the length of the rod has already been fixed in Eze. 40: 5, and therefore a fresh definition would be superfluous, and the one given here would contradict that of Eze. 40: 5. אֲצִילָה signifies connection or joint, and when applied to a building can hardly mean anything else than the point at which one portion of the building joins on to the other. Hävernäck and Kliefoth therefore understand by אֲצִילָה the point at which one storey ends and another begins, the connecting line of the rooms standing one above another; and Hävernäck takes the clause to be a more precise definition of מִסְדּוֹת הַצֵּי, understanding by מִסְדּוֹת the foundations of the rooms, i.e., the floors. Kliefoth, on the other hand, regards the clause as containing fresh information, namely, concerning the height of the storeys, so that according to the statement in this verse the side-building had a foundation of six cubits in height, and each of the storeys had also a height of six cubits, and consequently the whole building was twenty-four cubits high, reckoning from the ground. So much is clear, that מִסְדּוֹת does not signify the floors of the rooms, so that Hävernäck's explanation falls to the ground. And Kliefoth's view is also open to this objection, that if the words gave the height of the storeys, and therefore supplied a second measurement, the copula ו could hardly fail to stand before them. The absence of this copula evidently leads to the conclusion that the “six cubits” אֲצִילָה are merely intended to furnish a further substantial explanation as to the foundation, which was a full rod high, the meaning of which has not yet been satisfactorily cleared up, as all the explanations given elsewhere are still further from the mark.

In v. 9 there follow two further particulars with reference to the side-building. The wall of it without, i.e., on the outside (*f*), was five cubits thick or broad, and therefore one cubit thinner than the temple wall. The מִנְחָה in the side-building was just the same breadth. In the clause beginning with וְאֲשֶׁר the measure (five cubits) given in the first clause is to be repeated, so that we may render וְ by “and also,” and must take the words in the sense of “just as broad.” מִנְחָה, the *Hophal* participle of הִנִּיחַ, to let alone, in the case of a building, is that portion of the building space which is not built upon like the rest; and in v. 11, there it is used as a substantive, it signifies the space left open by the sides of



the building (Plate I *i*). The Chaldee rendering is **אַתְרֵי שְׁבִיב**, *locus relictus*. **בֵּית צְלָעוֹת** is an adverbial or locative accusative: against the house of side-chambers, or all along it; and **אֲשֶׁר לְבֵית** is an appositional explanation: “which was to the temple,” i.e., belonged to it, was built round about it. — Consequently there is no necessity for any alteration of the text, not even for changing **בֵּית** into **בֵּין** in order to connect together v. 9*b* and v. 10 as one clause, as Böttcher and Hitzig propose; though all that they gain thereby is the discrepancy that in vv. 9*b* and 10 the space left open between the side-rooms against the temple house and between the cells against the wall of the court is said to have been twenty cubits broad, whereas in v. 12 the breadth of this *munnach* is set down as five cubits. — There follows next in v. 10 the account of the breadth between the temple-building and the cells against the wall of the inner court, and then in v. 11 we have further particulars concerning the side-building and the space left open. **הַלְשָׁכוֹת** (v. 10) are the cell buildings, more fully described in Eze. 42: 1ff., which stood along the wall dividing the inner court from the outer on the west of the north and south gates of the inner court, and therefore opposite to the temple house (Plate I *L L*). To the expression, “and between the cells there was a breadth,” there has to be supplied the correlative term from the context, namely, the space between the **מִנְחָה** and the **לְשָׁכוֹת** had a breadth of twenty cubits round about the house, i.e., on the north, west, and south sides of the temple house. — The description of this space closes in v. 11 with an account of the entrances to the side-building. It had a door toward the space left open, i.e., leading out into this space, one to the north and one to the south (Plate III *i i*), and the space left open was five cubits broad round about, i.e., on the north, west, and south sides of the temple-building. **מְקוֹם הַמִּנְחָה**, the place of that which remained open, i.e., the space left open.

If, then, in conclusion, we gather together all the measurements of the temple house and its immediate surroundings, we obtain (as is shown in Plate I) a square of a hundred cubits in breadth and a hundred cubits in length, exclusive of the porch. The temple (*G*) was twenty cubits broad in the inside (v. 2); the wall surrounding the sanctuary was six cubits (v. 5), or (for the two walls)  $2 \times 6 = 12$  cubits. The side-buildings being four cubits broad in the clear on each side (v. 5), make  $2 \times 4 = 8$  cubits. The outside walls of these buildings, five cubits on each side (v. 9), make  $2 \times 5 = 10$  cubits. The **מִנְחָה** (*i*), five cubits round about (v. 11), makes  $2 \times 5 = 10$  cubits. And the space between this and the cells standing by the wall of the court (*e-g-h-f*), twenty cubits round about (v. 10), makes  $2 \times 20 = 40$  cubits. The sum total therefore is  $20 + 12 + 8 + 10 + 10 + 40 = 100$  cubits, in perfect harmony with the breadth of the inner court given in Eze. 40:47. The length was as follows: forty cubits the holy place, and twenty

cubits the holy of holies (vv. 2 and 4); the western wall, six cubits; the side-rooms on the west, four cubits; and their wall, five cubits; the  $\text{פָּנֵי}$ , on the west, five cubits; and the space to the cells, twenty cubits; in all,  $40 + 20 + 6 + 4 + 5 + 5 + 20 = 100$  cubits, as stated in v. 13. The porch and thickness both of the party-wall between the holy place and the most holy, and also of the front (eastern) wall of the holy place, are not taken into calculation here. The porch is not included, because the ground which it covered belonged to the space of the inner court into which it projected. The party-wall is not reckoned, because it was merely a thin wooden partition, and therefore occupied no space worth notice. But it is difficult to say why the front wall of the holy place is not included. As there was no room for it in the square of a hundred cubits, Kliefoth assumes that there was no wall whatever on the western side of the holy place, and supposes that the back wall (i.e., the western wall) of the porch supplied its place. But this is inadmissible, for the simple reason that the porch was certainly not of the same height as the holy place, and according to Eze. 40:48 it had only sixteen cubits of external breadth; so that there would not only have been an open space left in the upper portion of the front, but also an open space of two cubits in breadth on either side, if the holy place had had no wall of its own. Moreover, the measurement both of the pillars on both sides of the front of the  $\text{הֵיכָל}$  (v. 1), and of the shoulders on both sides of the door (v. 2), presupposes a wall or partition on the eastern side of the holy place, which cannot be supposed to have been thinner than the side-walls, that is to say, not less than six cubits in thickness. We are shut up, therefore, to the conjecture that the forty cubits' length of the holy place was measured from the door-line, which was ten cubits broad, and that the thickness of the door-shoulders on the two sides is included in these forty cubits, or, what is the same thing, that they were not taken into account in the measurement. The objection raised to this, namely, that the space within the holy place would thereby have lost a considerable portion of its significant length of forty cubits, cannot have much weight, as the door-shoulders, the thickness of which is not reckoned, were only five cubits broad on each side, and for the central portion of the holy place, which was occupied by the door, and was ten cubits broad, the length of forty cubits suffered no perceptible diminution. Just as the pillars of the door of the holy of holies with the party-wall are reckoned in the  $40 + 20$  cubits' length of the sanctuary, and are not taken into consideration; so may this also have been the case with the thickness of wall of the door-shoulders of the holy place. The measurements of the space occupied by the holy place and holy of holies, which have a symbolical significance, cannot be measured with mathematical scrupulosity.

*Eze. 41:12-14.* The Separate Place, and the External Dimensions of the Temple.

V. 12. *And the building at the front of the separate place was seventy cubits broad on the side turned toward the west, and the wall of the building five cubits broad round about, and its length ninety cubits.* V. 13. *And he measured the (temple) house: the length a hundred cubits; and the separate place, and its building, and its walls: the length a hundred cubits.* V. 14. *And the breadth of the face of the (temple) house, and of the separate place toward the east, a hundred cubits.*

The explanation of these verses depends upon the meaning of the word **גִּזְרָה**. According to its derivation from **גָּזַר**, to cut, to separate, **גִּזְרָה** means that which is cut off, or separated. Thus **אֶרֶץ גִּזְרָה** is the land cut off, the desert, which is not connected by roads with the inhabited country. In the passage before us, **גִּזְרָה** signifies a place on the western side of the temple, i.e., behind the temple, which was separated from the sanctuary (Plate I J), and on which a building stood, but concerning the purpose of which nothing more definite is stated than we are able to gather, partly from the name and situation of the place in question, and partly from such passages as 1Ch. 26:18 and 2Ki. 23:11, according to which, even in Solomon's temple, there was a similar space at the back of the temple house with buildings upon it, which had a separate way out, the gate **שַׁלְכֶת**, namely, that "this space, with its buildings, was to be used for the reception of all refuse, sweepings, all kinds of rubbish, — in brief, of everything that was separated or rejected when the holy service was performed in the temple, — and that this was the reason why it received the name of the separate place" (Kliefoth). The building upon this space was situated **אֶל-פְּנֵי-הַגִּזְרָה**, in the front of the *gizrah* (that is to say, as one approached it from the temple); and that **בְּאֵת דְּרֹדְ-הָיָם**, on the side of the way to the sea, i.e., on the western side, sc. of the temple, and had a breadth of seventy cubits (from north to south), with a wall round about, which was five cubits broad (thick), and a length of ninety cubits. As the thickness of the wall is specially mentioned in connection with the breadth, we must add it both to the breadth and to the length of the building as given here; so that, when looked at from the outside, the building was eighty cubits broad and a hundred cubits long. In v. 13b this length is expressly attributed to the separate place, and (i.e., along with) its building, and the walls thereof. But the length of the temple house has also been previously stated as a hundred cubits. In v. 14 the breadth of both is also stated to have been a hundred cubits, — namely, the breadth of the outer front, or front face of the temple, was a hundred cubits; and the breadth of the separate place **לְקִדְיִם** toward the east, i.e., the breadth which it showed to the person measuring on the eastern side, was the same. If, then, the building on the separate place was only eighty cubits broad, according to v. 12, including the walls, whilst the separate place itself was a hundred cubits broad, there remains a space of twenty cubits in breadth not covered by the building; that is to say, as we need not hesitate to put the building in the centre, open spaces of

ten cubits each on the northern and southern sides were left as approaches to the building on both sides (*K*), whereas the entire length of the separate place (from east to west) was covered by the building. — All these measurements are in perfect harmony. As the inner court formed a square of a hundred cubits in length (Eze. 40:47), the temple house, which joined it on the west, extended with its appurtenances to a similar length; and the separate place behind the temple also covered a space of equal size. These three squares, therefore, had a length from east to west of three hundred cubits. If we add to this the length of the buildings of the east gates of the inner and outer courts, namely fifty cubits for each (Eze. 40:15, 21, 25, 29, 33, 36), and the length of the outer court from gate to gate a hundred cubits (Eze. 40:19, 23, 27), we obtain for the whole of the temple building the length of five hundred cubits. If, again, we add to the breadth of the inner court or temple house, which was one hundred cubits, the breadths of the outer court, with the outer and inner gate-buildings, viz., two hundred cubits on both the north and south sides, we obtain a total breadth of  $100 + 200 + 200 = 500$  (say five hundred) cubits; so that the whole building covered a space of five hundred cubits square, in harmony with the calculation already made (at Eze. 40:24-27) of the size of the surrounding wall.

***Eze. 41:15-26.*** Summary Account of the Measurement, the Character, and the Significant Ornaments of the Projecting Portions of the Temple Building.

*V. 15. And thus he measured the length of the building in the front of the separate place which was at the back thereof, and its galleries on this side and that side, a hundred cubits, and the inner sanctuary, and the porches of the court; V. 16. The thresholds, and the closed windows, and the galleries round about all three — opposite to the thresholds was wainscoting wood round about, and the ground up to the windows; but the windows were covered — V. 17. (The space) above the doors, both to the inner temple and outside, and on all the wall round about, within and without, had its measures. V. 18. And cherubs and palms were made, a palm between every two cherubs; and the cherub had two faces; V. 19. A man's face toward the palm on this side, and a lion's face toward the palm on that side: thus was it made round about the whole house. V. 20. From the floor to above the doors were the cherubs and palms made, and that on the wall of the sanctuary. V. 21. The sanctuary had square door-posts, and the front of the holy of holies had the same form. V. 22. The altar was of wood, three cubits high, and its length two cubits; and it had its corner-pieces and its stand, and its walls were of wood: and he said to me, This is the table which stands before Jehovah. V. 23. And the holy place and the holy of holies had two doors. V. 24. And the doors had two wings, two turning leaves; the one door two, and the other two leaves. V. 25. And there were made upon them, upon the doors of the sanctuary, cherubs and palms, as they were made upon the walls; and a moulding of wood was on the front of the porch outside. V. 26. And there were closed windows and palms on this side and on that, on the side-walls of the porch, and the side-rooms of the house, and the beams.*

V. 15 is the commencement of a comprehensive enumeration of particular features in the building, the greater part of which have not been mentioned before; so that **וַיִּמְדַּד** (for **וַיִּמְדֹּד**) is to be rendered, “and thus he measured.” The circumstance that another measurement follows in v. 15a, whereas no further numbers are given from v. 15b onwards, does not warrant us in assuming that v. 15a is to be joined on to v. 14, and v. 15b to be taken in connection with v. 16. The absence of the cop. **ו** before **הַסָּפִים** in v. 16a is sufficient to preclude the latter, showing as it does that **הַסָּפִים** commences a fresh statement; and the words **וַיְהִיכֵל וְגוֹ** in v. 15b are still governed by the verb **וַיִּמְדַּד** in v. 15a. The contents of v. 15 are also decisive against the separation mentioned. If, for instance, we connect v. 15a with v. 14, the first clause contains a pure tautology, as the length of the building has been already measured, and the result is given in v. 13. The tautology does not exist, if the summary statements of the measurement of different portions of the whole temple building commence with v. 15; and in connection with these a supplementary account is given of various details not mentioned before.

The contents of the second clause, namely, what is stated concerning the **אֲתִיקִים**, belong directly to the latter. The building in front of the separate place, which was measured by the man, is more precisely defined, so far as its situation is concerned, by the words **אֲשֶׁר אֶל-אַחֲרֶיהָ**. The feminine suffix in **אֲחֵרֶיהָ** points back to **הַגִּזְרָה**; consequently **אֲשֶׁר** can only refer to **הַבְּנֵי**: “the building...which was at the back of the *gizrah*.” This is not at variance with the situation indicated in **אֶל-פְּנֵי הַגִּזְרָה**, but serves as a more exact definition of this statement, showing that the building which stood at the front of the *gizrah* occupied the hinder part of it, i.e., extended in length from the front of the *gizrah* to the back. — The meaning of **אֲתִיקִים** or **אֲתִיקִים**, here (*Keri*) and in v. 16, Eze. 42: 3 and 5, the only other passages in which it occurs, is involved in obscurity. Even Raschi confesses that he does not know what it means, and the older translators have simply resorted to vague conjectures for their renderings; the LXX here, **ἀπόλοιπα**, in Eze. 42: 3 and 5 **περίστυλον** and **στοαί**; the Vulgate, here, *ethecas* (the Hebrew word Latinized), in Eze. 42 *porticus*; Targum, in the London Polyglot, v. 15, **וַיִּנְתָּהָ**; v. 16, **אֲתִיקָא**; Eze. 42: 3, **וַיִּנְיָ**; and 42: 5, **וַיִּנְיָ**. There is no root **אֲתִק** in Hebrew; and the derivation of the word from **עֲתִק** is not only uncertain, but furnishes us with nothing that can be used for tracing the architectural signification of the word. Even the context in vv. 15 and 16 of this chapter supplies nothing, for in both verses the meaning of the clauses in which **אֲתִיקִים** stands is a matter of dispute. It is only in Eze. 42: 3 and 5 that we find any clue. According to Eze. 42: 3, in the three-storied cell-building there was **אֲתִיק אֶל-פְּנֵי אֲתִיק** on

the third storey; and according to v. 5 the cells of the upper storey in this building were shorter than those of the lower and central storey, because **אֲתִיקִים** took space away from them; and the reason for this, again, was, that the three-storied cells had no pillars. From this we may infer with certainty that the **אֲתִיקִים** were galleries or passages running along the outer walls of the building, which were not supported by pillars, and therefore necessarily rested upon ledges obtained by the receding of the rooms of the upper storey. This meaning also suits the present chapter. The suffix in **אֲתִיקָהָ** (an Aramaic form for **אֲתִיקָה**) points back, not to **בִּנְיָן**, but to **הַבְּנֵיהָ** in v. 13; for the words, “and its galleries on this side and on that,” i.e., on the north and south sides of the building, are not dependent upon **אֶרֶץ הַבְּנֵינָן**, in the sense of “the length of the building, with its galleries on this side and on that,” as **וְאֲתִיקָהָ** is too widely separated from **אֶרֶץ הַבְּנֵינָן** for this. **וְאֲתִיקָהָ** is rather a second object to **מָדַד**: he measured (1) the length of the building; (2) its galleries on this side and that — a hundred cubits; (3) the inner temple, etc. The hundred cubits do not refer to the length of the building, but to the galleries on both sides, which were of the same length as the building, and therefore ran along its entire length, — a fact which it was not superfluous to mention, as they might possibly have been shorter. **הַהֵיכָל הַפְּנִימִי** is the temple house, with the buildings against it, within the inner court. In addition to these, there are also mentioned the porches of the court, i.e., at the gate-buildings of the inner and outer courts, as the projecting portions of these buildings. These three works mentioned in v. 15 comprise the whole of the buildings, the measurements of which have been mentioned in the previous description — viz. the building to the west of the temple, in vv. 12-14; the inner temple, in vv. 1-11; the porches of the courts, to which the temple porch in front of the holy place is to be added, as having been reckoned in the measurement as belonging to the inner court, in Eze. 41. — Thus the contents of our verse (v. 15) plainly show that it not only is an indivisible whole, but forms a conclusion in which the foregoing measurements are all summed up, and which serves as an introduction, in accordance with this, to the following summary of various additional features in the temple buildings which are also worthy of mention.

In this summary there are five points noticed: (*a*) the fact that all parts of the buildings had their measurements (vv. 16 and 17); (*b*) the significant ornamentation of the inner walls of the sanctuary (vv. 18-21); (*c*) the altar in the holy place (v. 22); (*d*) the character and decoration of the doors of the sanctuary (vv. 23-25*a*); (*e*) the style of the porch and of the side-buildings against the temple (vv. 25, 26). — Vv. 16 and 17 form one period, enlarged by the parenthetical insertion of explanatory statements, similar to the construction in vv. 18 and 19. The predicate to the three subjects — the thresholds, the

closed windows, and the galleries — is not to be sought for either in **לְשַׁלְשֶׁתָם** **סְבִיב** or in **הַסֵּף שְׁחִירָה וְגו'**. The latter construction, adopted by Böttcher and Hävernick, yields the unmeaning assertion that the thresholds lay across in front of the threshold. The former gives the apparently bald thought, that thresholds, windows, and galleries were round about; in which the use of the article, *the* thresholds, *the* windows, is exceedingly strange. The predicate to **הַסֵּפִים וְגו'** is **מְדוּת** at the end of v. 17: the thresholds, etc., had measurements; and the construction is so far anakolouthistic, that the predicate **מְדוּת**, strictly speaking, belongs to the things mentioned in v. 17 alone, and the subjects mentioned in v. 16 are to be regarded as absolute nominatives. The words **לְשַׁלְשֶׁתָם סְבִיב** belong to the three preceding subjects, as a further definition, the thresholds, windows, and galleries (which were) against these three round about. The suffix to **שְׁלֹשָׁתָם**, “*their* triad,” refers to the three buildings mentioned in v. 15: the one upon the separate place, the temple building, and the porches of the court; and the appositional **סְבִיב** is not to be so pressed as to lead to the conclusion that all three buildings, and therefore the porches of the court also, had **אֶתְיָקִים** round about. As the **סְבִיב לְשַׁלְשֶׁתָם** is affirmed of the thresholds, and the windows, and the galleries, and these three objects are introduced by the article, as well known, i.e., as already mentioned and described in the preceding verses, the more precise definition (*resp.* limitation) of the apposition, “round about these three,” is to be taken from the preceding description of these three buildings, and we are simply to assume the existence of thresholds, windows, and galleries in these buildings in those cases in which they have been mentioned in that description; so that the only place in which there were galleries was the building upon the separate place. But before the intended information is given concerning the thresholds, etc., a remark is introduced, with the words from **נִגְדַּד הַסֵּף** to **סְבִיב**, as to the construction of the thresholds: viz., that opposite to the threshold (**הַסֵּף** being used in a general sense for every threshold) there was **שְׁחִירָה עֵץ**, a thin covering of wood, or wainscoting. **נִגְדַּד** does not mean across the front (Böttcher), but “opposite;” and the part opposite to the threshold of a door is, strictly speaking, the lintel. Here, however, the word is probably used in the broader sense for the framework of the door, above and on the two sides, as is shown by **סְבִיב סְבִיב** which follows. With **הָאָרֶץ** a fresh object is introduced. **הָאָרֶץ** is a nominative, like **הַסֵּפִים**, etc.; and the thought of supplying **מִן**, “from the ground,” has originated in a faulty interpretation of the words. The idea is this: as the thresholds, the windows, etc., so also the ground up to the windows, i.e., the space between the ground and the windows, had measurements. The allusion to the windows is followed by the remark, in the form of a circumstantial clause,

that “the windows were covered.” **מַכְסוֹת** is apparently only a substantial explanation of **אַטְמוֹת** (see the comm. on Eze. 40:16).

In v. 17 two further objects are mentioned as having measurements; not, however, in the logical position of subjects, but with prepositions **אֶל** and **אֶל**: upon that which was above the opening of the door...and (what was) on all the walls, i.e., the space above the doors and on all the walls. To this periphrasis of the subject, through **אֶל** and **אֶל**, there is attached the predicate **מִדוֹת**, which belongs to all the subjects of vv. 16 and 17, in the sense of, “on all the walls there were measures.” The meaning is, that all the parts of the building which have been named had their definite measurements, were carefully measured off. In order to express this thought in as general and comprehensive a manner as possible, the ideas contained in the subjects in v. 17 are expanded by means of appositions: that of the space above, over the entrance door, by **הַפִּי וְלְחוּץ** **וְאֵד הַבַּיִת** (both **ו** — **ו** = *et* — *et*) into the inner temple, i.e., both the inside of the temple throughout, and also to the outside. The idea of the whole wall is expressed by “round about, in the inside and on the outside.” — Thus everything in vv. 16 and 17 is clear, and in accordance with fact; and there is no necessity either for the critical scissors of Ewald and Hitzig, who cut out all that they do not understand as glosses, or for the *mal*-emendation of Böttcher, who changes **מִדוֹת** into **מִקְלָעוֹת** (1Ki. 6:18), and thus finds it good to ornament the temple with sculptures, even on the outsides of all the walls.

Vv. 18-21 treat of the ornamenting of the inside of the sanctuary, i.e., of the holy place and the holy of holies. Vv. 18 and 19 form, like vv. 16 and 17, a period extended by parentheses. The predicate **עָשׂוּי**, standing at the beginning of v. 18, is resumed in v. 19<sup>b</sup>, and completed by **אֶל-כָּל-הַבַּיִת סִי סִי**. That the cherubim and palms were executed in sculpture or carving, is evident from the resemblance to Solomon’s temple. They were so distributed that a cherub was followed by a palm, and this by a cherub again, so that the palm stood between the two cherubim, and the cherub turned one of its two faces to the palm on this side, and the other to the palm upon that side. In sculpture only two faces could be shown, and consequently these cherubic figures had only two faces, and not four, like those in the vision. This sculpture was placed round about the whole house, and that, as is added in v. 20 by way of explanation, from the ground even to up above the door, namely, on the inner wall of the sanctuary (**הַחֵיכָל**). **כָּל-הַבַּיִת** is hereby limited to the **חֵיכָל**, the holy place and the holy of holies. **וְקִיר** is a local accusative. To this there is appended the further notice in v. 21, that the sanctuary had door-posts in a square form. The loose arrangement of the words, “the sanctuary post work of square form,” is a concise form of



expression after the manner of brief topographical notices. **מְזוּזָה** invariably signifies, wherever it occurs, the door-posts, i.e., the projecting framework of the entrances. **רְבוּא**, “foured,” does not mean four-cornered merely, but really square (Exo. 27: 1 and 28:16). Consequently the words, “the door-posts of the holy place were of a square shape,” might be understood as signifying not merely that the door-posts were beams cut square, but, as Kliefoth supposes, that the post work surrounding the door was made of a square form, that is to say, was of the same height as breadth, which would be quite in keeping with the predominance of the square shape, with its symbolical significance, in this picture of a temple. But the statement in the second half of the verse can hardly be reconciled with this; for whatever diversity there may be in the interpretation of this verse in particular points, it is certain that it does contain the general assertion that the doorway of the holy of holies was also shaped in the same way. But the door of the holy of holies, instead of being square, was (according to v. 3) six cubits high and seven cubits broad. **הַקִּדְשׁ**, as distinguished from **הַהֵיכָל**, is the holy of holies, which v. 23 places beyond all doubt (for this use of **הַקִּדְשׁ**, see Lev. 16: 2, 3, 16). **פְּנֵי־הַקִּדְשׁ**, the face of the holy of holies, the front which met the eye of a person entering the holy place. **הַמְרָאָה בַּמְרָאָה** is the predicate, which is attached as loosely as in the first hemistich. The front of the holy of holies had the appearance like the appearance (just described), i.e., like the appearance of the **הֵיכָל**; in fact, it had also a doorway with four-cornered posts. J. F. Starch has already given this explanation of the words: *Eadem facies et aspectus erat utriusque portae templi et adyti, utraque quadrata et quadratis postibus conspicua erat.* The proposal of Ewald, on the other hand, to connect **בַּמְרָאָה** with the following word **הַמְזֻבָּח**, “in front of the holy of holies there was something to be seen like the shape of the altar” (LXX, Syr.), has the article in **הַמְרָאָה** against it (Böttcher).

**Eze. 41:22.** The Altar of Burnt-Offering in the holy place (see Plate III *n*). “The abrupt style of writing is still continued.” The altar wood for the altar was of wood three cubits high; its length, i.e., the expanse of the wall from one corner to the other, was two cubits; the breadth (thickness), which is not expressly mentioned, was the same, because the square form is presupposed from the shape of this altar in the tabernacle and Solomon’s temple. Under the term **מִקְצַעֹתָיו**, its corner-pieces, the horns projecting at the corners, or the horn-shaped points, are probably included, as the simple mention of the corners appears superfluous, and the horns, which were symbolically significant features in the altar, would certainly not have been wanting. There is something strange in the occurrence of **וְאָרְכוֹ** before and along with **קִירוֹת**, as the length is already included in the walls, and it would not be appropriately said of the

length that it was of wood. אֲרָכוֹ is therefore certainly a copyist's error for אֲדָנוֹ, ἡ βάσις αὐτοῦ (LXX), its stand or pedestal. The angel describes this altar as the "table which stands before Jehovah" — in perfect harmony with the epithet already applied to the sacrifices in the Pentateuch, the "bread (לֶחֶם) of God," though not "because the altar table was intended to combine the old table of shewbread and the altar of incense" (Böttcher). The table of shewbread is not mentioned any more than the candlestick and other portions of the temple furniture. — The altar of burnt-offering stood before Jehovah, i.e., before the entrance into the holy of holies. This leads in vv. 23ff. to the notice of the doors of the sanctuary, the character of which is also described as simply openings (פֶּתַח), since the doorway had been mentioned before. דְּלָת signifies a moveable door, and the plural דְּלָתוֹת, doors, whether they consist of one leaf or two, i.e., whether they are single or folding doors. Here the דְּלָתוֹת in vv. 23 and 24 (לדלתות) are folding doors; on the other hand, the first דְּלָתוֹת in v. 24 and דְּלָת *ibid.* are used for the wings of the door, and מוֹסְבֹת דְּלָתוֹת for the swinging portions (leaves) of the separate wings. The meaning is this: the holy place (הַיְכָל) and the holy of holies (הַקֹּדֶשׁ) had two folding doors (i.e., each of these rooms had one). These doors had two wings, and each of these wings, in the one door and in the other, had two reversible door-leaves, so that when going in and out there was no necessity to throw open on every occasion the whole of the wing, which was at least three or four cubits broad. There is no foundation for the objection raised by Kliefoth to the interpretation of וְלִקְדָשׁ לְהַיְכָל as signifying the holy place and the holy of holies; since he cannot deny that the two words are so used, הַיְכָל in 1Ki. 6: 5, 17, 31, 33, and קֹדֶשׁ in Lev. 16: 2, 3, etc. And the artificial explanation, "to the temple space, and indeed to the holy place," not only passes without notice the agreement between our verses and 1Ki. 6:31-34, but gains nothing further than a side door, which does violence to the dignity of the sanctuary, a passage from the side chambers into the holy place, with which Böttcher has presented Solomon's temple. — These doors were ornamented, like the walls, with figures of cherubim and palms. — Other remarks are added in vv. 25b and 26 concerning the porch in front of the holy place. The first is, that on the front of the porch outside there was עַב אֵץ. The only other passage in which the word עַב occurs in a similar connection is 1Ki. 7: 6, where it refers to wood-work in front of the *Ulam* of Solomon's porch of pillars; and it cannot be determined whether it signifies threshold, or moulding, or threshold-mouldings. On the shoulders, i.e., on the right and left side walls of the front porch, there were closed windows and figures of palms. The cherubim were omitted here. — The last words of v. 26 are very obscure. וְצִלְעוֹת הַפֵּיטָה may be taken in

connection with the preceding clause, “and on the side-rooms of the temple,” as there is no necessity to repeat the preposition in the case of closely continuous clauses (vid., Ewald, § 351a); and the side-rooms not only must have had windows, but might also be ornamented with figures of palms. But if the words be taken in this sense, the עֲבֵיִם must also signify something which presented, like the walls of the porch and of the side chambers, a considerable extent of surface capable of receiving a similar decoration; although nothing definite has hitherto been ascertained with regard to the meaning of the word, and our rendering “beams” makes no pretension to correctness.

## CH. 42. THE HOLY CELLS IN THE COURT, AND THE EXTENT OF THE HOLY DOMAIN AROUND THE TEMPLE

*Eze. 42: 1-14.* The Cell-Building in the Outer Court for Holy Use.

V. 1. *And he brought me out into the outer court by the way toward the north, and brought me to the cell-building, which was opposite to the separate place, and opposite to the building toward the north, V. 2. Before the long side of a hundred cubits, with the door toward the north, and the breadth fifty cubits, V. 3. Opposite to the twenty of the inner court and opposite to the stone pavement of the outer-court; gallery against gallery was in the third storey. V. 4. And before the cells a walk, ten cubits broad; to the inner a way of a hundred cubits; and their doors went to the north. V. 5. And the upper cells were shortened, because the galleries took away space from them, in comparison with the lower and the central ones in the building. V. 6. For they were three-storied, and had no columns, like the columns of the courts; therefore a deduction was made from the lower and from the central ones from the ground. V. 7. And a wall outside parallel with the cells ran toward the outer court in front of the cells; its length fifty cubits. V. 8. For the length of the cells of the outer court was fifty cubits, and, behold, against the sanctuary it was a hundred cubits. V. 9. And out from underneath it rose up these cells; the entrance was from the east, when one went to them from the outer court. V. 10. In the breadth of the court wall toward the south, before the separate place and before the building, there were cells, V. 11. With a way before them, like the cells, which stood toward the north, as according to their length so according to their breadth, and according to all their exits as according to all their arrangements. And as their doorways, V. 12. So were also the doorways of the cells, which were toward the south, an entrance at the head of the way, of the way opposite to the corresponding wall, of the way from the east when one came to them. V. 13. And he said to me, The cells in the north, the cells in the south, which stood in front of the separate place, are the holy cells where the priests, who draw near to Jehovah, shall eat the most holy thing; there they shall place the most holy thing, both the meat-offering and the sin-offering and the trespass-offering; for the place is holy. V. 14. When they go in, the priests, they shall not go out of the holy place into the outer court; but there shall they place their clothes, in which they perform the service, for they are holy; they shall put on other clothes, and so draw near to what belongs to the people.*

It is evident from vv. 13 and 14, which furnish particulars concerning the cells already described, that the description itself refers to two cell-buildings only, one on the north side and the other on the south side of the separate place (see Plate I L). Of these the one situated on the north is described in a more circumstantial manner (vv. 1-9); that on the south, on the contrary, is merely stated in the briefest manner to have resembled the other in the main (vv. 10-12). That these two cell-buildings are not identical either with those mentioned in Eze. 40:44ff. or with those of Eze. 40:17, as Hävernäck supposes, but are distinct from both, is so obvious that it is impossible to understand how they could ever have been identified. The difference in the description is sufficient to show that they are not the same as those in Eze. 40:44ff. The cells mentioned in Eze. 40:44 were set apart as dwelling-places for the priests during their administration of the service in the holy place and at the altar; whereas these serve as places for depositing the most holy sacrificial gifts and the official dresses of the priests. To this may be added the difference of situation, which distinguishes those mentioned here both from those of Eze. 40:44f., and also from those of Eze. 40:17. Those in Eze. 40:44 were in the inner court, ours in the outer. It is true that those mentioned in Eze. 40:17 were also in the latter, but in entirely different situations, as the description of the position of those noticed in the chapter before us indisputably proves. Ezekiel is led out of the inner court into the outer, by the way in the direction toward the north, to **הַלְשָׁכָה**, the cell-building (that **הַלְשָׁכָה** is used here in a collective sense is evident from the plural **לְשָׁכוֹת** in vv. 4, 5). This stood opposite to the *gizrah*, i.e., the separate space behind the temple house (Eze. 41:12ff.), and opposite to the **בִּנְיָן**, i.e., neither the outer court wall, which is designated as **בִּנְיָן** in Eze. 40: 5, but cannot be intended here, where there is no further definition, nor the temple house, as Kliefoth imagines, for this is invariably called **הַבַּיִת**. We have rather to understand by **הַבִּנְיָן** the building upon the *gizrah* described in Eze. 41:12ff., to which no valid objection can be offered on the ground of the repetition of the relative **וְאֲשֶׁר**, as it is omitted in v. 10, and in general simply serves to give greater prominence to the second definition in the sense of “and, indeed, opposite to the building (sc., of the separate place) toward the north.”

As **אֶל-הַצָּפוֹן** belongs to **אֲשֶׁר** as a more precise definition of the direction indicated by **נָגַד**, the **אֶל-פְּנֵי א'** which follows in v. 2 depends upon **וַיְבִיֵאֵנִי**, and is co-ordinate with **אֶל-הַלְשָׁכָה**, defining the side of the cell-building to which Ezekiel was taken: “to the face of the length,” i.e., to the long side of the building, which extended to a hundred cubits. The article in **הַמָּאֵה** requires that the words should be connected in this manner, as it could not be used if the words were intended to mean “on the surface of a length of a hundred cubits.”

Since, then, the separate place was also a hundred cubits, that is to say, of the same length as the cell-building opposite to it, we might be disposed to assume that as the separate place reached to the outer court wall on the west, the cell-building also extended to the latter with its western narrow side. But this would be at variance with the fact that, according to Eze. 46:19, 20, the sacrificial kitchens for the priests stood at the western end of this portion of the court, and therefore behind the cell-building. The size of these kitchens is not given; but judging from the size of the sacrificial kitchens for the people (Eze. 46:22), we must reserve a space of forty cubits in length; and consequently the cell-building, which was a hundred cubits long, if built close against the kitchens, would reach the line of the back wall of the temple house with its front (or eastern) narrow side, since, according to the calculation given in the comm. on Eze. 41: 1-11, this wall was forty cubits from the front of the separate place, so that there was no prominent building standing opposite to the true sanctuary on the northern or southern side, by which any portion of it could have been concealed. And not only is there no reason for leaving a vacant space between the sacrificial kitchens and the cell-buildings, but this is precluded by the fact that if the kitchens had been separated from the cell building by an intervening space, it would have been necessary to carry the holy sacrificial flesh from the kitchen to the cell in which it was eaten, after being cooked, across a portion of the outer court. It is not stated here how far this cell-building was from the northern boundary of the *gizrah*, and the open space (מִנְחָה) surrounding the temple house; but this may be inferred from Eze. 41:10, according to which the intervening space between the *munnach* and the cells was twenty cubits. For the cells mentioned there can only be those of our cell-building, as there were no other cells opposite to the northern and southern sides of the temple house. But if the distance of the southern longer side of the cell-building, so far as it stood opposite to the temple house, was only twenty cubits, the southern wall of the cell-building coincided with the boundary wall of the inner court, so that it could be regarded as a continuation of that wall. — The further definition פֶּתַח הַצֶּפֶן, door to the north, is to be taken as subordinate to the preceding clause, in the sense of “with the door to the north,” because it would otherwise come in between the accounts of the length and breadth of the building, so as to disturb the connection. The breadth of the building corresponds to the breadth of the gate-buildings of the inner court.

The meaning of the third verse is a subject of dispute. “הַעֲשָׂרִים,” says Böttcher, “is difficult on account of the article as well as the number, inasmuch as, with the exception of the twenty cubits left open in the temple ground (Eze. 41:10), there are no עֲשָׂרִים mentioned as belonging to the actual הַפֶּנִּי הַצֶּר, and the numeral does not stand with sufficient appropriateness by the side

of the following רַצְפָּה.” But there is not sufficient weight in the last objection to render the reference to the twenty cubits a doubtful one, since the “twenty cubits” is simply a contracted form of expression for “the space of twenty cubits,” and this space forms a fitting antithesis to the pavement (רַצְפָּה), i.e., the paved portion of the court. Moreover, it is most natural to supply the missing substantive to the “twenty” from the אַמּוֹת mentioned just before, — much more natural certainly than to supply לְשִׁכּוֹת, as there is no allusion either before or afterwards to any other cells than those whose situation is intended to be defined according to the twenty. We therefore agree with J. H. Michaelis, Rosenmüller, Hävernick, and Hitzig, that the only admissible course is to supply אַמּוֹת; for the description of the priests’ cells in Eze. 40:44, to which Kliefoth imagines that הָעֲשָׂרִים refers, is far too distant for us to be able to take the word לְשִׁכּוֹת thence and supply it to הָעֲשָׂרִים. And again, the situation of these priests’ cells to the east of the cell-building referred to here does not harmonize with the נֶגֶד, as the second definition introduced by the correlative וְנֶגֶד points to the stone pavement on the north. East and north do not form such a *vis-à-vis* as the double נֶגֶד requires. — Our view of the הָעֲשָׂרִים is also in harmony with the explanatory relative clause, “which were to the inner court,” i.e., belonged to it. For the open space of twenty cubits’ breadth, which ran by the long side of the temple house between the *munnach* belonging to the temple and the wall of the inner court, formed the continuation of the inner court which surrounded the temple house on the north, west, and south. <sup>155</sup>

If, therefore, this first definition of the נֶגֶד refers to what was opposite to the cell-building on the south, the second נֶגֶד defines what stood opposite to it on the northern side. There the portion of the outer court which was paved with stones ran along the inner side of the surrounding wall. This serves to define as clearly as possible the position of the broad side of the cell-building. For Kliefoth and Hitzig are right in connecting these definitions with v. 2*b*, and taking the words from אַתִּיק onwards as introducing a fresh statement. Even the expression itself אֶל-פְּנֵי אַתִּיק does not properly harmonize with the combination of the two halves of the third verse as one sentence, as Böttcher proposes, thus: “against the twenty cubits of the inner court and against the pavement of the outer court there ran gallery in front of gallery threefold.” For if the galleries of the building were opposite to the pavement on the north, and to the space in front of the temple on the south of the building, they must of necessity have run along the northern and southern walls of the building in a parallel direction, and אֶל-פְּנֵי is not the correct expression for this. אֶל-פְּנֵי, to the front — that is to say, one gallery to the front of the other, or up to the other. This could only be the case if the galleries surrounded the building on all

four sides, or at any rate on three; for with the latter arrangement, the gallery upon the eastern side would terminate against those on the southern and northern sides. Again, the rendering “threefold,” or into the threefold, cannot be defended either from the usage of the language or from the facts. The only other passage in which the plural **שְׁלֹשִׁים** occurs is Gen. 6:16, where it signifies chambers, or rooms of the third storey, and the singular **שְׁלֹשִׁי** means the third. Consequently **בְּשְׁלֹשִׁים** is “in the third row of chambers or rooms,” i.e., in the third storey. And so far as the fact is concerned, it does not follow from the allusion to upper, central, and lower cells (vv. 5 and 6), that there were galleries round every one of the three storeys.

Ver. 4. “Before the cells there was a walk of ten cubits’ breadth” (*m*). In what sense we are to understand **לְפָנַי**, “before,” whether running along the northern longer side of the building, or in front of the eastern wall, depends upon the explanation of the words which follow, and chiefly of the words **אֲמָה אֶחָת דֶּרֶךְ**, by which alone the sense in which **אֶל־הַפְּנִימִית** is to be understood can also be determined. Hävernicks and Kliefoth take **אֲמָה אֶחָת דֶּרֶךְ**, “a way of one cubit,” in the sense of “the approaches (entrances into the rooms) were a cubit broad.” But the words cannot possibly have this meaning; not only because the collective use of **דֶּרֶךְ** after the preceding **מִהַלְךְ**, which is not collective, and with the plural **פְּתֻחֹתֵיהֶם** following, is extremely improbable, if not impossible; but principally because **דֶּרֶךְ**, a way, is not synonymous with **מְבֹא**, an entrance, or **פְּתָח**, a doorway. Moreover, an entrance, if only a cubit in breadth, to a large building would be much too narrow, and bear no proportion whatever to the walk of ten cubits in breadth. It is impossible to get any suitable meaning from the words as they stand, “a way of one cubit;” and no other course remains than to alter **אֲמָה אֶחָת** into **מֵאָה אֲמָת**, after the **ἐπι πηχέις ἑκατόν** of the Septuagint. There is no question that we have such a change of **מֵאָה** into **אֲמָה** in v. 16, where even the Rabbins acknowledge that it has occurred. And when once **מֵאָה** had been turned into **אֲמָה**, this change would naturally be followed by the alteration of **אֲמָת** into a numeral — that is to say, into **אֶחָת**. The statement itself, “a way of a hundred cubits” (in length), might be taken as referring to the length of the walk in front of the cells, as the cell-building was a hundred cubits long. But **אֶל־הַפְּנִימִית** is hardly reconcilable with this. If, for example, we take these words in connection with the preceding clause, “a walk of ten cubits broad into the interior,” the statement, “a way of a hundred cubits,” does not square with this. For if the walk which ran in front of the cells was a hundred cubits long, it did not lead into the interior of the cell-building, but led past it to the outer western wall. We must therefore take

אל־הַפְּנִימִית in connection with what follows, so that it corresponds to לַפְּנֵי הַלְּשׁוֹת: in front of the cells there was a walk of ten cubits in breadth, and to the inner there led a way of a hundred cubits in length. הַפְּנִימִית would then signify, not the interior of the cell-building, but the inner court (הַפְּנִימִית הַדָּצֵר, Eze. 44:17; 21:27, etc.). This explanation derives its principal support from the circumstance that, according to vv. 9 and 11, a way ran from the east, i.e., from the steps of the inner court gates, on the northern and southern sides, to the cell-buildings on the north and south of the separate place, the length of which, from the steps of the gate-buildings already mentioned to the north-eastern and south-eastern corners of our cell-buildings, was exactly a hundred cubits, *as we may see from the plan in Plate I*. This way (*l*) was continued in the walk in front of the cells (*m*), and may safely be assumed to have been of the same breadth as the walk. — The last statement of the fourth verse is perfectly clear; the doorways to the cells were turned toward the north, so that one could go from the walk in front of the cells directly into the cells themselves.

In vv. 5 and 6 there follow certain statements concerning the manner in which the cells were built. The building contained upper, lower, and middle cells; so that it was three-storied. This is expressed in the words בִּי מִשְׁלֹשׁוֹת הָנָה, “for the cells were tripled;” three rows stood one above another. But they were not all built alike; the upper ones were shortened in comparison with the lower and the central ones, i.e., were shorter than these (מִן before הַתְּחַנּוֹת and הַתִּיכּוֹנוֹת is comparative); “for galleries ate away part of them” — that is to say, took away a portion of them (יֹאכְלוּ for יוֹכְלוּ, in an architectural sense, to take away from). How far this took place is shown in the first two clauses of the sixth verse, the first of which explains the reference to upper, lower, and middle cells, while the second gives the reason for the shortening of the upper in comparison with the lower and the central cones. As the three rows of cells built one above another had no columns on which the galleries of the upper row could rest, it was necessary, in order to get a foundation for the gallery of the third storey, that the cells should be thrown back from the outer wall, or built as far inwards as the breadth of the gallery required. This is expressly stated in the last clause, נֶאֱצַל אֶל־כֶּן נֶאֱצַל וְגוֹ, with an indefinite subject: there was deducted from the lower and the middle cells from the ground, sc. which these rooms covered. מִדְּהָאָרֶץ is added for the purpose of elucidation. From the allusion to the columns of the courts we may see that the courts had colonnades, like the courts in the Herodian temple, and probably also in that of Solomon, though their character is nowhere described, and no allusion is made to them in the description of the courts.



The further statements concerning this cell-building in vv. 7-9 are obscure. גִּדְרֵי is a wall serving to enclose courtyards, vineyards, and the like. The predicate to גִּדְרֵי follows in אֶל-פְּנֵי הַלְּשָׁכוֹת: a boundary wall ran along the front of the cells (אֶל-פְּנֵי stands for אֶל-פְּנֵי, as the corresponding אֶל-פְּנֵי הַהֵיכָל in v. 8 shows). The course of this wall (*n*) is more precisely defined by the relative clause, “which ran outwards parallel with the cells in the direction of the outer court,” i.e., toward the outer court. The length of this wall was fifty cubits. It is evident from this that the wall did not run along the north side of the building, — for in that case it must have been a hundred cubits in length, — but along the narrow side, the length of which was fifty cubits. Whether it was on the western or eastern side cannot be determined with certainty from v. 7, although אֶל פְּנֵי favours the eastern, i.e., the front side, rather than the western side, or back. And what follows is decisive in favour of the eastern narrow side. In explanation of the reason why this wall was fifty cubits long, it is stated in v. 8 that “the length of the cells, which were to the outer court, was fifty cubits; but, behold, toward the temple front a hundred cubits.” Consequently “the cells which the outer court had” can only be the cells whose windows were toward the outer court — that is to say, those on the eastern narrow side of the building; for the sacrificial kitchens were on the western narrow side (Eze. 46:19, 20). The second statement in v. 8, which is introduced by הִנֵּה is an indication of something important, is intended to preclude any misinterpretation of אֶרְךָ הַלֵּשׁ, as though by *length* we must necessarily understand the extension of the building from east to west, as in v. 2 and most of the other measurements. The use of אֶרְךָ for the extension of the narrow side of the building is also suggested by the אֶרְכוֹ, “length of the wall,” in v. 7, where רָחֵב would have been inadmissible, because רָחֵב, the breadth of a wall, would have been taken to mean its thickness. אֶל פְּנֵי הַהֵיכָל is the outer side of the temple house which faced the north.

A further confirmation of the fact that the boundary wall was situated on the eastern narrow side of the building is given in the first clause of the ninth verse, in which, however, the reading fluctuates. The *Chetib* gives מִתַּחַת לְשָׁכוֹת, the *Keri* מִתַּחַת הַלְּשָׁכוֹת. But as we generally find, the *Keri* is an alteration for the worse, occasioned by the objection felt by the Masoretes, partly to the unusual circumstance that the singular form of the suffix is attached to תַּחַת, whereas it usually takes the suffixes in the plural form, and partly to the omission of the article from לְשָׁכוֹת by the side of the demonstrative הָאֵלֶּה, which is defined by the article. But these two deviations from the ordinary rule do not warrant any alterations, as there are analogies in favour of both. תַּחַת

has a singular suffix not only in **תַּחֲתֵינָהּ** (Gen. 2:21) and **תַּחֲתֵינִי** (2Sa. 22:37, 40, and 48), instead of **תַּחֲתַי** (Psa. 18:37, 40, 48), which may undoubtedly be explained on the ground that the direction whither is thought of (Ges. § 103. 1, Anm. 3), but also in **תַּחֲתָם**, which occurs more frequently than **תַּחֲתֵיהֶם**, and that without any difference in the meaning (compare, for example, Deu. 2:12, 21, 22, 23, Jos. 5: 7, Job. 34:24, and 40:12, with 1Ki. 20:24, 1Ch. 5:22, 2Ch. 12:10). And **לְשִׁכּוֹת הָאֵלֶּה** is analogous to **הַר הַגְּדוֹל** in Zec. 4: 7, and many other combinations, in which the force of the definition (by means of the article) is only placed in the middle for the sake of convenience (vid., Ewald, § 293a). If, therefore, the *Chetib* is to be taken without reserve as the original reading, the suffix in **תַּחֲתָהּ** can only refer to **גִּרְר**, which is of common gender: from underneath the wall were these cells, i.e., the cells turned toward the outer court; and the meaning is the following: toward the bottom these cells were covered by the wall, which ran in front of them, so that, when a person coming toward them from the east fixed his eyes upon these cells, they appeared to rise out of the wall. Kliefoth, therefore, who was the first to perceive the true meaning of this clause, has given expression to the conjecture that the design of the wall was to hide the windows of the lower row of cells which looked toward the east, so that, when the priests were putting on their official clothes, they might not be seen from the outside. — **הַמְּבֹאֵ** commences a fresh statement. To connect these words with the preceding clause (“underneath these cells was the entrance from the east”), as Böttcher has done, yields no meaning with which a rational idea can possibly be associated, unless the **מִן** in **מִתַּחֲתָהּ** be altogether ignored. The LXX have therefore changed **וּמִתַּחֲתָהּ**, which was unintelligible to them, into **καὶ ἀπὸ θύραι** (“**וּפְתָחַ**”), and Hitzig has followed them in doing so. No such conjecture is necessary if **וּמִתַּחֲתָהּ** be rightly interpreted, for in that case **הַמְּבֹאֵ** must be the commencement of a new sentence. **הַמְּבֹאֵ** (by the side of which the senseless reading of the *Keri* **הַמְּבִיא** cannot be taken into consideration for a moment) is the approach, or the way which led to the cells. This was from the east, from the outer court, not from the inner court, against the northern boundary of which the building stood. **בְּבֹאוֹ לְהִזְנֶה** is not to be taken in connection with **מִתְחַצֵּר הַחֲצֵנָה**, but is co-ordinate with **מִהַקְּדִים**, of which it is an explanator apposition.

In vv. 10-12 the cell-building on the south of the separate place is described, though very briefly; all that is said in addition to the notice of its situation being, that it resembled the northern one in its entire construction. But there are several difficulties connected with the explanation of these verses, which are occasioned, partly by an error in the text, partly by the unmeaning way in which the Masoretes have divided the text, and finally, in part by the brevity of the

mode of expression. In the first clause of v. 10, **הַקְדִּים** is a copyist's error for **הַדְּרוֹם**, which has arisen from the fact that it is preceded by **מִהַקְדִּים** (v. 9). For there is an irreconcilable discrepancy between **דֶּרֶךְ הַקְדִּים** and **הַגְּזֵרָה אֶל-פְּנֵי**, which follows. The building stood against, or upon, the broad side (**רָחֹב**) of the wall of the court, i.e., the wall which separated the inner court from the outer, opposite to the separate place and the building upon it (**אֶל פְּנֵי**, from the outer side hither, is practically equivalent to **נִגַּד** in v. 1; and **הַבְּנִין** is to be taken in the same sense here and there). The relation in which this cell-building stands to the separate place tallies exactly with the description given of the former one in v. 2. If, then, according to v. 2, the other stood to the north of the separate place, this must necessarily have stood to the south of it, — that is to say, upon the broad side of the wall of the court, not in the direction toward the east (**דֶּרֶךְ הַקְדִּים**), but in that toward the south (**דֶּרֶךְ הַדְּרוֹם**), as is expressly stated in vv. 12 and 13 also. Kliefoth has affirmed, it is true, in opposition to this, that “the *breadth* of the wall enclosing the inner court must, as a matter of course, have been the eastern side of the inner court;” but on the eastern side of the wall of the inner court there was not room for a cell-building of a hundred cubits in length, as the wall was only thirty-seven cubits and a half long (broad) on each side of the gate-building. If, however, one were disposed so to dilute the meaning of **בְּרָחֹב גֵּדֵר הַחֵץ** as to make it affirm nothing more than that the building stood upon, or against, the breadth of the wall of the court to the extent of ten or twenty cubits, and with the other eighty or ninety cubits stood out into the outer court, as Kliefoth has drawn it upon his “ground plan;” it could not possibly be described as standing **אֶל-פְּנֵי הַגְּזֵרָה**, because it was not opposite to (in face of) the *gizrah*, but was so far removed from it, that only the north-west corner would be slightly visible from the south-east corner of the *gizrah*. And if we consider, in addition to this, that in v. 13 and 14, where the intention of the cell-buildings described in vv. 1-12 is given, only cells on the north and on the south are mentioned as standing **אֶל-פְּנֵי הַגְּזֵרָה**, there can be no doubt that by **רָחֹב** we are to understand the broad side of the wall which bounded the inner court on the south side from east to west, and that **הַקְדִּים דֶּרֶךְ** should be altered into **הַדְּרוֹם דֶּרֶךְ**.

In v. 11 the true meaning has been obscured by the fact that the Masoretic verses are so divided as to destroy the sense. The words **וְדֶרֶךְ לְפָנֵיהֶם** belong to **לְשִׁכּוֹת** in v. 10: “cells and a way before them,” i.e., cells with a way in front. **דֶּרֶךְ** corresponds to the **מִהֲלֵךְ** in v. 4. — **בְּמִרְאָהּ**, like the appearance = appearing, or constructed like, does not belong to **דֶּרֶךְ** in the sense of made to conform to the way in front of the cells, but to **לְשִׁכּוֹת**, cells with a way in

front, conforming to the cells toward the north. The further clauses from **כְּאַרְבֵּן** to **וּכְמִשְׁפְּטֵיהֶן** are connected together, and contain two statements, loosely subordinated to the preceding notices, concerning the points in which the cells upon the southern side were made to conform to those upon the northern; so that they really depend upon **בְּמִרְאָה**, and to render them intelligible in German (English tr.) must be attached by means of a preposition: “with regard to,” or “according to” (*secundum*). Moreover, the four words contain two co-ordinated comparisons; the first expressed by **בְּ... בְּ**, the second simply indicated by the particle **כְּ** before **מִשְׁפְּטֵיהֶן** (cf. Ewald, § 360a). The suffixes of all four words refer to the cells in the north, which those in the south were seen to resemble in the points referred to. The meaning is this: the cells in the south were like the cells in the north to look at, as according to their length so according to their breadth, and according to all their exits as according to their arrangements (**מִשְׁפְּטִים**, lit., the design answering to their purpose, i.e., the manner of their arrangement and their general character: for this meaning, compare Exo. 26:30; 2Ki. 1: 7). The last word of the verse, **וּכְפִתְחֵיהֶן**, belongs to v. 12, viz., to **וּכְפִתְחֵי הַלְשִׁי**, the comparison being expressed by **וּכְכֹכ**, as in Jos. 14:11; Dan. 11:29; 1Sa. 30:24 (cf. Ewald, *l.c.*).

Another construction also commences with **וּכְפִתְחֵיהֶן**. **כְּפִתְחֵיהֶן** is a nominative: and like their doors (those of the northern cells), so also were the doors of the cells situated toward the south. Consequently there is no necessity either to expunge **וּכְפִתְחֵי** arbitrarily as a gloss, for which procedure even the LXX could not be appealed to, or to assent to the far-fetched explanation by which Kliefoth imagines that he has discovered an allusion to a third cell-building in these words. — Light is thrown upon the further statements in v. 12 by the description of the northern cells. “A door was at the head,” i.e., at the beginning of the way. **דְּרָךְ** corresponds to the way of a hundred cubits in v. 4, and **רֵאשִׁי דְרָךְ** is the point where this way, which ran to the southern gate-building of the inner court, commenced — that is to say, where it met the walk in front of the cells (v. 4). The further statement concerning this way is not quite clear to us, because the meaning of the **ἄπ. λεγ. הַגִּינָה** is uncertain. In the Chaldee and Rabbinical writings the word signifies *decens, conveniens*. If we take it in this sense, **הַגִּנְדֶּרֶת הַגִּינָה** is the wall corresponding (to these cells), i.e., the wall which ran in front of the eastern narrow side of the building parallel to the cells, the wall of fifty cubits in length described in v. 7 in connection with the northern building (for the omission of the article before **הַגִּינָה** after the substantive which it defines, compare Eze. 39:27; Jer. 2:21, etc.). **לְפָנָי**, *in conspectu*, which is not perfectly synonymous with **לְפָנָי**, also harmonizes with this. For the way referred to was exactly opposite to this wall

at its upper end, inasmuch as the wall joined the way at right angles. The last words of v. 12 are an abbreviated repetition of v. 9b; **דֶּרֶךְ הַקְּדָיִם** is equivalent to **הַמְּכוֹאֵ מִהַקְּדָיִם**, the way from the east on coming to them, i.e., as one went to these cells.

According to vv. 13 and 14, these two <sup>156</sup> cell-buildings were set apart as holy cells, in which the officiating priests were to deposit the most holy sacrifices, and to eat them, and to put on and off the sacred official clothes in which they drew near to the Lord. **קְדָשֵׁי הַקְּדָשִׁים** were that portion of the meat-offering which was not burned upon the altar (Lev. 2: 3, 10; 6: 9-11; 10:12; see my *Bibl. Archäologie*, I § 52), and the flesh of all the sin- and trespass-offerings, with the exception of the sin-offerings offered for the high priest and all the congregation, the flesh of which was to be burned outside the camp (cf. Lev. 6:19-23; 7: 6). All these portions of the sacrifices were called most holy, because the priests were to eat them as the representatives of Jehovah, to the exclusion not only of all the laity, but also of their own families (women and children; see my *Archäol.* I § § 45 and 47). The depositing (**נִיחָה**) is distinguished from the eating (**יֵאָכְלוּ**) of the most holy portions of the sacrifices; because neither the meal of the meat-offering, which was mixed with oil, nor the flesh of the sin- and trespass-offerings, could be eaten by the priests immediately after the offering of the sacrifice; but the former had first of all to be baked, and the latter to be boiled, and it was not allowable to deposit them wherever they liked previous to their being so prepared. The putting on and off, and also the custody of the sacred official clothes, were to be restricted to a sacred place. **בְּבֹשֶׁם**, on their coming, sc. to the altar, or into the holy place, for the performance of service. There not going out of the holy place into the outer court applies to their going into the court among the people assembled there; for in order to pass from the altar to the sacred cells, they were obliged to pass through the inner gate and go thither by the way which led to these cells (Plate I l).

### *Eze. 42:15-20.* Extent of the Holy Domain around the Temple.

V. 15. *And when he had finished the measurements of the inner house, he brought me out by the way of the gate, which is directed toward the east, and measured there round about.* V. 16. *He measured the eastern side with the measuring rod five hundred rods by the measuring rod round about;* V. 17. *He measured the northern side five hundred rods by the measuring rod round about;* V. 18. *The southern side he measured five hundred rods by the measuring rod;* V. 19. *He turned round to the western side, measured five hundred rods by the measuring rod.* V. 20. *To the four winds he measured it. It had a wall round about; the length was five hundred and the breadth five hundred, to divide between the holy and the common.*

There has been a division of opinion from time immemorial concerning the area, the measuring of which is related in these verses, and the length and breadth of which are stated in v. 20 to have been five hundred; as the Seventy, and after them J. D. Michaelis, Böttcher, Maurer, Ewald, and Hitzig, understand by this the space occupied by the temple with its two courts. But as that space was five hundred cubits long and five hundred broad, according to the sum of the measurements given in Eze. 40-42:15, the LXX have omitted the word קָנִים in vv. 16, 18, and 19, whilst they have changed it into πύχαις in v. 17, and have also attached this word to the numbers in v. 20. According to this, only the outer circumference of the temple area would be measured in our verses, and the wall which was five hundred cubits long and five hundred cubits broad (v. 20) would be the surrounding wall of the outer court mentioned in Eze. 40: 5. V. 15 could certainly be made to harmonize with this view. For even if we understood by the “inner house” not merely the temple house, which the expression primarily indicates, but the whole of the inner building, i.e., all the buildings found in the inner and outer court, and by the east gate the eastern gate of the outer court; the expression מָדָדוֹ סָבִיב ס', “he measured it round about,” merely affirms that he measured something round about outside this gate. The suffix in מָדָדוֹ is indefinite, and cannot be taken as referring to any of the objects mentioned before, either to הַשָּׂאֵר or to הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי. The inner house he had already measured; and the measurements which follow are not applicable to the gate. Nor can the suffix be taken as referring to הַבַּיִת, *illam sc. aedem* (Ros.); or at any rate, there is nothing in v. 20 to sustain such a reference. Nevertheless, we might think of a measuring of the outer sides of the whole building comprehended under the idea of the inner house, and regard the wall mentioned in v. 20 as that which had been measured round about on the outer side both in length and breadth. But it is difficult to reconcile this view even with v. 20; and with the measurements given in vv. 16-19 it is perfectly irreconcilable. Even if we were disposed to expunge קָנִים as a gloss in vv. 16, 17, 18, and 19, the words, “he measured the east side with the measuring rod, five hundred by the measuring rod,” are equivalent to five hundred rods, according to the well-known Hebrew usage; just as indisputably as בַּאֲמָה מֵאָה, a hundred by the cubit, is equivalent to a hundred cubits (see the comm. on Eze. 40:21 at the close). The rejection of קָנִים as an imaginary gloss is therefore not only arbitrary, but also useless; as the appended words הַמְּדָה בַּקֵּנָה, even without קָנִים, affirm that the five hundred were not cubits, but rods. <sup>57</sup>

The סָבִיב in vv. 16 and 17 is not to be understood as signifying that on the east and north sides he measured a square on each side of five hundred rods in

length and breadth, but simply indicates that he measured on all sides, as is obvious from v. 20. For according to this, the space which was measured toward every quarter at five hundred rods had a boundary wall, which was five hundred rods long on every side. This gives an area of 250,000 square rods; whereas the temple, with the inner and outer courts, covered only a square of five hundred cubits in length and breadth, or 250,000 square cubits. It is evident from this that the measuring related in vv. 15-20 does not refer to the space occupied by the temple and its courts, and therefore that the wall which the measured space had around it (v. 20) cannot be the wall of the outer court mentioned in Eze. 40: 5, the sides of which were not more than five hundred cubits long. The meaning is rather, that around this wall, which enclosed the temple and its courts, a further space of five hundred rods in length and breadth was measured off “to separate between the holy and profane,” i.e., a space which was intended to form a separating domain between the sanctuary and the common land. The purpose thus assigned for the space, which was measured off on all four sides of the “inner house,” leaves no doubt remaining that it was not the length of the surrounding wall of the outer court that was measured, but a space outside this wall. The following clause **הַזֶּמָּה לֹא סָבִיב**, “a wall was round about it,” is irreconcilable with the idea that the suffix in **מְדָרוֹ** (vv. 20 and 15) refers to this wall, inasmuch as the **לֹא** can only refer to the object indicated by the suffix attached to **מְדָרוֹ**. This object, i.e., the space which was five hundred rods long and the same broad round about, i.e., on every one of the four sides, had a wall enclosing it on the outside, and forming the partition between the holy and the common. **הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי** is therefore **הַקֶּדֶשׁ**, “the inner house;” but this is not the temple house with its side-building, but the sanctuary of the temple with its two courts and their buildings, which was measured in Eze. 40: 5-42:12.

The arguments which have been adduced in opposition to this explanation of our verses, — the only one in harmony with the words of the text, — and in vindication of the alterations made in the text by the LXX, are without any force. According to Böttcher (p. 355), Hitzig, and others, **קָנִים** is likely to be a false gloss, (1) “because **בְּקִנְיַת הַמֶּדָּה** stands close to it; and while this is quite needless after **קָנִים**, it may also have occasioned the gloss.” But this tells rather against the suspicion that **קָנִים** is a gloss, since, as we have already observed, according to the Hebrew mode of expression, the “five hundred” would be defined as rods by **בְּקִנְיַת הַמֶּדָּה**, even without **קָנִים**. Ezekiel, however, had added **בְּקִנְיַת הַמֶּדָּה** for the purpose of expressing in the clearest manner the fact that the reference here is not to cubits, but to a new measurement of an extraordinary kind, to which nothing corresponding could be shown in the

earlier temple. And the Seventy, by retaining this clause, ἐν καλᾶμῳ τοῦ μέτρου, have pronounced sentence upon their own change of the rods into cubits; and it is no answer to this that the Talmud (*Midd. c. ii. note 5*) also gives only five hundred cubits to the הָרַר הַבֵּינָה, since this Talmudic description is treating of the historical temple and not of Ezekiel's prophetic picture of a temple, although the Rabbins have transferred various statements from the latter to the former. The second and third reasons are weaker still — viz. "because there is no other instance in which the measurement is expressed by rods in the plural; and, on the other hand, אֲמָטָה is frequently omitted as being the ordinary measurement, and therefore taken for granted." For the first assertion is proved to be erroneous, not only by our verses, but also by Eze. 45: 1ff. and 48:16ff., whilst there is no force whatever in the second. The last argument employed is a more plausible one — namely, that "the five hundred rods are not in keeping with the sanctuary, because the edifice with the courts and gates would look but a little pile according to the previous measurements in the wide expanse of 20,000 (?) rods." But although the space measured off around the temple-building for the separation between the holy and the profane was five times as long and five times as broad, according to the Hebrew text, or twenty-five times as large as the whole extent of the temple and its courts, the appearance of the temple with its courts is not diminished in consequence, because the surrounding space was not covered with buildings; on the contrary, the fact that it was separated from the common by so large a surrounding space, would rather add to the importance of the temple with its courts. This broad separation is peculiar to Ezekiel's temple, and serves, like many other arrangements in the new sanctuary and worship, to symbolize the inviolable holiness of that sanctuary. The earlier sanctuary had nothing answering to this; and Kliefoth is wrong in supposing that the outer court served the same purpose in the tabernacle and Solomon's temple, whereas in the temple of Ezekiel this had also become part of the sanctuary, and was itself holy. The tabernacle had no outer court at all, and in Solomon's temple the outer court did form a component part of the sanctuary. The people might enter it, no doubt, when they desired to draw near to the Lord with sacrifices and gifts; but this continued to be the case in Ezekiel's temple, though with certain restrictions (cf. Eze. 46: 9 and 10). Only, in the case of Solomon's temple, the outer court bordered directly upon the common soil of the city and the land, so that the defilement of the land produced by the sin of the people could penetrate directly even into the holy space of the courts. In the sanctuary of the future, a safeguard was to be placed against this by the surrounding space which separated the holy from the common. It is true that the surface of Moriah supplied no room for this space of five hundred rods square; but the new temple was not to be built upon the real Moriah, but upon a very high mountain, which



the Lord would exalt and make ready for the purpose when the temple was erected. Moreover, the circumstance that Moriah was much too small for the extent of the new temple and its surroundings, cannot furnish any argument against the correctness of our view of the verses in question, for the simple reason that in Eze. 45 and 48 there follow still further statements concerning the separation of the sanctuary from the rest of the land, which are in perfect harmony with this, and show most indisputably that the temple seen by Ezekiel was not to have its seat in the ancient Jerusalem.

## **CH. 43: 1-12. ENTRANCE OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD INTO THE NEW TEMPLE**

### *Eze. 43: 1-12.*

*V. 1. And he led me to the gate, the gate which looked toward the east: V. 2. And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the east, and its sound was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with His glory. V. 3. And the appearance which I saw, was to look at like the appearance which I saw when I came to destroy the city; and (there were) appearances like the appearance which I had seen by the river Chebar, and I fell down upon my face. V. 4. And the glory of Jehovah came into the house by the way of the gate, the direction of which is toward the east. V. 5. And wind lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of Jehovah filled the house. V. 6. And I heard one speaking to me from the house, and there was a man standing by me. V. 7. And he said to me, Son of man, the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I shall dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel for ever; and the house of Israel will no more defile my holy name, they and their kings, through their whoredom and through the corpses of their kings, their high places, V. 8. When they set their threshold by my threshold, and their door-posts by my door-posts, and there was only the wall between me and them, and they defiled my holy name by their abominations which they did, so that I destroyed them in my wrath. V. 9. Now will they remove their whoredom and the corpses of their kings from me, and I shall dwell in the midst of them for ever. V. 10. Thou, son of man, show to the house of Israel this house, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities, and may measure the well-measured building. V. 11. And when they are ashamed of all that they have done, show them the picture of the house and its arrangement, and its goings out and in, and all its forms and all its statutes, and all its forms and all its laws; and write it before their eyes, that they may keep all its form and all its statutes and do them. V. 12. This is the law of the house: Upon the top of the mountain all its territory round about is most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.*

The angel had shown the prophet the new sanctuary as already completed, and had measured it in his presence according to its several parts. But this building only became the house of God when Jehovah as the God of Israel consecrated it, to be the dwelling-place of His divine and gracious presence in the midst of His people, by the entrance of His divine glory into the house. <sup>158</sup>

The description of the new temple closes, therefore, with this act of consecration. That the prophet might see this act of divine grace with his own eyes, the measuring man led him from the ground surrounding the temple (Eze. 42:15-20) back again to the east gate (v. 1). The allusion is to the eastern gate of the outer court; for it is not till v. 5 that Ezekiel is taken into the inner court, and, according to Eze. 44: 1, he was brought *back* to the east gate of the outer court. Standing in front of this gate, he sees the glory of the God of Israel come by the way from the east with a great noise, and lighting up the earth with its splendour. The coming of the theophany from the east points back to Eze. 10:19; 11: 1 and 23, where the Shechinah, when leaving the ancient temple, went out at the east gate and ascended to the summit of the mountain, which was situated on the east of Jerusalem. It was from the east, therefore, that it returned to enter the new temple. This fact is sufficient of itself to show that the present entrance of the divine glory into the new temple did not lay the foundation for a new and more exalted bond of grace, but was simply intended to restore the relation which had existed before the removal of Israel into captivity. The tabernacle and Solomon's temple had both been consecrated by Jehovah in the same manner as the seat of His throne of grace in Israel (compare Exo. 40:34, 35; 1Ki. 8:10, 11; and 2Ch. 5:13, 14, and 7: 1-3, from which the expression **מלא כבוד יהוה את בית יהוה** in v. 5 has been borrowed). It is true that Hävernick, Kliefoth, and others find, along with this agreement, a difference in the fact that the glory of Jehovah appeared in the cloud in both the tabernacle and Solomon's temple; whereas here, on the contrary, it appeared in that peculiar form which Ezekiel had already repeatedly seen. But it does not follow that there was really a difference, because the cloud is not mentioned in the verses before us; for it is evident that the cloud was not wanting, even in the manifestation of the glory of God seen by Ezekiel, from the words found in Eze. 10: 3: "The *cloud* filled the inner court, and the glory of Jehovah had risen up from the cherubim to the threshold of the house, *and the house was filled with the cloud*, and the court was full of the splendour of the glory of Jehovah." If, therefore, it is expressly attested in v. 3, as even Kliefoth admits, that the appearance of God which entered the temple as like the appearance which Ezekiel saw by the Chaboras and before the destruction of the temple, and in connection with the last-mentioned appearance the cloud was visible along with the brilliant splendour of the divine *doxa*, the cloud will certainly not have been wanting when it entered the new temple; and the only reason why it is not expressly mentioned must be, that it did not present a contrast to the brilliant splendour, or tend to obscure the light of the glory of God, but as a shining cloud was simply the atmospheric clothing of the theophany.

If, then, the cloud did not present a contrast to the brilliancy of the divine glory, it cannot be inferred from the words, “and the earth shone with His glory,” that there was any difference between this and the earlier manifestations of the divine glory at the consecration of the tabernacle and Solomon’s temple; more especially as these words do not affirm that it became light on earth, but simply that the earth shone with the glory God, — that is to say, that it threw a bright light upon the earth as it passed along, — so that this remark simply serves to indicate the intensity of the brightness of this theophany. The words **בְּקוֹל וְגוֹ** **קוֹלוֹ** are not to be understood, as we may learn from Eze. 1:24, as referring to a voice of the coming God, but describe the loud noise made by the moving of the theophany on account of the rustling of the wings of the cherubim. This resembled the roaring of mighty waves. In v. 3, the expression **הַמְרָאָה** **וּכְמְרָאָה** ... **בְּמְרָאָה** is somewhat heavy in style, but is correct Hebrew; and the remark with which Hitzig seeks to justify his alteration of **וּכְמְרָאָה** into **וּמְרָאָה**, — namely, that **כְּמְרָאָה** “would signify ‘so the appearance,’ whereas Ezekiel intends to explain the present appearance from the well-known earlier one,” — is false so far as the usage of the language is concerned. When the Hebrew uses two **כִּי** in cases of comparison, which we are accustomed to express in German by *so...wie* (so...as), he always commences with the thing to which he compares another, and lets the thing which is to be compared follow afterwards. Thus, for example, in Gen. 18:25, **וְהָיָה בְּצַדִּיק כְּרָשָׁע** does not affirm that it happens as to the righteous so to the wicked, but *vice versâ*, that it happens to the righteous as to the wicked; and in Gen. 44:18, **כְּמוֹךָ בְּפַרְעֹה** **כִּי** does not mean, for like thee so is Pharaoh, but “for thou art like Pharaoh.” According to this genuine Hebrew expression, the present appearance of the divine glory is mentioned first in the verse before us, and then in the earlier one which the present resembled. And even the apparent pleonasm **מְרָאָה הַמְרָאָה** vanishes if we render **מְרָאָה** by “look,” — the look of the apparition which I saw was just like the apparition, etc. **כְּבָאֵי לְשַׁחַת וְגוֹ** refers to the ecstatic transportation of the prophet to Jerusalem (Eze. 8-11), to witness the destruction of the city (see more particularly Eze. 8: 4; 9: 1ff.). “The prophet destroyed the city ideally by his prophecy, of which the fulfilment simply forms the objective reverse side” (Hitzig). **וּמְרָאוֹת** is appended in loose apposition, — there were appearances, visions, — and the plural is to be taken as in **מְרָאוֹת אֱלֹהִים** in Eze. 1: 1; 40: 2. For what follows, compare Eze. 3:23; 10:15. For v. 5a, compare Eze. 3:14; 11:24.

In vv. 6 and 7 the question arises, who it is who is speaking to the prophet; whether it is Jehovah, who has entered the temple, or the man who is standing

by Ezekiel in the inner court? There can be no doubt that **מַדְבֵּר אֱלֹהִים** is Jehovah here, as in Eze. 2: 2; though the commentators are divided in opinion whether Jehovah spoke directly to the prophet, or through the medium of the man who stood by his side. Hävernicks presses the *Hithpael* **מַדְבֵּר**, and imagines that Ezekiel heard God conversing within the sanctuary, in consequence of which the angel stood by his side; so that the words of God consisted chiefly in the command to communicate to Ezekiel the divine revelation which follows in v. 7. But this view is proved to be erroneous by the expression **אֱלֹהִים** which follows **מַדְבֵּר**, and which Hävernicks has overlooked. Kliefoth, on the other hand, is of opinion that the words contained in v. 7, which proceeded from the **מַדְבֵּר**, were addressed to the prophet directly by God Himself; for he heard them before anything was said by the man, and neither here nor in what follows is the man said to have spoken. On the contrary, both here and in what follows, even in Eze. 46:20, 24; 47: 6, 7, it is always God Himself who appears as the speaker, and the man simply as the prophet's guide. But this is also not correct. Such passages as Eze. 46:20 and 24 compared with vv. 19 and 21, and Eze. 47: 6, 8, compared with vv. 1 and 4, show undeniably that the man who conducted the prophet also talked with him. Consequently, in the case referred to in the verse before us, we must also conclude that he who spoke to the prophet from the temple addressed him through the medium of the man who stood by his side, and that **אִישׁ** is the subject to **וַיֹּאמֶר** in v. 7; from which, however, it by no means follows that the **מַדְבֵּר** was also an angel, who spoke to the prophet, not from the most holy place, but simply from within the house, as Hitzig explains the matter. The meaning is rather, that Ezekiel heard God conversing with him from the sanctuary, whilst a man, i.e., an angel, stood by his side and spoke to him as follows. **אִישׁ** is in that case not some angel merely who spoke in the name of Jehovah, but the angel of Jehovah, God's own speaker, **ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ** (Joh. 1: 1ff.). But according to his outward *habitus*, this angel of the Lord, who is designated as **אִישׁ**, is identical with the angel who showed the prophet the temple, and measured it (Eze. 40: 3 onwards). For according to Eze. 47: 1ff. this **אִישׁ** had also a measuring rod, and measured. The absence of the article from **אִישׁ** in v. 6, which prevents Kliefoth from admitting this identity, does not indicate decidedly that a different man from the one mentioned before is introduced here as the prophet's attendant, but simply leaves the identity of this **אִישׁ** with the former indefinite, so that it can only be inferred from the further course of events; because the point of importance here was neither to establish this identity by employing the article, nor to define the medium of the word of God more precisely, but simply to introduce the words which follow as the words of God Himself. The address commences with an explanation on the part

of God that the temple into which the glory of the Lord had entered was the place of His throne, where He would dwell for ever among the sons of Israel. The **אֶת־מְקוֹם** is a concise expression, in which **אֵת** is *nota accus.*, and we have to supply in thought either **רֵאשׁה** or **הִנֵּה**: “behold the place.” **בַּפְּוֹת רַגְלֵי מְקוֹם**, the place of the soles of my feet (cf. Isa. 60:13), is equivalent to the footstool of my feet in Isa. 66: 1. The ark of the covenant is called the footstool of God in 1Ch. 28: 2 and Psa. 132: 7; compare Psa. 99: 5 and Lam. 2: 1, where this epithet may possibly be used to designate the temple. This also applies to the throne of Jehovah, since God was enthroned above the cherubim of the ark in the holy of holies (cf. Exo. 25:22; 1Sa. 4: 4, etc.). In the sanctuary which Ezekiel saw, no reference is made to the ark of the covenant, and the silence with regard to this is hardly to be regarded as a mere omission to mention it, inasmuch as none of the things contained in the temple are mentioned with the exception of the altars, not even the table of shew-bread or the candlestick. The ark of the covenant is not mentioned, because, as is stated in Jer. 3:16, in the Messianic times the ark of the covenant will not be remembered, neither will it be missed.

**לְעֹלָם**, as in Eze. 37:26 and 28. The promise culminates in this. **לְעֹלָם** does not apply either to the tabernacle or to Solomon’s temple, in which Jehovah also had His dwelling-place, though not for ever. These sanctuaries He left, and gave them up to destruction, because the Israelites had profaned His holy name by their idolatry. This will not take place any more after the erection of the new sanctuary. **לֹא יִטְמָאוּ** is not imperative, but a simple future: “they will no more defiled,” because they come to a knowledge of their sins through the punitive judgment of exile, so that they become ashamed of them, and because the Lord will have poured out His Spirit upon them (cf. Eze. 37:23ff., 39:29). — Formerly, however (v. 7b), they profaned the holy name of God by their spiritual whoredom (cf. Eze. 16) and by dead idols, for which they erected high places in the immediate neighbourhood of the dwelling-place of Jehovah, that is to say, even in the temple courts, so that Jehovah was only separated from the idols by a wall. This is the general meaning of vv. 7b and 8, in which the exposition of **פְּגָרֵי מְלֻכֵיהֶם** is difficulty. Rosenmüller, Hävernick, and others understand by the “corpses of their kings,” the dead idols. Ewald, Hitzig, and Kliefoth, on the other hand, take the expression in a literal sense, as referring to the corpses of kings which had been buried near to the temple, so that the temple had been defiled by the proximity of these graves. But the latter view is precluded by the fact that not a single instance can be adduced of the burial of a king in the vicinity of the temple, since Neh. 3:15 contains no allusion to anything of the kind, and the tombs of the kings upon Zion were not so near to the temple that it could possibly be defiled in consequence. Moreover, **בְּמִזְבְּחֵם**

cannot be reconciled with this view; and for that reason Ewald and Hitzig propose to read **בְּמֹתָם**, “in their death.” The attempt of Kliefoth, however, to defend the reading **בְּבִנְיָתָם**, by taking it as in apposition to **בְּבִנְיָתָם** and not to **וּבְפִגְרֵי מְלָכֵיהֶם**, is a desperate remedy, which clearly shows the impossibility of connecting **בְּמֹתָם** with the “corpses of the kings.” We therefore understand by **פִּגְרֵי** the dead idols, in accordance with Lev. 26:30 (cf. Jer. 16:18); but by **מְלָכֵיהֶם** we understand, not the idols, but the Israelitish kings, as in the case of the preceding **מְלָכֵיהֶם**; partly because it cannot be shown that the plural **מְלָכִים** is ever used in the sense of idols (though the singular **מְלָכָם** is used of Baal in Zep. 1: 5 and Amo. 5:26), and partly on account of the harshness involved in interpreting the two **מְלָכֵיהֶם** when standing so close together, in the first instance of the kings, and in the second of the idols of Israel. The corpses of the kings are therefore the dead idols, for which the kings (for example, Manasseh) had built altars or high places (**בְּמֹתָה**) in the sanctuary, i.e., in the courts of the temple (2Ki. 21: 4, 5-7). The objection that **פִּגְרֵים** without anything further, such, for instance, as **גְּלוּלִים** in Lev. 26:30, cannot signify the dead idols, will not bear examination, as the more precise definition which is wanting is supplied by the context, where idolatry is the point in question. **בְּמֹתָם** without the preposition **ב** is a loosely attached apposition to **מְלָכֵיהֶם** **בְּפִגְרֵי** and **בְּבִנְיָתָם**, which defines more precisely in what way the whoredom of the nation and the dead idols of the kings had amounted to a defiling of the house of the Lord, namely, from the fact that the people and the kings had erected temples of high places (*bâmoth*) for dead idols by the side of the temple of the living God, and had placed them so close that the threshold and door-posts of these idol-temples touched the threshold and door-posts of the temple of Jehovah, and there was nothing but the wall of the temple (**הַקִּיר**) between Jehovah and the carcase-gods. **בְּמֹתָם** is explained in this way in v. 8a, and then the defiling of the holy name of the Lord is mentioned again for the purpose of appending, by means of **וְאָכַל** (imperf. *Piel* of **כָּלָה**), the allusion to the penal judgment which they had thereby brought upon themselves. V. 9. Such profanation as this will not take place any more in time to come, and Jehovah will dwell for ever in the midst of Israel.

To lead Israel to this goal, Ezekiel is to show them the house (i.e., the temple). In this way are the further words of God in vv. 10-12 attached to what goes before. **הַגִּיד אֶת־הַבַּיִת**, show or make known the house, is equivalent to proclaim to the people the revelation concerning the new temple. In this were the Israelites to discern the magnitude of the grace of God, that they might blush at their evil deeds, and measure the well-measured building (**תִּכְנִית**), as in

Eze. 28:12), i.e., carefully consider and ponder what the Lord had bestowed upon His people through this sanctuary, so that they might suffer themselves to be brought to repentance by means of its glory. And if they felt shame and repentance on account of their transgressions, Ezekiel was to show them the shape and arrangement of the sanctuary, with all its forms and ordinances, and write them out before their eyes, that they might have the picture of it impressed upon their minds, and keep the statutes thereof. In v. 11 the words are crowded together, to indicate that all the several parts and arrangements of the new temple are significant and worthy of being pondered and laid to heart. **צורה** is the shape of the temple generally, its external form; **תכונה**, the internal arrangement as a whole. Both of these are noticed specifically by the allusion to the goings out and in, as well as to the forms (**צורות**) of the separate parts, and their statutes and laws. **חקות** are the precepts concerning the things to be observed by Israel when appearing before the Lord in the temple, the regulations for divine worship. **תורות**, the instructions contained in these statutes for sanctification of life. The second **ובל-צורתו** is omitted in the LXX and some of the Hebrew *Codd.*, and has therefore been expunged as a gloss by Dathe, Hitzig, and other critics; but it is undoubtedly genuine, and in conformity with the intentional crowding together of words. — The admonition to keep and to observe everything carefully is closed in v. 12 with a statement of the fundamental law of the temple; that upon the lofty mountain the whole of its domain round about is to be most holy. **אל-ראש הקר** does not belong to **הבית** in the sense of the house which is to be built upon the top of the mountain, but to the contents of the *thorâh* of this house. It is to stand upon the top of the mountain, and to be most holy in all its domain. **ראש הקר** is to be understood in accordance with Eze. 40: 2; and **גבלו** points back to **הבית**. Both by its situation upon a very high mountain, and also by the fact that not merely the inner sanctuary, and not merely the whole of the temple house, but also the whole of its surroundings (all its courts), are to be most holy, the new sanctuary is to be distinguished from the earlier one. What has been already stated — namely, that the temple shall not be profaned any more — is compressed into this clause; and by the repetition of the words, “this is the law of the house,” the first section of this vision, viz., the description of the temple, is rounded off; whilst the command given to the prophet in vv. 10 and 11, to make known all the statutes and laws of this temple to the house of Israel, forms at the same time the transition to the section which follows.

## CH. 43:13-46:24. THE NEW ORDINANCES OF DIVINE WORSHIP

*Eze. 43:13-46:24.* With the entrance of the divine glory into the new temple, which Ezekiel saw in the spirit (Eze. 43: 1-5), the Lord God entered once more into the covenant relation of grace toward the tribes of Israel. But if the abode of Jehovah in the midst of His people was to have an eternal duration, Israel must turn in uprightness of heart to its God, and suffer itself to be renewed and sanctified in heart, mind, and spirit from within the sanctuary, through the mercy of the Lord and His Spirit. It must entirely renounce the idols to which it was formerly attached, and cherish with willingness of heart fellowship with its God in the temple, through the faithful fulfilment of all that He required of His people. The description and consecration of the new temple, as the site of the throne of Jehovah in Israel, is therefore followed by the precepts concerning the manner in which Israel was to serve its God in the sanctuary, and to sanctify His name. These precepts commence with the description and ritual of the consecration of the altar of burnt-offering, at which the people was to approach the Lord with sacrifices, to seek and obtain from Him, grace, sanctification, and blessing (Eze. 43:13-27). To these there are appended regulations, —

(1) concerning the access to the sanctuary, for the prince (Eze. 44: 1-4), also for the ministers of the altar and of the holy place, the Levites and the priests, their duties and privileges (Eze. 44: 5-31);

(2) concerning the attitude of all the people toward the sanctuary and its ministers, or concerning the holy portion to be set apart to the Lord for His sanctuary, and its ministers, priests, Levites, and princes on the division of the land (Eze. 45: 1-12), and also concerning the heave-offerings, which all Israel was to bring to the prince to supply the sacrifices binding upon him (Eze. 45:13-17);

(3) concerning the offerings which were to be brought on the Sabbaths, the new moons, the yearly festivals, and every day (Eze. 45:18-46:15); and lastly,

(4) by way of appendix, precepts concerning the landed property of the prince (Eze. 46:16-18), and the sacrificial kitchens (Eze. 46:19-24).

### VV. 13-27. DESCRIPTION AND CONSECRATION OF THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING

*Eze. 43:13-17.* Description of the Altar (see the illustration on Plate III).

V. 13. *And these are the measures of the altar in cubits: The cubit a cubit and a handbreadth; a ground-framework of a cubit (in height), and a cubit in breadth, and its moulding on its border round about a span. This is the base of the altar.* V. 14. *And from the ground-framework of earth to the lower enclosure, two cubits (in height), and a cubit in breadth; and from the small enclosure to the greater enclosure, four cubits (in height), and one cubit in breadth.* V. 15. *And the mount of God, four cubits; and from the heart of God upwards, the four horns.* V. 16. *And the hearth of God, twelve cubits in length by twelve cubits in breadth; squared on its four sides.* V. 17. *And the enclosure, fourteen cubits in length by fourteen cubits in*



*breadth on its four sides; and the moulding round about it, half a cubit, and the ground-framework of it, a cubit round about: and its steps faced the east.*

To the heading, “these are the measures of the altar in (according to) cubits,” there is once more appended, as in Eze. 40: 5, in connection with the measuring of the temple, the length of the cubit measure. The description commences with the foundation of the altar, and, proceeding upwards, gives the height and breadth of the several gradations of the walls of the altar, up to the horns at the four corners (vv. 13-15). It then passes from above downwards, to supply the length and breadth or the circumference of the different stages (vv. 16 and 17). As the first, or lowest part, the **חֵיק** is mentioned, literally, the bosom or lap; then by transference, the hollow formed by the sides of a chariot (1Ki. 22:35); here the lower hollow or base of the altar (*p*), formed by a border of a definite height, to merely “a frame running round, a stand in which the altar stood” (Hitzig), nor merely “the hollow filled with earth” (Kliefoth), but both together. This ground-framework (*p*) was a cubit (sc., high) and a cubit broad. That **הָאֲמָה** is to be taken as referring to the height, is evident from the statement of the breadth which follows. **חֵיק הָאֲמָה** is not to be altered into **חֵיקָה אֲמָה**, as Ewald proposes, nor is **הָאֲמָה** to be changed into **בֵּאֲמָה** (Hitzig); but Hävernicks explanation is to be adopted: “and a bosom (was there) the cubit,” i.e., of the height of the cubit just described. **רָחֵב**, breadth, is the extent to which the bosom projected beyond the next enclosure (*q*) on every side, and formed a support, the circumference of which was a cubit more than the lower cube of the altar on every side. This is shown by the measurements in vv. 16 and 17. The **חֵיק** had a **גְּבוּל** on its **שֹׁפָה** of a span (half a cubit) in height (*o*). **שֹׁפָה**, lip, is the rim (1Ki. 7:26; Gen. 22:17); and **גְּבוּל**, the bordering on the rim, is a moulding. The feminine suffixes attached to **גְּבוּלָהּ** and **שֹׁפָתֶיהָ** refer to **חֵיק**, which is of the masculine gender, no doubt, when used in its literal sense of bosom or lap, but is construed as a feminine in the tropical sense of an inanimate object. The ground-framework, with its moulding, formed the **גִּב** of the altar. **גִּב**, the arched, then a hump or back, signifies here the support of the altar. Upon this support the altar rose in a cubical enclosure or frame, which diminished in circumference by ledges or steps. The enclosure resting upon the support, and therefore the lowest enclosure (*q*), is mentioned in v. 14*a*; and the one which followed (*r*) in v. 14*b*.

The word **עֲזָרָה**, which has probably sprung from **עָצַר** by the softening of **צ** into **ז**, signifies enclosure, surrounding, and is mostly used for the outer court of the temple; here it is applied to the altar, and signifies the enclosure or framework of the kernel of the altar, consisting of earth. As the altar rose in steps, a distinction is made between the lower or smaller, and the (upper or)

greater **עֲזָרָה**. The identity of the lower **עֲזָרָה** and the smaller one (**הַקְּמָנָה**) is so evident from the course of the description, that it is universally admitted by modern expositors. The lower one (*q*) is called the small one, in comparison with the large one which stood above it, from the fact that its height was smaller, as it was only two cubits high, whereas the upper one (*r*) was four. When, therefore, the measurement of the greater one is given in this way in v. 14*b*: “from the small enclosure to the great enclosure, four cubits,” this statement cannot be understood in any other way than as meaning, that this enclosure or frame had a height of four cubits from the lower to the upper end, — that is to say, in other words, that the lower ledge was four cubits from the upper. Consequently the statement in v. 14*a*, “from the ground-framework of earth to the lower enclosure, two cubits,” can also have no other meaning than that the lower enclosure, from the lower edge by the moulding to the upper edge, at which the second enclosure commenced, was two cubits high. This height is reckoned from the upper edge of the **חֵיק**, or from the first (lowest) ledge. The height of these three portions taken together, therefore, was (1 + 2 + 4) seven cubits. To this the mount of God (*s*), which was four cubits (v. 15), has to be added, making in all eleven cubits. In v. 14 **חֵיק** is followed by **הָאֲרָזִי**: the **חֵיק** consisting of earth, or filled with earth. But the **חֵיק**, with its moulding, is designated **גֹּב**, the back or support of the altar, and is thereby distinguished from the altar itself; so that, for the height of the altar, we have only to reckon the two enclosures, with the mount of God, which amount to ten cubits. Upon the basis of the **חֵיק**, with its moulding, and the two enclosures (**עֲזָרָה**), there rose the true altar, with its hearth, and the horns at the four corners, noticed in v. 15. A distinction is here made between **הָרֵאָל**, i.e., mount of God, and **אֲרֵאָל**; and they are not to be identified, as they have been by many of the commentators, down to Hitzig, after the example of the LXX. **אֲרֵאָל** (as the word is to be written according to the *Keri*) does not mean “lion of God,” but “heart of God” (**אֲרֵי**, from **אָרָה**, to burn), as in Isa. 29: 1, 2. The hearth of God is the surface of the altar, its fire-hearth (*t*); whereas **הָרֵאָל**, mount of God (*s*), was the basis or foundation of the hearth. This was four cubits high, whereas no height is mentioned in connection with the hearth of God; but it is simply stated that four horns went upward from it, namely, at the four corners. With the horns of the altar, the size and height of which are not given, and which cannot be reckoned at three cubits, the description of all the parts, from the bottom to the top, is given; and all that remains to complete the measurements, is to describe the circumference of the several parts which rose one above another in the form of steps. This follows in vv. 16 and 17. The hearth of God is twelve cubits long and twelve cubits broad, and is therefore **רַבִּוּאִי**, square, of the same length and breadth on its four sides. Going

downwards, there follow in v. 17a the length and breadth of the **עֲזָרָה**, with fourteen cubits, as it was a cubit broader on every side according to v. 14. It is very strange, however, that the length and breadth of only one **עֲזָרָה** are given here, as there are two of different heights mentioned in v. 14. Many of the commentators have therefore identified the mount of God with the great **עֲזָרָה**, and attribute only a height of seven cubits to the altar; whereas Kliefoth regards both the **עֲזָרָה** of v. 17 and the **גְּבוּל** and **חֵיק** of v. 15 as different from the parts mentioned by the same name in vv. 13 and 14, and takes them as referring to an enclosure and a barrier of the mount of God. One is as arbitrary as the other, as the words of the text do not require either of these assumptions. The difficulty, that only one **עֲזָרָה** is mentioned in v. 17, is easily solved, if we consider that in v. 15 only the height of the mount of God is given, and no breadth is mentioned as in the case of the **עֲזָרָה** in v. 14. We may see from this that the mount of God had the same breadth or the same circumference as the upper **עֲזָרָה** (see *r* and *s* in the illustration). In that case the length and breadth of all the parts of the altar were given, when, in addition to the length and breadth of the hearth of God (*t*), those of one **עֲזָרָה**, and that the lower, were given, as this alone was longer and broader than the hearth of God and the mount of God; whereas the length and breadth of the upper **עֲזָרָה** were identical with those of the circumference of the mount of God.

The altar, therefore, upon the upper surface, the hearth of God, was a square, of twelve cubits in length and breadth. The mount of God and the upper enclosure had the same length and breadth. The lower enclosure, on the other hand, were fourteen cubits long and broad; and the support, finally, without the moulding, was sixteen cubits in length and breadth. The height of the altar was as follows: the support, with the moulding, a cubit and a half; the lower enclosure, two cubits; the upper, four; and the mount of God, with the hearth, also four cubits in height; whereas the altar in Solomon's temple was ten cubits high, and at its lower basis twenty cubits long and broad (2Ch. 4: 1). — The description closes in v. 17b with an allusion to steps, which the altar of Ezekiel had upon the eastern side; whereas, in the case of the tabernacle, steps were not allowed to be placed by the altar (Exo. 20:23). The form **פְּנוֹת** is taken by Kimchi as a noun. Others regard it as an *infin. nominasc.*; whilst Hitzig proposes to point it as a participle **פְּנוֹת**.

### *Eze. 43:18-27.* Consecration of the Altar.

V. 18. *And he said to me, Son of man, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, These are the statutes of the altar in the day when it is erected, to offer burnt-offerings upon it, and to sprinkle blood thereon.* V. 19. *Thou shalt give to the priests of the tribe of Levi who are of the seed of Zadok, who draw near to me, is the saying of the Lord*

*Jehovah, a bullock, a young ox, for a sin-offering. V. 20. And thou shalt take of its blood, and put it upon its four horns, and upon the four corners of the enclosure, and upon the moulding round about; and so absolve and expiate it. V. 21. And thou shalt take the bullock of the sin-offering, and burn it at the appointed place of the house, outside the sanctuary. V. 22. And on the second day thou shalt offer a faultless he-goat for a sin-offering, that they may absolve the altar, as they absolved it with the bullock. V. 23. When thou hast completed the absolution, thou shalt offer a bullock, a young ox, without fault, and a faultless ram of the flock; V. 24. And shalt bring them before Jehovah, and the priests shall throw salt upon them, and sacrifice them as burnt-offering to Jehovah. V. 25. Seven days shalt thou offer a sin-offering goat daily and a bullock, a young ox, and a ram of the flock without fault shall they prepare. V. 26. Seven days shall they expiate the altar, and cleanse it, and fill its hand. V. 27. And when they have completed these days, it shall come to pass on the eighth day and henceforward, that the priests place your burnt-offerings and your peace-offerings upon the altar, and I will accept you with delight, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

As the altar of the tabernacle and that of Solomon's temple were consecrated before they were used (Lev. 8:11, 15, 19, 33; 1Ki. 8:62-66; 2Ch. 7: 4-10), and God commanded and regulated this consecration of the altar of the tabernacle (Exo. 29:10ff.), so also is the altar of burnt-offering in the new sanctuary to be consecrated before it is used. This command is given to Ezekiel, and the consecration enjoined upon him, not as the representative of the nation, but as a prophet, upon whom, as is frequently the case in the prophetic narratives, those things are said to be enjoined, which are to be set in operation through his proclamation. This commission is given to him, however, for the day (the time) when the altar will be made or restored, from which alone we may see that the execution of the command belongs to the future, in which the temple shown him in the spirit is to be erected, and that it will take place in a manner corresponding to the realization of the temple; so that we cannot infer from this command alone that the reference is to the building of a temple and altar of stone, metal, and wood. **חֲקוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ** are not the regulations prescribed for the altar service generally, but simply those relating to its consecration. If we compare these with the account of the consecration of the altars of the earlier sanctuaries, we find that no detailed description is given of the consecration of the altar of Solomon's temple, but that it is simply stated that it lasted seven days (2Ch. 7: 9). The consecration of the altar of the tabernacle lasted just the same time (Exo. 29:37; Lev. 8:33). And the same period is appointed here (v. 26). But the consecration of the altar of the tabernacle was associated with the consecration of the priests. Here, on the contrary, the existence of the priesthood is presupposed, and only the altar is consecrated. The consecration of the Mosaic altar commenced with the anointing of the altar and all its utensils, by the sprinkling of it seven times by Moses with the holy anointing oil, for the purpose of sanctifying it (Lev. 8:11). Here, on the other hand, nothing is

said about the anointing of the altar; only the absolving of it by sacrifice is mentioned, which followed the anointing in the case of the Mosaic altar. At the altar in the tabernacle Moses performed the whole act of consecration, as the mediator of the covenant, the anointing as well as the preparation of the sacrifices. Here, however, the priests already consecrated for their service are to complete the sacrificial ceremony. It is true that the expressions used in v. 20, “take of its blood,” etc., and in v. 21, “take the bullock of the sin-offering,” etc., apparently indicate that the prophet was to perform the sprinkling of the blood and the burning of the sin-offering. But it is obvious that this is only to be understood as signifying that he was to do it through the medium of the priests, i.e., was to enjoin the performance of it upon them, from the use of the plural **הַמִּזְבֵּחַ** in v. 22*b*: “they shall absolve the altar, as they have absolved it with the bullock.” It is not all the priests of the tribe of Levi however, who are to perform this service, but simply those of the family of Zadok, who alone are selected in the new temple for specifically priestly service (cf. Eze. 40:46 and 44:15ff.).

The sacred ceremony commences with the offering of a young ox as a sin-offering; vv. 19, 20, as in Lev. 8:14, compared with Exo. 29: 1, 10. The blood of the ox is to be put upon the four horns and the four corners of the enclosure, and upon the moulding below it round about; and the flesh is to be burned at an appointed place outside the sanctuary. For the article in **הַפֶּרֶת הַחֲטָאתָה** (v. 21), see Ewald, § 290*b*. The pouring out of the blood — that was not used for smearing the places indicated — at the foot of the altar is not mentioned, nor the burning of the fat portions of the sacrifice upon the altar. We cannot infer, from the omission of the latter circumstance, that the fat was not consumed upon the altar, but was burned, with the flesh, skin, and bones of the animal, outside the sanctuary, as Kliefoth supposes. Without the burning of certain definite portions of the victim upon the altar, the slaughtering of the animal would not have been a complete sacrifice at all; the smearing of the blood upon the altar would not have sufficed for this. And the fact that in v. 21 the command is given, “take the bullock and burn it,” does not prove that the animal was to be burned along with those fat portions which were to be consumed upon the altar in the case of every sin-offering. In Lev. 8:17 also, **אֶת־הַפֶּרֶת** stands in the place of **אֶת־בֶּשֶׂר הַפֶּרֶת**, Exo. 29:14. Ezekiel generally presupposes that the sacrificial ritual is well known, and therefore mentions only those points in which deviations from the ordinary ritual took place in connection with this sacrifice, such as the sprinkling of the blood, because the blood was to be smeared on particular parts of the altar, and the burning of the flesh, on account of the place where this was to be done. In the case of the burnt-offering in v. 23, no directions are given concerning the ceremonial; because this was to be in conformity with the standing ritual, with the exception

of the sprinkling with salt, which was not to be performed in the same manner as in the ordinary sacrifices. The burning is to take place **בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ הַזֶּה**, outside the sanctuary. **מִזְבֵּחַ** is a place commanded or appointed; and **הַזֶּה** **מִזְבֵּחַ** is a place in the temple set apart for that purpose. It follows from this that the place in question, since it belonged to the house, i.e., to the temple, is to be sought for within the square of five hundred cubits in extent, which was covered by the temple and its courts; and at the same time that it was outside the **מִזְבֵּחַ**, i.e., upon a spot which did not form part of the sanctuary in the stricter sense of the word. Kliefoth therefore thinks of a spot within the *gizrah* (Eze. 41:12), the name of which implies that the space which it covered did not belong to the true **מִזְבֵּחַ**. This view is the most probable one; whereas Ewald's conjecture, that the place intended is the locality of the sacrificial kitchens of the priests described in Eze. 46:19, is decidedly erroneous, as these kitchens, which were set apart for the cooking of the holy sacrificial flesh to be eaten by the priests alone, were certainly reckoned as forming part of the **מִזְבֵּחַ**. — V. 22. On the second day, a he-goat was to be brought for a sin-offering, and the altar was to be cleansed from sin with this just as with the bullock on the first day; which implies that the same ceremonial was to be observed with this sacrifice as with that of the sin-offering.

After the completion of the expiation a burnt-offering was to be presented to the Lord of a bullock and a ram (vv. 23 and 24). There is a difference of opinion as to the meaning of **בְּכֹלֹתֶיךָ מִחֲטָא** in these verses. Hitzig and Kliefoth suppose that the expiation was only completed on the second day, with the offering of the he-goat as a sin-offering. They both of them lay stress upon the fact that, on the one hand, in vv. 23 and 24 the offering of the burnt-offering is mentioned on the second day, and not on the first day also; and on the other hand, in v. 25, for the seven days of consecration, only the preparation of a he-goat for the sin-offering and the preparation of the two animals appointed for the burnt-offering are mentioned. Hitzig also adduces the fact that in v. 26 there is no further reference to **חֲטָא**, but simply to **כֹּפֶר** and **טָהַר**, and draws the conclusion from this, that the sin attaching to the altar was removed with two sin-offerings on two days, and then through seven days further by means of burnt-offerings the anger of God which followed the sin was appeased (**כֹּפֶר**), and the uncleanness or profane character of the altar was expunged (**טָהַר**), so that the seven days of v. 25 are not to be dated from v. 19 onwards. According to this view, the consecration of the altar lasted nine days, and not seven, and the eighth day mentioned in v. 27 would really be the tenth day, reckoning from the commencement of the consecration. To carry out this view, Hitzig is obliged to erase not only the **וּכְפַרְתֶּהוּ** of v. 20, but also the first half of v. 25

as glosses; a fact which carries its condemnation with it, as even the Septuagint furnishes no warrant for the erasure of v. 25a. Moreover, the distinction which Hitzig draws between **הִטָּא** on the one hand, and **כִּפֹּר** and **מָהַר** on the other, is quite erroneous. Purification (**מָהַר**) is never mentioned in the law as the effect produced by a burnt-offering. A sin-offering followed by a burnt-offering is invariably prescribed for the removal of uncleanness; for “reconciliation and purification take place through the absolution effected by the sin-offering; and to such a sin-offering and its purifying operation the burnt-offering is then added to secure the good pleasure of God for that which has been already cleansed” (Kliefoth).

But we cannot regard even Kliefoth’s view as well founded, namely, that on the first day a sin-offering alone was presented, and it was only from the second day onwards that a sin-offering and burnt-offering were presented, and this lasted for seven days, so that the consecration of the altar continued fully eight days, and on the ninth day (not the eighth, as stated in v. 27) the regular use of the altar commenced. Kliefoth bases this conclusion principally upon the fact that vv. 19-21 attribute only the sin-offering of a bullock to the first day; and that, on the other hand, vv. 25 and 26 extend in all its details to seven days the very same ceremony as vv. 22-24 assign to the second day, whereas they do not contain a syllable to the effect that the sin-offering of the bullock was to be repeated every day, or that the sacrifices described in vv. 22-24 were also to be offered on the first day. The sinew of this demonstration consists *in silentio*, therefore; and this precarious basis of argument crumbles here, as in most other cases, as is evident from the words of v. 26: “seven days shall ye reconcile the altar, and purify it.” This perfectly general statement, which is not connected with v. 25 by any *Vav copul.*, or placed in subordination to it, affirms in the clearest manner that the consecration of the altar was to last seven days, neither more nor less; so that if these seven days are to be reckoned from the second day, the sin-offering of the bullock upon the first day must be deprived of its reconciling and purifying worth, in direct contradiction not only to v. 20, according to which the altar was to be absolved and reconciled through the sin-offering of the bullock to be offered on the first day, but also to v. 22, according to which they were to absolve the altar by the sin-offering of the he-goat, in just the same manner as they had absolved it by the sin-offering of the bullock (on the first day). To take the **כִּפֹּר** and **מָהַר** in v. 26 merely as the effect produced by the sacrifices mentioned in v. 25, renders the **שִׁבְעַת יָמִים** standing at the head of v. 26 an impossibility. Unless, therefore, we would impose upon the words of the prophet a gross contradiction, we must lay no stress either upon the fact that in v. 23 the offering of the burnt-offering is not mentioned till after the direction concerning the sin-offering to be presented on

the second day, or upon the circumstance that in v. 25 the he-goat is mentioned as a sin-offering for all the seven days, and no allusion is made to the fact that the sin-offering of the first day was a bullock. The former (the reference to the burnt-offering after the sin-offering of the second day) may be explained very simply, on the ground that the sin-offerings of the first two days are mentioned one after the other, because different animals were prescribed for the purpose, and then, first, the burnt-offerings, which were the same for every day. And it is obvious that the explanation is to be sought for in this formal arrangement, and not in the fact that only a sin-offering without a burnt-offering was to be presented on the first day, and consequently that the expression “on the second day” refers solely to the sin-offering of that day, from the words **מִהַטָּא** **בַּלֹּחֶתְךָ** in v. 23; since **מִהַטָּא** cannot be understood in a different sense from that which it bears in v. 22*b*, the clause immediately preceding, i.e., must not be restricted to the sin-offering of the second day, but must be taken as referring to the sin-offerings of both the first and second days. The meaning of the words is therefore this: when the absolution by means of the sin-offering on the first and on the second day is ended, then shalt thou bring a burnt-offering. But if this is the meaning of the words, the offering of the burnt-offering prescribed in v. 23 does not fall so exclusively under the definition of time contained in the words “on the second day,” as to warrant our assigning it to the second day alone, and concluding that no such offering was presented on the first day. There was no necessity for Ezekiel to express himself more clearly on this point, as there was no fear of any misunderstanding on the part of those who were acquainted with the law; since every Israelite who had been instructed in the law knew full well that no sin-offering could ever be presented without being followed by a burnt-offering, that in fact the burnt-offering was indispensable to the accomplishment of the **בִּפְרָה**, for which the sin-offering was presented. And in v. 25 also, Ezekiel had no occasion to fear that the somewhat loose expression, “seven days shalt thou prepare a he-goat sin-offering for the day,” would be misunderstood; as he had already stated that a bullock was to be taken for the sin-offering of the first day, and the period of seven days was so universally prescribed in the law for every act of consecration which lasted more than one day, that he would have indicated in a clearer manner any deviation from this rule. We therefore regard the change of the seven days devoted to the consecration of the altar into eight as being just as groundless as that into nine, and adhere to the traditional explanation of these verses, namely, that the consecration of the altar lasted only seven days, and that on every one of these days a sin-offering and a burnt-offering were to be presented, the sin-offering on the first day being a bullock, and on the other days a he-goat, whilst the burnt-offerings were to consist on all seven days of a young ox and a ram.



With regard to the burnt-offering, the direction given, that the priests are to throw or pour (הִשְׁלִיךְ), and not merely to strew or sprinkle, salt upon it, is to be regarded as significant. According to Lev. 2:13, salt was to be added to every קָרְבָּן (bloody or bloodless) sacrifice. The express allusion to the salting of these consecrating burnt-offerings, and also the choice of the verb הִשְׁלִיךְ, point to a copious strewing with salt for the purpose of giving greater intensity to the force of these sacrifices. On the significance of salt in relation to the sacrifices, see the comm. on Lev. 2:13. The וְ attached to the *Chetib* וְכִפְרוּ in v. 26 is to be explained from the fact that the definition of the time שְׁבַעַת יָמִים is placed at the head absolutely. There is something bold in the application of the expression מֵלֶא יָד to the altar; since this expression arose from the ceremony peculiar to the consecrating sacrifice of the priests, namely, that the fat and fleshy portions of this sacrifice, which were intended partly for consumption upon the altar, and partly as a heave-offering for Jehovah, were to be given into the hands of the priests to be consecrated for the purpose of investing them symbolically with the gifts, which they were to offer in part to the Lord in the altar fire in the fulfilment of their official duties, and to receive in part for their service (see the comm. on Lev. 8:25-29). Filling the hand of the altar, therefore, is equivalent to providing it with sacrificial gifts, so that it should never be without them. In this sense the symbolical act was connected with the completion of its consecration as a place of sacrifice. The *Keri* יָדוּ is incorrect, and יָדוּ the proper reading; inasmuch as even at the consecration of the priests, when the sacrificial portions were placed in the hands of the priests, מֵלֶא יָד only is used, and not יָדִים (cf. Exo. 29:9; Lev. 21:10, etc.).

If we compare the directions given in the section before us concerning the consecration of the altar, with the consecration which was prescribed in Exo. 29 for the altar of burnt-offering in the tabernacle, and was fully carried out according to Lev. 8, we find the following points of difference:

- (1) the anointing of the altar is wanting here;
- (2) at the consecration of the Mosaic altar a bullock (young ox) was prescribed as the sin-offering for all the seven days (Exo. 29:36), in Ezekiel for the first day only, and a he-goat for the rest;
- (3) the blood of this sin-offering is smeared upon the horns of the altar in the former consecration (Exo. 29:12; Lev. 8:15), in the latter upon the horns and the corners of the walls, and upon the lower moulding round about;
- (4) the burnt-offering there consists in a ram every day, here in a bullock and a ram daily;

(5) on the other hand, the ram offered as a sacrifice of consecration in the Mosaic ceremony, which was specially connected with the institution of the priests in their office, is omitted here, as the priests were already holding their office; so that the sacrifice of consecration might be said to be here absorbed into the burnt-offering.

All essential differences therefore reduce themselves to the fact that in Ezekiel the anointing of the altar is wanting, and the sin-offering of the last six days is diminished by the selection of an inferior animal, in place of which the burnt-offering is considerably intensified by the demand of a bullock and a ram for this, the same thing being also indicated by the copious pouring of salt thereon. — For the symbolical meaning of these sacrifices, compare the commentary on Lev. 8. — The consecration of the altar was completed in seven days; and from the eighth day onwards the priests were to offer the regular sacrifices upon it (v. 27); whereas at the Mosaic consecration of the altar and priests, the constant altar service of the priests was still further inaugurated by a solemn sacrifice on the eighth day (Lev. 9). Burnt-offerings and peace-offerings are mentioned in v. 27 *instar omnium* as being the principal and most frequent sacrifices, whilst sin-offerings and meat-offerings are implied therein.

#### **CH. 44. POSITION OF THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF THE PEOPLE IN RELATION TO THE NEW SANCTUARY**

*Eze. 44.* With the consecration of the altar of burnt-offering the way is opened for the congregation of Israel to appear in the sanctuary before the Lord, to serve Him with sacrifices. If, however, the use of the new house of God was to be in harmony with the holiness of the God who dwelt therein, it was requisite that still further directions should be given concerning the entering of the people into it, and the character of the servants of both the altar and the sanctuary. These directions follow in the chapter before us, — first, as to the place which the prince was to occupy at the service in the temple (vv. 1-3); secondly, as to the admission of foreigners and the appointment of Levites and priests for the service (vv. 4-16); and lastly, as to the conditions requisite for the administration of the priest's office, and the duties and privileges of that office (vv. 17-31).

*Eze. 44: 1-3.* The Place of the Prince in the Sanctuary.

V. 1. *And he brought me back by the way to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looked toward the east; and it was shut.* V. 2. *And Jehovah said to me, This gate shall be shut, shall not be opened, and no one shall enter thereby; because Jehovah, the God of Israel, has entered by it, it shall be shut.* V. 3. *As for the prince, as prince he shall sit therein, to eat bread before Jehovah; from the way to the porch of the gate shall he go in, and from its way shall he go out.*

From the inner court where Ezekiel had received the measurements of the altar of burnt-offering and the instructions concerning its consecration (Eze. 43: 5ff.), he is taken back to the east gate of the outer court, and finds this gate, which formed the principle entrance to the temple, closed. Jehovah explains this fact to him through the angel (יְהוָה אֱמָר) is to be understood according to Eze. 43: 6 and 7) thus: “this gate is to be shut, because Jehovah, the God of Israel, has entered into the temple thereby,” as we have already learned from Eze. 43: 2. Only the prince, as prince, was allowed to sit in it for the purpose of holding sacrificial meals there. So far the meaning of the words is clear and indisputable. For there can be no doubt whatever that v. 3 introduces a more precise statement concerning the closing of the gate; in other words, that the right of sitting in the gate to eat bread before Jehovah, which is conceded to the priest, is intended as an explanation, *resp.* modification and limitation, of the statement וְהָיָה סֹגֹר (v. 2). On the other hand, the more precise definition of the prerogative granted to the prince in v. 3 is not quite clear, and therefore open to dispute. Such a prerogative is already indicated in the prominence expressly given to the prince, consisting partly in the fact that אֶת־דָּבָר־אֱשִׂיא is written first in an absolute form, and partly in the expression הוּא אֱשִׂיא, which is repeated in the form of a circumstantial clause, “prince is he,” equivalent to “because he is prince, he is to sit there.” אֱשִׂיא is neither the high priest, as many of the older commentators supposed, nor a collective term for the civil authorities of the people of Israel in the Messianic times (Hävernick), but the David who will be prince in Israel at that time, according to Eze. 34:23, 24, and Eze. 37:24. “To eat bread before Jehovah” signifies to hold a sacrificial meal at the place of the divine presence, i.e., in the temple court, and is not to be restricted, as Kliefoth supposes, to that sacrificial meal “which was held after and along with the bloodless sacrifices, viz., the *minchoth*, and the shew-breads, and the sweet loaves of the Passover.” There is no authority in the usage of the language for this literal interpretation of the expression “to eat bread,” for לָחֶם אָכַל means in general to partake of a meal, compare Gen. 31:54, etc., and especially Exo. 18:12, where Jethro “eats bread before God” with Aaron and the elders of Israel, that is to say, joins in a sacrificial meal composed of זְבָחִים or slain-offerings. According to this view, which is the only one supported by usage, the prerogative secured to the אֱשִׂיא of the future is not “that of participating in the sacrificial meals (of the priests), which were to be held daily with the *minchoth* and shew-bread, in opposition to the law which prevailed before” (Kliefoth), but simply that of holding his sacrificial meals in the gate, i.e., in the porch of the gate, whereas the people were only allowed to hold them in the court, namely, in the vicinity of the sacrificial kitchens.

There is also a difference of opinion concerning the meaning of the second statement in v. 3: “from the way of the porch of the gate shall he enter in, and thence shall he go out.” The suffix in **מִדְרָכּוֹ** can only refer to **אוֹלָם**, “from the way from which he came (entered), from this way shall he go out again.” Hitzig follows the Rabbins, who understand the passage thus: “as the gate is to remain shut, he must go by the way to the porch which is directed inwardly, toward the court (Eze. 40: 9). He must have gone into the outer court through the north or the south gate, and by the way by which he came he also went back again.” But Kliefoth argues, in objection to this, that “if the prince was to eat the bread in the porch, the entrance through the south or the north gate would be of no use to him at all; as the gate which could be shut was at that door of the porch which was turned toward the outer court.” Moreover, he affirms that it is not at all the meaning of the text that he was to eat the bread in the porch, but that he was to eat it in the gate-building, and he was to come thither **אוֹלָם הַשָּׂאֵר** **מִדְרָךְ**, i.e., “from the place which served as a way to the gate porch, that is to say, the walk from the eastern entrance of the gate-building to the front of the porch, and from that was he to go out again.” The prince, therefore, was “to go into the gate-building as far as the front of the porch through the eastern entrance, there to eat his bread before Jehovah, and to come out again from thence, so that the gate at the western side of the gate porch still remained shut.” But we cannot regard either of these views as correct. There is no firm foundation in the text for Kliefoth’s assertion, that he was not to eat the bread in the porch, but in the gate-building. It is true that the porch is not expressly mentioned as the place where the eating was to take place, but simply the gate (**בַּיָּת**); yet the porch belonged to the gate as an integral part of the gate-building; and if **דְּרָךְ אוֹלָם** is the way to the porch, or the way leading to the porch, the words, “by the way to the porch shall he enter in,” imply clearly enough that he was to go into the porch and to eat bread there. This is also demanded by the circumstance, as the meaning of the words cannot possibly be that the prince was to hold his sacrificial meal upon the threshold of the gate, or in one of the guard-rooms, or in the middle of the gateway; and apart from the porch, there were no other places in the gate-building than those we have named. And again, the statement that the gate on the western side of the gate porch was to be shut, and not that against the eastern wall, is also destitute of proof, as **דְּרָךְ אוֹלָם**, the way to the porch, is not equivalent to the way “up to the front of the porch.” And if the prince was to hold the sacrificial meal behind the inner gate, which was closed, how was the food when it was prepared to be carried into the gate-building? Through a door of one of the guard-rooms? Such a supposition is hardly reconcilable with the significance of a holy sacrificial meal. In fact, it is a question whether eating in the gate-building with the inner door

closed, so that it was not even possible to look toward the sanctuary, in which Jehovah was enthroned, could be called eating **לפני יהוה**.

Hitzig's explanation of the words is not exposed to any of these difficulties, but it is beset by others. At the outset it is chargeable with improbability, as it is impossible to see any just ground why the prince, if he was to hold the sacrificial meal in the porch of the east gate, should not have been allowed to enter through this gate, but was obliged to take the circuitous route through the south or the north gate. Again, it is irreconcilable with the analogous statements in Eze. 46. According to Eze. 46: 1ff., the east gate of the inner court was to be shut, namely, during the six working days; but on the Sabbath and on the new moon it was to be opened. Then the prince was to come by the way of the gate porch from without, and during the preparation of his sacrifice by the priests to stand upon the threshold of the gate and worship. This same thing was to take place when the prince desired to offer a freewill offering on any of the week-days. The east gate was to be opened for him to this end; but after the conclusion of the offering of sacrifice it was to be closed again, whereas on the Sabbaths and new moons it was to stand open till the evening (Eze. 46:12 compared with v. 2). It is still further enjoined, that when offering these sacrifices the prince is to enter by the way of the gate porch, and to go out again by the same way (vv. 2 and 8); whereas on the feast days, on which the people appear before Jehovah, every one who comes, the priest along with the rest, is to go in and out through the north or the south gate (vv. 9 and 10). If, therefore, on the feast days, when the people appeared before Jehovah, the prince was to go into the temple in the midst of the people through the north or the south gate to worship, whereas on the Sabbaths and new moons, on which the people were not required to appear before the Lord, so that the prince alone had to bring the offerings for himself and the people, he was to enter by the way of the porch of the east gate, and to go out again by the same, and during the ceremony of offering the sacrifice was to stand upon the threshold of the inner east gate, it is obvious that the going in and out by the way of the porch of the gate was to take place by a different way from that through the north or the south gate. This other way could only be through the east gate, as no fourth gate existed. — The conclusion to which this brings us, so far as the passage before us is concerned, is that the shutting of the east gate of the outer court was to be the rule, but that there were certain exceptions which are not fully explained till Eze. 46, though they are hinted at in the chapter before us in the directions given there, that the prince was to hold the sacrificial meal in this gate. — The outer east gate, which was probably the one chiefly used by the people when appearing before the Lord in the earlier temple, both for going in and coming out, is to be shut in the new temple, and not to be made use of by the people for either entrance or exit, because the glory of the Lord entered into

the temple thereby. This reason is of course not to be understood in the way suggested by the Rabbins, namely, that the departure of the Shechinah from the temple was to be prevented by the closing of the gate; but the thought is this: because this gateway had been rendered holy through the entrance of the Shechinah into the temple thereby, it was not to remain open to the people, so as to be desecrated, but was to be kept perpetually holy. This keeping holy was not prejudiced in any way by the fact that the prince held the sacrificial meal in the gate, and also entered the court through this gateway for the purpose of offering his sacrifice, which was made ready by the priests before the inner gate, and then was present at the offering of the sacrifice upon the altar, standing upon the threshold of the inner gate-building. **דֶּרֶךְ אֹזְלִים הַשָּׂר** is therefore the way which led from the outer flight of steps across the threshold past the guard-rooms to the gate porch at the inner end of the gate- building. By this way the priest was to go into the gate opened for him, and hold the sacrificial meal therein, namely, in the porch of this gate. That the offering of the sacrifice necessarily preceded the meal is assumed as self-evident, and the law of sacrifice in Eze. 46 first prescribes the manner in which the prince was to behave when offering the sacrifice, and how near to the altar he was to be allowed to go.

**Eze. 44: 4-16.** The Position of Foreigners, Levites, and Priests in Relation to the Temple and the Temple Service. — The further precepts concerning the approach to the sanctuary, and the worship to be presented there, are introduced with a fresh exhortation to observe with exactness all the statutes and laws, in order that the desecration of the sanctuary which had formerly taken place might not be repeated, and are delivered to the prophet at the north gate in front of the manifestation of the glory of God (vv. 4-8).

V. 4. *And he brought me by the way of the north gate to the front of the house; and I looked, and behold the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah, and I fell down upon my face.* V. 5. *And Jehovah said to me, Son of man, direct thy heart and see with thine eyes and hear with thine ears all that I say to thee with regard to all the statutes of the house of Jehovah and all its laws, and direct thy heart to the entering into the house through all the exits of the house,* V. 6. *And say to the rebellious one, to the family of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Let it be sufficient for you, of all your abominations, O house of Israel,* V. 7. *In that ye brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to desecrate it, my house, when ye offered my food, fat and blood, and so they broke my covenant to all your abominations,* V. 8. *And so ye did not keep the charge of my holy things, but made them keepers of my charge for you in my sanctuary.*

From the outer gate to which Ezekiel had been taken, simply that he might be instructed concerning the entering thereby, he is once more conducted, after this has been done, by the way of the north gate to the front of the temple house, to receive the further directions there for the performance of the worship

of God in the new sanctuary. The question, whether we are to understand by the north gate that of the outer or that of the inner court, cannot be answered with certainty. Hitzig has decided in favour of the latter, Kliefoth in favour of the former. The place to which he is conducted is אֶל־פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת, *ad faciem domus*, before the temple house, so that he had it before his eyes, i.e., was able to see it. As the gateway of the inner court was eight steps, about four cubits, higher than the outer court gate, this was hardly possible if he stood at or within the latter. הַבַּיִת, i.e., the temple house, could only be distinctly seen from the inner north gate. And the remark that it is more natural to think of the outer north gate, because the next thing said to the prophet has reference to the question who is to go into and out of the sanctuary, has not much force, as the instructions do not refer to the going in and out alone, but chiefly to the charge of Jehovah, i.e., to the maintenance of divine worship.

At the fresh standing-place the glory of the Lord, which filled the temple, met the sight of the prophet again, so that he fell down and worshipped once more (cf. Eze. 43: 3, 5). This remark is not intended “to indicate that now, after the preliminary observations in Eze. 43:13-44: 3, the true *thorah* commences” (Kliefoth), but to show the unapproachable glory and holiness of the new temple. For v. 5, see Eze. 40: 4; 43:11, 12. In v. 6 אֶל־מְרִי is placed at the head in a substantive form for the sake of emphasis, and בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל is appended in the form of an apposition. For the fact itself, see Eze. 2: 8. רַב־לָכֶם followed by מִן, a sufficiency of anything, as in Exo. 9:28, 1Ki. 12:28, is equivalent to “there is enough for you to desist from it.” The תּוֹעֵבוֹת, from which they are to desist, are more precisely defined in v. 6. They consisted in the fact that the Israelites admitted foreigners, heathen, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, into the sanctuary, to desecrate it during the offering of sacrifice. It is not expressly stated, indeed, that they admitted uncircumcised heathen to the offering of sacrifice, but this is implied in what is affirmed. The offering of sacrifice in the temple of Jehovah is not only permitted in the Mosaic law to foreigners living in Israel, but to some extent prescribed (Lev. 17:10, 12; Num. 15:13ff.). It was only in the paschal meal that no בֶּן נֶכְרִי was allowed to participate (Exo. 12:43). To do this, he must first of all be circumcised (v. 44). Solomon accordingly prays to the Lord in his temple-prayer that He will also hearken to the prayer of the foreigner, who may come from a distant land for the Lord’s name sake to worship in His house (1Ki. 8:41ff.). The reproof in the verse before us is apparently at variance with this. Raschi would therefore understand by בְּנֵי־יִכְר, Israelites who had fallen into heathen idolatry. Rosenmüller, on the other hand, is of opinion that the Israelites were blamed because they had accepted *victimae et libamina* from the heathen, and offered them in the temple, which had been prohibited in Lev. 25:22. Hävernick

understands by the sons of the foreigner, Levites who had become apostates from Jehovah, and were therefore placed by Ezekiel on a par with the idolatrous sons of the foreigner. And lastly, Hitzig imagines that they were foreign traders, who had been admitted within the sacred precincts as sellers of sacrificial animals, incense, and so forth. All these are alike arbitrary and erroneous. The apparent discrepancy vanishes, if we consider the more precise definition of **בְּנֵי נֶכֶר**, viz., “uncircumcised in heart and flesh.” Their being uncircumcised in heart is placed first, for the purpose of characterizing the foreigners as godless heathen, who ere destitute not only of the uncircumcision of their flesh, but also of that of the heart, i.e., of piety of heart, which Solomon mentions in his prayer as the motive for the coming of distant strangers to the temple. By the admission of such foreigners as these, who had no fear of God at all, into the temple during the sacrificial worship, Israel had defiled the sanctuary. **אֶת־בֵּיתִי** is in apposition to the suffix to **תְּחַלְּלוּ**. The food of Jehovah (**לֶחֶמִי**) is sacrifice, according to Lev. 3:11; 21: 6, etc., and is therefore explained by “fat and blood.” **וַיִּפְרוּ**, which the LXX changed in an arbitrary manner into the second person, refers to the “foreigners,” the heathen. By their treading the temple in their ungodliness they broke the covenant of the Lord with His people, who allowed this desecration of His sanctuary. **אֵל בְּלִתְּוֵעֲבוֹתַי**, in addition to all your abominations. How grievous a sin was involved in this is stated in v. 8. The people of Israel, by their unrighteous admission of godless heathen into the temple, not only failed to show the proper reverence for the holy things of the Lord, but even made these heathen, so to speak, servants of God for themselves in His sanctuary. These last words are not to be understood literally, but spiritually. Allowing them to tread the temple is regarded as equivalent to appointing them to take charge of the worship in the temple. For **מִשְׁמֶרְתִּי** **שָׁמַר**, see Lev. 18:30; 22: 9, and the commentary on Lev. 8:35.

The Lord would guard against such desecration of His sanctuary in the future. To this end the following precepts concerning the worship in the new temple are given.

*V. 9. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall come into my sanctuary, of all the foreigners that are in the midst of the sons of Israel; V. 10. But even the Levites, who have gone away from me in the wandering of Israel, which wandered away from me after its idols, they shall bear their guilt. V. 11. They shall be servants in my sanctuary, as guards at the gates of the house and serving in the house; they shall slay the burnt-offering and the slain-offering for the people, and shall stand before it to serve them. V. 12. Because they served them before their idols, and became to the house of Israel a stumbling-block to guilt, therefore I have lifted my hand against them, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah, that they should bear their guilt. V. 13. They shall not draw near to me to serve me as priests, and to draw near to all my holy things, to the most*



*holy, but shall bear their disgrace and all their abominations which they have done. V. 14. And so will I make them guards of the charge of the house with regard to all its service, and to all that is performed therein. V. 15. But the priests of the tribe of Levi, the sons of Zadok, who have kept the charge of my sanctuary on the wandering of the sons of Israel from me, they shall draw near to me to serve me, and stand before me, offer to me fat and blood, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 16. They shall come into my sanctuary, and they draw near to my table to serve me, and shall keep my charge. —*

In order that all desecration may be kept at a distance from the new sanctuary, foreigners uncircumcised in heart and flesh are not to be admitted into it; and even of the Levites appointed for the service of the sanctuary according to the Mosaic law, all who took part in the falling away of the people into idolatry are to be excluded from investiture with the priests' office as a punishment for their departure from the Lord, and only to be allowed to perform subordinate duties in connection with the worship of God. On the other hand, the descendants of Zadok, who kept themselves free from all straying into idolatry, are to perform the specifically priestly service at the altar and in the sanctuary, and they alone. The meaning and design of the command, to shut out the foreigners uncircumcised in heart from all access to the sanctuary, are not that the intermediate position and class of foreigners living in Israel should henceforth be abolished (Kliefoth); for this would be at variance with Eze. 47:22 and 23, according to which the foreigners (גֵּרִים) were to receive a possession of their own in the fresh distribution of the land, which not only presupposes their continuance within the congregation of Israel, but also secures it for the time to come. The meaning is rather this: No heathen uncircumcised in heart, i.e., estranged in life from God, shall have access to the altar in the new sanctuary. The emphasis of the prohibition lies here, as in v. 7, upon their being uncircumcised in heart; and the reason for the exclusion of foreigners consists not so much in the foreskin of the flesh as in the spiritual foreskin, so that not only the uncircumcised heathen, but also Israelites who were circumcised in flesh, were to keep at a distance from the sanctuary if they failed to possess circumcision of heart. The ל before כָּל־בֶּן־נִ serves the purpose of comprehension, as in Gen. 9:10, Lev. 11:42, etc. (compare *Ewald*, § 310a). Not only are foreigners who are estranged from God to be prevented from coming into the sanctuary, but even the Levites, who fell into idolatry at the time of the apostasy of the Israelites, are to bear their guilt, i.e., are to be punished for it by exclusion from the rights of the priesthood. This is the connection between the tenth verse and the ninth, indicated by כִּי אִם, which derives its meaning, *truly (imo), yea even*, from this connection, as in Isa. 33:21. הַלְוִיִּם are not the Levites here as distinguished from the priests (Aaronites), but all the descendants of Levi, including the Aaronites chosen for the priests' office, to whom what is to be said concerning the Levites chiefly applied. The division of

the Levites into such as are excluded from the service and office of priests (בִּהָן, v. 13) on account of their former straying into idolatry, and the sons of Zadok, who kept aloof from that wandering, and therefore are to be the only persons allowed to administer the priests' office for the future, shows very clearly that the threat "they shall bear their guilt" does not apply to the common Levites, but to the Levitical priests. They are to be degraded to the performance of the inferior duties in the temple and at divine worship. The guilt with which they are charged is that they forsook Jehovah when the people strayed into idolatry. Forsaking Jehovah involves both passive and active participation in idolatry (cf. Jer. 2: 5). This wandering of the Israelites from Jehovah took place during the whole time that the tabernacle and Solomon's temple were in existence, though at different periods and with varying force and extent.

Bearing the guilt is more minutely defined in vv. 11-13. The Levitical priests who have forsaken the Lord are to lose the dignity and rights of the priesthood; they are not, indeed, to be entirely deprived of the prerogative conferred upon the tribe of Levi by virtue of its election to the service of the sanctuary in the place of the first-born of the whole nation, but henceforth they are merely to be employed in the performance of the lower duties, as guards at the gates of the temple, and as servants of the people at the sacrificial worship, when they are to slaughter the animals for the people, which every one who offered sacrifice was also able to do for himself. Because they have already served the people before their idols, i.e., have helped them in their idolatry, they shall also serve the people in time to come in the worship of God, though not as priests, but simply in non-priestly occupations. The words הָמָה יֵאָמְדוּ וְגו' are taken from Num. 16: 9, and the suffixes in לְפָנֶיהֶם and לְשִׁרְתָּם refer to עַם, as in Eze. 7:19; 14: 3; 18:30. נָשָׂא יָד, not to raise the arm to smite, but to lift up the hand to swear, as in Eze. 20: 5, 6, etc. לְגִשְׁתָּ אֶל כָּל־קֹדְשֵׁי, to draw near to all my holy things. קֹדְשִׁים are not the rooms in the sanctuary, but those portions of the sacrifices which were sacred to the Lord. They are not to touch these, i.e., neither to sprinkle blood nor to burn the portions of fat upon the altar, or perform anything connected therewith. This explanation is required by the apposition אֶל־קֹדְשֵׁי הַקֹּדְשִׁים, which (in the plural) does not mean the most holy place at the hinder part of the temple, but the most holy sacrificial gifts (cf. Eze. 42:13). נָשָׂא כָל־מָמָה, as in Eze. 16:52. In v. 14 it is once more stated in a comprehensive manner in what the bearing of the guilt and shame was to consist: God would make them keepers of the temple with regard to the inferior acts of service. The general expression מְשַׁמְרֵת הַבַּיִת, which signifies the temple service universally, receives its restriction to the inferior acts of service from לְכָל עֲבֹדָתוֹ וְגו', which is used in Num. 3:26; 4:23, 30,

32, 39, 47, for the heavy duties performed by the Merarites and Gershonites, in distinction from the עֲבָדָה of the Kohathites, which consisted in הַקָּדֵשׁ שְׁמֵר מִשְׁמֵרָתָא (Num. 3:28) and עֲשׂוֹת מְלֹאכָה בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד (Num. 4: 3). The priestly service at the altar and in the sanctuary, on the other hand, was to be performed by the sons of Zadok alone, because when the people went astray they kept the charge of the sanctuary, i.e., performed the duties of the priestly office with fidelity. *Zadok* was the son of Ahitub, of the line of Eleazar (1Ch. 5:34; 6:37, 38), who remained faithful to King David at the rebellion of Absalom (2Sa. 15:24ff.), and also anointed Solomon as king in opposition to Adonijah the pretender (1Ki. 1:32ff.); whereas the high priest Abiathar, of the line of Ithamar, took part with Adonijah (1Ki. 1: 7, 25), and was deposed from his office by Solomon in consequence, so that now the high-priesthood was in the sole possession of Zadok and his descendants (1Ki. 2:26, 27, and 35). From this attitude of Zadok toward David, the prince given by the Lord to His people, it may be seen at once that he not only kept aloof from the wandering of the people, but offered a decided opposition thereto, and attended to his office in a manner that was well-pleasing to God. As he received the high-priesthood from Solomon in the place of Abiathar for this fidelity of his, so shall his descendants only be invested with the priestly office in the new temple. For the correct explanation of the words in these verses, however, we must pay particular regard to the clause, “who have kept the charge of my sanctuary.” This implies, for example, that lineal descent from Zadok alone was not sufficient, but that fidelity in the service of the Lord must also be added as an indispensable requisite. In vv. 15*b* and 16 the priestly service is described according to its principal functions at the altar of burnt-offering, and in the holy place at the altar of incense. שְׁלֶחֶנִי is the altar of incense (see Eze. 41:22).

### *Eze. 44:17-31.* Requisites for the Administration of the Priests’ Office, and the Obligations and Privileges of that Office.

V. 17. *And it shall come to pass, when they go to the gates of the inner court, they shall put on linen clothes, and no wool shall lie upon them, when they serve in the gates of the inner court and serve toward the house.* V. 18. *Linen turbans shall be upon their head, and linen drawers upon their hips; they shall not gird themselves in sweat.* V. 19. *And when they go out into the outer court, into the outer court to the people, they shall take off their clothes in which they have ministered, and put them in the holy cells, and put on other clothes, that they may not sanctify the people with their clothes.* V. 20. *And they shall not shave their head bald, nor let their hair grow freely; they shall cut the hair of their head.* V. 21. *And they shall not drink wine, no priest, when they go into the inner court.* V. 22. *And a widow and a divorced woman they shall not take as wives, but virgins of the seed of the house of Israel, and the widow who has become the widow of a priest they may take.* V. 23. *And they shall teach my people, make known to them the difference between holy and common, and between unclean and clean.* V. 24. *And they shall stand to judge*

*concerning disputes; and they shall observe my laws and my statutes at all my feasts, and sanctify my Sabbaths. V. 25. And one shall not go to any corpse of a man to defile himself; only for father and mother, for son and daughter, for brother, for sister who had no husband, may they defile themselves. V. 26. And after his purification shall they reckon seven days more to him; V. 27. And on the day when he comes to the holy place, into the inner court, to serve in the holy place, he shall offer his sin-offering, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. — V. 28. And so shall it be with their inheritance, that I am their inheritance, ye shall not give them a possession in Israel: I am their possession. V. 29. The meat-offering, and the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering, these shall they eat, and everything banned in Israel shall belong to them. V. 30. And the firstlings of all the first-fruits of everything, and every heave-offering of everything, of all your heave-offerings, shall belong to the priests; and the firstlings of all your ground meal shall ye give to the priest, that a blessing may come down upon thy house. V. 31. No carrion nor anything torn in pieces of fowl and of beast shall the priests eat. —*

To the directions, who are to perform the service in the new temple, there are appended corresponding instructions concerning the bodily condition in which this service is to be performed, as the bodily condition shadows forth the state of the soul, or the spiritual constitution of the servants of God. The dress prescribed in Exo. 28 for the priests to wear during the holy service had this signification. The same rule is here presupposed as still in force; and it is simply renewed and partially emphasized by the enumeration of some of the leading points. At the service at the altar and in the holy place the priests are to wear linen clothes, and, after the performance of the service, they are to take them off again when they go into the outer court (vv. 17-19). In the Mosaic law, שֵׁשׁ, white byssus, or בָּרָד, white linen, is mentioned as the material used for the priests' clothing (Exo. 28:39, 42); here the material is more distinctly designated as פִּשְׁתִּים, flax linen; and צֵמֶר, animal wool, is expressly forbidden, the motive being assigned for this regulation, namely, that the priest is not to cause himself to sweat by wearing woollen clothing. Sweat produces uncleanness; and the priest, by keeping his body clean, is to show even outwardly that he is clean and blameless. With regard to the putting on and off of the official clothes, the new *thorah* accords with the Mosaic. For we cannot agree with Kliefoth, who detects a deviation in the fact that, according to Exo. 28:43, the priests were to wear the official clothes only when they entered the tabernacle and when approaching the altar, and, according to Lev. 6: 4; 16:23, were to take them off when the service was ended; whereas, according to v. 17 of the chapter before us, they were to put them on as soon as they entered the inner court, and were never to come before the people in the official costume. If, according to the Mosaic law, the priests were to go before the altar of burnt-offering in the court in their holy official dress, and not otherwise, they must have put on this dress on entering the court; for they could not wait till they were in front of the altar before they changed their clothes. For the

expression **צֵאת אֶל הָעָם** does not imply that, according to Ezekiel, they were never to appear in the presence of the people in their official costume, as it does not mean “come before the people,” but “go out to the people,” or “walk among the people;” nor is this involved in the words **וְלֹא יִקְדְּשׁוּ וְגו'**, they shall not sanctify the people in their clothes (by their clothes). The latter by no means affirms that they are to sanctify the people by intercourse with them, but are not to do this in official costume; the meaning is simply that they are not to move among the people in the outer court while wearing their official clothes, that they may not sanctify them by their holy clothes.

This sanctification cannot be understood in any other way than as analogous to the rule laid down in the law, that touching most holy sacrificial flesh would sanctify (Lev. 6:11, 20), which Ezekiel repeats in Eze. 46:20, and which does not stand in anything like an isolated position in the law, but is also affirmed in Exo. 29:37 and 30:29 of the altar of burnt-offering and the vessels of the sanctuary. The same thing which applied to these vessels — namely, that their holiness passed from them to any one who touched them — is here predicated of the holy dresses of the priests; and the moving of the priests among the people in their holy clothes is forbidden, because such holiness, acquired by contact with holy objects, imposed upon the person to whom it had passed the obligation to guard against all defilement (Lev. 21: 1-8), which the people could not avoid in the ordinary relations of life, and thus a weakening or abolition of the distinction between things holy and common would inevitably have ensued. **לְשִׁכּוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ** are the holy cell-buildings described in Eze. 42: 1-14. — To the clothing there is simply appended in v. 20 the direction concerning the hair of the head, the natural covering of the head, in relation to which excess on either side is prohibited, either shaving the head bald or wearing the hair uncut. Both of these were forbidden to the priests in the law: shaving in Lev. 21: 5, and letting the hair grow freely in Lev. 10: 6; and the latter was simply imposed upon the Nazarites for the period of their vow (Num. 6: 5). **בָּסַם** only occurs here; but its meaning, to cut the hair, is obvious from the context. — V. 21. The prohibition of the drinking of wine when performing service agrees with Lev. 10: 9; on the other hand, the instructions concerning the choice of wives are sharpened in v. 22, as that which only applied to the high priest in the law is here extended to all the priests. In fact, Ezekiel throughout makes no distinction between the high priest and the common priests. In Lev. 21:14, marrying a widow is only forbidden to the high priest, who was to marry a virgin of his own people, whereas no such restriction is laid down for the ordinary priests. Here, on the other hand, marrying a widow is forbidden to all the priests, marriage with the widow of a priest being the only one allowed. **מִכְהֵן** belongs to **תַּהְיֶה אֵלְמָנָה**, who has become the widow of a priest. <sup>159</sup>

In vv. 23 and 24 the general official duties of the priests are mentioned, viz., to teach the people, and to instruct them concerning the difference between the holy and the unholy, the clean and the unclean, as in Lev. 10:10 (cf. Deu. 33:10 and Eze. 22:26); also to administer justice in questions in dispute according to the rights of God, — a duty which had already been committed to the priests in its highest form in Deu. 17: 8ff., 19:17, and 21: 5. **אֵל רִיב**, concerning, in the case of, matters in dispute. **עָמַד לְשַׁפֵּט**, to stand to judge, i.e., to appear or act as judge (compare **הָעֹמֵד שֹׁפְטִים**, to appoint or institute judges, in 2Ch. 19: 5). The *Keri* **לְמִשְׁפָּט** is a needless emendation after 2Ch. 19: 8. The *Chetib* **וּשְׁפָטָהוּ**, on the other hand, is a copyist's error for **יִשְׁפָּטָהוּ**. Lastly, at all the feasts they are to observe the laws and statutes of Jehovah, that is to say, to perform all the priestly duties binding upon them at the feasts, and to sanctify the Sabbaths, not merely by offering the Sabbath sacrifices, but also by maintaining the Sabbath rest (cf. Lev. 23: 3). — In vv. 25-27 there follow regulations concerning defilement from the dead, and its removal. V. 25 is a simple repetition of Lev. 21: 1-3. But the instructions concerning the purification from defilement from the dead are sharpened, inasmuch as not only is the purification prescribed by the law (Num. 19: 1ff.), and which lasted seven days, required (this is meant by **טָהַרְתּוּ**), but a further period of seven days is appointed after these, at the expiration of which the presentation of a sin-offering is demanded before the service in the sanctuary can be resumed. By this demand for a heightened purification, the approach to a corpse permitted to the priests, which was prohibited to the high priest in the Mosaic law, even in the case of father and mother (Lev. 21:11), is tolerably equalized.

For these duties and obligations of service the priests are to receive corresponding emoluments. These are treated of in vv. 28-31. They are not, indeed, to receive any share of the land as their property in time to come any more than in former times; but in the place of this Jehovah will be their property and possession, and give them the necessary room for their dwellings from His own property in the land (Eze. 45: 4), and let them draw their maintenance from His altar (vv. 29 and 30). The promise that Jehovah will be the **נַחֲלָה** and **אֲחֻזָּה** of the priests is a simple repetition of the regulation in the law (Num. 18:20; Deu. 18: 1; 10: 9). So far as the construction in v. 28a is concerned, the words **אֲנִי נַחֲלָתְכֶם** are really the subject to **וְהָיְתָה לָהֶם לָנִי**, which we are obliged to render obliquely, “the inheritance for them shall be, I am their inheritance.” For the proposal of Hitzig to take the words from **נַחֲלָתְכֶם אֲנִי** to the close of the verse as a parenthesis, and to regard **הַמִּנְקָה וְגוֹ'** in v. 29a as the subject to **וְהָיְתָה וְגוֹ'**, is untenable, not only on account of the great harshness which such a parenthesis would involve, but principally because these

portions of the sacrifices and heave-offerings which belonged to the priest were not a **נַחֲלָה**, and are never designated as **נַחֲלָה**, inheritance, i.e., property in land. V. 28 treats of the property in land, which God assigned to the Levites and priests under the Mosaic economy, by appointing them towns to dwell in, with meadows for the feeding of their cattle, within the territory of the other tribes, but would assign to them in future from the heave-offering set apart from the land for the sanctuary (Eze. 45: 4). It is not till vv. 29 and 30 that the means of support for the priests are spoken of. They are to be supported from the sacrifices and the tithes and first-fruits which Israel has to pay to Jehovah as the lord of the land, and which He transfers to His servants the priests. For the priests' share of the meat-offering, sin-offering, and trespass-offering, see Lev. 2: 3; 6: 9, 11, 19; 7: 6, 7; for that which is put under the ban, Lev. 27:21; for the first-fruits, Exo. 23:19; 34:26, Deu. 18: 4, Num. 18:13; for the **תְּרוּמוֹת**, Num. 15:19; 18:19; for the **רֵאשִׁית עֵרִיסוֹת**, Num. 15:20, 21. In **לְהַנִּיחַ וְגו'**, "to cause a blessing to rest upon thy house," the individual Israelite is addressed. For the fact itself, see Mal. 3:10. — To the enumeration of the means of support there is appended in v. 31 an emphatic repetition of the command in Lev. 22: 8, not to eat of any dead thing (i.e., anything that has died a natural death), or anything torn to pieces, either of birds or beasts, on account of its defiling (Lev. 17:15).

## CH. 45: 1-17. THE HOLY HEAVE OF THE LAND AND THE HEAVE-OFFERINGS OF THE PEOPLE

*Eze. 45: 1-17.* The determination of the means of support for the priesthood is followed still further by an explanation of the manner in which Jehovah will be their inheritance and possession; in other words, assign to the priests and Levites that portion of the land which was requisite for their abode. This is to be done by His causing a definite tract of land to be set apart for Himself, for the sanctuary, and for His servants, and for the capital, when the country is distributed among the tribes of Israel (vv. 1-8). On both sides of this domain the prince is also to receive a possession in land, to guard against all exaction on the part of the princes in time to come. And everywhere unrighteousness is to cease, just weight and measure are to be observed (vv. 9-12), and the people are to pay certain heave-offerings to provide for the sacrifices binding upon the prince (vv. 13-17).

*Eze. 45: 1-8.* The Holy Heave from the Land.

V. 1. *And when ye divide the land by lot for an inheritance, ye shall lift a heave for Jehovah as a holy (portion) from the land; five and twenty thousand the length, and the breadth ten (? twenty) thousand. It shall be holy in all its circumference round about.* V. 2. *Of this five hundred shall belong to the Holy by five hundred square*

round about, and fifty cubits open space thereto round about. V. 3. And from this measured space thou shalt measure a length of five and twenty thousand, and a breadth of ten thousand, and in this shall be the sanctuary, a holy of holies. V. 4. A holy (portion) of the land shall this be; to the priests, the servants of the sanctuary, shall it belong who draw near to serve Jehovah, and it shall be to them the place for houses and a sanctuary for the sanctuary. V. 5. And five and twenty thousand in length and ten thousand in breadth shall belong to the Levites, the servants of the house, for a possession to them as gates to dwell in. V. 6. And as a possession for the city, ye shall give five thousand in breadth and five and twenty thousand in length, parallel to the holy heave; it shall belong to the whole house of Israel. V. 7. And to the prince (ye shall give) on both sides of the holy heave and of the possession of the city, along the holy heave and along the possession of the city, on the west side westwards and on the east side eastwards, and in length parallel to one of the tribe-portions, from the western border to the eastern border. V. 8. It shall belong to him as land, as a possession in Israel; and my princes shall no more oppress my people, but shall leave the land to the house of Israel according to its tribes.

The domain to be first of all set apart from the land at the time of its distribution among the tribes is called **תְּרוּמָה**, *heave*, not in the general sense of the lifting or taking of a portion from the whole, but as a portion lifted or taken by a person from his property as an offering for God; for **תְּרוּמָה** comes from **הָרִים**, which signifies in the case of the *minchah* the lifting of a portion which was burned upon the altar as **אֲזַכְּרָה** for Jehovah (see the comm. on Lev. 2: 9). Consequently everything that was offered by the Israelites, either voluntarily or in consequence of a precept from the Lord for the erection and maintenance of the sanctuary and its servants, was called **תְּרוּמָה** (see Exo. 25: 2ff., 30:15; Lev. 7:14; Num. 15:19, etc.). Only the principal instructions concerning the heave from the land are given here, and these are repeated in Eze. 48: 8-22, in the section concerning the division of the land, and to some extent expanded there. The introductory words, “when ye divide the land by lot for an inheritance,” point to this. (See the map on Plate IV.) **גָּזַל**, sc. **הַפִּיל** (Pro. 1:14), to cast the lot, to divide by lot, as in Jos. 13: 6. Then shall ye lift, set apart, a heave for Jehovah as a holy (portion) from the land. **מִן הָאָרֶץ** is to be closely connected with **קָדַשׁ**, as shown by v. 4. In the numbers mentioned the measure to be employed is not given. But it is obvious that cubits are not meant, as Böttcher, Hitzig, and others assume, but rods; partly from a comparison of v. 2 with Eze. 42:16, where the space of the sanctuary, which is given here as 500 by 500 square, is described as five hundred rods on every side; and partly also from the fact that the open space around the sanctuary is fixed at fifty cubits, and in this case **אֲמָה** is added, because rods are not to be understood there as in connection with the other numbers. The correctness of this view, which we meet with in Jerome and Raschi, cannot be overthrown by



appealing to the excessive magnitude of a **τέμενος** of twenty-five thousand rods in length and ten thousand rods in breadth; for it will be seen in Eze. 48 that the measurements given answer to the circumstances in rods, but not in cubits. The **אָרְדֵי** before and after the number is pleonastic: “as for the length, twenty-five thousand rods in length.” Length here is the measurement from east to west, and breadth from north to south, as we may clearly see from Eze. 48:10. No regard, therefore, is paid to the natural length and breadth of the land; and the greater extent of the portions to be measured is designated as length, the smaller as breadth. The expression **עֲשָׂרָה אֲלָפִים** is a remarkable one, as **אֲלָפִים** is constantly used, not only in vv. 3 and 5, but also in Eze. 48: 9, 10, 13, 18. The LXX have **εἴκοσι χιλιάδας**, twenty thousand breadth. This reading appears more correct than the Masoretic, as it is demanded by vv. 3 and 5. For according to v. 3, of the portion measured in v. 1 twenty-five thousand rods in length and ten thousand in breadth were to be measured for the sanctuary and for the priests’ land; and according to v. 5, the Levites were also to receive twenty-five thousand rods in length and ten thousand in breadth for a possession. The first clause of v. 3 is unintelligible if the breadth of the holy *terumah* is given in v. 1 as only ten thousand rods, inasmuch as one cannot measure off from an area of twenty-five thousand rods in length and ten thousand rods in breadth another space of the same length and breadth. Moreover, v. 1 requires the reading **עֲשָׂרִים אֲלָפִים**, as the “holy *terumah*” is not only the portion set apart for the sanctuary and the priests’ land, but also that which was set apart for the Levites.

According to Eze. 48:14, this was also “holy to Jehovah;” whereas the portion measured off for the city was “common” (Eze. 48:15). This is borne out by the fact that in the chapter before us the domain appointed for the city is distinguished from the land of the priests and Levites by the verb **תִּפְתָּנוּ** (v. 6), whilst the description of the size of the Levites’ land in v. 5 is closely connected with that of the land of the priests; and further, that in v. 7, in the description of the land of the prince, reference is made only to the holy *terumah* and the possession of the city, from which it also follows that the land of the Levites is included in the holy *terumah*. Consequently v. 1 treats of the whole of the **קִדְשׁ** **תְּרוּמַת**, i.e., the land of the priests and Levites, which was twenty-five thousand rods long and twenty thousand rods broad. This is designated in the last clause of the verse as a holy (portion) in its entire circumference, and then divided into two domains in vv. 2 and 3. — V. 2. Of this (**מִנְחָה**, of the area measured in v. 1) there shall come, or belong, to the holy, i.e., to the holy temple domain, five hundred rods square, namely, the domain measured in Eze. 42:15-20 round about the temple, for a separation between holy and common; and round this domain there is to be a **מִנְרֵשׁ**, i.e., an open space of

fifty cubits on every side, that the dwellings to the priests may not be built too near to the holy square of the temple building. — V. 3. **הַמְּדָה הַזֹּאת**, this measure (i.e., this measured piece of land), also points back to v. 1, and **מִן** cannot be taken in any other sense than in **מִזְהָה** (v. 2). From the whole tract of land measured in v. 1 a portion is to be measured off twenty-five thousand rods in length and ten thousand rods in breadth, in which the sanctuary, i.e., the temple with its courts, is to stand as a holy of holies. This domain, in the midst of which is the temple, is to belong to the priests, as the sanctified portion of the land, as the place or space for their houses, and is to be a sanctuary for the sanctuary, i.e., for the temple. V. 5. A portion equally large is to be measured off to the Levites, as the temple servants, for their possession. The *Keri* **הָהָה** is formed after the **וְהָהָה** of v. 4, and the *Chetib* **הָהָה** is indisputably correct.

There is great difficulty in the last words of this verse, **עֲשָׂרִים לְשָׁבֶת**, “for a possession to them twenty cells;” for which the LXX give **αὐτοῖς εἰς κατάσχεσιν πόλεις τοῦ κατοικεῖν**, and which they have therefore read, or for which they have substituted by conjecture, **עָרִים לְשָׁבֶת**. We cannot, in fact, obtain from the **עֲשָׂרִים לְשָׁבֶת** of the Masoretic text any meaning that will harmonize with the context, even if we render the words, as Rosenmüller does, in opposition to the grammar, *cum viginti cubiculis*, and understand by **לְשָׁבֶת** capacious cell-buildings. For we neither expect to find in this connection a description of the number and character of the buildings in which the Levites lived, nor can any reason be imagined why the Levites, with a domain of twenty-five thousand rods in length and ten thousand rods in breadth assigned to them, should live together in twenty cell-buildings. Still less can we think of the “twenty cells” as having any connection with the thirty cells in the outer court near to the gate-buildings (Eze. 40:17, 18), as these temple cells, even though they were appointed for the Levites during their service in the temple, were not connected in any way with the holy *terumah* spoken of here. Hävernicks remark, that “the prophet has in his eye the priests’ cells in the sanctuary, — and the dwellings of the Levites during their service, which were only on the outside of the sanctuary, were to correspond to these,” is not indicated in the slightest degree by the words, but is a mere conjecture. There is no other course open, therefore, than to acknowledge a corruption of the text, and either to alter **עֲשָׂרִים לְשָׁבֶת** into **לְעָרִים לְשָׁבֶת**, as Hitzig proposes (cf. Num. 35: 2, 3; Jos. 21: 2), or to take **עֲשָׂרִים** as a mistake for **שְׁעָרִים**: “for a possession to them as gates to dwell in,” according to the frequent use of **שְׁעָרִים**, gates, for **עָרִים**, cities, e.g., in what was almost a standing phrase, “the Levites who is in thy gates” (= cities; Deu. 12:18; 14:27; 16:11; cf. Exo. 20:10; Deu. 5:14, etc.). In that case the faulty reading would have arisen from the transposition of **עש** into **שע**, and the change of **ב** into **כ**.

Beside the holy *terumah* for sanctuary, priests, and Levites, they are also (v. 6) to give a tract of twenty-five thousand rods in length and five thousand rods in breadth as the property of the city (i.e., of the capital). **לְעִמָּת**: parallel to the holy heave, i.e., running by the longer side of it. This portion of land, which was set apart for the city, was to belong to all Israel, and not to any single tribe. The more precise directions concerning this, and concerning the situation of the whole *terumah* in the land, are not given till Eze. 48: 8-22. Here, in the present chapter, this heave is simply mentioned in connection with the privileges which the servants of the Lord and of His sanctuary were to enjoy. These included, in a certain sense, also the property assigned to the prince in v. 7 as the head of the nation, on whom the provision of the sacrifices for the nation devolved, and who, apart from this, also needed for his subsistence a portion of the land, which should be peculiarly his own, in accordance with his rank. They were to give him as his property (the verb **תִּתְּנוּ** is to be supplied to **לְנָשִׂיא** from v. 6) the land on this side and that side of the holy *terumah* and of the city-possession, and that in front (**אֶל-פְּנֵי**) of these two tracts of land, that is to say, adjoining them, extending to their boundaries, **מִפְּאֵת יָם וְגוֹ**, “from” (i.e., according to our view, “upon”) the west side westward, and from (upon) the east side eastward; in other words, the land which remained on the eastern and western boundary of the holy *terumah* and of the city domain, both toward the west as far as the Mediterranean Sea, and toward the east as far as the Jordan, the two boundaries of the future Canaan. The further definition **לְעִמָּת וְגוֹ** **וְאֶרֶץ** is not quite clear; but the meaning of the words is, that “the length of the portions of land to be given to the prince on the east and west side of the *terumah* shall be equal to the length of one of the tribe-portions,” and not that the portions of land belonging to the prince are to be just as long from north to south as the length of one of the twelve tribe-possession. “Length” throughout this section is the extent from east to west. It is so in the case of all the tribe-territories (cf. Eze. 48: 8), and must be taken in this sense in connection with the portion of land belonging to the prince also. The meaning is therefore this: in length (from east to west) these portions shall be parallel to the inheritance of one of the twelve tribes from the western boundary to the eastern. Two things are stated here: first, that the prince’s portion is to extend on the eastern and western sides of the *terumah* as far as the boundary of the land allotted to the tribes, i.e., on the east to the Jordan, and on the west to the Mediterranean (cf. Eze. 48: 8); and secondly, that on the east and west it is to run parallel (**לְעִמָּת**) to the length of the separate tribe-territories, i.e., not to reach farther toward either north or south than the *terumah* lying between, but to be bounded by the long sides of the tribe-territories which bound the *terumah* on the north and south. **אֶרֶץ** is the accusative of direction; **אֶחָד**, some one (cf. Jud. 16: 7;

Psa. 82: 7). — In v. 8, לְאֲרֵץ with the article is to be retained, contrary to Hitzig's conjecture לְאֲרֵץ: "to the land belonging to him as a possession shall it (the portion marked off in v. 7) be to him." אֲרֵץ, as in 1Ki. 11:18, of property in land. In v. 8b, the motive for these instructions is given. The former kings of Israel had no land of their own, no domain; and this had driven them to acquire private property by violence and extortion. That this may not occur any more in the future, and all inducement to such oppression of the people may be taken from the princes, in the new kingdom of God the portion of land more precisely defined in v. 7 is to be given to the prince as his own property. The plural, "my princes," does not refer to several contemporaneous princes, nor can it be understood of the king and his sons, i.e., of the royal family, on account of Eze. 46:16; but it is to be traced to the simple fact "that Ezekiel was also thinking of the past kings, and that the whole series of princes, who had ruled over Israel, and still would rule, was passing before his mind" (Kliefoth), without our being able to conclude from this that there would be a plurality of princes succeeding one another in time to come, in contradiction to Eze. 37:25. — "And the land shall they (the princes) leave to the people of Israel" (נָתַן in the sense of *concedere*; and הָאָרֶץ, the land, with the exception of the portion set apart from it in vv. 1-7). — The warning against oppression and extortion, implied in the reason thus assigned, is expanded into a general exhortation in the following verses.

### *Eze. 45: 9-12.* General Exhortation to Observe Justice and Righteousness in their Dealings.

*V. 9. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Let it suffice you, ye princes of Israel: desist from violence and oppression, and observe justice and righteousness, and cease to thrust my people out of their possession, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 10. Just scales, and a just ephah, and a just bath, shall ye have. V. 11. The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, so that the bath holds the tenth part of the homer, and the ephah the tenth part of the homer: after the homer shall its standard be. V. 12. And the shekel shall have twenty gerahs; twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall the mina be with you.*

The exhortation in v. 9 is similar to that in Eze. 44: 6, both in form and substance. As the Levites and priests are to renounce the idolatry to which they have been previously addicted, and to serve before the Lord in purity and holiness of life, so are the princes to abstain from the acts of oppression which they have formerly practised, and to do justice and righteousness; for example, to liberate the people of the Lord from the גְּרֻשָׁה גְּרֻשׁוֹת. *גרֻשָׁה* is unjust expulsion from one's possession, of which Ahab's conduct toward Naboth furnished a glaring example (1Ki. 21). These acts of violence pressed heavily upon the people, and this burden is to be removed (הָרִים מֵאֵל). In vv. 10-12 the

command to practise justice and righteousness is expanded; and it is laid as a duty upon the whole nation to have just weights and measures. This forms the transition to the regulation, which follows from v. 13 onwards, of the taxes to be paid by the people to the prince to defray the expenses attendant upon the sacrificial worship. — For v. 10, see Lev. 19:36 and Deu. 25:13ff. Instead of the *hin* (Lev. 19:36), the *bath*, which contained six hins, is mentioned here as the measure for liquids. The **בַּת** is met with for the first time in Isa. 5:10, and appears to have been introduced as a measure for liquids after the time of Moses, having the same capacity as the *ephah* for dry goods (see my *Bibl. Archäol.* II pp. 139ff.). This similarity is expressly stated in v. 11. Both of them, the ephah as well as the bath, are to contain the tenth of a homer (**לְשֹׂאֵה**, to carry, for **לְהַכִּיל**, to contain, to hold; compare Gen. 36: 7 with Amo. 7:10), and to be regulated by the homer. V. 12 treats of the weights used for money. The first clause repeats the old legal provision (Exo. 30:13; Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47), that the shekel, as the standard weight for money, which was afterwards stamped as a coin, is to contain twenty gerahs. The regulations which follow are very obscure: “twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, fifteen shekels, shall the mina be to you.” The *mina*, **הַמִּנָּה**, occurs only here and in 1Ki. 10:17; Ezz. 2:69; and Neh. 7:71, 72, — that is to say, only in books written during the captivity of subsequent to it. If we compare 1Ki. 10:17, according to which three minas of gold were used for a shield, with 2Ch. 9:16, where three hundred (shekels) of gold are said to have been used for a similar shield, it is evident that a mina was equal to a hundred shekels. Now as the talent (**בְּפָרָה**) contained three thousand (sacred or Mosaic) shekels (see the comm. on Exo. 38:25, 26), the talent would only have contained thirty minas, which does not seem to answer to the Grecian system of weights. For the Attic talent contained sixty minas, and the mina a hundred drachms; so that the talent contained six thousand drachms, or three thousand didrachms. But as the Hebrew shekel was equal to a **δίδραχμον**, the Attic talent with three thousand didrachms corresponded to the Hebrew talent with three thousand shekels; and the mina, as the sixtieth part of the talent, with a hundred drachms or fifty didrachms, ought to correspond to the Hebrew mina with fifty shekels, as the Greek name **μνᾶ** is unquestionably derived from the Semitic **מִנָּה**. The relation between the mina and the shekel, resulting from a comparison of 1Ki. 10:17 with 2Ch. 9:16, can hardly be made to square with this, by the assumption that the shekels referred to in 2Ch. 9:16 are not Mosaic shekels, but so-called civil shekels, the Mosaic half-shekel, the *beka*, **בִּקְעָה**, having acquired the name of *shekel* in the course of time, as the most widely-spread silver coin of the larger size. A hundred such shekels or bekas made only fifty Mosaic shekels, which amounted to one mina; while sixty minas also formed one talent (see my *Bibl. Archäol.* II pp. 135, 136).

But the words of the second half of the verse before us cannot be brought into harmony with this proportion, take them how we will. If, for example, we add the three numbers together, 20 + 25 + 15 shekels shall the mina be to you, Ezekiel would fix the mina at sixty shekels. But no reason whatever can be found for such an alteration of the proportion between the mina and the talent on the one hand, or the shekel on the other, if the shekel and talent were to remain unchanged. And even apart from this, the division of the sixty into twenty, twenty-five, and fifteen still remains inexplicable, and can hardly be satisfactorily accounted for in the manner proposed by the Rabbins, namely, that there were pieces of money in circulation of the respective weights of twenty, twenty-five, and fifteen shekels, for the simple reason that no historical trace of the existence of any such pieces can be found, apart from the passage before us. <sup>f60</sup>

And the other attempts that have been made to explain the difficult words are no satisfactory. The explanation given by Cocceius and J. D. Michaelis (*Supplem. ad lex.* p. 1521), that three different minas are mentioned, — a smaller one of fifteen Mosaic shekels, a medium size of twenty shekels, and a large one of twenty-five, — is open to the objection justly pointed out by Bertheau, that in an exact definition of the true weight of anything we do not expect three magnitudes, and the purely arbitrary assumption of three different minas is an obvious subterfuge. The same thing applies to Hitzig's explanation, that the triple division, twenty, twenty-five, and fifteen shekels, has reference to the three kinds of metal used for coinage, viz., gold, silver, and copper, so that the gold mina was worth, or weighed, twenty shekels; the silver mina, twenty-five; and the copper mina, fifteen, — which has no tenable support in the statement of Josephus, that the shekel coined by *Simon* was worth four drachms; and is overthrown by the incongruity in the relation in which it places the gold to the silver, and both these metals to the copper. — There is evidently a corruption of very old standing in the words of the text, and we are not in possession of the requisite materials for removing it by emendation.

### *Eze. 45:13-17.* The Heave-offerings of the People.

V. 13. *This is the heave-offering which ye shall heave: The sixth part of the ephah from the homer of wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of the ephah from the homer of barley; V. 14. And the proper measure of oil, from the bath of oil a tenth of the bath from the cor, which contains ten baths or a homer; for ten baths are a homer; V. 15. And one head from the flock from two hundred from the watered land of Israel, for the meat-offering, and for the burnt-offering, and for the peace-offerings, to make atonement for them, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah. V. 16. All the people of the land shall be held to this heave-offering for the prince in Israel. V. 17. And upon the prince shall devolve the burnt-offerings, and the meat-offering, and the drink-offering at the feasts, the new moons, and the Sabbaths, at all the festivals of the house of Israel; he shall provide the sin-offering, and the meat-*

*offering, and the burnt-offering, and the peace-offerings, to make atonement for the house of Israel.*

The introductory precepts to employ just measures and weights are now followed by the regulations concerning the productions of nature to be paid by the Israelites to the prince for the sacrificial worship, the provision for which was to devolve on him. Fixed contributions are to be levied for this purpose, of wheat, barley, oil, and animals of the flock — namely, according to vv. 13-15, of corn the sixtieth part, of oil the hundredth part, and of the flock the two hundredth head. There is no express mention made of wine for the drink-offering, or of cattle, which were also requisite for the burnt-offering and peace-offering, in addition to animals from the flock. The enumeration therefore is not complete, but simply contains the rule according to which they were to act in levying what was required for the sacrifices. The word **שְׁשִׁיתָם** in v. 13 must not be altered, as Hitzig proposes; for although this is the only passage in which **שֶׁשָׁה** occurs, it is analogous to **חֲמִשָּׁה** in Gen. 41:34, both in its formation and its meaning, “to raise the sixth part.” A sixth of an ephah is the sixtieth part of a homer. **חֶקֶף**, that which is fixed or established, i.e., the proper quantity. **הַבַּת הַשֶּׁמֶן** is in apposition to **הַשֶּׁמֶן** (for the article, see the comm. on Eze. 43:21), the fixed quantity of oil, namely of the bath of oil, — i.e., the measure of that which is to be contributed from the oil, and that from the bath of oil, — shall be the tenth part of the bath from the cor, i.e., the hundredth part of the year’s crop, as the cor contained ten baths. The cor is not mentioned in the preceding words (v. 11), nor does it occur in the Mosaic law. It is another name for the homer, which is met with for the first time in the writings of the captivity (1Ki. 5: 2, 25; 2Ch. 2: 9; 27: 5). For this reason its capacity is explained by the words which are appended to **עֲשֶׂרֶת הַבָּתִּים וְגוֹ׳: מִכּוּר׃**, from the cor (namely) of ten baths, one homer; and the latter definition is still further explained by the clause, “for ten baths are one homer.” — V. 15. **מִמִּשְׁקָהּ**, from the watered soil (cf. Gen. 13:10), that is to say, not a lean beast, but a fat one, which has been fed upon good pasture. **לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם** indicates the general purpose of the sacrifices (vid., Lev. 1: 4). — V. 16. The article in **הָעֵם**, as in **הַבַּת** in v. 14. **הָיָה אֵל**, to be, i.e., to belong, to anything — in other words, to be held to it, under obligation to do it; **הָיָה אֵל** (v. 17), on the other hand, to be upon a person, i.e., to devolve upon him. In **בְּכָל-מוֹעֲדֵי** the feast and days of festival, which have been previously mentioned separately, are all grouped together. **עָשָׂה אֵת הַחֲטָאת וְגוֹ׳**, to furnish the sin-offering, etc., i.e., to supply the materials for them.

So far as the fact is concerned, the Mosaic law makes no mention of any contributions to the sanctuary, with the exception of the first-born, the first-

fruits and the tithes, which could be redeemed with money, however. Besides these, it was only on extraordinary occasions — e.g., the building of the tabernacle — that the people were called upon for freewill heave-offerings. But the Mosaic law contains no regulation as to the sources from which the priests were to meet the demands for the festal sacrifices. So far, the instructions in the verses before us are new. What had formerly been given for this object as a gift of spontaneous love, is to become in the future a regular and established duty, to guard against that arbitrary and fitful feeling from which the worship of God might suffer injury. — To these instructions there are appended, from v. 18 onwards, the regulations concerning the sacrifices to be offered at the different festivals.

### **CH. 45:18-46:15. INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THE FESTAL AND DAILY SACRIFICES**

*Eze. 45:18-46:15.* The series commences with the sin-offerings in the first month (*Eze. 45:18-20*). Then follow the sacrifices at the Passover and feasts of tabernacles (*vv. 21-25*), in connection with which a way and a standing-place in the temple are assigned to the prince and the people during the offering of these sacrifices (*Eze. 46: 1-3*). After these we have the burnt-offerings on the Sabbaths and new moons (*Eze. 46: 4-7*), and once more a direction with regard to their entrance and exit when the prince and the people come to the temple at the yearly festivals (*vv. 8-10*); also the meat-offerings at the feasts (*v. 11*), to which there is appended a direction with regard to the freewill-offerings of the prince (*v. 12*); and, finally, the instructions concerning the daily burnt-offering and meat-offering (*vv. 13-15*).

*Eze. 45:18-20.* The Sin-Offerings in the First Month.

*V. 18. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, In the first (month), on the first of the month, thou shalt take a bullock, a young ox without blemish, and absolve the sanctuary. V. 19. And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering, and put it upon the door-posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the enclosure of the altar, and upon the door-posts at the gate of the inner court. V. 20. And so shalt thou do on the seventh of the month, for the sake of erring men and of folly, that so ye may make atonement for the house.*

The Mosaic law had prescribed for the new moons generally the sin-offering of a he-goat, in addition to the burnt-offerings and meat-offerings (*Num. 28:15*); and, besides, this, had also distinguished the new-moon's day of the seventh month by a special feast-offering to be added to the regular new-moon's sacrifices, and consisting of a sin-offering of a he-goat, and burnt-offerings and meat-offerings (*Num. 29: 2-6*). This distinguishing of the seventh month by a special new-moon's sacrifice is omitted in Ezekiel; but in the place of it the first



month is distinguished by a sin-offering to be presented on the first and seventh days. Nothing is said in vv. 18-20 about burnt-offerings for these days; but as the burnt-offering is appointed in Eze. 46: 6, 7 for the new-moon's day without any limitation, and the regulations as to the connection between the meat-offering and the burnt-offerings are repeated in Eze. 46:11 for the holy days and feast days (חגים ומועדים) generally, and the new-moon's day is also reckoned among the מועדים, there is evidently good ground for the assumption that the burnt-offering and meat-offering prescribed for the new moon in Eze. 46: 6, 7 were also to be offered at the new moon of the first month. On the other hand, no special burnt-offering or meat-offering is mentioned for the seventh day of the first month; so that in all probability only the daily burnt-offering and meat-offering were added upon that day (Eze. 46:13ff.) to the sin-offering appointed for it. Moreover, the sin-offerings prescribed for the first and seventh days of the first month are distinguished from the sin-offerings of the Mosaic law, partly by the animal selected (a young bullock), and partly by the disposal of the blood. According to the Mosaic law, the sin-offering for the new moons, as well as for all the feast days of the year, the Passover, Pentecost, day of trumpets, day of atonement, and feast of tabernacles (all eight days), was to be a he-goat (Num. 28:15; 22:30; 29: 5, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38). Even the sin-offering for the congregation of Israel on the great day of atonement simply consisted in a he-goat (or two he-goats, Lev. 16: 5); and it was only for the sin-offering for the high priest, whether on that day (Lev. 16: 3), or when he had sinned so as to bring guilt upon the nation (Lev. 4: 3), or when the whole congregation had sinned (Lev. 4:14), that a bullock was required. On the other hand, according to Ezekiel, the sin-offering both on the first and seventh days of the first month, and also the one to be brought by the prince on the fourteenth day of that month, i.e., on the day of the feast of Passover (Eze. 45:22), for himself and for all the people, were to consist of a bullock and only the sin-offering on the seven days of the feast of Passover and tabernacles of a he-goat (Eze. 45:23, 25). The Mosaic law contains no express instructions concerning the sprinkling of the blood of the sin-offering at the new moons and feasts (with the exception of the great atoning sacrifice on the day of atonement), because it was probably the same as in the case of the sin-offerings for the high priest and the whole congregation, when the blood was first of all to be sprinkled seven times against the curtain in front of the capporeth, and then to be applied to the horns of the altar of incense, and the remainder to be poured out at the foot of the altar of burnt-offering (Lev. 4: 6, 7, 17, 18); whereas, in the case of the great atoning sacrifice on the day of atonement, some of the blood was first of all to be sprinkled at or upon the front side of the capporeth and seven times upon the ground, and after that it was to be applied to the horns of the altar of incense

and of the altar of burnt-offering (Lev. 16:15-17). But according to Ezekiel, some of the blood of the sin-offerings on the first and seventh days of the first month, and certainly also on the same days of the feasts of Passover and tabernacles, was to be smeared upon the posts of the house — that is to say, the posts mentioned in Eze. 41:21, not merely those of the **הַיְכֹל**, the door into the holy place, but also those of the **קִדְשׁ**, the door leading into the most holy place, upon the horns and the four corners of the enclosure of the altar of burnt-offering (Eze. 43:20), and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court. It is a point in dispute here whether **שַׁאר הַחֲצַר** is only one door, and in that case whether the east gate of the inner court is to be understood as in Eze. 46: 2 (**מִזוֹת הַשַּׁאר**), as Hitzig and others suppose, or whether **שַׁאר** is to be taken in a collective sense as signifying the three gates of the inner court (Kliefoth and others). The latter view is favoured by the collective use of the word **מִזוֹת** by itself, and also by the circumstance that if only one of the three gates were intended, the statement which of the three would hardly have been omitted (cf. Eze. 46: 1; 44: 1, etc.).

According to v. 18, these sin-offerings were to serve for the absolving of the sanctuary; and according to v. 20, to make atonement for the temple on account of error or folly. Both directions mean the same thing. The reconciliation of the temple was effected by its absolution or purification from the sins that had come upon it through the error and folly of the people. Sins **בְּשִׁגָּה** are sins occasioned by the weakness of flesh and blood, for which expiation could be made by sin-offerings (see the comm. on Lev. 4: 2 and Num. 15:22ff.). **שִׁגָּה מֵאִישׁ**, lit., away from the erring man, i.e., to release him from his sin. This expression is strengthened by **מִפְתִּי**, away from simplicity or folly; here, as in Pro. 7: 7, as *abstractum pro concreto*, the simple man. — The great expiatory sacrifice on the day of atonement answered the same purpose, the absolution of the sanctuary from the sins of the people committed **בְּשִׁגָּה** (Lev. 16:16ff.).

### **Eze. 45:21-25.** Sacrifices at the Passover and Feast of Tabernacles.

V. 21. *In the first (month), on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall keep the Passover, a feast of a full week; unleavened shall be eaten.* V. 22. *And the prince shall prepare on that day for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock as a sin-offering.* V. 23. *And for the seven days of the feast he shall prepare as a burnt-offering for Jehovah seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily, the seven days, and as a sin-offering a he-goat daily.* V. 24. *And as a meat-offering, he shall prepare an ephah for the bullock, and an ephah for the ram, and a hin of oil for the ephah.* V. 25. *In the seventh (month), on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast he shall do the same for seven days with regard to the sin-offering, as also the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering, as also the oil.*

In the words, “shall *the Passover* be to you,” there lies the thought that the Passover is to be celebrated in the manner appointed in Exo. 12, with the paschal meal in the evening of the 14th Abib. — There is considerable difficulty connected with the following words, חַג שִׁבְעוֹת יָמִים, which all the older translators have rendered “a feast of seven days.” חַג שִׁבְעוֹת signifies periods of seven days or weeks. A feast of heptads of days, or weeks of days, cannot possibly mean a feast which lasted only seven days, or a week. חַג שִׁבְעוֹת is used elsewhere for the feast of weeks (Exo. 34:22; Deu. 16:10), because they were to reckon seven weeks from the second day of the Passover, the day of the sheaf of first-fruits, and then to keep the feast of the loaves of first-fruits, or the feast of harvest (Deu. 16: 9). Kliefoth retains this well-established meaning of the words in this passage also, and give the following explanation: If the words חַג שִׁבְעוֹת stood alone without יָמִים, it would mean that in future the Passover was to be kept like the feast of seven weeks, as the feast of the loaves of first-fruits. But the addition of יָמִים, which is to be taken in the same sense as in Dan. 10: 2, 3, Gen. 29:14, etc., gives this turn to the thought, that in future the Passover is to be kept as a feast of seven weeks long, “a feast lasting seven weeks.” According to this explanation, the meaning of the regulation is, “that in future not only the seven days of sweet loaves, but the whole of the seven weeks intervening between the feast of the wave-sheaf and the feast of the wave-loaves, was to be kept as a Passover, that the whole of the quinquagesima should be one Easter חַג, and the feast of weeks be one with the Passover.” To this there is appended the further regulation, that unleavened bread is to be eaten, not merely for the seven days therefore, but for the whole of the seven weeks, till the feast of the loaves of first-fruits. This explanation is a very sagacious one, and answers to the Christian view of the Easter-tide. But it is open to objections which render it untenable. In the first place, that יָמִים, when used in the sense of lasting for days, is not usually connected with the preceding noun in the construct state, but is attached as an adverbial accusative; compare שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׁבָעִים יָמִים in Dan. 10: 2, 3, and שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים in Gen. 41: 1, Jer. 28: 3, 11, etc. But a still more important objection is the circumstance that the words שְׁבַעַת יָמִי הַחַג in v. 23 unquestionably point back to שִׁבְעוֹת יָמִים חַג, as there is no other way in which the article in הַחַג can be explained, just as בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא in v. 22 points back to the fourteenth day mentioned in v. 21 as the time of the *pesach* feast. It follows from this, however, that שִׁבְעוֹת יָמִים can only signify a seven days’ feast. It is true that the plural שִׁבְעוֹת appears irreconcilable with this; for Kimchi’s opinion, that שִׁבְעוֹת is a singular, written with *Cholem* instead of *Patach*, is purely a result of perplexity, and the explanation given by Gussetius, that Ezekiel speaks in the plural of weeks,

because the reference is “to the institution of the Passover as an annual festival to be celebrated many times in the series of times and ages,” is no better. The plural **שְׁבַעֹת** must rather be taken as a plural of genus, as in **עָרֵי**, Gen. 13:12 and Jud. 12: 7; **בָּהֶן**, Gen. 19:29; or **בָּנִים**, Gen. 21: 7, Isa. 37: 3; so that Ezekiel speaks indefinitely of heptads of days, because he assumes that the fact is well known that the feast only lasted one heptad of days, as he expressly states in v. 23. If this explanation of the plural does not commend itself, we must take **שְׁבַעֹת** as a copyist’s error for **שְׁבַעַת**, feast of a heptad of days, i.e., a feast lasting a full week, and attribute the origin of this copyist’s error to the fact that **חַג שְׁבַעֹת** naturally suggested the thought of **חַג שְׁבַעֹת**, feast of weeks, or Pentecost, not merely because the feast of Pentecost is always mentioned in the Pentateuch along with the feasts of Passover and tabernacles, but also because the only singular form of **שְׁבַעֹת** that we meet with elsewhere is **שְׁבוּעָה** (Dan. 9:27), or in the construct state **שְׁבַעַת** (Gen. 29:27), not **שְׁבַעָה** and **שְׁבַעַת**.

The word **הַפֶּסַח** is used here as in Deu. 16: 1, 2, so that it includes the seven days’ feast of unleavened bread. The *Niphal* **יֵאָכַל** is construed with the accusative in the olden style: *mazzoth* shall men eat. — In vv. 22 and 23 there follow the regulations concerning the sacrifices of this festival, and first of all concerning the sin-offering to be presented on the fourteenth day, on the evening of which the paschal lamb was slaughtered and the paschal meal was held (v. 22). The Mosaic legislation makes no allusion to this, but simply speaks of festal sacrifices for the seven days of *mazzoth*, the 15th to the 21st Abib (Lev. 23: 5-8; Num. 28:16-25), with regard to which fresh regulations are also given here. The Mosaic law prescribes for each of these seven days as burnt-offerings two bullocks, a ram, and seven yearling lambs, as a meat-offering; three-tenths of an ephah of meal mixed with oil for each bullock, two-tenths for the ram, and one-tenth for each lamb, and a he-goat for the sin-offering (Num. 28:19-22). The new law for the feasts, on the other hand, also requires, it is true, only one he-goat daily for a sin-offering on the seven feast days, but for the daily burnt-offerings seven bullocks and seven rams reach; and for the meat-offering, an ephah of meal and a hin of oil for every bullock, and for every ram. In the new *thorah*, therefore, the burnt-offerings and meat-offerings are much richer and more copious, and the latter in far greater measure than the former. — V. 25. The same number of sacrifices is to be offered throughout the feast of seven days falling upon the fifteenth day of the seventh month. This feast is the feast of tabernacles, but the name is not mentioned, doubtless because the practice of living in tabernacles (booths) would be dropped in the time to come. And even with regard to the sacrifices of this feast, the new *thorah* differs greatly from the old. According to the Mosaic law, there were to

be offered, in addition to the daily sin-offering of a he-goat, seventy bullocks in all as burnt-offerings for the seven days; and these were to be so distributed that on the first day thirteen were to be offered, and the number was to be reduced by one on each of the following days, so that there would be only seven bullocks upon the seventh day; moreover, every day two rams and fourteen yearling lambs were to be offered, together with the requisite quantity of meal and oil for a meat-offering according to the number of the animals (Num. 29:12-34). According to Ezekiel, on the other hand, the quantity of provision made for the sacrifices remained the same as that appointed for the feast of Passover; so that the whole cost of the burnt-offerings and meat-offerings did not reach the amount required by the Mosaic law. In addition to all this, there was an eighth day observed as a closing festival in the Mosaic feast of tabernacles, with special sacrifices; and this also is wanting in Ezekiel. — But the following is still more important than the points of difference just mentioned: Ezekiel only mentions the two yearly feasts of seven days in the first and seventh months, and omits not only the Pentecost, or feast of weeks, but also the day of trumpets, on the first of the seventh month, and the day of atonement on the tenth; from which we must infer that the Israeli of the future would keep only the two first named of all the yearly feasts. The correctness of this conclusion is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the fact that he practically transfers the feasts of the day of trumpets and of the day of atonement, which were preparatory to the feast of tabernacles, to the first month, by the appointment of special sin-offerings for the first and seventh days of that month (vv. 18-20), and of a sin-offering on the day of the paschal meal (v. 22). This essentially transforms the idea which lies at the foundation of the cycle of Mosaic feasts, as we intend subsequently to show, when discussing the meaning and significance of the whole picture of the new kingdom of God, as shown in Eze. 40-48.

#### **CH. 46: 1-15. SACRIFICES FOR THE SABBATH AND NEW MOON, FREEWILL-OFFERINGS, AND DAILY SACRIFICES**

*Eze. 46: 1-7.* Sacrifices for the Sabbath and New Moon. — As, according to Eze. 45:17, it devolved upon the prince to provide and bring the sacrifices for himself and the house of Israel; after the appointment of the sacrifices to be offered at the yearly feasts (Eze. 45:18-25), and before the regulation of the sacrifices for the Sabbath and new moon (Eze. 46: 4-7), directions are given as to the conduct of the prince at the offering of these sacrifices (Eze. 46: 1-3). For although the slaughtering and preparation of the sacrifices for the altar devolved upon the priests, the prince was to be present at the offering of the sacrifices to be provided by him, whereas the people were under no obligation to appear before the Lord in the temple except at the yearly feasts.

## Eze. 46: 1-7.

*Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, The gate of the inner court, which looks toward the east, shall be shut the six working days, and on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. V. 2. And the prince shall come by the way to the porch of the gate from without, and stand at the posts of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt-offering and his peace-offerings, and he shall worship on the threshold of the gate and then go out; but the gate shall not be shut till the evening. V. 3. And the people of the land shall worship at the entrance of that gate on the Sabbaths and on the new moons before Jehovah. V. 4. And the burnt-offering which the prince shall offer to Jehovah shall consist on the Sabbath-day of six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish; V. 5. And as a meat-offering, an ephah for the ram, and for the lambs as a meat-offering that which his hand may give, and of oil a hin to the ephah (of meal). V. 6. And on the day of the new moon there shall be an bullock, a young ox without blemish, and six lambs and a ram without blemish; V. 7. And he shall put an ephah for the bullock, and an ephah for the ram for the meat-offering, and for the lambs as much as his hand affords, and of oil a hin for the ephah.*

Vv. 1-3 supply and explain the instructions given in Eze. 44: 1-3 concerning the outer eastern gate. As the east gate of the outer court (Eze. 44: 1), so also the east gate of the inner court was to remain closed during the six working days, and only to be opened on the Sabbaths and new moons, when it was to remain open till the evening. The prince was to enter this inner east gate, and to stand there and worship upon the threshold while his sacrifice was being prepared and offered. **בוא דרך אולם השאר** is to be taken as in Eze. 44: 3; but **מחויץ**, which is appended, is not to be referred to the entrance into the inner court, as the statement would be quite superfluous so far as this is concerned, since any one who was not already in the inner court must enter the gate-building of the inner court from without, or from the outer court. The meaning of **מחויץ** is rather that the prince was to enter, or to go to, the gate porch of the inner court through the outer east gate. There he was to stand at the posts of the gate and worship on the threshold of the gate during the sacrificial ceremony; and when this was over he was to go out again, namely, by the same way by which he entered (Eze. 44: 3). But the people who came to the temple on the Sabbaths and new moons were to worship **בפתח**, i.e., at the entrance of this gate, outside the threshold of the gate. Kliefoth is wrong in taking **בפתח** in the sense of through the doorway, as signifying that the people were to remain in front of the outer east gate, and to worship looking at the temple through this gate and through the open gate between. For **השאר ההוא**, *hits* gate, can only be the gate of the inner court, which has been already mentioned. There is no force in the consideration which has led Kliefoth to overlook **ההוא**, and think of the outer gate, namely, that “it would be unnatural to suppose that the people were to come into the outer court through the outer north and south gates, whilst the

outer east gate remained shut (or perhaps more correctly, was opened for the prince), and so stand in front of the inner court," as it is impossible to see what there is that is unnatural in such a supposition. On the other hand, it is unnatural to assume that the people, who, according to v. 9, were to come through the north and south gates into the outer court at all the **מוֹעֲדִים** to appear before Jehovah, were not allowed to enter the court upon the Sabbaths and new moons if they should wish to worship before Jehovah upon these days also, but were to stand outside before the gate of the outer court. The difference between the princes and the people, with regard to visiting the temple upon the Sabbaths and new moons, consisted chiefly in this, that the prince could enter by the outer east gate and proceed as far as the posts of the middle gate, and there worship upon the threshold of the gate, whereas the people were only allowed to come into the outer court through the outer north and south gates, and could only proceed to the front of the middle gate. — Vv. 4ff. The burnt-offering for the Sabbath is considerably increased when compared with that appointed in the Mosaic law. The law requires two yearling lambs with the corresponding meat-offering (Num. 28: 9); Ezekiel, six lambs and one ram, and in addition to these a meat-offering for the ram according to the proportion already laid down in Eze. 45:24 for the festal sacrifices; and for the lambs, **מִתַּת יָדוֹ**, a gift, a present of his hand, — that is to say, not a handful of meal, but, according to the formula used in alternation with it in v. 7, as much as his hand can afford. For **בְּאֲשֶׁר תִּשְׂגֶה יָדוֹ**, see Lev. 14:30; 25:26. — It is different with the sacrifices of the new moon in vv. 6 and 7. The law of Moses prescribed two bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs, with the corresponding meat-offering, and a he-goat for a sin-offering (Num. 28:11-15); the *thorah* of Ezekiel, on the contrary, omits the sin-offering, and reduces the burnt-offering to one bullock, one ram, and six lambs, together with a meat-offering, according to the proportion already mentioned, which is peculiar to his law. The first **תְּמִיִּים** in v. 6 is a copyist's error for **תְּמִיִּם**.

### **Eze. 46: 8-12.** On the Opening of the Temple for the People, and for the Voluntary Offerings of the Prince.

V. 8. *And when the prince cometh, he shall go in by the way to the porch of the gate, and by its way shall he go out.* V. 9. *And when the people of the land come before Jehovah on the feast days, he who enters through the north gate to worship shall go out through the south gate; and he who enters through the south gate shall go out through the north gate: they shall not return through the gate through which they entered, but go out straight forward.* V. 10. *And the prince shall enter in the midst of them, when they enter; and when they go out, they shall go out (together).* V. 11. *And at the feast days and holy days the meat-offering shall be an ephah for the bullock, an ephah for the ram, and for the lambs what his hand may give, and of oil a hin for the ephah.* V. 12. *And when the prince prepares a voluntary burnt-offering*

or voluntary peace-offerings to Jehovah, they shall open the gate that looks to the east, and he shall prepare his burnt-offerings and his peace-offering as he does on the Sabbath day; and when he has gone out they shall shut the gate after his going out.

The coming of the people to worship before Jehovah has been already mentioned in v. 3, but only causally, with reference to the position which they were to take behind the prince in case any individuals should come on the Sabbaths or new moons, on which they were not bound to appear. At the high festivals, on the other hand, every one was to come (Deu. 16:16); and for this there follow the necessary directions in vv. 9 and 10, to prevent crowding and confusion. For the purpose of linking these directions to what comes before, the rule already laid down in v. 2 concerning the entrance and exit of the prince is repeated in v. 8. מועדים is supposed by the commentators to refer to the high festivals of the first and seventh months (Eze. 45:21 and 25); but מועדים does not apply to the same feasts as those which are called חגים in v. 11, as we may see from the combination of חגים and מועדים. חגים is the term applied to the greater annual feasts, as distinguished from the Sabbaths, new moons, and the day of atonement. The מועדים, on the contrary, are all the times and days sanctified to the Lord, including even the Sabbath (see the comm. on Lev. 23: 2). It is in this sense that מועדים is used here in v. 9, and not חגים, because what is laid down concerning the entrance and exit of the people, when visiting the temple, is not merely intended to apply to the high festivals, on which the people were bound to appear before Jehovah, but also to such feast days as the Sabbaths and new moons, whenever individuals from among the people were desirous of their own free-will to worship before the Lord. The latter cases were not to be excluded, although, as v. 10 clearly shows, the great feasts were principally kept in mind. For the entrance and exit of the prince in the midst of the people (v. 10) apply to the great yearly feasts alone. The *Chetib* יצאו in v. 9 is to be preferred to the easier *Keri* יצאו, and is not merely the more difficult reading, but the more correct reading also, as two kinds of people are mentioned, — those who entered by the north gate and those who entered by the south. Both are to go out walking straight forward; and neither of them is to turn in the court for the purpose of going out by the gate through which he entered. Even in v. 10 יצאו is not to be altered, as Hitzig supposes, but to be taken as referring to the prince and the people. — In v. 11, the instructions given in Eze. 45:24; 46: 5, 7, concerning the quantities composing the meat-offering for the different feasts, are repeated here as rules applicable to all festal times. בחגים ובמועדים has been correctly explained as follows: “at the feasts, and generally at all regular (more correctly, established) seasons,” cf. Eze. 45:17. Only the daily sacrifices are excepted from this rule, other



regulations being laid down for them in v. 14. — V. 12. The freewill-offerings could be presented on any week-day. And the rules laid down in vv. 1 and 2 for the Sabbath-offerings of the prince are extended to cases of this kind, with one modification, namely, that the east gate, which had been opened for the occasion, should be closed again as soon as the sacrificial ceremony was over, and not left open till the evening, as on the Sabbath and new moon. נִדְבָה is a substantive: the freewill-offering, which could be either a burnt-offering or a peace-offering.

### *Eze. 46:13-15.* The Daily Sacrifice.

V. 13. *And a yearling lamb without blemish shalt thou prepare as a burnt-offering daily for Jehovah: every morning shalt thou prepare it.* V. 14. *And a meat-offering shalt thou add to it every morning, a sixth of an ephah, and oil a third of a hin, to moisten the wheaten flour, as a meat-offering for Jehovah: let these be everlasting statutes, perpetually enduring.* V. 15. *And prepare the lamb, and the meat-offering, and the oil, every morning as a perpetual burnt-offering.*

The preparation of the daily sacrifice is not imposed upon the prince, in harmony with Eze. 45:17; it is the duty of the congregation, which the priests have to superintend. Every morning a yearling lamb is to be brought as a burnt-offering. The Mosaic law required such a lamb both morning and evening (Num. 28: 3, 4). The new *thorah* omits the evening sacrifice, but increases the meat-offering to the sixth of an ephah of meal and the third of a hin of oil, against the tenth of an ephah of meal and the fourth of a hin of oil prescribed by the Mosaic law (Num. 28: 5). רָס, from רָסַם, ἄπ λει., to moisten (cf. רָסִים, Son. 5: 2). The plural חֲקוֹת refers to the burnt-offering and meat-offering.

תָּמִיד is added to give greater force, and, according to the correct remark of Hitzig, appears to be intended as a substitute for לְדוֹרְתֵיכֶם in Lev. 23:14, 21, 31. The repeated emphasizing of בַּבֶּקֶר בַּבֶּקֶר shows that the silence as to the evening sacrifice is not a mere oversight of the matter, but that in the new order of worship the evening sacrifice is to be omitted. The *Chetib* וְעֵשׂוּ is to be retained, in opposition to the *Keri* יַעֲשׂוּ.

This brings to an end the new order of worship. The verses which follow in the chapter before us introduce two supplementary notices, — namely, a regulation pointing back to Eze. 45: 7-9, concerning the right of the prince to hand down or give away his landed property (vv. 16-18); and a brief description of the sacrificial kitchens for priests and people (vv. 19-24).

### *Eze. 46:16-18.* On the Right of the Prince to Dispose of his Landed Property.

V. 16. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, If the prince gives a present to one of his sons, it is his inheritance, shall belong to his sons; it is their possession, in an hereditary*

way. V. 17. *But if he gives a present from his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall belong to him till the year of liberty, and then return to the prince; to his sons alone shall his inheritance remain.* V. 18. *And the prince shall not take from the inheritance of the people, so as to thrust them out of their possession; from his own possession he shall transmit to his sons, that no one of my people be scattered from his possession.*

According to Eze. 45: 7, 8, at the future division of the land among the tribes, a possession was to be given to the prince on both sides of the holy heave and of the city domain, that he might not seize upon a possession by force, as the former princes had done. The prince might give away portions of this royal property, but only within such limits that the design with which a regal possession had been granted might not be frustrated. To his sons, as his heirs, he might make gifts therefrom, which would remain their own property; but if he presented to any one of his servants a portion of his hereditary property, it was to revert to the prince in the year of liberty; just as, according to the Mosaic law, the hereditary field of an Israelite, which had been alienated, was to revert to its hereditary owner (Lev. 27:24, compared with 25:10-13). The suffix in נַחֲלָתוֹ (v. 16) is not to be taken as referring to the prince, and connected with the preceding words in opposition to the accents, but refers to אִישׁ מִבְּנָיו. What the prince gives to one of his sons from his landed property shall be his נַחֲלָה, i.e., after the manner of an hereditary possession. On the other hand, what the prince presents to one of his servants shall not become hereditary in his case, but shall revert to the prince in the year of liberty, or the year of jubilee. The second half of v. 17 reads verbally thus: “only his inheritance is it; as for his sons, it shall belong to them.” — And as the prince was not to break up his regal possession by presents made to servants, so was he (v. 18) also not to put any one out of his possession by force, for the purpose, say, of procuring property for his own sons; but was to give his sons their inheritance from his own property alone. For הַיְנִיָּה, compare Eze. 45: 8, and such passages as 1Sa. 8:14; 22: 7. We shall return by and by to the question, how this regulation stands related to the view that the prince is the Messiah.

### *Eze. 46:19-24.* The Sacrificial Kitchens for the Priests and for the People.

V. 19. *And he brought me up the entrance by the shoulder of the gate to the holy cells for the priests, which looked to the north; and behold there was a place on the outermost side toward the west.* V. 20. *And he said to me, This is the place where the priests boil the trespass-offering and the sin-offering, where they bake the meat-offering that they may not need to carry it out into the outer court, to sanctify the people.* V. 21. *And he led me out into the outer court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and behold, in every corner of the court there was again a court.* V. 22. *In the four corners of the court were closed courts of forty cubits in length and thirty cubits in breadth; all four corner spaces had one measure.* V. 23. *And a row of stands was round about therein in all four, and boiling hearths were*

*under the rows made round about. V. 24. And he said to me, These are the kitchen-house, where the servants of the house boil the slain-offering of the people.*

In the list and description of the subordinate buildings of the temple, the sacrificial kitchens are passed over; and they are therefore referred to here again in a supplementary manner. Ewald has shifted vv. 19-24, and placed them after Eze. 42:14, which would certainly have been the most suitable place for mentioning the sacrificial kitchens for the priests. But it is evident that they stood here originally, and not there; not only from the fact that in v. 19a the passage to the holy cells (Eze. 42: 1ff.) is circumstantially described, which would have been unnecessary if the description of the kitchens had originally followed immediately after Eze. 42:14, as Ezekiel was then standing by the cells; but also, and still more clearly, from the words that serve as an introduction to what follows, “he led me back to the door of the house” (Eze. 47: 1), which are unintelligible unless he had changed his standing-place between Eze. 46:18 and 47: 1, as is related in Eze. 46:19 and 21, since Ezekiel had received the sacrificial *thorah* (Eze. 44: 5-46:18) in front of the house (Eze. 44: 4). If vv. 19-24 had originally stood elsewhere, so that Eze. 47: 1 was immediately connected with Eze. 46:18, the transition-formula in Eze. 47: 1a would necessarily have read very differently. — But with this section the right of the preceding one, vv. 16-18, which Ewald has arbitrarily interpolated in Eze. 45 between vv. 8 and 9, to hold its present place in the chapter before us as an appendix, is fully vindicated. — The holy cells (v. 19) are those of the northern cell-building (Eze. 42: 1-10) described in Eze. 42: 1-14 (see Plate I L). **בַּמְבֹּאֵ** is the approach or way mentioned in Eze. 42: 9, which led from the northern inner gate to these cells (see Plate I l); not the place to which Ezekiel was brought (Kliefoth), but the passage along which he was led. The spot to which he was conducted follows in **אֵל הַלְשָׁכוֹת** (the article before the construct state, as in Eze. 43:21, etc.). **אֵל הַכִּהָנִים** is appended to this in the form of an apposition; and here **לְשָׁכוֹת** is to be repeated in thought: to those for the priests. **הַפְּנוֹת צִ** belongs to **הַלְשָׁכוֹת**. There, i.e., by the cells, was a space set apart at the outermost (hindermost) sides toward the west (Plate I M), for the boiling of the flesh of the trespass-offering and sin-offering, and the baking of the *minchah*, — that is to say, of those portions of the sacrifices which the priests were to eat in their official capacity (see the comm. on Eze. 42:13). For the motive assigned in v. 20b for the provision of special kitchens for this object, see the exposition of Eze. 44:19.

In addition to these, kitchens were required for the preparation of the sacrificial meals, which were connected with the offering of the *shelamim*, and were held by those who presented them. These sacrificial kitchens for the people are treated of in vv. 20-24. They were situated in the four corners of the outer

court (Plate I N). To show them to the prophet, the angel leads him into the outer court. The holy cells (v. 19) and the sacrificial kitchens for the priests (v. 20) were also situated by the outside wall of the inner court; and for this reason Ezekiel had already been led out of the inner court, where he had received the sacrificial *thorah*, through the northern gate of the court by the way which led to the holy cells, that he might be shown the sacrificial kitchens. When, therefore, it is stated in v. 21 that “he led me out into the outer court,” **וַיֵּצֵאֵנִי** can only be explained on the supposition that the space from the surrounding wall of the inner court to the way which led from the gate porch of that court to the holy cells, and to the passage which continued this way in front of the cells (Plate I l and m), was regarded as an appurtenance of the inner court. In every one of the four corners of the outer court there was a (small) courtyard in the court. The repetition of **וְהָיָה חֵצֶר בְּמִקְצֵא הָחֵר** has a distributive force. The small courtyards in the four corners of the court were **קְטָרוֹת**, i.e., not “uncovered,” as this would be unmeaning, since all courts or courtyards were uncovered; nor “contracted” (Böttcher), for **קָטַר** has no such meaning; nor “*fumum exhalantia*,” as the Talmudists suppose; nor “bridged over” (Hitzig), which there is also nothing in the language to sustain; but in all probability *atria clausa*, i.e., *muris cincta et janius clausa* (Ges. *Thes.*), from **קָטַר**; in Aram. *ligavit*, in Ethiop. *clausit, obseravit januam*. The word **מִהֶקְצֵעוֹת** is marked with *puncta extraordinaria* by the Masoretes as a suspicious word, and is also omitted in the Septuagint and Vulgate. Böttcher and Hitzig have therefore expunged it as a gloss. But even Hitzig admits that this does not explain how it found its way into the text. The word is a *Hophal* participle of **קָצַע**, in the sense of cornered off, cut off into corners, and is in apposition to the suffix to **לְאַרְבַּעָתָם**, — literally, one measure wax to all four, the spaces or courtyards cut off in the corners. For this appositional use of the participle, compare 1Ki. 14: 6. There is also a difference of opinion as to the meaning of the word **טוֹר**, which only occurs here and in Exo. 28:17ff. and 39:10, where it signifies “row,” and not “enclosure” (Kliefoth). **טִירוֹת**, which follows, is evidently merely the feminine plural, from **טוֹר**, as **טִירָה** is also derived from **טוֹר**, in the sense of “to encircle” (see the comm. on Psa. 69:26). Consequently **טוֹר** does not mean a covering or boundary wall, but a row or shelf of brickwork which had several separate shelves, under which the cooking hearths were placed. **מִבְּשָׁלוֹת**, not kitchens, but cooking hearths; strictly speaking a *partic. Piel*, things which cause to boil. — **בֵּית הַמִּבְּשָׁלִים**, kitchen house. **מְשָׁרְתֵי הַבַּיִת**, the temple servants, as distinguished from the servants of Jehovah (Eze. 44:15, 16), are the Levites (Eze. 44:11, 12). **עֲשׂוּי** is construed as in Eze. 40:17 and 41:18, 19.

## CH. 47 AND 48. BLESSING OF THE LAND OF CANAAN, AND DISTRIBUTION OF IT AMONG THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

*Eze. 47-48.* After Ezekiel had seen the entrance of the glory of the Lord into the new temple, which was measured before his eyes, and had received the new *thorah* to be announced to the people concerning the service which Israel was to render to its God in the new sanctuary, a stream of living water was shown to him, proceeding from the threshold of the temple, flowing to the Arabah, and emptying itself into the Dead Sea, to fertilize the barren soil, and fill the salt water of the Dead Sea with vital power (Eze. 47: 1-12); and finally, the command of the Lord is communicated to him concerning the boundaries of the holy land, its distribution among the twelve tribes of Israel, and the building of the holy city (Eze. 47:13-48:35).

### CH. 47: 1-12. THE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE

*Eze. 47: 1-12.* When Jehovah shall have judged all the heathen in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and shall dwell as King of His people upon Zion His holy mountain, then will the mountains trickle with new wine, and the hills run with milk, and all the brooks of Judah flow with water; and a spring will proceed from the house of Jehovah, and water the Acacia valley. With these figures Joel (Joe. 4:18) has already described the river of salvation, which the Lord would cause to flow to His congregation in the time when the kingdom of God shall be perfected. This picture of the Messianic salvation shapes itself in the case of our prophet into the magnificent vision contained in the section before us. <sup>161</sup>

V. 1. *And he led me back to the door of the house, and, behold, water flowed out from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the front side of the house was toward the east; and the water flowed down from below, from the right shoulder of the house on the south of the altar.* V. 2. *And he led me out by the way of the north gate, and caused me to go round about on the outside, to the outer gate of the way to the (gate), looking toward the east; and, behold, waters rippled for the right shoulder of the gate.* V. 3. *When the man went out toward the east, he had a measuring line in his hand, and he measured a thousand cubits, and caused me to go through the water — water to the ankles.* V. 4. *And he measured a thousand, and caused me to go through the water — water to the knees; and he measured a thousand, and caused me to go through — water to the hips.* V. 5. *And he measured a thousand — a river through which I could not walk, for the water was high, water to swim in, a river which could not be forded.* V. 6. *And he said to me, Hast thou seen it, son of man? and he led me back again by the bank of the river.* V. 7. *When I returned, behold, there stood on the bank of the river very many trees on this side and on that.* V. 8. *And he said to me, This water flows out into the eastern circle, and runs down into the plain, and reaches the sea; into the sea is it carried out, that the waters may become wholesome.* V. 9. *And it will come to pass, every living thing with which it swarms everywhere, whither the double river comes, will live, and there will be very many fishes; for when this water comes thither they will become*

*wholesome, and everything will live whither the river comes. V. 10. And fishermen will stand by it, from Engedi to Eneglaim they will spread out nets; after their kind will there be fishes therein, like the fishes of the great sea, very many. V. 11. Its marshes and its swamps, they will not become wholesome, they will be given up to salt. V. 12. And by the river will all kinds of trees of edible fruit grow on its bank, on this side and on that, their leaves will not wither, and their fruits will not fail; every moon they will bear ripe fruit, for its water flows out of its sanctuary. And their fruits will serve as food, and their leaves as medicine.*

From the outer court, where Ezekiel had been shown the sacrificial kitchens for the people (Eze. 46:21ff.), he is taken back to the front of the door of the temple house, to be shown a spring of water, flowing out from under the threshold of the temple, which has swollen in the short course of four thousand cubits from its source into a deep river in which men can swim, and which flows down to the Jordan valley, to empty itself into the Dead Sea. In vv. 1 and 2, the origin and course of this water are described; in vv. 3 and 5, its marvellous increase; in v. 6, the growth of trees on its banks; in vv. 7-12, its emptying itself into the Arabah and into the Dead Sea, with the life-giving power of its water.

— V. 1. The door of the house is the entrance into the holy place of the temple, and **מִפֶּתַח הַבַּיִת** the threshold of this door. **קִדְמָה**, not “in the east” (Hitzig), for the following sentence explaining the reason does not require this meaning; but “toward the east” of the threshold, which lay toward the east, for the front of the temple was in the east. **מִתַּחַת** is not to be connected with **מִבְּתָר**, but to be taken by itself, only not in the sense of downwards (Hitzig), but from beneath, namely, down from the right shoulder of the house. **יָרַד**, to flow down, because the temple stood on higher ground than the inner court. The right shoulder is the part of the eastern wall of the holy place between the door and the pillars, the breadth of which was five cubits (Eze. 41: 1). The water therefore issued from the corner formed by the southern wall of the porch and the eastern wall of the holy place (see the sketch on Plate I), and flowed past the altar of burnt-offering on the south side, and crossed the court in an easterly direction, passing under its surrounding wall. It then flowed across the outer court and under the pavement and the eastern wall into the open country, where the prophet, on the outside in front of the gate, saw it rippling forth from the right shoulder of that gate. That he might do this, he was led out through the north gate, because the east gate was shut (Eze. 44: 1), and round by the outside wall to the eastern outer gate. **דְּרֹךְ חוּץ** is more minutely defined by **אֶל-שַׁאֲר הַחוּץ**, and this, again, by **דְּרֹךְ הַפְּנִינָה קְדָמָה**, “by the way to the (gate) looking eastwards.” The **ἀπ. λεγ. מִפְּכָה**, *Piel* of **פָּכָה**, related to **בִּכָּה**, most probably signifies to ripple, not to trickle. **מִים** has no article, because it is evident from the context that the water was the same as that which Ezekiel had seen in the inner court, issuing from the threshold of the temple. The right

shoulder is that portion of the eastern wall which joined the south side of the gate. — Vv. 3-5. The miraculous increase in the depth of the water. A thousand cubits from the wall, as one walked through, it reached to the ankles; a thousand cubits further, to the knees; a thousand cubits further, to the hips; and after going another thousand cubits it was impossible to wade through, one could only swim therein. The words **מִי אֲפָסִים** are a brief expression for “there was water which reached to the ankles.” **אֲפָס** is equivalent to **פָּס**, an ankle, not the sole of the foot. In 1Ch. 11:13, on the other hand, we have **פָּס דְּמַיִם** for **אֲפָס דְּמַיִם**. The striking expression **מַיִם בְּרָכִים** for **מִי בְרָכִים** may possibly have been chosen because **מִי בְרָכִים** had the same meaning as **מַיִם הַגְּלִילִים** in Isa. 36:12 (*Keri*). The measuring man directed the prophet’s attention (v. 6) to this extraordinary increase in the stream of water, because the miraculous nature of the stream was exhibited therein. A natural river could not increase to such an extent within such short distances, unless, indeed, other streams emptied themselves into it on all sides, which was not the case here. He then directed him to go back again **אֶל שְׂפַת**, along the bank, not “to the bank,” as he had never left it. The purpose for which he had been led along the bank was accomplished after he had gone four thousand cubits. From the increase in the water, as measured up to this point, he could infer what depth it would reach in its further course. He is therefore now to return along the bank to see how it is covered with trees. **בְּשׁוּבְנִי** cannot be explained in any other way than as an incorrect form for **בְּשׁוּבִי**, though there are no corresponding analogies to be found.

In vv. 8-12 he gives him a still further explanation of the course of the river and the effect of its waters. The river flows out into **הַגְּלִילָה הַקְּדָמוֹנָה**, the eastern circle, which is identical with **גְּלִילוֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן**, the circle of the Jordan (Jos. 22:10, 11), the region above the Dead Sea, where the Jordan valley (Ghor) widens out into a broad, deep basin. **הַעֲרָבָה** is the deep valley of the Jordan, now called the *Ghor* (see the comm. on Deu. 1: 1), of which Robinson says that the greater part remains a desolate wilderness. It was so described in ancient times (see Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 10. 7, iv. 8. 2), and we find it so to-day (compare v. Raumer, *Pal.* p. 58). **הַיָּם הַקְּדָמוֹנִי** is the Dead Sea, called **הַיָּם הַקְּדָמוֹנִי** in v. 18, and the sea of the Arabah in Deu. 3:17; 4:49. We agree with Hengstenberg in taking the words **אֶל-הַיָּמָה הַמוּצְאִים** as an emphatic summing up of the previous statement concerning the outflow of the water, to which the explanation concerning its effect upon the Dead Sea is attached, and supply **בָּאוּ** from the clause immediately preceding: “the waters of the river that have been brought out (come) to the sea, and the waters of the Dead Sea are healed.” There is no need, therefore, for the emendation proposed by Hitzig,

namely, **אֵל הַיָּם הֵם מוֹצְאִים**. So much, however, is beyond all doubt, that **הַיָּמָה** is no other than the Dead Sea already mentioned. The supposition that it is the Mediterranean Sea (Chald., Ros., Ewald, and others) cannot be reconciled with the words, and has only been transferred to this passage from Zec. 14: 8. **נִרְפָּא** signifies, as in 2Ki. 2:22, the healing or rendering wholesome of water that is injurious or destructive to life. The character of the Dead Sea, with which the ancients were also well acquainted, and of which Tacitus writes as follows: *Lacus immenso ambitu, specie maris sapore corruptior, gravitate odoris accolis pestifer, neque vento impellitur neque pisces aut suetas aquis volucres patitur* (*Hist.* v. c. 6), — a statement confirmed by all modern travellers (cf. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 61ff., and Robinson, *Physical Geography of the Holy Land*), — is regarded as a disease of the water, which is healed or turned into wholesome water in which fishes can live, by the water of the river proceeding from the sanctuary. The healing and life-giving effect of this river upon the Dead Sea is described in vv. 9 and 10. Whithersoever the waters of the river come, all animated beings will come to life and flourish.

In v. 9 the dual **נַחְלִים** occasions some difficulty. It is not likely that the dual should have been used merely for the sake of its resemblance to **מַיִם**, as Maurer imagines; and still less probable is it that there is any allusion to a junction of the river proceeding from the temple at some point in its course with the Kedron, which also flows into the Dead Sea (Hävernick), as the Kedron is not mentioned either before or afterwards. According to Kliefoth, the dual is intended to indicate a division which takes place in the waters of the river, that have hitherto flowed on together, as soon as they enter the sea. But this would certainly have been expressed more clearly. Hengstenberg takes the expression “double river” to mean a river with a strong current, and refers to Jer. 50:21 in support of this. This is probably the best explanation; for nothing is gained by altering the text into **נַחֲלָם** (Ewald) or **נַחְלִים** (Hitzig), as **נַחַל** does not require definition by means of a suffix, nor does the plural answer to the context. **וּגְרֵי אֵל כָּל-אֲשֶׁר** is to be taken in connection with **אֲשֶׁר יִשְׂרָץ**: “wherewith it swarms whithersoever the river comes;” though **אֵל** does not stand for **אֵל** after Gen. 7:21, as Hitzig supposes, but is to be explained from a species of attraction, as in Gen. 20:13. **יַחְיֶה** is a pregnant expression, to revive, to come to life. The words are not to be understood, however, as meaning that there were living creatures in the Dead Sea before the health-giving water flowed into it; the thought is simply, that whithersoever the waters of the river come, there come into existence living creatures in the Dead Sea, so that it swarms with them. In addition to the **שָׂרָץ**, the quantity of fish is specially mentioned; and in the second hemistich the reason is assigned for the number of living creatures



that come into existence by a second allusion to the health-giving power of the water of the river. The subject to **וַיִּרְפָּאוּ**, viz., the waters of the Dead Sea, is to be supplied from the context. The great abundance of fish in the Dead Sea produced by the river is still further depicted in v. 10. Fishermen will spread their nets along its coast from *Engedi* to *Englaim*; and as for their kind, there will be as many kinds of fish there as are to be found in the great or Mediterranean Sea. **עַיִן גִּדִי**, i.e., Goat's spring, now *Ain-Jidi*, a spring in the middle of the west coast of the Dead Sea, with ruins of several ancient buildings (see the comm. on Jos. 15:62, and v. Raumer, *Pal.* p. 188). **עַיִן עֵגְלִים** has not yet been discovered, though, from the statement of Jerome, "*Engallim* is at the beginning of the Dead Sea, where the Jordan enters it," it has been conjectured that it is to be found in *Ain el-Feshkhah*, a spring at the northern end of the west coast, where there are also ruins of a small square tower and other buildings to be seen (vid., Robinson's *Palestine*, II pp. 491, 492), as none of the other springs on the west coast, of which there are but few, answer so well as this. **לְמִנְהָ** is pointed without *Mappik*, probably because the Masoretes did not regard the **ה** as a suffix, as the noun to which it alludes does not follow till afterwards. — V. 11 introduces an exception, namely, that notwithstanding this the Dead Sea will still retain marshes or pools and swamps, which will not be made wholesome (**בַּצֹּת** for **בְּצֹתָת**, pools). An allusion to the natural character of the Dead Sea underlies the words. "In the rainy season, when the sea is full, its waters overspread many low tracts of marsh land, which remain after the receding of the water in the form of moist pools or basins; and as the water in these pools evaporates rapidly, the ground becomes covered with a thick crust of salt" (Robinson's *Physical Geography*, p. 215). **לְמַלַּח נְתָנוּ**, they are given up to salt, i.e., destined to remain salt, because the waters of the river do not reach them. The light in which the salt is regarded here is not that of its seasoning properties, but, in the words of Hengstenberg, "as the foe to all fruitfulness, all life and prosperity, as Pliny has said (*Hist. Nat.* xxxi. c. 7: *Omnis locus, in quo reperitur sal, sterilis est nihilque gignit*") (cf. Deu. 29:22; Jer. 17: 6; Zep. 2: 9; Ps. 107:34). — In v. 12 the effect of the water of the river upon the vegetation of the ground, already mentioned in v. 7, is still further described. On its coast grow all kinds of trees with edible fruits (**מֵאֲכָל עֵץ**, as in Lev. 19:23), whose leaves do not wither, and whose fruits do not fail, but ripen every month (**בְּכֶר**, or produce first-fruits, i.e., fresh fruits; and **לְחֻדָּשִׁים** distributive, as in Isa. 47:13), because the waters which moisten the soil proceed from the sanctuary, i.e., "directly and immediately from the dwelling-place of Him who is the author of all vital power and fruitfulness" (Hitzig). The leaves and fruits of these trees therefore possess supernatural powers. The fruits serve as food, i.e., for the maintenance of the life produced

by the river of water; the leaves as medicine (רִפְּאָה from רָפָא = רָפָא, healing), i.e., for the healing of the sick and corrupt (εἰς θεραπείαν, Rev. 22: 2).

In the effect of the water proceeding from the sanctuary upon the Dead Sea and the land on its shores, as described in vv. 8-12, the significance of this stream of water in relation to the new kingdom of God is implied. If, then, the question be asked, what we are to understand by this water, whether we are to take it in a literal sense as the temple spring, or in a spiritual and symbolical sense, the complete answer can only be given in connection with the interpretation of the whole of the temple vision (Eze. 40-48). Even if we assume for the moment, however, that the description of the new temple, with the worship appointed for it, and the fresh division of Canaan, is to be understood literally, and therefore that the building of an earthly temple upon a high mountain in the most holy *terumah* of the land set apart for Jehovah, and a renewal of the bleeding sacrifices in this temple by the twelve tribes of Israel, when restored to Palestine from the heathen lands, are to be taken for granted, it would be difficult to combine with this a literal interpretation of what is said concerning the effect of the temple spring. It is true that in Volck's opinion "we are to think of a glorification of nature;" but even this does not remove the difficulties which stand in the way of a literal interpretation of the temple spring. According to v. 12, its waters possess the life-giving and healing power ascribed to them because they issue from the sanctuary. But how does the possession by the water of the power to effect the glorification of nature harmonize with its issuing from a temple in which bullocks, rams, calves, and goats are slaughtered and sacrificed? — Volck is still further of opinion that, with the spiritual interpretation of the temple spring, "nothing at all could be made of the fishermen;" because, for example, he cannot conceive of the spiritual interpretation in any other way than as an allegorical translation of all the separate features of the prophetic picture into spiritual things. But he has failed to consider that the fishermen with their nets on the shore of the sea, once dead, but now swarming with fish, are irreconcilably opposed to the assumption of a glorification of nature in the holy land, just because the inhabitants of the globe or holy land, in its paradisaically glorified state, will no more eat fish or other flesh, according to the teaching of Scripture, than the first men in Paradise. When once the wolf shall feed with the lamb, the leopard with the kid, the cow with the bear, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, under the sceptre of the sprout from the stem of Jesse, then will men also cease their fishing, and no longer slaughter and eat either oxen or goats. To this the Israelites will form no exception in their glorified land of Canaan. — And if even these features in the vision before us decidedly favour the figurative or spiritual view of the temple spring, the necessity for this explanation is placed beyond the reach of doubt by a comparison of our picture with the parallel passages. According to Joe. 4:18,

at the time when a spring issues from the house of Jehovah and the vale of Shittim is watered, the mountains trickle with new wine, and the hills run with milk. If, then, in this case we understand what is affirmed of the temple spring literally, the trickling of the mountains with new wine and the flowing of the hills with milk must be taken literally as well. But we are unable to attain to the belief that in the glorified land of Israel the mountains will be turned into springs of new wine, and the hills into fountains of milk,; and in the words of the whole verse we can discern nothing but a figurative description of the abundant streams of blessing which will then pour over the entire land. And just as in Joel the context points indisputably to a non-literal or figurative explanation, so also does the free manner in which Zechariah uses this prophecy of his predecessors, speaking only of living waters which issue from Jerusalem, and flow half into the eastern (i.e., the Dead) sea, and half into the western (i.e., the Mediterranean) sea (Zec. 14: 8), show that he was not thinking of an actual spring with earthly water. And here we are still provisionally passing by the application made of this feature in the prophetic descriptions of the glory of the new kingdom of God in the picture of the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 22: 1 and 2).

The figurative interpretation, or spiritual explanation, is moreover favoured by the analogy of the Scriptures. "Water," which renders the unfruitful land fertile, and supplies refreshing drink to the thirsty, is used in Scripture as a figure denoting blessing and salvation, which had been represented even in Paradise in the form of watering (cf. Gen. 13:10). In Isa. 12: 3, "and with joy ye draw water from the wells of salvation," the figure is expressly interpreted. And so also in Isa. 44: 3, "I will pour water upon the thirsty one, and streams upon the desert; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:" where the *blessing* answers to the water, the *Spirit* is named as the principal form in which the blessing is manifested, "the foundation of all other salvation for the people of God" (Hengstenberg). This salvation, which Joel had already described as a spring issuing from the house of Jehovah and watering the dry acacia valley, Ezekiel saw in a visionary embodiment as water, which sprang from under the threshold of the temple into which the glory of the Lord entered, and had swollen at a short distance off into so mighty a river that it was no longer possible to wade through. In this way the thought is symbolized, that the salvation which the Lord causes to flow down to His people from His throne will pour down from small beginnings in marvellously increasing fulness. The river flows on into the barren, desolate waste of the Ghor, and finally into the Dead Sea, and makes the waters thereof sound, so that it swarms with fishes. The waste is a figure denoting the spiritual drought and desolation, and the Dead Sea a symbol of the death caused by sin. The healing and quickening of the salt waters of that sea, so fatal to all life, set forth the power of that

divine salvation which conquers death, and the calling to life of the world sunk in spiritual death. From this comes life in its creative fulness and manifold variety, as shown both by the figure of the fishermen who spread their nets along the shore, and by the reference to the kinds of fish, which are as manifold in their variety as those in the great sea. But life extends no further than the water of salvation flows. Wherever it cannot reach, the world continues to life in death. The pools and swamps of the Dead Sea are still given up to salt. And lastly, the water of salvation also possesses the power to produce trees with leaves and fruits, by which the life called forth from death can be sustained and cured of all diseases. This is the meaning, according to the express statement of the text, of the trees with their never withering leaves, upon the banks of the river, and their fruits ripening every month.

### **CH. 47:13-48:35. BOUNDARIES AND DIVISION OF THE HOLY LAND. DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY OF GOD**

*Eze. 47:13-23.* Boundaries of the Land to be Divided among the Tribes of Israel. (See the map, Plate IV.)

V. 13. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, This is the boundary according to which ye shall divide the land among you for an inheritance, for Joseph portions.* V. 14. *And ye shall receive it for an inheritance, one as well as another, because I lifted up my hand to give it to your fathers; and thus shall this land fall to you for an inheritance.* V. 15. *And this is the boundary of the land: toward the north side, from the great sea onwards by the way to Chetlon, in the direction of Zedad;* V. 16. *Hamath, Berotah, Sibram, which is between the boundary of Damascus and the boundary of Hamath, the central Hazer, which is on the boundary of Haruan.* V. 17. *And the boundary from the sea shall be Hazar-Enon, the boundary town of Damascus; and as for the north northwards, Hamath is the boundary. This, the north side.* V. 18. *And the east side between Hauran and Damascus and Gilead and the land of Israel, shall be the Jordan; from the boundary to the eastern sea ye shall measure. This, the east side.* V. 19. *And the south side toward the south; from Tamar to the water of strife, Kadesh, along the brook to the great sea. This, the south side toward the south.* V. 20. *And the west side; the great sea from the boundary to Hamath. This, the west side.* V. 21. *This land shall ye divide among you according to the tribes of Israel.* V. 22. *And it shall come to pass, ye shall divide it by lot among yourselves for an inheritance, and among the foreigners who dwell in the midst of you, who have begotten sons in the midst of you; they shall be to you like natives born among the sons of Israel; they shall cast lots with you for an inheritance among the tribes of Israel.* V. 23. *And it shall come to pass, in the tribe in which the foreigner dwells, there shall ye give him his inheritance, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

The fixing of the boundary of the land which Israel was to divide in future according to its twelve tribes is commenced (vv. 13 and 14) and concluded (vv. 22 and 23) with certain general statements concerning the distribution. The introductory statements are attached to the heading "this is the boundary,"

which is therefore repeated in v. 15. גָּדָה is evidently a copyist's error for גָּדָה, which is adopted by all the older translators, contained in some *Codd.*, and demanded by וְגָדָה in v. 15. גְּבוּלֵי stands here for the whole of the boundary of the land to be distributed; and אֲשֶׁר which follows is an accusative, "according to which." — "According to the *twelve* tribes," — for all Israel is to return and dwell as *one* people of God under one prince in its own land (Eze. 36:24ff., 37:21ff.). But the division among the twelve tribes is more precisely defined immediately afterwards by the clause abruptly appended, "Joseph portions," i.e., two portions for Joseph. There can be no doubt that this is the meaning of the words in accordance with Gen. 48:22 and Jos. 17:14, 17. Hence the notice-like form of the expression, which should not be obliterated by pointing חֲבֵלִים as a dual, חֲבֵלִים. If the land was to be divided by lot according to twelve tribes, and the tribe of Levi was to receive its portion from the *terumah* which was set apart, Joseph must necessarily receive two hereditary portions for his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, in accordance with the appointment of the patriarch in Gen. 48:22. The commencement of v. 14 is not at variance with this, as Hitzig imagines; for the words, "ye shall receive it for an inheritance, one as another," simply affirm, that of the twelve tribes reckoned by Israel in relation to the נַחֲלָה, all were to receive equal shares, the one as much as the other. As the reason for this command to divide the land, allusion is made to the oath with which God promised to give this land to the fathers (cf. Eze. 20:28).

The definition of the boundaries commences with v. 15. In form it differs in many points from Num. 34: 1-5, but in actual fact it is in harmony with the Mosaic definition. In Num. 34 the description commences with the southern boundary, then proceeds to the western and northern boundaries, and closes with the eastern. In Ezekiel it commences with the northern boundary and proceeds to the east, the south, and the west. This difference may be explained in a very simple manner, from the fact that the Israelites in the time of Moses came from Egypt i.e., marching from the south, and stood by the south-eastern boundary of the land, whereas at this time they were carried away into the northern lands Assyria and Babylon, and were regarded as returning thence. Again, in Ezekiel the boundaries are described much more briefly than in Num. 34, the northern boundary alone being somewhat more circumstantially described. The course which it takes is represented in a general manner in v. 15 as running from the great sea, i.e., the Mediterranean, by the way to Chetlon, in the direction toward Zedad. In vv. 16 and 17 there follow the places which formed the boundary. The starting-point on the Mediterranean Sea can only be approximately determined, as the places mentioned, Chetlon and Zedad, are still unknown. Not only *Chetlon*, but *Zedad* also, has not yet been discovered. The city of *Sadad* (*Sudud*), to the east of the road leading from Damascus to Hums

(Emesa), which Robinson and Wetzstein suppose to be the same, lies much too far toward the east to be used in defining the boundary either here or in Num. 34: 8 (see the comm. on Num. 34: 8). Among the names enumerated in v. 16, **חַמַּת** is not the city of *Hamah* on the Orontes, which lay much too far to the north, but the kingdom of *Hamath*, the southern boundary of which formed the northern boundary of Canaan, though it cannot be given with exactness. *Berothah* is probably identical with *Berothai* in 2Sa. 8: 8, a city of the king of Zobah; but the situation of it is still unknown. *Sibraim* may perhaps be identical with *Ziphron* in Num. 34: 9, which has also not yet been discovered, and is not to be sought for in the ruins of *Zifran*, to the north-east of Damascus, near the road to Palmyra; for that place could not form the boundary of Damascus and Hamath. The situation of the “central *Hazer*” has also not yet been determined. *Hauran*, on the boundary of which it stood, is used here in a more comprehensive sense than **Αυρανίτις** in Josephus and other Greek authors, and includes the later *Auranitis*, together with *Gaulanitis* (Golan) and *Batanaea* (Bashan), and probably also *Ituraea*, as only Damascus and Gilead are named in v. 18 in addition to Hauran, on the east side of the Jordan; so that the whole tract of land between the territory of Damascus and the country of Gilead is embraced by the name Hauran. **חַוְרָן**, Arab. *ḥawrân*, is derived from the number of caves (**חֹר**, **חֹר**) in that district, to which Wetzstein (*Reiseber.* p. 92) indeed raises the objection that with the exception of the eastern and south-eastern Hauran, where no doubt most of the volcanic hills have been perforated by troglodytes, the dwellings in caves are by no means common in that region. But the name may have originated in this eastern district, and possibly have included even that portion of Gilead which was situated to the north of the Jabbok, namely, *Erbed* and *Suët*, the true cave-country. For further remarks concerning these districts, see the comm. on Deu. 3: 4 and 10. The statement in v. 17a, “the boundary from the sea shall be *Hazar-Enon*, the boundary of Damascus,” cannot have any other meaning than that the northern boundary, which started from the Mediterranean Sea, stretched as far as *Hazar-Enon*, the frontier city of Damascus, or that *Hazar-Enon* formed the terminal point on the east, toward the boundary of Damascus, for the northern boundary proceeding from the sea. **חַצֵּר עֵינָן** or **חַצֵּר עֵינָן** (Num. 34: 9), i.e., spring-court, we have endeavoured to identify in the comm. on Num. 34: 3 with the spring *Lebweh*, which lies in the *Bekâa* at the watershed between the Orontes and the Leontes; and the designation “the boundary of Damascus” suits the situation very well. V. 17b has been aptly explained by Hitzig thus, in accordance with the literal meaning of the words, “and as for the north north-wards, *Hamath* is the boundary,” which he further elucidates by observing that **צַפְנָה** is intended as a supplementary note to the boundary line from west to east, which is indicated just before. **וְאֵת פְּאֵת צְפוֹן** is a concluding formula: “this, the north side.” But

זאת (here and vv. 18 and 19) is not to be altered into זאת after v. 20 and the Syriac version, as Hitzig supposes, but to be explained, as v. 18 clearly shows, on the supposition that Ezekiel had תְּמַדְדוּ, “ye shall measure,” floating before his mind, to which זאת פ, “and that the northern boundary,” would form a correct logical sequel.

The eastern boundary is defined in v. 18 in the same manner as in Num. 34:10-12, except that in the latter it is more minutely described above the Lake of Gennesaret by the mention of several localities, whereas Ezekiel only names the Jordan as the boundary. — פֶּאת קְדִים, with supplementary remarks, is not to be taken as the predicate to the subject הַיַּרְדֵּן, as Hitzig has correctly observed; for the meaning of פֶּאת does not allow of this. The explanation is rather this: as for the east side, between Hauran, etc. and the land of Israel, is the Jordan. Hauran, Damascus, and Gilead lie on the east side of the Jordan, the land of Israel on the west side. The striking circumstance that Ezekiel commences with Hauran, which lay in the middle between Damascus and Gilead, — Hauran, Damascus, and Gilead, instead of Damascus, Hauran, and Gilead, — may probably be explained from the fact that the Jordan, which he names as the boundary, for the sake of brevity, did not extend so far upwards as to the territory of Damascus, but simply formed the boundary of the land of Israel between Hauran and Gilead. מִנְבוֹל points back to the northern boundary already mentioned. From this boundary, the eastern terminal point of which was *Hazar-Enon*, they are to measure to the eastern sea, i.e., to the Dead Sea.

Ver. 19. The southern boundary toward the south is to proceed from Tamar to the water of strife, Kadesh, (and thence) along the brook to the great (i.e., Mediterranean) sea. *Tamar*, a different place from *Hazazon-Tamar*, called *Engedi* in v. 10 (cf. 2Ch. 20: 2), is supposed to be the *Thamara* (Θαμαρά), <sup>162</sup> which was a day's journey on the road from Hebron to Aelam (*Aelath*, Deu. 2: 8; 1Ki. 9:26), according to Eusebius in the *Onomast.* ed. Lars. p. 68, and had a Roman garrison; and Robinson (*Pal.* III pp. 178 and 186ff.) accordingly conjectures that it is to be found in the ruins of *Kurnub*, which lie six hours' journey to the south of *Milh*, toward the pass of *es-Sufāh*. But this conjecture is bound up with various assumptions of a very questionable character, and the situation of Hurnub hardly suits the *Tamar* of our passage, which should be sought, not to the west of the southern point of the Dead Sea, but, according to the southern boundary of Canaan as drawn in Num. 34: 3-5, to the south of the Dead Sea. The waters of strife of Kadesh (Num. 20: 1-13), in the desert of Zin, were near Kadesh-Barnea, which was in the neighbourhood of the spring *Ain Kades*, discovered by Rowland to the south of *Bir-Seba* and *Khalasa* by the fore-courts of *Jebel Helal*, i.e., at the north-west corner of the

mountain land of the *Azazimeh* (see the comm. on Num. 10:12; 12:16, and 20:16). Instead of מְרִיבוֹת we have the singular מְרִיבָה in Eze. 48:28, as in Num. 27:14 and Deu. 32:51. נַחֲלָה is to be pointed נַחֲלָה, from נָחַל with ה *loc.*; and the reference is to the brook of Egypt; the great wady *el-Arish* (Πινκοροῦδρα), along which the southern boundary of Canaan ran from Kadesh to the Mediterranean Sea (see the comm. on Eze. 34: 5). — V. 20. The Mediterranean Sea formed the western boundary. מַגְבּוֹל, i.e., from the southern boundary mentioned in v. 19 till opposite (אֶד נִכְח) to the coming to Hamath, i.e., till opposite to the point at which one enters the territory of *Hamath* (Hitzig), i.e., the spot mentioned in v. 20 (? 17) as the commencement of the northern boundary in the neighbourhood of the promontory of *esh-Shûkah* between Byblus (Gebal) and Tripolis. — V. 21. This land they are to divide among them according to their tribes. With this remark, which points back to v. 13, the definition of the boundaries is brought to a close. There is simply added in vv. 22 and 23 a further regulation concerning the foreigners living in Israel. The law of Moses had already repeatedly urged upon the Israelites affectionate treatment of them, and in Lev. 19:34 the command is given to treat them like natives in this respect, and to love them. But the full right of citizenship was not thereby conceded to them, so that they could also acquire property in land. The land was given to the Israelites alone for an hereditary possession. Foreigners could only be incorporated into the congregation of Israel under the limitations laid down in Deu. 23: 2-9, by the reception of circumcision. But in the future distribution of the land, on the contrary, the גֵּרִים were to receive hereditary property like native-born Israelites; and in this respect no difference was to exist between the members of the people of God born of Abraham's seed and those born of the heathen. At the same time, this right was not to be conferred upon every foreigner who might be only temporarily living in Israel, but to those alone who should beget sons in the midst of Israel, i.e., settle permanently in the holy land. The *Kal* יִפְלוּ is not to be altered into the *Hiphil* תִּפְלוּ, as Hitzig proposes, but is used in the sense of receiving by lot, derived from the *Hiphil* signification, "to apportion by lot."

*Eze. 48: 1-29.* Division of Canaan among the Tribes, and Boundary of the Terumah. — The division of the land, like the definition of the boundaries (Eze. 47:15), commences in the north, and enumerates the tribes in the order in which they were to receive their inheritances from north to south: first, seven tribes from the northern boundary to the centre of the land (vv. 1-7), where the heave for the sanctuary, with the land of the priests and Levites and the city domain, together with the prince's land on the two sides, was to be set apart



(vv. 8-22; and secondly, the other five tribes from this to the southern boundary (vv. 23-29). Compare the map on Plate IV.

*Eze. 48: 1-29.*

V. 1. *And these are the names of the tribes: from the north end by the side of the way to Chetlon toward Hamath (and) Hazar-Enon the boundary of Damascus — toward the north by the side of Hamath there shall east side, west side belong to him: Dan one (tribe-lot). V. 2. And on the boundary of Dan from the east side to the west side: Asher one. V. 3. And on the boundary of Asher from the east side to the west side: Naphtali one. V. 4. And on the boundary of Naphtali from the east side to the west side: Manasseh one. V. 5. And on the boundary of Manasseh from the east side to the west side: Ephraim one. V. 6. And on the boundary of Ephraim from the east side to the west side: Reuben one. V. 7. And on the boundary of Reuben from the east side to the west side: Judah one. V. 8. And on the boundary of Judah from the east side to the west side shall be the heave, which ye shall lift (heave) off, five and twenty thousand (rods) in breadth, and the length like every tribe portion from the east side to the west side; and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it. V. 9. The heave which ye shall lift (heave) for Jehovah shall be five and twenty thousand in length and ten thousand in breadth. V. 10. And to these shall the holy heave belong, to the priests, toward the north, five and twenty thousand; toward the west, breadth ten thousand; toward the east, breadth ten thousand; and toward the south, length five and twenty thousand; and the sanctuary of Jehovah shall be in the middle of it. V. 11. To the priests, whoever is sanctified of the sons of Zadok, who have kept my charge, who have not strayed with the straying of the sons of Israel, as the Levites have strayed, V. 12. To them shall a portion lifted off belong from the heave of the land; a most holy beside the territory of the Levites. V. 13. And the Levites (shall receive) parallel with the territory of the priests five and twenty thousand in length, and in breadth ten thousand; the whole length five and twenty thousand, and (the whole) breadth ten thousand. V. 14. And they shall not sell or exchange any of it, nor shall the first-fruit of the land pass to others; for it is holy to Jehovah. V. 15. And the five thousand which remain in the breadth along the five and twenty thousand are common land for the city for dwellings and for open space; and the city shall be in the centre of it. V. 16. And these are its measures: the north side four thousand five hundred, the south side four thousand five hundred, the east side four thousand five hundred, and the west side four thousand five hundred. V. 17. And the open space of the city shall be toward the north two hundred and fifty, toward the south two hundred and fifty, toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty. V. 18. And the remainder in length parallel with the holy heave, ten thousand toward the east and ten thousand toward the west, this shall be beside the holy heave, and its produce shall serve the workmen of the city for food. V. 19. And as for the workmen of the city, they shall cultivate it from all the tribes. V. 20. The whole of the heave is five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand; a fourth of the holy heave shall ye take for the possession of the city. V. 21. And the remainder shall belong to the prince on this side and on that side of the holy heave and of the city possession; along the five and twenty thousand of the heave to the eastern boundary, and toward the west along the five and twenty thousand to the western boundary parallel with the tribe portions, it shall belong to the prince; and the holy heave and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst.*

V. 22. *Thus from the possession of the Levites (as) from the possession of the city shall that which lies in the midst of what belongs to the prince between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin belong to the prince. V. 23. And the rest of the tribes are from the east side to the west side: Benjamin one. V. 24. And on the boundary of Benjamin from the east side to the west side: Simeon one. V. 25. And on the boundary of Simeon from the east side to the west side: Issachar one. V. 26. And on the boundary of Issachar from the east side to the west side: Zebulon one. V. 27. And on the boundary of Zebulon from the east side to the west side: Gad one. V. 28. And on the boundary of Gad on the south side toward the south, the boundary shall be from Tamar to the water of strife from Kadesh along the brook to the great sea. V. 29. This is the land which ye shall divide by lot for inheritance to the tribes of Israel; these are their portions, is the saying of the Lord Jehovah.*

The new division of the land differs from the former one effected in the time of Joshua, in the first place, in the fact that all the tribe-portions were to extend uniformly across the entire breadth of the land from the eastern boundary to the Mediterranean Sea on the west, so that they were to form parallel tracts of country; whereas in the distribution made in the time of Joshua, several of the tribe-territories covered only half the breadth of the land. For example, Dan received his inheritance on the west of Benjamin; and the territories of half Manasseh and Asher ran up from the northern boundary of Ephraim to the northern boundary of Canaan; while Issachar, Naphtali, and Zebulon received their portions on the east of these; and lastly, Simeon received his possession within the boundaries of the tribe of Judah. And secondly, it also differs from the former, in the fact that not only are all the twelve tribes located in Canaan proper, between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea; whereas previously two tribes and a half had received from Moses, at their own request, the conquered land of Bashan and Gilead on the eastern side of the Jordan, so that the land of Canaan could be divided among the remaining nine tribes and a half. But besides this, the central tract of land, about the fifth part of the whole, was separated for the holy heave, the city domain, and the prince's land, so that only the northern and southern portions, about four-fifths of the whole, remained for distribution among the twelve tribes, seven tribes receiving their hereditary portions to the north of the heave and five to the south, because the heave was so selected that the city with its territory lay near the ancient Jerusalem. — In vv. 1-7 the seven tribes which were to dwell on the north of the heave are enumerated. The principal points of the northern boundary, viz., the way to Chetlon and Hazar-Enon, the boundary of Damascus, are repeated in v. 1 from Eze. 47:15, 17, as the starting and terminal points of the northern boundary running from west to east. The words אֶל-יַד הַמַּת fix the northern boundary more precisely in relation to the adjoining territory; and in וְהָיוּ לוֹ פִּי the enumeration of the tribe-lots begins with that of the tribe of Dan, which was to receive its territory against the northern boundary. דָּן לוֹ refers to the name דָּן

which follows, and which Ezekiel already had in his mind. הַיָּם קְדִים פֶּאֶת is constructed *asyndetôs*; and פֶּאֶת is to be repeated in thought before הַיָּם: the east side (and) the west (side) are to belong to it, i.e., the tract of land toward its west and its east side. The words which follow, דָּן אֶחָד, are attached in an anacoluthistic manner: “Dan (is to receive) one portion,” for “one shall belong to Dan.” To אֶחָד we are to supply in thought the substantive הַבֵּל, tribe-lot, according to Eze. 47:13. “The assumption that one tribe was to receive as much as another (vid., Eze. 47:14), leads to the conclusion that each tribe-lot was to be taken as a *monas*” (Kliefoth). In this way the names in vv. 2-7, with the constantly repeated אֶחָד, must also be taken. The same form of description is repeated in vv. 23-28 in the case of the five tribes placed to the south of the heave. — In the order of the several tribe-territories it is impossible to discover any universal principle of arrangement. All that is clear is, that in the case of Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, and Ephraim, regard is had to the former position of these tribe-territories as far as the altered circumstances allowed. In the time of the Judges a portion of the Danites had migrated to the north, conquered the city of Laish, and given it the name of Dan, so that from that time forward Dan is generally named as the northern boundary of the land (e.g., as early as 2Sa. 3:10, and in other passages). Accordingly Dan receives the tract of land along the northern boundary. Asher and Naphtali, which formerly occupied the most northerly portions of the land, follow next. Then comes Manasseh, as half Manasseh had formerly dwelt on the east of Naphtali; and Ephraim joins Manasseh, as it formerly joined the western half of Manasseh. The reason for placing Reuben between Ephraim and Judah appears to be, that Reuben was the first-born of Jacob’s sons. The position of the *termuah* between Judah and Benjamin is probably connected with the circumstance that Jerusalem formerly stood on the boundary of these two tribes, and so also in the future was to skirt Benjamin with its territory. The other tribes had then to be located on the south of Benjamin; Simeon, whose territory formerly lay to the south; Issachar and Zebulun, for which no room was left in the north; and Gad, which had to be brought over from Gilead to Canaan.

In vv. 8-22, the *terumah*, which has already been described in Eze. 45: 1-7 for a different purpose, is more precisely defined: first of all, in v. 8, according to its whole extent — viz. twenty-five thousand rods in breadth (from north to south), and the length the same as any one (= every one) of the tribe-lots, i.e., reaching from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea (cf. Eze. 45: 7). In the centre of this separated territory the sanctuary (the temple) was to stand.

בְּתוֹכוֹ, the suffix of which refers *ad sensum* to הַקֶּלֶק instead of הַתְּרוּמָה, has not the indefinite meaning “therein,” but signifies “in the centre;” for the priests’ portion, in the middle of which the temple was to stand, occupied the central

position between the portion of the Levites and the city possession, as is evident from v. 22. The circumstance that here, as in Eze. 45: 1ff., in the division of the *terumah*, the priests' portion is mentioned first, then the portion of the Levites, and after this the city possession, proves nothing so far as the local order in which these three portions followed one another is concerned; but the enumeration is regulated by their spiritual significance, so that first of all the most holy land for the temple and priests is defined, then the holy portion of the Levites, and lastly, the common land for the city. The command, that the sanctuary is to occupy the centre of the whole *terumah*, leads to a more minute description in the first place (vv. 9-12) of the priests' portion, in which the sanctuary was situated, than of the heave to be lifted off for Jehovah. In v. 10, **לְאֵלֶּהָ**, which stands at the head, is explained by **לְכֹהֲנֵיִם** which follows. The extent of this holy *terumah* on all four sides is then given; and lastly, the command is repeated, that the sanctuary of Jehovah is to be in the centre of it. In v. 11, **הַמִּקְדָּשׁ** is rendered in the plural by the LXX, Chald. and Syr., and is taken in a distributive sense by Kimchi and others: to the priests whoever is sanctified of the sons of Zadok. This is required by the position of the participle between **לְכֹהֲנֵיִם** and **מִבְּנֵי צְדוֹק** (compare 2Ch. 26:18, and for the singular of the participle after a previous plural, Psa. 8: 9). The other rendering, "for the priests is it sanctified, those of the sons of Zadok," is at variance not only with the position of the words, but also with the fact, namely, that the assignment to the priests of a heave set apart for Jehovah is never designated as **קֹדֶשׁ**, and from the nature of the case could not be so designated. The apodosis to v. 11a follows in v. 12, where **לְכֹהֲנֵיִם** is resumed in **לְהֵם תְּרוּמָהּ** is an adjective formation derived from **תְּרוּמָה**, with the signification of an abstract: that which is lifted (the lifting) from the heave, as it were "a *terumah* in the second potency" (for these formations, see Ewald, § § 164 and 165). This *terumiyah* is called most holy, in contrast with the Levites' portion of the *terumah*, which was **קֹדֶשׁ** (v. 14). The priests' portion is to be beside the territory of the Levites, whether on the southern or northern side cannot be gathered from these words any more than from the definition in v. 13: "and the Levites beside (parallel with) the territory of the priests." Both statements simply affirm that the portions of the priests and Levites were to lie side by side, and not to be separated by the town possession. — Vv. 13 and 14 treat of the Levites' portion: v. 13, of its situation and extent; v. 14, of its law of tenure. The seemingly tautological repetition of the measurement of the length and breadth, as "all the length and the breadth," is occasioned by the fact "that Ezekiel intends to express himself more briefly here, and not, as in v. 10, to take all the four points of the compass singly; in 'all the length' he embraces the two long sides of the oblong, and in '(all) the breadth' the two broad sides, and affirms that 'all the length,' i.e., of both the north and south sides, is to be twenty-five

thousand rods, and ‘all the breadth,’ i.e., of both the east and west sides, is to be ten thousand rods” (Kliefoth). Hitzig has missed the sense, and therefore proposes to alter the text. With regard to the possession of the Levites, the instructions given in Lev. 25:34 for the field of the Levites’ cities — namely, that none of it was to be sold — are extended to the whole of the territory of the Levites: no part of it is to be alienated by sale or barter. And the character of the possession is assigned as the reason: the first-fruit of the land, i.e., the land lifted off (separated) as first-fruit, is not to pass into the possession of others, because as such it is holy to the Lord. The *Chetib* יַעְבוֹר is the correct reading: to pass over, *sc.* to others, to non-Levites.

Vv. 15-18 treat of the city possession. As the *terumah* was twenty-five thousand rods in breadth (v. 8), after measuring off ten thousand rods in breadth for the priests and ten thousand rods in breadth for the Levites from the entire breadth, there still remain five thousand rods אֶל פְּנֵי, in front of, i.e., along, the long side, which was twenty-five thousand rods. This remnant was to be חֵל, i.e., common (not holy) land for the city (Jerusalem). לְמֹשָׁב, for dwelling-places, i.e., for building dwelling-houses upon; and לְמִגְרָשׁ, for open space, the precinct around the city. The city was to stand in the centre of this oblong. V. 16 gives the size of the city: on each of the four sides, four thousand five hundred rods (the חֲמֵשׁ, designated by the Masoretes as כְּתִיב וְלֹא קָרִי, has crept into the text through a copyist’s error); and v. 17, the extent of the open space surrounding it: on each side two hundred and fifty rods. This gives for the city, together with the open space, a square of five thousand rods on every side; so that the city with its precinct filled the entire breadth of the space left for it, and there only remained on the east and west an open space of ten thousand rods in length and five thousand rods in breadth along the holy *terumah*. This is noticed in v. 18; its produce was to serve for bread, i.e., for maintenance, for the labourers of the city (the masculine suffix in תְּבוּאָתָהּ refers grammatically to הַנֶּחֱתֵר). By עֲבָדֵי הָעִיר Hitzig would understand the inhabitants of the city, because one cultivates a piece of land even by dwelling on it. But this use of עָבַד cannot be established. Nor are עֲבָדֵי הָעִיר the workmen employed in building the city, as Gesenius, Hävernicks, and others suppose; for the city was not perpetually being built, so that there should be any necessity for setting apart a particular piece of land for the builders; but they are the working men of the city, the labouring class living in the city. They are not to be without possession in the future Jerusalem, but are to receive a possession in land for their maintenance. We are told in v. 19 who these workmen are. Here הָעֹבְדִים is used collectively: as for the labouring class of the city, people out of all the tribes of Israel shall work upon the land belonging to the city. The

suffix in **אַבְדִּיהוּ** points back to **הַנְּזֹתָר**. The transitive explanation, to employ a person in work, has nothing in the language to confirm it. The fact itself is in harmony with the statement in Eze. 45: 6, that the city was to belong to all Israel. Lastly, in v. 20 the dimensions of the whole *terumah*, and the relation of the city possession to the holy *terumah*, are given. **כָּל-הַתְּרוּמָה** is the whole heave, so far as it has hitherto been described, embracing the property of the priests, of the Levites, and of the city. In this extent it is twenty-five thousand rods long and the same broad. If, however, we add the property of the prince, which is not treated of till vv. 21-23, it is considerably longer, and reaches, as has been stated in v. 8, to the boundaries of the land both on the east and west, the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, as the several tribe-territories do. But if we omit the prince's land, the space set apart from the city possession occupied the fourth part of the holy *terumah*, i.e., of the portion of the priests and Levites. This is the meaning of the second half of v. 20, which literally reads thus: "to a fourth shall ye lift off the holy *terumah* for the city possession." This is not to be understood as meaning that a fourth was to be taken from the holy *terumah* for the city possession; for that would yield an incorrect proportion, as the twenty thousand rods in breadth would be reduced to fifteen thousand rods by the subtraction of the fourth part, which would be opposed to vv. 9 and 15. The meaning is rather the following: from the whole *terumah* the fourth part of the area of the holy *terumah* is to be taken off for the city possession, i.e., five thousand rods for twenty thousand. According to v. 15, this was the size of the domain set apart for the city.

In vv. 21-23 the situation and extent of the prince's possession are described. For v. 21, vid., Eze. 45: 7. **הַנְּזֹתָר**, the rest of the *terumah*, as it has been defined in v. 8, reaching in length from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. As the holy *terumah* and the city possession were only twenty-five thousand rods in length, and did not reach to the Jordan on the east, or to the sea on the west, there still remained an area on either side whose length or extent toward the east and west is not given in rods, but may be calculated from the proportion which the intervening *terumah* bore to the length of the land (from east to west). **אַל-פְּנֵי** and **אַל-פְּנֵי**, in front of, or along, the front of the twenty-five thousand rods, refer to the eastern and western boundaries of the *terumah*, which was twenty-five thousand rods in length. In v. 21b the statement is repeated, that the holy *terumah* and the sanctuary were to lie in the centre of it, i.e., between the portions of land appointed for the prince on either side; and lastly, in v. 22 it is still further stated, with regard to the prince's land on both sides of the *terumah*, that it was to lie between the adjoining tribe-territories of Judah (to the north) and Benjamin (to the south), so that it was to be bounded by these two. But this is expressed in a heavy and therefore obscure manner.

The words **בְּתוֹךְ אֲשֶׁר לְנָשִׂיא יְהוּדָה**, “in the centre of that which belongs to the prince,” belong to **וּמֵאֲחֻזַּת ... הָעִיר**, and form together with the latter the subject, which is written absolutely; so that **מִן** is not used in a partitive, but in a local sense (from), and the whole is to be rendered thus: And as for that which lies on the side of the possession of the Levites, and of the possession of the city in the centre of what belongs to the prince, (that which lies) between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin shall belong to the prince. Hitzig’s explanation — what remains between Judah and Benjamin, from the city territory to the priests’ domain, both inclusive, shall belong to the prince — is arbitrary, and perverts the sense. The periphrastic designation of the *terumah* bounded off between the prince’s land by the two portions named together without a copula, viz., “possession of the Levites and possession of the city,” is worthy of notice. This periphrasis of the whole by two portions, shows that the portions named formed the boundaries of the whole, that the third portion, which is not mentioned, was enclosed within the two, so that the priests’ portion with the sanctuary lay between them. — In vv. 23-27 the rest of the tribes located to the south of the *terumah* are mentioned in order; and in vv. 28 and 29 the account of the division of the land is brought to a close with a repetition of the statement as to the southern boundary (cf. Eze. 47:19), and a comprehensive concluding formula.

If now we attempt, in order to form a clear idea of the relation in which this prophetic division of the land stands to the actual size of Canaan according to the boundaries described in Eze. 47:15ff., to determine the length and breadth of the *terumah* given here by their geographical dimensions, twenty-five thousand rods, according to the metrological calculations of Boeckh and Bertheau, would be 10·70 geographical miles, or, according to the estimate of the Hebrew cubit by Thenius, only 9·75 geographical miles. <sup>163</sup>

The extent of Canaan from Beersheba, or Kadesh, up to a line running across from *Râs esh-Shukah* to the spring *El Lebweh*, is  $3 \frac{1}{3}$  degrees, i.e., fifty geographical miles, ten of which are occupied by the *terumah*, and forty remain for the twelve tribe-territories, so that each tribe-lot would be  $3 \frac{1}{3}$  geographical miles in breadth. If, now, we reckon three geographical miles as the breadth of each of the five tribe-lots to the south of the *terumah*, and as the land becomes broader toward the south a breadth of  $3 \frac{4}{7}$  geographical miles for the seven tribe-lots to the north, the *terumah* set apart in the centre of the land would extend from the site of Jerusalem to Dothan or Jenin. If, however, we take into consideration the breadth of the land from east to west in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, or where the Jordan enters the Dead Sea, Canaan is eleven geographical miles in breadth, whereas at Jenin it is hardly ten geographical miles broad. If, therefore, the length of the *terumah* (from east to

west) was fully ten geographical miles, there would only remain a piece of land of half a mile in breadth on the east and west at the southern boundary, and nothing at all at the northern, for prince's land. We have therefore given to the *terumah* upon the map (Plate IV) the length and breadth of eight geographical miles, which leaves a tract of two miles on the average for the prince's land, so that it would occupy a fifth of the area of the holy *terumah*, whereas the city possession covered a fourth. No doubt the breadth of the *terumah* from south to north is also diminished thereby, so that it cannot have reached quite down to Jerusalem or quite up to Jenin. — If, now, we consider that the distances of places, and therefore also the measurements of a land in length and breadth, are greater in reality than those given upon the map, on account partly of the mountains and valleys and partly of the windings of the roads, and, still further, that our calculations of the Hebrew cubit are not quite certain, and that even the smaller estimates of Thenius are possibly still too high, the measurements of the *terumah* given by Ezekiel correspond as exactly to the actual size of the land of Canaan as could be expected with a knowledge of its extent obtained not by trigonometrical measurement, but from a simple calculation of the length of the roads. — But this furnishes a confirmation by no means slight of our assumption, that the lengths and breadths indicated here are measured by rods and not by cubits. Reckoned by cubits, the *terumah* would be only a mile and a half or a mile and two-thirds in length and breadth, and the city possession would be only a third of a mile broad; whereas the prince's land would be more than six times as large as the whole of the *terumah*, — i. e., of the territory of the Levites, the priests, and the city, — thirteen times as large as the priests' land, and from thirty to thirty-two times as large as the city possession = proportions the improbability of which is at once apparent.

*Eze. 48:30-35.* Size, Gates, and Name of the City. — To complete the whole picture of the future land of Israel, what has been stated in vv. 15 and 16 concerning the size of the holy city is still further expanded here.

V. 30. *And these are the outgoings of the city from the north side, four thousand and five hundred (rods) measurement.* V. 31. *And the gates of the city according to the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates toward the north; the gate of Reuben one, the gate of Judah one, the gate of Levi one.* V. 32. *And on the east side four thousand five hundred (rods): and three gates; namely, the gate of Joseph one, the gate of Benjamin one, the gate of Dan one.* V. 33. *And to the south side, four thousand five hundred measurement: and three gates; the gate of Simeon one, the gate of Issachar one, the gate of Zebulon one.* V. 34. *To the west side, four thousand five hundred — their gates three; the gate of Gad one, the gate of Asher one, the gate of Naphtali one.* V. 35. *Round about, eighteen thousand (rods); and the name of the city: from henceforth Jehovah there.*

The situation of the city of God within the *terumah* and its external dimensions have already been generally indicated in vv. 15, 16. Here the measurement of



the several sides is specified with a notice of their gates, and this is preceded by the heading, “the outlets of the city.” תִּנְצְאוֹת, the outgoings (not extensions, for the word never has this meaning) as the furthest extremities in which a city or a tract of land terminates; not outlets or gates, which are expressly distinguished from them, but outgoing sides; hence the definition of the extent or length of the several sides is appended immediately afterwards. The enumeration commences, as above in the case of the land, with the north side. Each side has three gates, so that the whole city has twelve, which bear the names of the twelve tribes, like the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem in Rev. 21:12, because it will be the city of the true people of God. Levi is included here, and consequently Ephraim and Manasseh are united in the one tribe of Joseph. The three sons of Leah commence the series with the northern gates. They also stand first in the blessing of Moses in Deu. 33: 6-8: the first-born in age, the first-born by virtue of the patriarchal blessing, and the one chosen by Jehovah for His own service in the place of the first-born. Then follow, for the eastern gates, the two sons of Rachel, according to their age (thus deviating from Deu. 33:12 and 13), and, along with them, the elder son of Rachel’s maid; for the southern gates, the three other sons of Leah; and lastly, for the western gates, the three other sons of the maids. Being thus indicated by the names of its gates as the city of all Israel, the city itself receives a name, which exalts it into the city of God (Jehovah). But different explanations have been given of the words in v. 35 which refer to this name. The allusion in מִיּוֹם and the meaning of שָׁמָּה are both disputed points. It is true that the latter literally means “thither;” but Ezekiel also uses it as synonymous with שָׁם, “there,” in Eze. 23: 3 and 32:29, 30, so that the assertion that שָׁמָּה never means “there” is incorrect. מִיּוֹם, from day forward, equivalent to henceforward; but not henceforth and for ever, though this may be implied in the context. Whether מִיּוֹם be taken in connection with the preceding words, “the name of the city will henceforward be,” or with those which follow, the name of the city will be, “henceforward Jehovah there,” makes no material difference so far as the thought is concerned, as the city can only bear the name from the time when Jehovah is שָׁמָּה, and can only bear it so long as Jehovah is שָׁמָּה. But so far as the question is concerned, whether שָׁמָּה signifies thither or there in this passage, Hävernicks is of opinion, indeed, that the whole of Ezekiel’s vision does not harmonize with the meaning “there,” inasmuch as he separates temple and city, so that Jehovah does not properly dwell in Jerusalem, but, in the strictest and highest sense, in His sanctuary, and turns thence to Jerusalem with the fulness of His grace and love. But if Jehovah does not merely direct His love toward the city from afar off, but, as Hävernicks still further says, turns it fully toward it, causes His good pleasure to rest upon it,

then He also rules and is in the city with His love, so that it can bear the name “Jehovah thither (there).” In any case, the interpretation, “Jehovah will from henceforth proceed thither, to restore it, to make it a holy city” (Kliefoth), is untenable; for the name is not given to Jerusalem when lying waste, but to the city already restored and fully built, which Ezekiel sees in the spirit. He has therefore before this turned His favour once more to Jerusalem, which was laid waste; and the name יהוה שְׂמָה, given to the new Jerusalem, can only affirm that henceforward it is to be a city of Jehovah, i.e., that from this time forth Jehovah will be and rule in her. The rendering “Jehovah thither” does not answer to this, but only the rendering, “Jehovah will be there.” compare Isa. 60:14, where Jerusalem is called the city of Jehovah, Zion of the Holy One in Israel, because the glory of Jehovah has risen over her as a brilliant light.

*Eze. 45-48.* Having now completed our exposition in detail, if we take a survey of the substance of the entire vision in Eze. 40-48, on comparing it with the preceding prophecies of the restoration of Israel (Eze. 34-37), we obtain the following picture of the new constitution of the kingdom of God: — When the Lord shall gather the sons of Israel from their banishment among the heathen, and bring them back to Canaan, so that they shall dwell therein as a united people under the rule of His servant David, then shall they, on the fresh distribution of the land according to the full extent to which God promised it to the patriarchs, and indicated the boundaries thereof through Moses (Eze. 47:15-20), set apart the central portion of it as a heave for the sanctuary and His servants, the priests and Levites, as well as for the capital and its labourers, and also give to the prince a possession of his own on both sides of this heave. In the central point of the heave, which occupies a square space of twenty-five thousand rods in length and breadth, the temple is to stand upon a high mountain, and cover, with its courts, a space of five hundred cubits square; and round about it a space of five hundred rods on every side is to form a boundary between the holy and the common. The glory of Jehovah will enter into the temple and dwell therein for ever; and the temple, in its whole extent, will be most holy (Eze. 43: 1-12). Round about this the priests receive a tract of land of twenty-five thousand rods in length and ten thousand in breadth to dwell in as a sanctuary for the sanctuary; and by their side, toward the north, the Levites receive an area of similar size for dwelling-places; but toward the south, a tract of land of twenty-five thousand rods in length and five thousand rods in breadth is to be the property of the city; and in the centre of this area, the city, with its open space, is to cover a square of five thousand rods in length and breadth; and the rest of the land on both sides is to be given to the labourers of the city out of all Israel for their maintenance. The land lying on the eastern and western sides of the heave, as far as the Jordan and the Mediterranean, is to be the property of the prince, and to remain the hereditary possession of his sons

(Eze. 45: 1-8; 46:16-18; 48: 8-22). After the separation of this heave, which, with the prince's possession, covers about the fifth part of the whole extent of Canaan, the rest of the land on the north and south of the heave is to be divided into equal parts and distributed among the twelve tribes, so that every tribe-territory shall stretch from the Jordan to the Mediterranean, — seven tribes receiving their hereditary portions on the north of the heave and five on the south, whilst the foreigners having their permanent homes among the different tribes are to receive hereditary possessions like the native Israelites (Eze. 47:21-48: 7, and 48:23-29).

Israel, thus placed once more in possession of the promised land, is to appear with its prince before the Lord in the temple at the yearly feasts, to worship and to offer sacrifices, the provision of which is to devolve upon the prince at all festal seasons, for which purpose the people are to pay to him the sixtieth part of the corn, the hundredth part of the oil, and the two hundredth head from the flock every year as a heave-offering. The sacrificial service at the altar and in the holy place is to be performed by none but priests of the family of Zadok, who kept the charge of the Lord faithfully when the people wandered into idolatry. All the other descendants of Levi are simply to discharge the inferior duties of the temple service, whilst uncircumcised heathen are not to be admitted into the temple any more, that it may not be defiled by them (Eze. 43:13-54:31, 45: 8-46:15, and 19-24). When Israel shall thus serve the Lord its God, and walk in His commandments and statutes, it will enjoy the richest blessing from God. A spring of living water will issue from the threshold of the temple house, and, swelling after a short course into a mighty river, will flow down to the Jordan valley, empty itself into the Dead Sea, and make the water of that sea so wholesome that it will swarm with living creatures and fishes of every kind; and on the banks of the river fruit-trees will grow with never-withering leaves, which will bear ripe fruit for food every month, whilst the leaves will serve as medicine (Eze. 47: 1-12).

As to the Messianic character of the substance of this whole vision, Jewish and Christian commentators are generally agreed; and the opinion which, according to Jerome, many of the Jews entertained, and which has been supported by the rationalistic expositors (Dathe, Eichhorn, Herder, Böttcher, and others), after the example of Grotius, — namely, that Ezekiel describes the temple of Solomon destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar as a model for the rebuilding of it after the return of the Jews from the captivity, — has not found much favour, inasmuch as, apart from all other objections to which it is exposed, it is upset by the fact that not only are its supporters unable to make anything of the description of the spring which issues from the threshold of the temple, flows through the land, and makes the waters of the Dead Sea sound, but they are also unable to explain the separation of the temple from the city of Jerusalem; as

it would never have occurred to any Jewish patriot, apart from divine revelation, much less to a priest like Ezekiel, who claims such important prerogatives for the prince of the family of David in relation to the temple, to remove the house of Jehovah from Mount Zion, the seat of the royal house of David, and out of the bounds and territory of the city of Jerusalem. But even if we lay aside this view, and the one related to it, — viz. that the whole vision contains nothing more than ideal hopes and desires of better things belonging to that age, with regard to the future restoration of the destroyed temple and kingdom, as Ewald and others represent the matter, — as being irreconcilable with the biblical view of prophecy, the commentators, who acknowledge the divine origin of prophecy and the Messianic character of the vision in these chapters, differ very widely from one another with reference to the question how the vision is to be interpreted; some declaring themselves quite as decidedly in favour of the literal explanation of the whole picture as others in favour of the figurative or symbolico-typical view, which they regard as the only correct and scriptural one. — The latter view gained the upper hand at a very early period in the Christian church, so that we find it adopted by Ephraem Syrus, Theodoret, and Jerome; <sup>164</sup> and it prevailed so generally, that Lud. Cappellus, for example, in his *Trisagion s. templi Hierosol. tripl. delin.* (in the *appar. bibl.* of Walton, in the first part of the *London Polyglot*, p. 3), says: “In this passage God designs to show by the prophet that He no more delights in that carnal and legal worship which they have hitherto presented to Him; but that He demands from them another kind of worship very different from that, and more pleasing to Him (a spiritual worship, of which they have a type in the picture and all the rites of this temple, which differ greatly from those of Moses), and that He will establish it among them when He shall have called them to Himself through the Messiah. And that this spiritual worship is set before them in shadows and figures, there is not a Christian who denies; nor any Jew, unless prejudiced and very obdurate, who ventures to deny, seeing that there are so many things in this description of Ezekiel which not even the most shameless Jew has dared to argue that we are to interpret according to the letter,” etc.

The literal interpretation remained for a long time peculiar to the Jews, who expect from the Messiah not only their own restoration to the earthly Canaan, but the rebuilding of the temple and the renewal of the Levitical worship in the manner described by Ezekiel, and the establishment of a political kingdom generally; whereas Christians have founded the expectation of an earthly kingdom of glory in the form of the millennium, more upon the Apocalypse than upon Ezekiel’s prophecy. It has only been in the most recent time that certain scientific defenders of chiliasm have not shrunk from carrying out their views so far as to teach not only the restoration of the Jews to Palestine on their

conversion to Christ, but, according to their literal explanation of our prophecy, the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the renewal of the Levitical worship in the millennial kingdom. Auberlen has only hinted at this, so that from his words quoted already, “when once priesthood and monarchy are revived, the, without impairing the Epistle to the Hebrews, the ceremonial and civil law of Moses will unfold its spiritual depths in the worship and in the constitution of the millennial kingdom,” we cannot see how far he assumes that there will be a literal fulfilment of Ezekiel’s prophecy. M. Baumgarten (art. “Ezekiel” in Herzog’s *Cyclopaedia*) says, more plainly, that “the restoration of all the outward reality, which Ezekiel saw in vision, will be not so much a repetition of what went before, as a glorification of the outward, which had perished and been condemned,” since this “glorification” will simply consist in “extensions and intensifications” of the earlier precepts of the law. “For,” he adds, in support of this opinion, “when Israel as a nation turns to God, how can, how should it manifest its faith and its obedience in any other way than in the forms and ordinances which Jehovah gave to that people? And is it not obvious (!?) that the whole law, in all its sections and portions, will not receive, till after this conversion, that fulfilment which in all ages it has hitherto sought in vain? And how should temple, priesthood, sacrificial service, Sabbath, and new moon, in themselves be opposed to faith in the perfect and eternal revelation of God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ?” In consistency with this, Baumgarten is therefore of opinion that eventually even the Gentile community will enter again into the congregation of Israel, and find its national organization in the law of Israel according to the will of God. — Hofmann, on the contrary (*Schriftbeweis*, II 2, pp. 577ff.), finds only so much established with certainty in the revelation of Ezekiel, viz., that Israel will serve God again in its own land, and Jehovah will dwell in the midst of it again. He therefore would have the several parts interpreted in relation to the whole; so that what Hengstenberg calls the ideal interpretation of this prophecy remains. But he does not say precisely what his view is concerning the temple, and the Levitical rite of sacrifice to be performed therein. He simply infers, from the fact that a stream of water issuing from the temple-mountain makes the Dead Sea sound and the lower Kedron-valley fruitful, that the land will be different from what it was before; and this alteration Volck calls a glorification of Palestine.

In our discussion of the question concerning the restoration of Israel to Canaan, we have already declared ourselves as opposed to the literal interpretation of the prophecy, and have given the general grounds on which the symbolico-typical view appears to be demanded — namely because the assumption of a restoration of the temple and the Levitical, i.e., bloody, sacrificial worship is opposed to the teaching of Christ and His apostles. We have now to assign further reasons for this. If, then, in the first place, we fix our attention upon the

vision in Eze. 40-48, we cannot find any conclusive argument against the literal and in favour of the figurative interpretation of the vision in question, either in the fact that Ezekiel does not give any building-plan for the temple, but simply ground arrangements and ground measurements, and does not sway that a temple is ever to be built according to his plan, or give any instructions for the restoration of the Israelitish worship, or in the fact that the division of the land, the bounding off of the *terumah* and the arranging of the city, cannot be practically realized. The omission of any command to build the temple might be simply accounted for, from the design to let the prophet merely see the restoration of the destroyed temple in a more perfect form, and cause this to be predicted to the people through him, without at present giving any command to build, as that was only to be carried out in the remote future. The absence of elevations and precise directions concerning the construction of the several buildings might be explained from the fact that in these respects the building was to resemble the former temple. And with regard to the distribution of the land among the tribes, and the setting apart of the *terumah*, it cannot truly be said that "they bear on the face of them their purposelessness and impracticability." The description of a portion of land of definite size for priests, Levites, city, and prince, which was to reach from the eastern boundary of Canaan to the western, and to be bounded off in a straight line by the tribe-territories immediately adjoining, contains nothing impracticable, provided that we do not think of the boundary line as a straight line upon a chess-board. But we may infer from the Mosaic instructions concerning the districts, which were to be given to the Levites as pasture grounds for their cattle round about the cities assigned to them to dwell in, that the words of the text do not warrant any such idea. They are described as perfect squares of a thousand cubits on every side (Num. 35: 2-5). If, then, these Mosaic instructions could be carried out, the same must be true of those of Ezekiel concerning the *terumah*, as its dimensions are in harmony with the actual size of the land. And so also the separation of the city from the temple, and the square form of the city with three gates on every side, cannot be regarded in general as either purposeless or impracticable. And, finally, in the statements concerning the territories to be distributed among the twelve tribes, viz., that they were to lie side by side, that they were all to stretch from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, and that they were to be of equal size, there is no ground for supposing that the land was to be cut up with the measuring rod into abstract oblongs of equal measurements, with an entire disregard of all the actual conditions. The only thing which causes any surprise here is the assumption on which the regulation, that one tribe is to receive as much as another, is founded, namely, that all the tribes of Israel will be equal in the number of families they contain. This hypothesis can hardly be reconciled with the assumption that an actual distribution of Palestine among the twelve tribes of Israel returning from exile is contemplated. Even the measuring of a

space around the temple for the purpose of forming a separation between the holy and the common, which space was to be five times as large as the extent of the temple with its courts, contains an obvious hint at a symbolical signification of the temple building, inasmuch as with a real temple such an object could have been attained by much simpler means. To this must be added the river issuing from the threshold of the eastern temple gate, with its marvellously increasing flow of water, and the supernatural force of life which it contains; for, as we have already pointed out, this cannot be regarded as an earthly river watering the land, but can only be interpreted figuratively, i.e., in a symbolico-typical sense. But if the stream of water flowing from the temple cannot be regarded as a natural river, the temple also cannot be an earthly temple, and the sacrificial service appointed for this temple cannot be taken as divine service consisting in the slaying and offering of bullocks, goats, and calves; and as the entire description forms a uniform prophetic picture, the distribution of the land among the sons of Israel must also not be interpreted literally.

But as different supporters of the chiliastic view have defended the literal interpretation of the picture of the temple spring by the assumption of a glorification of nature, i.e., of a glorification of Palestine before the new creation of the heaven and the earth, and this assumption is of great importance in relation to the question concerning the fulfilment of this prophecy (Eze. 40-48), we must examine somewhat more closely the arguments used in its support.

**I.** *Is the glorification of Canaan before the last judgment taught in the prophecy of the Old Testament?* — According to Volck (“Zur Eschatologie,” *Dorpat. Zeitschr.* vii. pp. 158ff.), the idea of such a glorification is very common throughout the Old Testament prophecy. “When,” he says, “Isaiah (Is. 2: 2-4) sees the mountain of the house of Jehovah exalted above all the mountains, and the nations flowing to it, to walk in Jehovah’s ways; when he prophesies of a time in which the Lord will shelter Israel, now saved and holy in all its members, and fill its land with glory, and Canaan, under the rule of the righteous prince of peace, with its inhabitants once scattered over all the world brought back once more, will be restored to the original, paradisaical state of peace, whilst the world is given up to judgment (Isa. 4: 2-6; 9: 1-6, and 11, 12); — when Jeremiah prophesies that Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and a sprout from the house of David will rule well over his people, upon whose heart Jehovah will write His law (Jer. 31:31-44; 33:15); — when Hosea (Hos. 2:16-25) sees the house of Jacob, which has returned home after a period of severe affliction, as a pardoned people to which its God betrothes Himself again; — when Joel (Joe. 4:16-21) sees a time break forth after the judgment upon the army of the world of nations, in which the holy land bursts into miraculous fruitfulness; —

when Amos (Amo. 9: 8-15) predicts the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David that has been overthrown, and the restoration of the Davidic kingdom; — when, according to Zechariah (Zec. 14: 8ff.), Jerusalem is to be the centre of the world, to which the nations flow, to celebrate the feast of tabernacles with Israel: — it is impossible, without introducing unbounded caprice into our exposition, to resist the conclusion, that in all these passages, and others of a similar kind, a time is depicted, when, after the judgment of God upon the power of the world, Israel will dwell in the enjoyment of blissful peace within its own land, now transfigured into paradisaical glory, and will rule over the nations round about.” But that all these passages do not contain clear scriptural statements “concerning a partial glorification of the earth” during that kingdom of glory, is apparent from the fact that it is not till after writing this that Volck himself raises the question, “Are there really, then, any distinct utterances of Scripture upon this point?” and he only cites two passages (Joe. 4:18ff. and Mic. 7: 9-13) as containing an affirmative answer to the question, to which he also adds in a note Isa. 24: 1-23 as compared with Isa. 13: 9 and Zec. 14: 8-11. But when Joel foretells that, after the judgment of Jehovah upon the army of nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat, the mountains will trickle with new wine, the hills flow with milk, and all the springs of Judah stream with water, while Egypt will become a desolation, and Edom a barren desert, he announces nothing more than that which Isaiah repeats and still further expands in Is. 34 and 35; where even Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, II 2, p. 563) admits that Edom is a symbolical designation, applied to the world of mankind in its estrangement from God. Joel merely mentions Egypt as well as Edom as representatives of the world in its hostility to God. But if Egypt and Edom are types of the world in its estrangement from God or its enmity against Him, Judah is a type of the kingdom of God; and this passage simply teaches that through the judgment the might and glory of the kingdoms of the world at enmity against God will be laid waste and destroyed, and the glory of the kingdom of God established. But in nowise do they teach the glorification of Palestine and the desolation of Idumaea and the country of the Nile; especially if we bear in mind that, as we have already observed, the trickling and flowing of the mountains and hills with new wine and oil cannot possibly be understood literally.

We meet with the very same antithesis in Mic. 7: 9-13, where the daughter of Zion, presented under the figure of a vineyard, is promised the building of her walls and the flowing into her of numerous peoples from Egypt, Asshur, and the ends of the world, and the desolation of the world is foretold. Micah does not say a word about a partial glorification of the earth, unless the building of the walls of Zion is taken allegorically, and changed into a glorification of Palestine. But if this is the case with passages selected as peculiarly clear, the rest will furnish still less proof of the supposed glorification of the land of Israel. It is



true, indeed, that we also find in Isa. 24: 1-23 “the antithesis between Zion, the glorified seat of Jehovah, and the earth laid waste by the judgment” (cf. Isa. 13: 3), and in Zec. 14: 8ff. the prediction of an exaltation of Jerusalem above the land lying round about; but even if a future glorification of the seat of God in the midst of His people, and, indeed, a transformation of the earthly soil of the kingdom of God, be foretold in these and many other passages, the chiliastic idea of a glorification of Palestine before the universal judgment and the new creation of the heaven and earth is by no means proved thereby, so long as there are no distinct statements of Scripture to confirm the supposition that the future glorification of Zion, Jerusalem, Canaan, predicted by the prophets, will take place before the judgment. Even Volck appears to have felt that the passages already quoted do not furnish a conclusive proof of this, since it is not till after discussing them that he thinks it necessary to raise the question, “Does the Old Testament really speak of a glorification of Canaan in the literal sense of the word?” To reply to this he commences with an examination of the view of the millennium held by Auberlen, who finds nothing more in the statements of the Old Testament than that “even nature will be included in the blessing of the general salvation, the soil endowed with inexhaustible fruitfulness, all hostility and thirst for blood be taken from the animal world, yea, the heavens bound to the earth in corresponding harmony,” so that we should be reminded of the times of the world before the flood, when the powers of nature were still greater than they are now. To this the intimation in Isa. 65:20-22 alludes, where men a hundred years old are called boys, etc. (*der Prophet Daniel*, pp. 402, 403). But Volck objects to the literal interpretation of such passages as Isa. 65:20, on the ground that “the consequence of this assumption leads to absurdities, inasmuch as such passages as Isa. 11: 6; 60:17, 18; 66:25, would then also have to be taken literally, to which certainly no one would be so ready to agree” (see also Luthardt, *die Lehre von den letzten Dingen*, p. 78). On the other hand, he defends the canon laid down by Hofmann (p. 566), “that in the prophetic description of that time of glory we must distinguish between the thoughts of the prophecy and the means used for expression them; the former we reach by generalizing what is said by way of example, and reducing the figurative expression to the literal one.” The thought lying at the foundation of these prophetic pictures is, in his opinion, no other than that of a blessed, blissful fellowship with God, and a state of peace embracing both the human and the extra-human creation. “To set forth this thought, the prophets seize upon the most manifold figures and colours which the earth offers them.” Thus in Isa. 65:20-23 we have only a figurative description of what is said in literal words in Isa. 25: 8: He swalloweth up death for ever, and Jehovah wipeth away the tears from every face. So also the figurative expressions in Isa. 11: 6-8; 65:25, affirm nothing more “than that the ground will be delivered from the curse which rests upon it

for the sake of man, and the extra-human creation will be included in the state of peace enjoyed in the holy seat of God. But where there is no death and no evil, and therefore no more sin, where the glory of the Lord shines without change (Isa. 60:19, 20), not only has the world before the flood with its still greater powers of nature returned, but there is the world of *glorification*.” We agree with this view in general, and simply add that this furnishes no proof of the glorification of Canaan before the last judgment. Before this can be done, it must be conclusively shown that these prophetic passages treat of the so-called millennial kingdom, and do not depict what is plainly taught in Isa. 65:17ff. and Rev. 21 and 22, the glory of the heavenly Jerusalem upon the new earth.

Volck also acknowledges this, inasmuch as, after examining these passages, he proposes the question, “Are there really clear passages in the Old Testament prophecy which warrant us in assuming that there will be an intermediate period between the judgment, through which Jehovah glorifies Himself and His people before the eyes of the world, and a last end of all things?” An affirmative answer to this question is said to be furnished by Isa. 24:21ff., where the prophet, when depicting the judgment upon the earth, says: “And it will come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will visit the army of the height on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth; and they will be gathered together as a crowd, taken in the pit, and shut up in the prison, and after the expiration of many days will they be visited. And the sun blushes, and the moon turns pale; for Jehovah rules royally upon Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and in the face of His elders is glory.” Here even Hofmann finds (pp. 566, 567) the idea clearly expressed “of a time between the judgment through which Jehovah glorifies Himself and His people before all the world, and a last end of things, such as we must picture to ourselves when we read of a rolling up of the heaven on which all its host falls off, like dry leaves from the vine (Isa. 34: 4), and of a day of retribution upon earth, when the earth falls to rise no more, and a fire devours its inhabitants, which burns for ever” (Isa. 34: 8, 9; 24:20). But if we observe that the announcement of the judgment upon the earth closes in Isa. 24:20 with the words, “the earth will fall, and not rise again;” and then vv. 21ff. continue as follows: “And it comes to pass in that day, Jehovah will visit,” etc., — it will be evident that the judgment upon the host of the heavens, etc., is assigned to the time when the earth is destroyed, so that by the Mount Zion and Jerusalem, where Jehovah will then reign royally in glory, we can only understand the heavenly Jerusalem. An intermediate time between the judgment upon the world and the last end of things, i.e., the destruction of the heaven and the earth, is not taught here. Nor is it taught in ch. 65:17-19, where, according to Hofmann (p. 568), a glorification of Jerusalem before the new creation of the heaven and the earth is said to be foretold; for here even Volck admits that we have a picture of the new world after the destruction of heaven and earth and after the last

judgment, and concludes his discussion upon this point (p. 166) with the acknowledgment, “that in the Old Testament prophecy these two phases of the end are not sharply separated from each other, and especially that the manner of transition from the former (the glorification of Jehovah and His church before the world in the so-called thousand years’ reign) to the last end of all things, to the life of eternity, does not stand clearly out,” though even in the latter respect there is an indication to be found in Eze. 38. If, then, for the present we lay this indication aside, as the question concerning Eze. 38 can only be considered in connection with Rev. 20, the examination of all the passages quoted by the chiliasts in support of the glorification of Palestine, before the new creation of the heavens and the earth, yields rather the result that the two assumed phases of the end are generally not distinguished in the Old Testament prophecy, and that the utterances of the different prophets concerning the final issue of the war of the world-powers against the kingdom of God clearly contain no more than this, that Jehovah will destroy all the enemies of His kingdom by a judgment, overthrow the kingdoms of the world, and establish His kingdom in glory. Isaiah alone rises to a prediction of the destruction of the whole world, and of the new creation of the heaven and the earth. — But what the Old Testament leaves still obscure in this respect, is supposed to be clearly revealed in the New. To this question, therefore, we will now proceed.

**II.** *Does the New Testament teach a glorification of Palestine and a kingdom of glory in the earthly Jerusalem, before the last judgment and the destruction of the heaven and the earth?* — In the opinion of most of the representatives of millenarianism, there is no doubt whatever as to either of these. “For, according to Rev. 20, the overthrow of the world-power and the destruction of Antichrist are immediately followed by the establishment of the kingdom of glory of the glorified church of Jesus Christ for the space of a thousand years, at the expiration of which the war of Gog and Magog against the beloved city takes place, and ends in the overthrow of the hostile army and the creation of the new heaven and the new earth” (Volck, p. 167). But this assumption is by no means so indisputable. Even if we grant in passing, that, according to the millenarian view of the Apocalypse, the events depicted in Eze. 20 are to be understood chronologically, the assumption that Palestine will be glorified during the millennium is not yet demonstrated. Auberlen, for example, who regards the doctrine of the thousand years’ reign as one of the primary articles of the Christian hope, pronounces the following sentence (pp. 454, 455) upon Hofmann’s view of the millennial reign, according to which the glorified church is to be thought of, not as in heaven, but as on earth, and, indeed, as united with the equally glorified Israel in the equally glorified Canaan: “It appears obvious to me that the whole of the Old Testament prophecy is irreconcilable with this view, apart from the internal improbability of the thing.” And according to our

discussion above, we regard this sentence as perfectly well founded. The prophets of the Old Testament known nothing of a thousand years' kingdom; and a glorification of the earthly Canaan before the end of the world cannot be inferred from the picture of the temple spring, for the simple reason that the resumption of this prophetic figure in Rev. 22: 1 and 2 shows that this spring belongs to the heavenly Jerusalem of the new earth. Even in Rev. 20 we read nothing about a glorification of Palestine of Jerusalem. This has merely been inferred from the fact that, according to the literal interpretation of the chapter, those who rise from the dead at the second coming of Christ will reign with Christ in the "beloved city," i.e., Jerusalem; but the question has not been taken into consideration, whether a warlike expedition of the heathen from the four corners of the unglorified world against the inhabitants of a glorified city, who are clothed with spiritual bodies, is possible and conceivable, or whether such an assumption does not rather "lead to absurdities." Nor can it be shown that the doctrine of a glorification of Palestine before the end of the present world is contained in the remaining chapters of the Apocalypse or the other writings of the New Testament. It cannot be inferred from the words of the Apostle Paul in Rom. 11:15, viz., that the restoration of the people of Israel, rejected for a time after the entrance of the *pleroma* of the heathen into the kingdom of God, will be or cause "life from the dead;" since "life from the dead" never really means the new bodily life of glorification beginning with the resurrection of the dead (Meyer), nor the glorification of the world (Volck); and this meaning cannot be deduced from the fact that that *παλιγγενεσία* ("regeneration," Mat. 19:28) and the *χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως* ("times of restitution," Act. 3:19-21) will follow the "receiving" (*πρόσληψις*) of Israel.

And even for the doctrine of a kingdom of glory in the earthly Jerusalem before the last judgment, we have no conclusive scriptural evidence. The assumption, that by the "beloved city" in Rev. 20: 9 we are to understand the earthly Jerusalem, rests upon the hypothesis, that the people of Israel will return to Palestine on or after their conversion to Christ, rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and dwell there till the coming of Christ. But, as we have already shown, this hypothesis has no support either in Rom. 11:25 or any other unequivocal passages of the New Testament; and the only passages that come into consideration at all are Rev. 7: 1-8; 14: 1-5, and 11, 12, in which this doctrine is said to be contained. In Rev. 7: 1ff., John sees how, before the outbreak of the judgment upon the God-opposing world-power, an angel seals "the servants of our God" in their foreheads, and hears that the number of those sealed is a hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel, twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes mentioned by name. In Eze. 14: 1ff. he sees the Lamb stand upon Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having the name of his Father written upon their forehead. And in

Eze. 11: 1ff. a rod is given to him, and he is commanded to measure the temple of God and the altar, but to cast out the outer court of the temple, and not to measure it, because it is given to the heathen, who will tread under foot the holy city, which has become spiritually a Sodom and an Egypt for forty-two months. From these passages, Hofmann (II 2, p. 703), Luther, Volck, and others conclude that the converted Israelitish church will not only dwell in Palestine, more especially in Jerusalem, before the coming (*parusia*) of Christ, but will be alone in outliving the coming of Christ; whilst the rest of Christendom, at all events the whole number of the believers from among the Gentile Christians, will lose their lives in the great tribulation which precedes the *parusia*, and go through death to God. This conclusion would be indisputable if the premises were well founded, namely, that the passages in question treated only of Jewish Christians and the earthly Jerusalem. For, in the first place, it is evident that the hundred and forty-four thousand whom John sees with the Lamb upon Mount Zion in Rev. 14: 1ff. are identical with the hundred and forty-four thousand who are sealed from the twelve tribes of Israel in Eze. 7. The omission of the retrospective article before *ἑκατὸν, κ.τ.λ.* in Rev. 14: 1 is to be explained from the fact that the intention is to give prominence to the antithesis, in which the notice of it stands to what precedes. "Over against the whole multitude of the rest of the world, subject to the beast and his prophet, there stands upon Zion a comparatively limited host of a hundred and forty-four thousand" (Volck). And in the second place, it is quite as evident that in the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are sealed (Eze. 7), the total number is contained of all believers, who have been preserved in the great tribulation, and kept from perishing therein; and in Eze. 7: 9-17 there is placed in contrast with these, in the innumerable multitude out of all the heathen, and nations, and languages standing before the throne of God clothed in white robes, and carrying palms in their hands, who have come out of the great tribulation, the total number of believers who have lost their temporal lives in the great tribulation, and entered into the everlasting life. The mode in which Christiani ("Uebersichtliche Darstellung des Inhalts der Apokalypse," *Dorpatser Zeitschr.* III p. 53) attempts to evade this conclusion — namely, by affirming that the separate visions never give a complete final account, but only isolated glimpses of it, and that they have mutually to supplement one another — does not suffice. Volck has correctly observed, in answer to the objection that the vision in Eze. 7: 9-17 does not set before us the entrance of *all* the believing Gentile Christians of the last time into heaven through death, that although we simply read of a "great multitude" in Eze. 7: 9, this expression does not permit us to infer that there will be a remnant of Gentile Christians, inasmuch as the antithesis upon which all turns is this: "on the one side, this compact number of a hundred and forty-four thousand out of Israel destined to survive the last oppression; on the other, an innumerable multitude out of every nation, who have come to God through

death.” Nevertheless, we must support Christiani in his opposition to the assumption, that at the *parusia* of Christ only Jewish Christians will be living on earth in Jerusalem or upon Mount Zion, and that all the believing Gentile Christians will have perished from the globe; because such a view is irreconcilably opposed not only to Rev. 3:12, but also to all the teaching of the New Testament, especially to the declarations of our Lord concerning His second coming. When the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica, consisting of Gentile and Jewish Christians, *ἐν λόγῳ κυρίου*: “we who live and remain to the coming of the Lord shall not anticipate those who sleep” (1 Thess. 4:15ff.), and when he announced as a *μυστήριον* to the church at Corinth, which was also a mixed church, consisting for the most part of Gentile Christians: “we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed” (1Co. 15:51), he held the conviction, based upon a word of the Lord, that at the time of Christ’s coming there would still be believing Gentile Christians living upon the earth. And when the Lord Himself tells His disciples: “the Son of man will come in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory, and will send His angels with sounding trumpets, and they will gather His elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other” (Mat. 24:30, 31), He treats it as an indisputable fact that there will be *ἐκλεκτοί*, believing Christians, in all the countries of the earth, and that the church existing at His coming will not be limited to the Israel which has become believing in Jerusalem and Palestine.

If, therefore, the Apocalypse is not to stand in direct contradiction to the teaching of Christ and the Apostle Paul in one of the principal articles of the truths of salvation, the exposition in question of Rev. 7 and 14 cannot be correct. On the contrary, we are firmly convinced that in the hundred and forty-four thousand who are sealed, the whole body of believing Christians living at the *parusia* of our Lord is represented; and notwithstanding the fact that they are described as the servants of God “out of all the tribes of the children of Israel,” and are distributed by twelve thousands among the twelve tribes of Israel, and that in Rev. 14: 1 they stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, we can only regard them, not as Jewish Christians, but as the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16), i.e., the church of believers in the last days gathered from both Gentiles and Jews. If the description of the sealed as children of Israel out of all the twelve tribes, and the enumeration of these tribes by name, prove that only Jewish Christians are intended, and preclude our taking the words as referring to believers from both Gentiles and Jews, we must also regard the heavenly Jerusalem of the new earth as a Jewish Christian city, because it has the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel written upon its gates (Rev. 21:12), like the Jerusalem of Ezekiel (Eze. 48:31); and as this holy city is called the bride of the Lamb (Rev. 21: 9, 10), we must assume that only Jewish Christians will take part in the marriage of the Lamb. Moreover, the Mount Zion upon

which John sees the Lamb and the hundred and forty-four thousand standing (Eze. 14: 1), cannot be the earthly Mount Zion, as Bengel, Hengstenberg, and others have correctly shown, because those who are standing there hear and learn the song sounding from heaven, which is sung before the throne and the four living creatures and the elders (Rev. 14: 3). The Mount Zion in this instance, as in Heb. 12:22, belongs to the heavenly Jerusalem. There is no foundation for the assertion that this view is at variance with the connection of this group, and is also opposed to the context (Christiani, p. 194, Luther, and others). The excellent remarks of Düsterdieck, with regard to the connection, are a sufficient refutation of the first, which is asserted without any proof: "Just as in Eze. 7: 9ff. an inspiring look at the heavenly glory was granted to such believers as should remain faithful in the great tribulation which had yet to come, before the tribulation itself was displayed; so also in the first part of Rev. 14 (vv. 1-5) a scene is exhibited, which shows the glorious reward of the conquerors (cf. Rev. 2:11; 3:12, 21) in a certain group of blessed believers (v. 1: 'a hundred and forty-four thousand;' v. 4: 'the first-fruits'), who appear with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, and are described as those who have kept themselves pure from all the defilement of the world during their earthly life." And this assumption would only be opposed to the context if vv. 2-5 formed an antithesis to v. 1, i.e., if those in heaven mentioned in vv. 2, 3 were distinguished from the hundred and forty-four thousand as being still on earth. But if those who sing the new song are really distinguished from the hundred and forty-four thousand, and are "angelic choirs," which is still questionable, it by no means follows from this that the hundred and forty-four thousand are upon the earthly Mount Zion, but simply that they have reached the Zion of the heavenly Jerusalem, and stand with the Lamb by the throne of God, serving Him as His attendants, seeing His face, and bearing His name upon their foreheads (Rev. 22: 1, 3, 4), and that they learn the new song sung before the throne.

Still less can we understand by the holy city of Rev. 11 the earthly Jerusalem, and by a woman clothed with the sun in Rev. 12 the Israelitish church of God, i.e., the Israel of the last days converted to Christ. The Jerusalem of Rev. 11 is spiritually a Sodom and Egypt. The Lord is obliged to endow the two witnesses anointed with His Spirit, whom He causes to appear there, with the miraculous power of Elias and Moses, to defend them from their adversaries. And when eventually they are slain by the beast from the abyss, and all the world, seeing their dead bodies lying in the streets of the spiritual Sodom and Egypt, rejoices at their death, He brings them to life again after three days and a half, and causes them to ascend visibly into heaven, and the same hour He destroys the tenth part of the city by an earthquake, through which seven thousand men are slain, so that the rest are alarmed and given glory to the God of heaven.

Jerusalem is introduced here in quite as degenerate a state as in the last times before its destruction by the Romans. Nevertheless we cannot think of this ancient Jerusalem, because if John meant this, his prophecy would be at variance with Christ's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. "For, according to the Revelation, there is neither a destruction of the temple in prospect, nor does the church of Jesus flee from the city devoted to destruction" (Hofmann, p. 684). The temple with the altar of burnt-offering is measured and defended, and only the outer court with the city is given up to the nations to be trodden down; and lastly, only the tenth part of the city is laid in ruins. For this reason, according to Hofmann and Luther, the Jerusalem of the last days, inhabited by the Israel converted to Christ, is intended. But the difficulty which presses upon this explanation is to be found not so much in the fact that Jerusalem is restored in the period intervening between the conversion of Israel as a nation to Christ and the establishment of the millennial kingdom, and possesses a Jewish temple, as in the fact that the Israel thus converted to Christ, whose restoration, according to the teaching of the Apostle Paul in Rom. 11:25, will be "life from the dead" to all Christendom, should again become a spiritual Sodom and Egypt, so that the Lord has to defend His temple with the believers who worship there from being trampled down by means of witnesses endowed with miraculous power, and to destroy the godless city partially by an earthquake for the purpose of terrifying the rest of the inhabitants, so that they may give glory to Him. Such an apostasy of the people of Israel after their final conversion to Christ is thoroughly opposed to the hope expressed by the Apostle Paul of the result of the restoration of Israel after the entrance of the *pleroma* of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God.

Hofmann and Luther are therefore of opinion that the Israelitish-Christian Jerusalem of the last times is called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, because the old Jewish Jerusalem had formerly sunk into a Sodom and Egypt, and that the Christian city is punished by the destruction of its tenth part and the slaying of seven thousand men "as a judgment upon the hostile nationality;" as if God could act so unjustly in the government of Jerusalem as to give up to the heathen the city that had been faithful to Him, and to destroy the tenth part thereof. This realistic Jewish interpretation becomes utterly impossible when Eze. 12 is added. According to Hofmann, the woman in the sun is that Israel of which Paul says, "God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew" (Rom. 11: 2), i.e., the Israelitish church of the saved. Before the birth of the boy who will rule the nations with a sceptre of iron, this church is opposed by the dragon; and after the child born by her has been caught up into heaven, she is hidden by God from the persecution of the dragon in a place in the wilderness for twelve hundred and sixty days, or three times and a half, i.e., during the forty-two months in which Jerusalem as a spiritual Sodom is trodden down of



the heathen, and only the temple with those who worship there is protected by God. But even if we overlook the contradiction involved in the supposition that the Israel believing in Christ of Eze. 11 has sunk so deep that Jerusalem has to be trodden down by the heathen, and only a small portion of the worshippers of God are protected in the temple, we must nevertheless inquire how it is possible that the Israelitish church of believers in Christ should at the same time be defended in the temple at Jerusalem, and, having fled from Canaan into the wilderness, be concealed “in a place of distress and tribulation.” The Jerusalem of the last times does not stand in the wilderness, and the temple protected by God is not a place of distress and tribulation. And how can the Israelitish church of God, which has given birth to Christ, be concealed in the wilderness after the catching up of Christ into heaven, or His ascension, seeing that the believing portion of Israel entered the Christian church, whilst the unbelieving mass at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem were in part destroyed by sword, famine, and pestilence, and in part thrust out among the Gentiles over all the world? From the destruction of Jerusalem onwards, there is no longer any Israelitish congregation of God outside the Christian church. The branches broken off from the olive tree because of their unbelief, are not a church of God. And Auberlen’s objection to this interpretation — namely, that from the birth of Christ in v. 6 it makes all at once a violent leap into the antichristian times — still retains its force, inasmuch as this leap not only has nothing in the text to indicate it, but is irreconcilable with vv. 5 and 6, according to which the flight of the woman into the wilderness takes place directly after the catching away of the child. Auberlen and Christiani have therefore clearly seen the impossibility of carrying out the realistic Jewish interpretation of these chapters. The latter, indeed, would take the holy city in Eze. 11 in a literal sense, i.e., as signifying the material Jerusalem; whilst he interprets the temple “allegorically” as representing the Christian church, without observing the difficulty in which he thereby entangles himself, inasmuch as if the holy city were the material Jerusalem, the whole of believing Christendom out of all lands would have fled thither for refuge. In the exposition of ch. 12 he follows Auberlen (*Daniel*, p. 460), who has correctly interpreted the woman clothed with the sun as signifying primarily the Israelitish church of God, and then passing afterwards into the believing church of Christ, which rises on the foundation of the Israelitish church as its continuation, other branches from the wild olive tree being grafted on in the place of the branches of the good olive that have been broken off (Rom. 11:17ff.). — In Rev. 13 and 15-19 there is no further allusion to Judah and Jerusalem.

If, then, we draw the conclusion from the foregoing discussion, the result at which we have arrived is, that even Rev. 1-19 furnishes no confirmation of the assumption that the Israel which has come to believe in Christ will dwell in the

earthly Jerusalem, and have a temple with bleeding sacrifices. And this takes away all historical ground for the assumption that by the beloved city in Rev. 20: 9, against which Satan leads Gog and Magog to war with the heathen from the four corners of the earth, we can only understand the earthly Jerusalem of the last times. If, however, we look more closely at Rev. 20, there are three events described in vv. 1-10, — viz.

- (1) the binding of Satan and his confinement in the abyss for a thousand years (vv. 1-3);
- (2) the resurrection of the believers, and their reigning with Christ for a thousand years, called the “first resurrection” (vv. 4-6);
- (3) after the termination of the thousand years, the releasing of Satan from his prison, his going out to lead the heathen with Gog and Magog to war against “the camp of the saints and the beloved city,” the destruction of this army by fire from heaven, and the casting of Satan into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet already are (vv. 7-10).

According to the millenarian exposition of the Apocalypse, these three events will none of them take place till after the fall of Babylon and the casting of the beast into the lake of fire; not merely the final casting of Satan into the lake of fire, but even the binding of Satan and the confining of him in the abyss. The latter is not stated in the text, however, but is merely an inference drawn from the fact that all three events are seen by John and related in his Apocalypse after the fall of Babylon, etc., — an inference for which there is just the same warrant as for the conclusion drawn, for example, by the traditional exposition of the Old Testament by the Jews, that because the death of Terah is related in Gen. 11, and the call and migration of Abram to Canaan in Gen. 12, therefore Terah died before the migration of Abraham, in opposition to the chronological data of Genesis. All that is stated in the text of the Apocalypse is, that Satan is cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are (v. 10), so that the final overthrow of Satan will not take place till after the fall of Babylon and the overthrow of the beast and the false prophet. That this is not to happen till a thousand years later, cannot be inferred from the position of Rev. 20:10 after Rev. 19:20, 21, but must be gathered from some other source if it is to be determined at all. The assumption that the contents of Rev. 20 are chronologically posterior to Eze. 18 and 19, which the millenarian interpretation of the Apocalypse has adopted from the earlier orthodox exposition, is at variance with the plan of the whole book. It is now admitted by all scientific expositors of the Apocalypse, that the visions contained therein do not form such a continuous series as to present the leading features of the conflict between the powers at enmity against God and the kingdom of God in chronological order, but rather that they are arranged in groups, each rounded off within itself, every one of which reaches to the end or closes with the last

judgment, while those which follow go back again and expand more fully the several events which prepare the way for an introduce the last judgment; so that, for example, after the last judgment upon the living and the dead has been announced in Eze. 11:15ff. by the seventh trumpet, the conflict between Satan and the kingdom of God on the birth and ascension of Christ is not shown to the seer till the following chapter (Eze. 12). And the events set forth in the last group commencing with Eze. 19 must be interpreted in a manner analogous to this. The contents of this group have been correctly explained by Hofmann (II 2, p. 720) as follows: "The whole series of visions, from Eze. 19:11 onwards, its merely intended to exhibit the victory of Christ over His foes. There is first a victory over Satan, through which the army of the enemies of His people by which he is served is destroyed; secondly, a victory over Satan, by which the possibility of leading the nations astray any more to fight against His church is taken from him; thirdly, a victory over Satan, by which he is deprived of the power to keep those who have died with faith in their Saviour in death any longer; and, fourthly, a victory over Satan, by which his last attack upon the saints of God issues in his final destruction." That the second and third victories are not to be separated from each other in point of time, is indicated by the sameness in the period assigned to each, viz., "a thousand years." But the time when these thousand years commence, cannot be determined from the Apocalypse itself; it must be gathered from the teaching of the rest of the New Testament concerning the first resurrection. According to the statements made by the Apostle Paul in 1Co. 15, every one will be raised "in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming;" then the end, i.e., the resurrection of all the dead, the last judgment, the destruction of the world, and the new creation of heaven and earth. Consequently the first resurrection takes place along with the coming of Christ.

But, according to the teaching of the New Testament, the *parusia* of Christ is not to be deferred till the last day of the present world, but commences, as the Lord Himself has said, not long after His ascension, so that some of His own contemporaries will not taste of death till they see the Son of man come in His kingdom (Mat. 16:28). The Lord repeats this in Mat. 24:34, in the elaborate discourse concerning His *parusia* to judgment, with the solemn asseveration: "Verily I say unto you, this generation (*ἡ γενεὰ αὐτή*) will not pass till all these things be fulfilled." And, as Hofmann has correctly observed (p. 640), the idea that "this generation" signifies the church of Christ, does not deserve refutation. We therefore understand that the contemporaries of Christ would live to see the things of which He says, "that they will be the heralding tokens of His second appearance;" and, still further (p. 641): "We have already seen, from Mat. 16:28, that the Lord has solemnly affirmed that His own contemporaries will live to see His royal coming." <sup>165</sup>

Concerning this royal coming of the Son of man in the glory of His Father with His angels, which some of His contemporaries live to see (Mat. 16:27 and 28), Paul writes, in 1 Thess. 4:15, 16: “We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not anticipate them which are asleep; for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, etc., and the dead in Christ will rise first,” etc. Consequently the New Testament teaches quite clearly that the first resurrection commences with the coming of Christ, which began with the judgment executed through the Romans upon the ancient Jerusalem. This was preceded only by the resurrection of Christ as “the first-fruits,” and the resurrection of the “many bodies of the saints which slept,” that arose from the graves at the resurrection of Christ, and appeared to many in the holy city (Mat. 27:52, 53), as a practical testimony that through the resurrection of Christ death is deprived of its power, and a resurrection from the grave secured for all believers. — According to this distinct teaching of Christ and the apostles, the popular opinion, that the resurrection of the dead as a whole will not take place till the last day of this world, must be rectified. The New Testament does not teach anywhere that all the dead, even those who have fallen asleep in Christ, will remain in the grave, or in Hades, till the last judgment immediately before the destruction of heaven and earth, and that the souls which have entered heaven at their death will be with Christ till then unclothed and without the body. This traditional view merely rests upon the unscriptural idea of the coming of Christ as not taking place till the end of the year, and as an act restricted to a single day of twenty-four hours. According to the Scriptures, the *parusia* takes place on the day of the Lord, **יּוֹם יְהוָה**, **ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου**. But this day is not an earthly day of twelve or twenty-four hours; but, as Peter says (2Pe. 3: 8), “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (cf. Psa. 90: 4). The day on which the Son of man comes in His glory commences with the appearing of the Lord to the judgment upon the hardened Israel at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; continues till His appearing to the last judgment, which is still future and will be visible to all nations; and closes with the day of God, on which the heavens will be dissolved with fire, and the elements will melt with heat, and the new heaven and new earth will be created, for which we wait according to His promise (2Pe. 3:12, 13). To show how incorrect is the popular idea of the resurrection of the dead, we may adduce not only the fact of the resurrection of many saints immediately after the resurrection of Christ (Mat. 27:52, 53), but also the solemn declaration of the Lord: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live,” — the hour “in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, etc.” (Joh. 5:25, 28); and again the repeated word of Christ, that whosoever believeth on Him *hath* everlasting life, and cometh not into

judgment, but hath passed from death unto life (Joh. 5:24; 6:40, 47; 3:16, 18, 36); and lastly, what was seen by the sacred seer on the opening of the fifth seal (Rev. 6: 9-11), namely, that white robes were given to the souls that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held, and that were crying for the avenging of their blood, inasmuch as the putting on of the white robe involves or presupposes the clothing of the soul with the new body, so that this vision teaches that the deceased martyrs are translated into the state of those who have risen from the dead before the judgment upon Babylon. The word *ψυχαι*, which is used to designate them, does not prove that disembodied souls are intended (compare, as evidence to the contrary, the *ὀκτώ ψυχαι* of 1Pe. 3:20).

But as Rev. 20: 1-10 furnishes no information concerning the time of the first resurrection, so also this passage does not teach that they who are exalted to reign with Christ by the first resurrection will live and reign with Christ in the earthly Jerusalem, whether it be glorified or not. The place where the thrones stand, upon which they are seated, is not mentioned either in vv. 4-6 or vv. 1-3. The opinion that this will be in Jerusalem merely rests upon the twofold assumption, for which no evidence can be adduced, viz., (1) that, according to the prophetic utterances of the Old Testament, Jerusalem or the holy land is the site for the appearance of the Lord to the judgment upon the world of nations (Hofmann, pp. 637, 638); and (2) that the beloved city which the heathen, under Gog and Magog, will besiege, according to Rev. 20: 8, 9, is the earthly Jerusalem, from which it is still further inferred, that the saints besieged in the beloved city cannot be any others than those placed upon thrones through the first resurrection. But the inconceivable nature, not to say the absurdity, of such an assumption as that of a war between earthly men and those who have been raised from the dead and are glorified with spiritual bodies, precludes the identification, which is not expressed in the text, of the saints in Jerusalem with those sitting upon thrones and reigning with Christ, who have obtained eternal life through the resurrection. And as they are reigning with Christ, the Son of God, who has returned to the glory of His heavenly Father, would also be besieged along with them by the hosts of Gog and Magog. But where do the Scriptures teach anything of the kind? The fact that, according to the prophecy of the Old Testament, the Lord comes from Zion to judge the nations furnishes no proof of this, inasmuch as this Zion of the prophets is not the earthly and material, but the heavenly Jerusalem. The angels who come at the ascension of Christ to comfort His disciples with regard to the departure of their Master to the Father, merely say: "This Jesus, who has gone up from you to heaven, will so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go to heaven" (Act. 1:11); but they do not say at what place He will come again. And though the Apostle Paul says in 1 Thess. 4:16, "the Lord will descend from heaven," he also says, they that

are living then will be caught up together with those that have risen in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so be ever with the Lord. And as here the being caught up in the clouds into the air is not to be understood literally, but simply expresses the thought that those who are glorified will hasten with those who have risen from the dead to meet the Lord, to welcome Him and to be united with Him, and does not assume a permanent abiding in the air; so the expression, “descend from heaven,” does not involve a coming to Jerusalem and remaining upon earth. The words are meant to be understood spiritually, like the rending of the heaven and coming down in Isa. 64: 1. Paul therefore uses the words ἀποκάλυψις ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ, revelation from heaven, in 2 Thess. 1: 7, with reference to the same event. The Lord has already descended from heaven to judgment upon the ancient Jerusalem, to take vengeance with flaming fire upon those who would not know God and obey the gospel (2Th. 1: 8). Every manifestation of God which produces an actual effect upon the earth is a coming down from heaven, which does not involve a local abiding of the Lord upon the earth. As the coming of Christ to the judgment upon Jerusalem does not affect His sitting at the right hand of the Father, so we must not picture to ourselves the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in the Lord, which commences with this coming, in any other way than that those who rise are received into heaven, and, as the church of the first-born, who are written in heaven, i.e., who have become citizens of heaven (Heb. 12:23), sit on seats around the throne of God and reign with Christ. — Even the first resurrection is not to be thought of as an act occurring once and ending there; but as the coming of the Lord, which commenced with the judgment of the destruction of Jerusalem, is continued in the long series of judgments through which one hostile power after another is overthrown, until the destruction of the last enemy, so may we also assume, in analogy with this, that the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ, commencing with that *parusia*, is continued through the course of centuries; so that they who die in living faith in their Saviour are raised from the dead at the hour appointed by God according to His wisdom, and the souls received into heaven at death, together with those sown as seed-corn in the earth and ripened from corruption to incorruptibility, will be clothed with spiritual bodies, to reign with Christ. The thousand years are not to be reckoned chronologically, but commence with the coming of Christ to the judgment upon Jerusalem, and extend to the final casting of the beast and the false prophet into the lake of fire, perhaps still further. When they will end we cannot tell; for it is not for us to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath reserved in His own power (Act. 1: 7).

The chaining and imprisonment of Satan in the abyss during the thousand years can also be brought into harmony with this view of the millennium, provided that the words are not taken in a grossly materialistic sense, and we bear in

mind that nearly all the pictures of the Apocalypse are of a very drastic character. The key to the interpretation of Rev. 20: 1-3 and 7-10 is to be found in the words of Christ in Joh. 12:31, when just before His passion He is about to bring His addresses to the people to a close, for the purpose of completing the work of the world's redemption by His death and resurrection. When the Lord says, just at this moment, "now is the judgment passing over the world; now will the prince of this world be cast out," namely, out of the sphere of his dominion, He designates the completion of the work of redemption by His death as a judgment upon the world, through which the rule of Satan in the world is brought to nought, or the kingdom of the devil destroyed. This casting out of the prince of this world, which is accomplished in the establishment and spread of the kingdom of Christ on earth, is shown to the sacred seer in Patmos in the visions of the conflict of Michael with the dragon, which ends in the casting out of Satan into the earth (Rev. 12: 7ff.), and of the chaining and imprisonment of Satan in the abyss for a thousand years (Rev. 20: 1ff.). The conflict of Michael with the dragon, which is called the Devil and Satanas, commences when the dragon begins to persecute the woman clothed with the sun after the birth of her child, and its being caught up into heaven, i.e., after the work of Christ on earth has terminated with His ascension to heaven. John receives an explanation of the way in which the victory of Michael, through which Satan is cast out of heaven upon the earth, is to be interpreted, from the voice, which says in heaven, "Now is come the salvation, and the strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused us day and night before God" (v. 10). With the casting of Satan out of heaven, the kingdom of God and the power of His anointed are established, and Satan is thereby deprived of the power to rule any longer as the prince of the world. It is true that when he sees himself cast from heaven to earth, i.e., hurled from his throne, he persecutes the woman; but the woman receives eagles' wings, so that she flies into the wilderness to the place prepared for her by God, and is there nourished for three times and a half, away from the face of the serpent (Rev. 12: 8, 13, 14). After the casting out of Satan from heaven, there follow the chaining and shutting up in the abyss, or in hell; so that during this time he is no more able to seduce the heathen to make war upon the camp of the saints (Rev. 20: 1-3 and 8). All influence upon earth is not thereby taken from him; he is simply deprived of the power to rule on the earth as ἄρχων among the heathen, and to restore the ἐξουσία wrested from him. <sup>f66</sup>

We may therefore say that the binding of Satan began with the fall of heathenism as the religion of the world, through the elevation of Christianity to be the state-religion of the Roman empire, and that it will last so long as Christianity continues to be the state-religion of the kingdoms which rule the world.

It is impossible, therefore, to prove from Rev. 20 that there will be a kingdom of the glory in the earthly Jerusalem before the last judgment; and the New Testament generally neither teaches the return of the people of Israel to Palestine on their conversion to Christ, — which will take place according to Rom. 11:25ff., — nor the rebuilding of the temple and restoration of Levitical sacrifices. But if this be the case, then Ezekiel's vision of the new temple and sacrificial worship, and the new division of the land of Canaan, cannot be understood literally, but only in a symbolico-typical sense. The following question, therefore, is the only one that remains to be answered: —

**III.** *How are we to understand the vision of the new kingdom of God in Eze. 40-48?* — In other words, What opinion are we to form concerning the fulfilment of this prophetic picture? The first reply to be given to this is, that this vision does not depict the coming into existence, or the successive stages in the rise and development, of the new kingdom of God. For Ezekiel sees the temple as a finished building, the component parts of which are so measured before his eyes that he is led about within the building. He sees the glory of Jehovah enter into the temple, and hears the voice of the Lord, who declares this house to be the seat of His throne in the midst of His people; and commands the prophet to make known to the people the form of the house, and its arrangement and ordinances, that they may consider the building, and be ashamed of their evil deeds (Eze. 43: 4-12). The new order of worship also (Eze. 43:14-46:15) does not refer to the building of the temple, but to the service which Israel is to render to God, who is enthroned in this temple. Only the directions concerning the boundaries and the division of the land presuppose that Israel has still to take possession of Canaan, though it has already been brought back out of the heathen lands, and is about to divide it by lot and take possession of it as its own inheritance, to dwell there, and to sustain and delight itself with the fulness of its blessings. It follows from this that the prophetic picture does not furnish a typical exhibition of the church of Christ in its gradual development, but sets forth the kingdom of God established by Christ in its perfect form, and is partly to be regarded as the Old Testament outline of the New Testament picture of the heavenly Jerusalem in Rev. 21 and 22. For the river of the water of life is common to both visions. According to Ezekiel, it springs from the threshold of the temple, in which the Lord has ascended His throne, flows through the land to the Arabah, and pours into the Dead Sea, to make the water thereof sound; and according to Rev. 22: 1ff., it proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and flows through the midst of the street of the New Jerusalem. According to Eze. 47: 7, 12, as well as Rev. 22: 2, there are trees growing upon its banks which bear edible fruits every month, that is to say, twelve times a year, and the leaves of which serve for the healing of the nations. But Ezekiel's picture of the new kingdom of God comes short of the



picture of the New Jerusalem in this respect, that in Ezekiel the city and temple are separated, although the temple stands upon a high mountain in the centre of the holy *terumah* in the midst of the land of Canaan, and the city of Jerusalem reaches to the holy *terumah* with the northern side of its territory; whereas the new heavenly Jerusalem has no temple, and, in its perfect cubic form of equal length, breadth, and height, has itself become the holy of holies, in which there stands the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 21:16; 22: 4). Ezekiel could not rise to such an eminence of vision as this. The kingdom of God seen by him has a preponderatingly Old Testament stamp, and is a perfect Israelitish Canaan, answering to the idea of the Old Covenant, in the midst of which Jehovah dwells in His temple, and the water of life flows down from His throne and pours over all the land, to give prosperity to His people. The temple of Ezekiel is simply a new Solomon's temple, built in perfect accordance with the holiness of the house of God, in the courts of which Israel appears before Jehovah to offer burnt-offerings and slain-offerings, and to worship; and although the city of Jerusalem does indeed form a perfect square, with three gates on every side bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, like the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, it has not yet the form of a cube as the stamp of the holy of holies, in which Jehovah the almighty God is enthroned, though its name is, "henceforth Jehovah thither." Still less does the attack of Gog with his peoples, gathered together from the ends of the earth, apply to the heavenly Jerusalem. It is true that, according to the formal arrangement of our prophet's book, it stands before the vision of the new kingdom of God; but chronologically its proper place is within it, and it does not even fall at the commencement of it, but at the end of the years, after Israel has been gathered out of the nations and brought back into its own land, and has dwelt there for a long time in security (Eze. 38: 8, 16). This attack on the part of the heathen nations is only conceivable as directed against the people of God still dwelling in the earthly Canaan.

How then are we to remove the discrepancy, that on the one hand the river of the water of life proceeding from the temple indicates a glorification of Canaan, and on the other hand the land and people appear to be still unglorified, and the latter are living in circumstances which conform to the earlier condition of Israel? Does not this picture suggest a state of earthly glory on the part of the nation of Israel in its own land, which has passed through a paradisaical transformation before the new creation of the heaven and the earth? Isaiah also predicts a new time, in which the patriarchal length of life of the primeval era shall return, when death shall no more sweep men prematurely away, and not only shall war cease among men, but mutual destruction in the animal world shall also come to an end (Isa. 65:19-23 compared with Eze. 11: 6-9). When shall this take place? Delitzsch, who asks this question (*Comm. on Isa.* at 65:25,

transl.), gives the following reply: "Certainly not in the blessed life beyond the grave, to which it would be both impossible and absurd to refer these promises, since they presuppose a continued mixture of sinners with the righteous, and merely a limitation of the power of death, not its destruction." From this he then draws the conclusion that the description is only applicable to the state of the millennium. But the creation of a new heaven and a new earth precedes this description (Isa. 65:17, 18). Does not this point to the heavenly Jerusalem of the new earth? To this Delitzsch replies that "the Old Testament prophet was not yet able to distinguish from one another the things which the author of the Apocalypse separates into distinct periods. From the Old Testament point of view generally, nothing was known of a state of blessedness beyond the grave.

In the Old Testament prophecy, the idea of the new cosmos is blended with the millennium. It is only in the New Testament that the new creation intervenes as a party wall between this life and the life beyond; whereas the Old Testament prophecy brings the new creation itself into the present life, and knows nothing of any Jerusalem of the blessed life to come, as distinct from the new Jerusalem of the millennium." But even if there were a better foundation for the chiliastic idea of the millennium (Rev. 20) than there is according to our discussion of the question above, the passage just quoted would not suffice to remove the difficulty before us. For if Isaiah is describing the Jerusalem of the millennium in Isa. 65:19-23, he has not merely brought the new creation of heaven and earth into the present life, but he has also transferred the so-called millennium to the new earth, i.e., to the other side of the new creation of heaven and earth.

Delitzsch himself acknowledges this on page 517 (transl.), where he observes in his commentary on Isa. 66:22-24 that "the object of the prophecy" (namely, that from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh will come to worship before Jehovah, and they will go out to look at the corpses of the men that have rebelled against Him, whose worm will not die, nor their fire be quenched) "is no other than the new Jerusalem of the world to come, and the eternal torment of the damned." Isaiah "is speaking of the other side, but he speaks of it as on this side." But if Isaiah is speaking of the other side as on this side in Isa. 66, he has done the same in Isa. 65:19-23; and the Jerusalem depicted in Isa. 65 cannot be the Jerusalem of the millennium on this side, but can only be the New Jerusalem of the other side coming down from heaven, as the description is the same in both chapters, and therefore must refer to one and the same object. The description in Isa. 65, like that in Isa. 66, can be perfectly comprehended from the fact that the prophet is speaking of that which is on the other side as on this side, without there being any necessity for the hypothesis of a thousand years' earthly kingdom of glory. It is quite correct that the Old Testament knows nothing whatever of a blessed state beyond the grave, or rather merely teaches nothing with regard to it, and that the Old Testament

prophecy transfers the state beyond to this side, in other words, depicts the eternal life after the last judgment in colours taken from the happiness of the Israelitish life in Canaan. And this is also correct, “that the Old Testament depicts both this life and the life to come as an endless extension of this life; whilst the New Testament depicts it as a continuous line in two halves, the last point in this present finite state being the first point of the infinite state beyond: that the Old Testament preserves the continuity of this life and the life to come, by transferring the outer side, the form, the appearance of this life, to the life to come; the New Testament by making the inner side, the nature, the reality of the life to come, the *δυνάμεις μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*, immanent in this life.” But it is only to the doctrinal writings of the New Testament that this absolutely applies. Of the prophetic pictures of the New Testament, on the other hand, and especially the Apocalypse, it can only be affirmed with considerable limitations. Not only is the New Jerusalem of Isaiah, which has a new heaven above it and a new earth beneath, simply the old earthly Jerusalem, which has attained to the highest glory and happiness; but in the Apocalypse also, the Jerusalem which has come down from heaven is an earthly city with great walls of jasper and pure gold, founded upon twelve precious stones, with twelve gates consisting of pearls, that are not shut by day, in order that the kings of the earth may bring their glory into the city, into which nothing common and no abomination enter. The whole picture rests upon those of Isaiah and Ezekiel, and merely rises above these Old Testament types by the fact that the most costly minerals of the earth are selected, to indicate the exceeding glory of the heavenly nature of this city of God. What, then, is the heavenly Jerusalem of the new earth? Is it actually a city of the new world, or the capital of the kingdom of heaven? Is it not rather a picture of the many mansions in the Father’s house in heaven, which Jesus entered at His ascension to heaven, to prepare a place for us (Joh. 14: 2)? Is it not a picture of the heavenly kingdom (2 Tim. 4:18), into which all the blessed in that world enter whose names are written in the book of life? And its brilliant glory, is it not a picture of the unspeakable glory of the eternal life, which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and which has not entered into the heart of any man (1Co. 2: 9)?

And if the state beyond the grave is transferred to this side, i.e., depicted in colours and imagery drawn from this side, not only in the Old Testament prophecy, but in that of the New Testament also, we must not seek the reason for this prophetic mode of describing the circumstances of the everlasting life, or the world to come, in the fact that the Old Testament knows nothing of a blessed state beyond the grave, is ignorant of a heaven with men that are saved. The reason is rather to be found in the fact, that heavenly things and circumstances lie beyond our idea and comprehension; so that we can only represent to ourselves the kingdom of God after the analogy of earthly

circumstances and conditions, just as we are unable to form any other conception of eternal blessedness than as a life without end in heavenly glory and joy, set free from all the imperfections and evils of this earthly world. So long as we are walking here below by faith and not by sight, we must be content with those pictures of the future blessings of eternal life with the Lord in His heavenly kingdom which the Scriptures have borrowed from the divinely ordered form of the Israelitish theocracy, presenting Jerusalem with its temple, and Canaan the abode of the covenant people of the Old Testament as types of the kingdom of heaven, and picturing the glory of the world to come as a city of God coming down from heaven upon the new earth, built of gold, precious stones, and pearls, and illumined with the light of the glory of the Lord. — To this there must no doubt be added, in the case of the Old Testament prophets, the fact that the division of the kingdom of the Messiah into a period of development on this side, and one of full completion on the other, had not yet been so clearly revealed to them as it has been to us by Christ in the New Testament; so that Isaiah is the only prophet who prophesies of the destruction of the present world and the creation of a new heaven and new earth. If we leave out of sight this culminating point of the Old Testament prophecy, all the prophets depict the glorification and completion of the kingdom of God established in Israel by the Messiah, on the one hand, as a continuous extension of His dominion on Zion from Jerusalem outwards over all the earth, through the execution of the judgment upon the heathen nations of the world; and, on the other hand, as a bursting of the land of Canaan into miraculous fruitfulness for the increase of His people's prosperity, and as a glorification of Jerusalem, to which all nations will go on pilgrimage to the house of the Lord on Zion, to worship the Lord and present their treasures to Him as offerings. Thus also in Ezekiel the bringing back of the people of Israel, who have been scattered by the Lord among the heathen on account of their apostasy, to the promised land, the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, which have been destroyed, and the future blessing of Israel with the most abundant supply of earthly good from the land which has been glorified into paradisaical fruitfulness, form a continuity, in which the small beginnings of the return of the people from Babylon and the deliverance and blessing which are still in the future, lie folded in one another, and the present state and that beyond are blended together. And accordingly he depicts the glory and completion of the restored and renovated kingdom of God under the figure of a new division of Canaan among the twelve tribes of all Israel, united under the sceptre of the second David for ever, and forming one single nation, by which all the incongruities of the former times are removed, and also of a new sanctuary built upon a very high mountain in the centre of Canaan, in which the people walking in the commandments and rights of their God offer sacrifice, and come to worship before the Lord in His courts on the Sabbaths, new moons, and yearly feasts. This blessedness of Israel also is not

permanently disturbed through the invasion of the restored land by Gog and his hordes, but rather perfected and everlastingly established by the fact that the Lord God destroys this last enemy, and causes him to perish by self-immolation. But however strongly the Old Testament drapery of the Messianic prophecy stands out even in Ezekiel, there are traits to be met with even in this form, by which we may recognise the fact that the Israelitish theocratical form simply constitutes the clothing in which the New Testament constitution of the kingdom of God is veiled. <sup>167</sup>

Among these traits we reckon not only the description given in Eze. 40-48, which can only be interpreted in a typical sense, but also the vision of the raising to life of the dry bones in Eze. 37: 1-14, the ultimate fulfilment of which will not take place till the general resurrection, and more especially the prophecy of the restoration not only of Jerusalem, but also of Samaria and Sodom, to their original condition (Eze. 16:53ff.), which, as we have already shown, will not be perfectly fulfilled till the *παλιγγενεσία*, i.e., the general renovation of the world after the last judgment. From this last-named prophecy, to which the healing of the waters of the Dead Sea in Eze. 47: 9ff. supplies a parallel, pointing as it does to the renewal of the earth after the destruction of the present world, it clearly follows that the tribes of Israel which receive Canaan for a perpetual possession are not the Jewish people converted to Christ, but the Israel of God, i.e., the people of God of the new covenant gathered from among both Jews and Gentiles; and that Canaan, in which they are to dwell, is not the earthly Canaan or Palestine between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, but the New Testament Canaan, i.e., the territory of the kingdom of God, whose boundaries reach from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. And the temple upon a very high mountain in the midst of this Canaan, in which the Lord is enthroned, and causes the river of the water of life to flow down from His throne over His kingdom, so that the earth produces the tree of life with leaves as medicine for men, and the Dead Sea is filled with fishes and living creatures, is a figurative representation and type of the gracious presence of the Lord in His church, which is realized in the present period of the earthly development of the kingdom of heaven in the form of the Christian church in a spiritual and invisible manner in the indwelling of the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers, and in a spiritual and invisible operation in the church, but which will eventually manifest itself when our Lord shall appear in the glory of the Father, to translate His church into the kingdom of glory, in such a manner that we shall see the almighty God and the Lamb with the eyes of our glorified body, and worship before His throne.

This worship is described in our vision (Eze. 43:13-46:24) as the offering of sacrifice according to the Israelitish form of divine worship under the Old Testament; and in accordance with the mode peculiar to Ezekiel of carrying out

all the pictures in detail, the leading instructions concerning the Levitical sacrifices are repeated and modified in harmony with the new circumstances. As the Mosaic worship after the building of the tabernacle commenced with the consecration of the altar, so Ezekiel's description of the new worship commences with the consecration of the altar of burnt-offering, and then spreads over the entering into and exit from the temple, the things requisite for the service at the altar, the duties and rights of the worshippers at the altar, and the quantity and quality of the sacrifices to be offered on the Sabbaths, new moons, and yearly feasts, as well as every day. From a comparison of the new sacrificial *thorah* with that of Moses in our exposition of these chapters, we have observed various distinctions which essentially modified the character of the whole service, viz., a thorough alteration in the order and celebration of the feasts, and a complete change in the proportion between the material of the meat-offering and the animal sacrifices. So far as the first distinction is concerned, the daily sacrifice is reduced to a morning burnt- and meat-offering, and the evening sacrifice of the Mosaic law is abolished; on the other hand, the Sabbath offering is more than tripled in quantity; again, in the case of the new-moon offerings, the sin-offering is omitted and the burnt-offering diminished; in the yearly feasts, the offerings prescribed for the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread and of the feast of tabernacles are equalized in quantity and quality, and the daily burnt- and meat- offerings of the feast of unleavened bread are considerably increased; on the other hand, the daily sacrifices of the feast of tabernacles are diminished in proportion to those prescribed by the Mosaic law. Moreover, the feast of weeks, or harvest-feast, and in the seventh month the day of trumpets and the feast of atonement, with its great atoning sacrifices, are dropt. In the place of these, copious sin-offerings are appointed for the first, seventh, and fourteenth days of the first month. To do justice to the meaning of these changes, we must keep in mind the idea of the Mosaic cycle of feasts. (For this, see my *Bibl. Archäol.* I § 76ff.) The ceremonial worship prescribed by the Mosaic law, in addition to the daily sacrifice, consisted of a cycle of feast days and festal seasons regulated according to the number seven, which had its root in the Sabbath, and was organized in accordance with the division of time, based upon the creation, into weeks, months, and years. As the Lord God created the world in six days, and ended the creation on the seventh day by blessing and sanctifying that day through resting from His works, so also were His people to sanctify every seventh day of the week to Him by resting from all work, and by a special burnt- and meat-offering. And, like the seventh day of the week, so also was the seventh month of the year to be sanctified by the keeping of the new moon with sabbatical rest and special sacrifices, and every seventh year to be a sabbatical year. Into this cycle of holy days, arranged according to the number seven, the yearly feasts consecrated to the remembrance of the mighty acts of the Lord for the establishment, preservation,

and blessing of His people, were so dovetailed that the number of these yearly feasts amounted to seven, — the Passover, feast of unleavened bread, feast of weeks, day of trumpets, day of atonement, feast of tabernacles, and conclusion of this feast, — of which the feasts of unleavened bread and tabernacles were kept for seven days each. These seven feasts formed two festal circles, the first of which with three feasts referred to the raising of Israel into the people of God and to its earthly subsistence; whilst the second, which fell in the seventh month, and was introduced by the day of trumpets, had for its object the preservation of Israel in a state of grace, and its happiness in the full enjoyment of the blessings of salvation, and commenced with the day of atonement, culminated in the feast of tabernacles, and ended with the octave of that feast.

In the festal *thorah* of Ezekiel, on the other hand, the weekly Sabbath did indeed form the foundation of all the festal seasons, and the keeping of the new moon as the monthly Sabbath corresponds to this; but the number of yearly feasts is reduced to the Passover, the seven days' feast of unleavened bread, and the seven days' feast of the seventh month (the feast of tabernacles). The feast of weeks and the presentation of the sheaf of first-fruits on the second day of the feast of unleavened bread are omitted; and thus the allusion in these two feasts to the harvest, or to their earthly maintenance, is abolished. Of still greater importance are the abolition both of the day of trumpets and of the day of atonement, and the octave of the feast of tabernacles, and the institution of three great sin-offerings in the first month, by which the seventh month is divested of the sabbatical character which it had in the Mosaic *thorah*.

According to the Mosaic order of feasts, Israel was to consecrate its life to the Lord and to His service, by keeping the feast of Passover and the seven days' feast of unleavened bread every year in the month of its deliverance from Egypt as the first month of the year, in commemoration of this act of divine mercy, — by appropriating to itself afresh the sparing of its first-born, and its reception into the covenant with the Lord, in the sacrifice of the paschal lamb and in the paschal meal, — and by renewing its transportation from the old condition in Egypt into the new life of divine grace in the feast of unleavened bread, — then by its receiving every month absolution for the sins of weakness committed in the previous month, by means of a sin-offering presented on the new moon, — and by keeping the seventh month of the year in a sabbatical manner, by observing the new moon with sabbatical rest and the tenth day as a day of atonement, on which it received forgiveness of all the sins that had remained without expiation during the course of the year through the blood of the great sin-offering, and the purification of its sanctuary from all the uncleanness of those who approached it, so that, on the feast of tabernacles which followed, they could not only thank the Lord their God for their gracious preservation in the way through the wilderness, and their introduction into the Canaan so

abounding in blessings, but could also taste the happiness of vital fellowship with their God. The yearly feasts of Israel, which commenced with the celebration of the memorial of their reception into the Lord's covenant of grace, culminated in the two high feasts of the seventh month, the great day of atonement, and the joyous feast of tabernacles, to indicate that the people living under the law needed, in addition to the expiation required from month to month, another great and comprehensive expiation in the seventh month of the year, in order to be able to enjoy the blessing consequent upon its introduction into Canaan, the blessedness of the sonship of God. According to Ezekiel's order of feasts and sacrifices, on the other hand, Israel was to begin every new year of its life with a great sin-offering on the first, seventh, and fourteenth days of the first month, and through the blood of these sin-offerings procure for itself forgiveness of all sins, and the removal of all the uncleanness of its sanctuary, before it renewed the covenant of grace with the Lord in the paschal meal, and its transposition into the new life of grace in the days of unleavened bread, and throughout the year consecrated its life to the Lord in the daily burnt-offering, through increased Sabbath-offerings and the regular sacrifices of the new moon; and lastly, through the feast in commemoration of its entrance into Canaan, in order to live before Him a blameless, righteous, and happy life. In the Mosaic order of the feasts and sacrifices the most comprehensive act of expiation, and the most perfect reconciliation of the people to God which the old covenant could offer, lay in the seventh month, the Sabbath month of the year, by which it was indicated that the Sinaitic covenant led the people toward reconciliation, and only offered it to them in the middle of the year; whereas Ezekiel's new order of worship offers to Israel, now returning to its God, reconciliation through the forgiveness of its sins and purification from its uncleannesses at the beginning of the year, so that it can walk before God in righteousness in the strength of the blood of the atoning sacrifice throughout the year, and rejoice in the blessings of His grace.

Now, inasmuch as the great atoning sacrifice of the day of atonement pointed typically to the eternally availing atoning sacrifice which Christ was to offer in the midst of the years of the world through His death upon the cross on Golgotha, the transposition of the chief atoning sacrifices to the commencement of the year by Ezekiel indicates that, for the Israel of the new covenant, this eternally-availing atoning sacrifice would form the foundation for all its acts of worship and keeping of feasts, as well as for the whole course of its life. It is in this that we find the Messianic feature of Ezekiel's order of sacrifices and feasts, by which it acquires a character more in accordance with the New Testament completion of the sacrificial service, which also presents itself to us in the other and still more deeply penetrating modifications of the Mosaic *thorah* of sacrifice on the part of Ezekiel, both in the fact that the daily sacrifice



is reduced to a morning sacrifice, and also in the fact that the quantities are tripled in the Sabbath-offerings and those of the feast of unleavened bread as compared with the Mosaic institutes, and more especially in the change in the relative proportion of the quantity of the meat-offering to that of the burnt-offering. For example, as the burnt-offering shadows forth the reconciliation and surrender to the Lord of the person offering the sacrifice, whilst the meat-offering shadows forth the fruit of this surrender, the sanctification of the life in good works, the increase in the quantity of the meat-offering connected with the burnt-offering, indicates that the people offering these sacrifices will bring forth more of the fruit of sanctification in good works upon the ground of the reconciliation which it has received. We do not venture to carry out to any greater length the interpretation of the differences between the Mosaic law of sacrifice and that of Ezekiel, or to point out any Messianic allusions either in the number of victims prescribed for the several feast days, or in the fact that a different quantity is prescribed for the meat-offering connected with the daily burnt-offering from that enjoined for the festal sacrifices, or in any other things of a similar nature. These points of detail apparently belong merely to the individualizing of the matter. And so also, in the fact that the provision of the people's sacrifices for the Sabbath, new moon, and feasts devolves upon the prince, and in the appointment of the place where the prince is to stand and worship in the temple, and to hold the sacrificial meal, we are unable to detect any Messianic elements, for the simple reason that the position which David and Solomon assumed in relation to the temple and its ritual furnished Ezekiel with a model for these regulations. And, in a similar manner, the precept concerning the hereditary property of the prince and its transmission to his sons (Eze. 46:16ff.) is to be explained from the fact that the future David is thought of as a king, like the son of Jesse, who will be the prince of Israel for ever, not in his own person, but in his family. The only thing that still appears worthy of consideration is the circumstance that throughout the whole of Ezekiel's order of worship no allusion is made to the high priest, but the same holiness is demanded of all the priests which was required of the high priest in the Mosaic law. This points to the fact that the Israel of the future will answer to its calling to be a holy people of the Lord in a more perfect manner than in past times. In this respect the new temple will also differ from the old temple of Solomon. The very elaborate description of the gates and courts, with their buildings, in the new temple has no other object than to show how the future sanctuary will answer in all its parts to the holiness of the Lord's house, and will be so arranged that no person uncircumcised in heart and flesh will be able to enter it. — But all these things belong to the "shadow of things to come," which were to pass away when "the body of Christ" appeared (Col. 2:17; Heb. 10: 1). When, therefore, M. Baumgarten, Auberlen, and other millenarians, express the opinion that this shadow-work will be restored after the eventual conversion of

Israel to Christ, in support of which Baumgarten even appeals to the authority of the apostle of the Gentiles, they have altogether disregarded the warning of this very apostle: “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2: 8, 16, 20, 21).

Lastly, with regard to the prophecy concerning Gog, the prince of Magog, and his expedition against the restored land and people of Israel (Eze. 38 and 39), and its relation to the new conformation of the kingdom of God depicted in Eze. 40-48, the assumption of Hengstenberg (on Rev. 20: 7), “that Gog and Magog represent generally all the future enemies of the kingdom of God, and that we have here embraced in one large picture all that has been developing itself in a long series of events, so that the explanations which take them as referring to the Syrian kings, the Goths and Vandals, or the Turks, are all alike true, and only false in their exclusiveness,” — is not in harmony with the contents of this prophecy, and cannot be reconciled with the position which it occupies in Ezekiel and in the Apocalypse. For the prophecy concerning Gog, though it is indeed essentially different from those which concern themselves with the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, and other smaller or larger nations of the world, has nothing “utopian” about it, which indicates “a thoroughly ideal and comprehensive character.” Even if the name *Gog* be formed by Ezekiel in the freest manner from *Magog*, and however remote the peoples led by Gog from the ends of the earth to make war upon Israel, when restored and living in the deepest peace, may be; yet *Magog*, *Meshech*, *Tubal*, *Pharaz*, *Cush*, and *Phut* are not utopian nations, but the names of historical tribes of whose existence there is no doubt, although their settlements lie outside the known civilised world. Whether there be any foundation for the old Jewish interpretation of the name *Magog* as referring to a great Scythian tribe, or not, we leave undecided; but so much is certain, that *Magog* was a people settled in the extreme north of the world known to the ancients. Nor will we attempt to decide whether the invasion of Hither Asia by the Scythians forms the historical starting-point or connecting link for Ezekiel’s prophecy concerning Gog; but there can be no doubt that this prophecy does not refer to an invasion on the part of the Scythians, but foretells a last great conflict, in which the heathen dwelling on the borders of the globe will engage against the kingdom of God, after the kingdom of the world in its organized national forms, as Asshur, Babel, Javan, shall have been destroyed, and the kingdom of Christ shall have spread over the whole of the civilised world. Gog of Magog is the last hostile phase of the world-power opposed to God, which will wage war on earth against the kingdom of God, and that the rude force of the uncivilised heathen world, which will not rise up and attack the church of Christ till after the fall of the world-power bearing the name of Babylon in the Apocalypse, i.e., till

towards the end of the present course of the world, when it will attempt to lay it waste and destroy it, but will be itself annihilated by the Lord by miracles of His almighty power. In the “conglomerate of nations,” which Gog leads against the people of Israel at the end of the years, there is a combination of all that is ungodly in the heathen world, and that has become ripe for casting into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, to be destroyed by the storms of divine judgment (Eze. 38:21, 22; 39: 6). But, as Baumgarten has correctly observed (in Herzog’s *Cyclopaedia*), “inasmuch as the undisguised and final malice of the world of nations against the kingdom of God is exhibited here, Ezekiel could truly say that the prophets of the former times had already prophesied of this enemy (Eze. 38:17), and that the day of vengeance upon Gog and Magog is that of which Jehovah has already spoken (Eze. 39: 8), — that is to say, all that has been stated concerning hostility on the part of the heathen towards the kingdom of Jehovah, and the judgment upon this hostility, finds its ultimate fulfilment in this the last and extremest opposition of all.” This is in harmony not only with the assumption of this prophecy in Rev. 20, but also with the declaration of the Apocalypse, that it is the Satan released from his prison who leads the heathen to battle against the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and that fire from God out of heaven consumes these enemies, and the devil who has seduced them is cast into the lake of fire to be tormented for ever and ever. — According to all this, the appearing of Gog is still in the future, and the day alone can clearly show what form it will assume.

## FOOTNOTES

- <sup>ft1</sup> Compare the investigation of the cherubim in my *Handbuch der Biblischen Archaeologie*, I. pp. 86ff. and 113ff.; also Kliefoth's *Abhandlung über die Zahlensymbolik der heiligen Schrift in der Theolog. Zeitschrift von Dieckhoff und Kliefoth*, III. p. 381ff., where especially the older view — that the cherubim are angelic beings of a higher rank — is defended in a thorough manner, and the daring hypothesis of Hofmann signally refuted; lastly, Ed. C. Aug. Riehm, *De naturâ et notione symbolicâ Cheruborum, Commentat. Basil.* 1864, who, proceeding from the view — adopted by Bähr, Hengstenberg, and others — that the cherubim were only symbolical figures, has sought to determine more minutely the meaning of these symbols.
- <sup>ft2</sup> See on this distinction Winer's *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Moulton's translation), p. 137, where, among other remarks, it is observed that “*πᾶσαι γενεαί* are all generations, whatever their number; *πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί* (Mat. 1:17), *all the generations*, — those which, either from the context or in some other way, are familiar as a definite number.”
- <sup>ft3</sup> This has been already rightly recognised by Riehm, *l.c.* p. 21ff., who has drawn from it the inference: *quaternis igitur faciebus eximiae vires atque facultates significantur cherubis a deo ad munus suum sustinendum impertitae*, which is connected with the erroneous representation that the cherubim are intended to bear the throne of God, and to carry the Lord of the world.
- <sup>ft4</sup> *Alii vero et maxime Judaei a secundo anno Vespasiani, quando Hierusalem a Romanis capta templumque subversum est, supputari volunt in tribulatione et angustia et captivitatis iugo populi constitui annos quadringentos triginta, et sic redire populum ad pristinum statum ut quomodo filii Israel 430 annis fuerunt in Aegypto, sic in eodem numero finiatur: scriptumque esse in Exo. 12:40. — Hieronymus.*
- <sup>ft5</sup> Another ingenious explanation of the numbers in question has been attempted by Kliefoth, *Comment.* p. 123. Proceeding from the symbolical signification of the number 40 as a measure of time for divine visitation and trial, he supposes that the prescription in Deu. 25: 3 — that if an Israelite were to be subject to corporal punishment, he was not to receive more than 40 stripes — is founded upon this symbolical signification, — a prescription which, according to 2Co. 11:24, was in practice so carried out that only 39 were

actually inflicted. From the application and bearing thus given to the number 40, the symbolical numbers in the passage before us are to be explained. Every year of punishment is equivalent to a stripe of chastisement. To the house of Israel  $10 \times 39$  years = stripes, were adjudged, i.e., to each of the ten tribes 39 years = stripes; the individual tribes are treated as so many single individuals, and each receives the amount of chastisement usual in the case of one individual. Judah, on the contrary, is regarded as the one complete historical national tribe, cause in the two faithful tribes of Judah and Benjamin the people collectively were represented. Judah, then, may receive, not the number of stripes falling to individuals, but that only which fell upon one, although, as a fair compensation, not the usual number of 40, but the higher number — compatible with the Torah — of 40 stripes = years. To this explanation we would give our assent, if only the transformation into stripes or blows of the days of the prophet's reclining, or of the years of Israel's punishment, could be shown to be probable through any analogous *Biblical* example, and were not merely a deduction from the modern law of punishment, in which corporal punishment and imprisonment hold the same importance. The assumption, then, is altogether arbitrary irrespective of this, that in the case of the house of Israel the measure of punishment is fixed differently from that of Judah; in the former case, according to the number of the tribes; in the latter, according to the unity of the kingdom: in the former at 39, in the latter at 40 stripes. Finally, the presupposition that the later Jewish practice of inflicting only 30 instead of 40 stripes — in order not to transgress the letter of the law in the enumeration which probably was made at the infliction of the punishment — goes back to the time of the exile, is extremely improbable, as it altogether breathes the spirit of Pharisaic micrology.

<sup>ft6</sup> Cf. Plinii *Histor. Natur.* xviii. 30: "*Inter legumina maximus honos fabae, quippe ex qua tentatus sit etiam panis...Frumento etiam miscetur apud plerasque gentes et maxime panico solida ac delicatius fracta.*"

<sup>ft7</sup> Kliefoth's supposition is untenable, that what is required in vv. 9-17 refers in reality only to the 390 days of Israel, and not also to the 40 days of Judah, so that so long as Ezekiel lay and bore the sins of Israel, he was to eat his food by measure, and unclean. For this is in contradiction with the distinct announcement that during the whole time that he lay upon the one side and the other, he was besieging Jerusalem; and by the scanty and unclean food, was to portray both the deficiency of bread and water which occurred in the besieged city (v. 17), as well as the eating of unclean bread, which impended over the Israelites when among the heathen nations. The famine which took place in Jerusalem during the siege did not affect the ten tribes, but that of Judah; while unclean bread had to be eaten among the heathen

not only by the Israelites, but also by the Jews transported to Babylon. By the limitation of what is prescribed to the prophet in vv. 9-15 to the time during which the sin of Israel was to be borne, the significance of this symbolical act for Jerusalem and Judah is taken away.

- <sup>ft8</sup> In our climate (Germany) we count 2 lbs. of bread for the daily supply of a man; but in warm countries the demand for food is less, so that scarcely 1 1/2 lbs. are required. Wellsted (*Travels in Arabia*, II. p. 200) relates that “the Bedoweens will undertake a journey of 10 to 12 days without carrying with them any nutriment, save a bottle full of small cakes, baked of white flour and camel or goat’s milk, and a leather bag of water. Such a cake weighs about 5 ounces. Two of them, and a mouthful of water, the latter twice within 24 hours, is all which they then partake of.”
- <sup>ft9</sup> The use of dung as a material for burning is so common in the East, that it cannot be supposed that Ezekiel first became acquainted with it in a foreign country, and therefore regarded it with peculiar loathing. Human ordure, of course, so far as our knowledge goes, is never so employed, although the objection raised by Hitzig, on the other hand, that it would not yield so much heat as would be necessary for roasting without immediate contact, i.e., through the medium of a brick, rests upon an erroneous representation of the matter. But the employment of cattle-dung for firing could not be unknown to the Israelites, as it forms in the Hauran (the ancient Bashan) the customary firing material; cf. Wetzstein’s remarks on Delitzsch’s *Job*, vol. I. pp. 377, 8 (Eng. trn.), where the preparation of the *géele* — this prevalent material for burning in the Hauran — from cow-dung mixed with chopped straw is minutely described; and this remark is made among others, that the flame of the *géele*, prepared and dried from the dung of oxen that feed at large, is entirely without smoke, and that the ashes, which retain their heat for a lengthened time, are as clean as those of wood.
- <sup>ft10</sup> Coccejus had already well remarked on Eze. 11:12: “*Haec probe concordant. Imitabantur Judaei gentiles vel fovendo opiniones gentiles, vel etiam assumendo ritus et sacra gentilium. Sed non faciebant ut gentes, quae integre diis suis serviebant. Nam Israelitae nomine Dei abutebantur et ipsius populus videri volebant.*”
- <sup>ft11</sup> “It is a natural thing to rejoice in the purchase of property, and to mourn over its sale. But when slavery and captivity stare you in the face, rejoicing and mourning are equally absurd.” — Jerome.
- <sup>ft12</sup> “Because the whole is exhibited pictorially and figuratively, he says that he saw one hole in a wall, and was directed to dig through and make it larger, that he might enter as if through an open door, and see the things which he could not possibly have seen while stationed outside.” — Jerome.

<sup>ft13</sup> “An extraordinary form, invented for the purpose of more effectually expressing their extraordinary abomination.” — Lightfoot.

<sup>ft14</sup> לְבוּשׁ בָּרִים is rendered by the LXX, in the passage before us, ἔνδεδικώς ποδήρη. It is in accordance with this that Christ is described in Rev. 1:13 as clothed with a ποδήρης, and not after Dan. 10: 5, as Hengstenberg supposes. In Dan. 10: 5, the Septuagint has ἔνδεδύμενος βαδδίν or τὰ βαδδίν. In other places, the Sept. rendering of דָּבָר is λίνον (thus Lev. 16: 4, 23; 6: 3; Exo. 28:42, etc.); and hence the λίνον λαμπρόν of Rev. 15: 6 answers to the דָּבָר made of שֵׁשׁ, βύσσος, and is really the same as the βύσσινον λαμπρόν of Rev. 19: 8.

<sup>ft15</sup> “This city is a pot, our receptacle and defence, and we are the flesh enclosed therein; as flesh is preserved in its caldron till it is perfectly boiled, so shall we continue here till an extreme old age.” — Hülsemann in *Calov. Bibl. Illustr.*

<sup>ft16</sup> Calvin has given the correct explanation, thus: “He does not mean that men had been openly assassinated in the streets of Jerusalem; but under this form of speech he embraces all kinds of injustice. For we know that all who oppressed the poor, deprived men of their possessions, or shed innocent blood, were regarded as murderers in the sight of God.”

<sup>ft17</sup> “He threatens a double punishment; *first*, that God will cast them out of Jerusalem, in which they delight, and where they say that they will still make their abode for a long time to come, so that exile may be the first punishment. He then adds, *secondly*, that He will not be content with exile, but will send a severer punishment, after they have been cast out, and both home and land have spued them out as a stench which they could not bear. *I will judge you at the frontier of Israel*, i.e., outside the holy land, so that when one curse shall have become manifest in exile, a severer and more formidable punishment shall still await you.”

<sup>ft18</sup> Hitzig objects to the two forms, which do not occur elsewhere; and with the help of the Sept. rendering τι διαθῶ τὴν θυγατέρα σου, which is a mere guess founded upon the false reading מַה אֲמַלָּה לְבַתְּךָ, he adopts the conjectural reading מַה אֲמַלָּה לְבַתְּךָ, “what hope is there for thy daughter?” by which he enriches the Hebrew language with a new word (אֲמַלָּה), and the prophecy contained in this chapter with a thought which is completely foreign to it, and altogether unsuitable.

<sup>ft19</sup> Jerome adopts this rendering: *non facta es quasi meretrix fastidio augens pretium*, and gives the following explanation: “thou hast not imitated the cunning prostitutes, who are accustomed to raise the price of lust by increasing the difficulties, and in this way to excite their lovers to greater

frenzy.” Rosenmüller and Maurer have adopted a similar explanation: “thou differest greatly from other harlots, who despise the payment offered them by their lovers, that they may get still more; for thou acceptest any reward, being content with the lowest payment; yea, thou dost even offer a price to thine own lovers.”

<sup>ft20</sup> Theodoret has explained it correctly in this way: “He shows by this, that He is not the God of Jews only, but of Gentiles also; for God once gave oracles to them, before they chose the abomination of idolatry. Therefore he says that they also put away both the husband and the children by denying God, and slaying the children to demons.”

<sup>ft21</sup> The remarks of Calvin upon this point are very good. “We do not learn directly from Moses,” he says, “that they had been rebels against God, because they would not throw away their idols and superstitions; but the conjecture is a very probable one, that they had always been so firmly fixed in their abominations as to prevent in a certain way the hand of God from bringing them relief. And assuredly, if they had embraced what Moses promised them in the name of God with promptness of mind, the execution of the promise would have been more prompt and swift. But we may learn that it was their own obtuseness which hindered God from stretching out His hand forthwith and actually fulfilling all that He had promised. It was necessary, indeed, that God should contend with Pharaoh, that His power might be more conspicuously displayed; but the people would not have been so tyrannically afflicted if they had not closed the door of divine mercy.”

<sup>ft22</sup> In the Hebrew Bible the previous chapter closes at v. 44, and Eze. 21 commences there. Keil has adhered to this division of chapters; but for the sake of convenience we have followed the arrangement adopted in the English authorized version. — Tr.

<sup>ft23</sup> The arrow-lot (*Belomantie*) of the ancient Greeks (Homer, *Il.* iii. 324, vii. 182, 183) was similar to this; also that of the ancient Arabs (vid., Pococke, *Specim. hist. Arab.* pp. 327ff., and the passages from Nuweiri quoted by Reiske, *Samml. einiger Arab. Sprichwörter von den Stecken oder Stäben*, p. 21). Another kind, in which the lot was obtained by shooting off the arrows, was common according to the *Fihrist el Ulum* of *En-Ned-m* among the Hananian Ssabians (see Chwolsohn, *Ssabier*, ii. pp. 26 and 119, 200).

<sup>ft24</sup> Hitzig has given a most preposterous exposition of this verse. Taking the words **הָסִיר** and **הָרִים** as antithetical, in the sense of removing and exalting or sustaining in an exalted position, and regarding the clauses as questions signifying, “Shall the high-priesthood be abolished, and the real dignity, on the contrary, remain untouched?” he finds the answer to these questions in the words **זֹאת לֹא זֹאת** (this, not this). They contain, in his opinion, as



affirmation of the former and a negation of the latter. But he does not tell us how **זֹאת לֹא זֹאת** without a verb can possibly mean, “the former (the abrogation of the high-priesthood) will take place, but the latter (the exaltation of the monarchy) will not occur.” And, finally, the last clause, “the low shall be lifted up,” etc., is said to contain simply a watchword, which is not for the time being to be followed by any result. Such trifling needs no refutation. We simply observe, therefore, that there is no ground for the assertion, that **הָרִים** without **מִן** cannot possibly signify to abolish.

<sup>ft25</sup> The proposal of Ewald to take **לְבַלְלָהּ נְאֻפִים** as an independent clause, “adultery to the devil,” cannot be defended by the usage of the language; and that of Hitzig, “the withered hag practises adultery,” is an unnatural invention, inasmuch as **לְ**, if taken as *nota dativi*, would give this meaning: the hag has (possesses) adultery as her property — and there is nothing to indicate that it should be taken as a question.

<sup>ft26</sup> Hitzig discovers a *Hysteronproteron* in this description, because the cleaning of the pot ought to have preceded the cooking of the flesh in it, and not to have come afterwards, and also because, so far as the actual fact is concerned, the rust of sin adhered to the people of the city, and not to the city itself as a collection of houses. But neither of these objections is sufficient to prove what Hitzig wants to establish, namely, that the untenable character of the description shows that it is not really a prophecy; nor is there any force in them. It is true that if one intended to boil flesh in a pot for the purpose of eating, the first thing to be done would be to clean the pot itself. But this is not the object in the present instance. The flesh was simply to be thoroughly boiled, that it might be destroyed and thrown away, and there was no necessity to clean the pot for this purpose. And so far as the second objection is concerned, the defilement of sin does no doubt adhere to man, though not, as Hitzig assumes, to man alone. According to the Old Testament view, it extends to things as well (vid., Lev. 18:25; 27:28). Thus leprosy, for example, did not pollute men only, but clothes and houses also. And for the same reason judgments were not restricted to men, but also fell upon cities and lands.

<sup>ft27</sup> Drechsler (in his commentary on Isa. 23) has given the following explanation of the distinction to be observed between the prophecies of Isaiah and those of Ezekiel concerning Tyre, — namely, that in the case of Isaiah the spirit of prophecy invests its utterances with the character of totality, in accordance with the position assigned to this prophet at the entrance upon a new era of the world, embracing the entire future even to the remotest times, and sketching with grand simplicity the ground-plan and outline of the whole; whereas in the case of the later prophets, such as Jeremiah and

Ezekiel, who were living in the midst of the historical execution, the survey of the whole gives place to the contemplation of particular features belonging to the details of the immediate fulfilment. But this explanation is not satisfactory, inasmuch as Jeremiah, notwithstanding the fact that he lived in the midst of the execution of the judgment, foretold the turning of judgment into salvation at least in the case of some of the heathen nations. For example, in Eze. 48:47 he prophesies to the Moabites, and in Eze. 49: 6 to the Ammonites, that in the future time Jehovah will turn their captivity; and in Eze. 46:26 he says, concerning Egypt, that after the judgment it will be inhabited as in the days of old.

<sup>ft28</sup> Insular Tyre possessed two harbours, a northern one called the Sidonian, because it was on the Sidonian side, and one on the opposite or south-eastern side, which was called the Egyptian harbour from the direction in which it pointed. The Sidonian was the more celebrated of the two, and consisted of an inner harbour, situated within the wall of the city, and an outer one, formed by a row of rocks, which lay at a distance of about three hundred paces to the north-west of the island, and ran parallel to the opposite coast of the mainland, so as to form a roadstead in which ships could anchor (vid., Arrian, ii. 20; Strabo, xvi. 2. 23). This northern harbour is still held by the city of *Sur*, whereas the Egyptian harbour with the south-eastern portion of the island has been buried by the sand driven against the coasts by the south winds, so that even the writers of the Middle Ages make no allusion to it. (See Movers, *Phönizier*, II. 1, pp. 214ff.).

<sup>ft29</sup> Curtius, iv. 2: *Tyrus et claritate et magnitudine ante omnes urbes Syriae Phoenicesque memorabilis.* (Cf. Strabo, xvi. 2. 22.)

<sup>ft30</sup> Jerome recognised this allegory, and has explained it correctly as follows: “He (the prophet) speaks **τροπικῶς**, as though addressing a ship, and points out its beauty and the abundance of everything. Then, after having depicted all its supplies, he announces that a storm will rise, and the south wind (*auster*) will blow, by which great waves will be gathered up, and the vessel will be wrecked. In all this he is referring to the overthrow of the city by King Nabuchodonosor,” etc. Rashi and others give the same explanation.

<sup>ft31</sup> The Targum has paraphrased it in this way: **מכבשין בשן דפיל** **דפין דאשכרעין**, i.e., planks of box or pine inlaid with ivory.

<sup>ft32</sup> See Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs*, III Pl. xvi., where engravings are given of Egyptian state-ships with embroidered sails. On one ship a large square sail is displayed in purple-red and purple-blue checks, surrounded by a gold border. The vessel of Antony and Cleopatra in the battle of Actium had also purple sails; and in this case the purple sails were the sign of the admiral's ship, just as in Ezekiel they serve as a mark of distinction (ס).

See Movers, II 3, p. 165, where the accounts of ancient writers concerning such state-ships are collected together.

<sup>ft33</sup> Movers (II 3, pp. 303ff.) adduces still further evidence in addition to that given above, namely, that “unquestionable traces of the ancient name have been preserved in the region in which the ancient Dedanites are represented as living, partly on the coast in the names *Attana*, *Attene*, which have been modified according to well-known laws, — the former, a commercial town on the Persian Gulf, visited by Roman merchants (Plin. vi. 32, § 147); the latter, a tract of country opposite to the island of Tylos (Plin. *l.c.* § 49), — and partly in the islands of the Persian Gulf” (p. 304).

<sup>ft34</sup> The Ethiopians also call ivory *Karna nage*, i.e., *cornu elephanti*, and suppose that it is from horns, and not from tusks, that ivory comes (vid., Hiob Ludolph, *Hist. Aeth.* I c. 10).

<sup>ft35</sup> According to Movers (II 3, p. 269), **צִיָּהָר** is the *Sicharia of Aethicus* (Cosm. § 108): *Sicharia regio, quae postea Nabathaea, nuncupatur, silvestris valde, ubi Ismaelitae eminus*, — an earlier name for the land of the Nabathaeans, who dwelt in olden time between Palestine and the Euphrates, and were celebrated for their wealth in flocks of sheep.

<sup>ft36</sup> In explanation of the fact alluded to, Hävernicks has very appropriately called attention to a passage of Athen. (xii. 8, p. 531), in which the following statement occurs with reference to Strato, the Sidonian king: “Strato, with flute-girls, and female harpers and players on the cithara, made preparations for the festivities, and sent for a large number of *hetaerae* from the Peloponnesus, and many signing-girls from Ionia, and young *hetaerae* from the whole of Greece, both singers and dancers.” See also other passages in Brissonius, *de regio Pers. princ.* pp. 142-3.

<sup>ft37</sup> The passage reads as follows: “In the reign of Ithobal the king, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years. After him judges were appointed. Ecnibalus, the son of Baslachus, judged for two months; Chelbes, the son of Abdaeus, for ten months; Abbarus, the high priest, for three months; Myttonus and Gerastartus, the sons of Abdelemus, for six years; after whom Balatorus reigned for one year. When he died, they sent for and fetched Merbalus from Babylon, and he reigned four years. At his death they sent for his brother Eiramus, who reigned twenty years. During his reign, Cyrus ruled over the Persians.”

<sup>ft38</sup> Cyrill. Alex. gives the same explanation in his commentary on Isa. 23.

<sup>ft39</sup> For the purpose of furnishing the proof that the temple at Jerusalem lay in ruins for fifty years, from the time of its destruction till the commencement of its rebuilding, Josephus gives in the passage referred to above the years of the several reigns of the kings and judges of Tyre from Ithobal to *Hirrom*,

in whose reign *Cyrus* took the kingdom; from which it is apparent that fifty years elapsed from the commencement of the siege of Tyre to the fourteenth year of *Hiram*, in which *Cyrus* began to reign. At the same time, the seventh year of *Nebuchadnezzar* is given by mistake instead of the seventeenth or nineteenth as the date of the beginning of the siege. (Compare on this point *Movers, Phönizier*, II 1, pp. 437ff.; *M. v. Niebuhr, Gesch. Assurs u. Bab.* pp. 106ff.; and *M. Duncker, Gesch. des Altert.* I p. 841.)

<sup>ft40</sup> Ewald proposes to alter צָרָי into צָרֵי (after the Aramaean), “rust,” and renders it: “Memphis will be eternal rust.” But to this Hitzig has very properly objected that in Eze. 24: 6, 11, rust is called קִלְאָה; and that even in Psa. 6: 3 יָנָם does not mean perpetual or eternal. Hävernicks proposes to explain צָרָי, from the Aramaean *z'ra* , to rend or tear in pieces, “Memphis shall become perpetual rents.” To this also it may be objected, that צָרָי in Hebrew has the standing meaning of oppressors; and that יָנָם, *interdiu*, is not equivalent to perpetual; and still further, that the preposition לְ could not be omitted before צָרָי.

<sup>ft41</sup> The explanation of Jerome is the following: “Then will purest waters, which had been disturbed by the sway of the dragon, be restored not by another, but by the Lord Himself; so that their streams flow like oil, and are the nutriment of true light.”

<sup>ft42</sup> C. a Lapide has already given the true meaning: “He compares them, therefore, not with the righteous, but with the heathen, who, although uncircumcised, had met with a glorious death, i.e., they will be more wretched than these; for the latter went down to the shades with glory, but they with ignominy, as if conquered and slain.”

<sup>ft43</sup> It is incomprehensible how Kliefoth could find “no sign of introductory thoughts” in this section, or could connect it with the preceding oracles against the foreign nations, for no other reason than to secure fourteen words of God for that portion of the book which contains the prophecies against the foreign nations. For there is no force in the other arguments which he adduces in support of this combination; and the assertion that “the section, Eze. 33: 1-20, speaks of threatenings and warnings, and of the faithfulness with which Ezekiel is to utter them, and of the manner in which Israel is to receive them,” simply shows that he has neither correctly nor perfectly understood the contents of this section and its train of thought.

<sup>ft44</sup> “For as the body of our forefather Adam was first moulded, and then the soul was thus breathed into it; so here also both combined in fitting harmony.” — Theodoret.

<sup>fi45</sup> No conclusive evidence can be adduced that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was not only known to Ezekiel, but was regarded by the people as indisputably sure, as both Hengstenberg (*Christology*, vol. III p. 51, transl.) and Pareau (*Comment. de immortal.* p. 109) assume. Such passages as Isa. 25: 8 and 26:19, even if Ezekiel referred to them, merely prove that the belief or hope of the resurrection of the dead could not be altogether unknown to the believers of Israel, because Isaiah had already declared it. But the obvious announcement of this dogma in Dan. 12: 2 belongs to a later period than our vision; and even Daniel does not speak of it as a belief that prevailed throughout the nation, but simply communicates it as a consolation offered by the angel of the Lord in anticipation of the times of severe calamity awaiting the people of God.

<sup>fi46</sup> His words are these: ἐπειδὴ γὰρ δι' ἣν ἐνόσουν ἀπιστίαν τὰς χρηστοτέρας ἀπηγόρευσαν ἐλπίδας οἱ ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας αἰχμάλωται γενόμενοι, τὴν οἰκείαν αὐτοῖς ὁ τῶν ὄλων Θεὸς ἐπιδείκνυσι δύναμιν, καὶ τὴν πολλῶ τῆς ἀνακλήσεως ἐκείνης δυσκολωτέραν τῶν νεκρῶν σωμάτων ἀνάστασιν ἐπιδείκνυσι τῷ προφήτῃ καὶ δι' ἐκείνου πάντα διδάσκει τὸν λαὸν, ὡς πάντα αὐτῷ ῥάδια βουλομένῳ.

<sup>fi47</sup> The view expressed by Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, II 2, pp. 507ff.) is a kindred one, namely, that it is not the future resurrection of the dead, or the resurrection of the deceased Israelites, which is indicated in the vision, and that it does not even set forth to view the unconditioned power of God over death, or an idea which is intended as a pledge of the resurrection of the dead; but that by the revelation made manifest to the prophet in the state of ecstasy, the completeness of that state of death out of which Israel is to be restored is exhibited, and thus the truth is set before his eyes that the word of prophecy has the inherent power to ensure its own fulfilment, even when Israel is in a condition which bears precisely the same resemblance to a nation as the state of death to a human being.

<sup>fi48</sup> These are, C. A. Auberlen, "The Prophet Daniel and the Revelation of John;" also in a treatise on the Messianic Prophecies of the Mosaic times, in the *Jahrbb.f. deutsche Theologie*, IV pp. 778ff.; J. C. K. Hofmann, in his *Weissagung und Erfüllung im A. u. N. Testamente*, and in the *Schriftbeweis*, vol. II p. 2; Mich. Baumgarten, article "Ezekiel" in Herzog's *Cyclopaedia*, and here and there in his commentary on the Old Testament; C. E. Luthardt, *The Doctrine of the Last Things in Treatises and Expositions of Scripture* (1851); and Dr. Volck, in the *Dorpat'er Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, IX pp. 142ff.; and others.

<sup>fi49</sup> Compare with this the words of Auberlen (*der Prophet Daniel*, p. 399, ed. 2): "The doctrine of the glorious restoration of Israel to Canaan, after severe chastisement and humiliation, is so essential and fundamental a

thought of all prophecy, that the difficulty is not so much to find passages to support it, as to make a selection from them. By way of example, let us notice Isa. 2: 2-4; 4: 2-6; 9: 1-6, 11 and 12; more especially 11:11ff., 24ff., 60ff.; Jer. 30-33; Eze. 34:23-31, 36, 37; Hos. 2:16-25; 3: 4, 5; 11: 8-11; 14: 2ff.; Joe. 3: 1-5; 4:16-21; Amo. 9: 8-15; Oba. 1:17-21; Mic. 2:12, 13; 4: 5; 7:11-20); Zep. 3:14-20; Zec. 2: 4ff., 8: 7ff., 9: 9ff., 10: 8-12; 12: 2-13: 6, 14: 8ff.” Auberlen (pp. 400f.) then gives the following as the substance of these prophetic descriptions: “Israel having been brought back to its own land, will be the people of God in a much higher and deeper sense than before; inasmuch as sin will be averted, the knowledge of God will fill the land, and the Lord will dwell again in the midst of His people at Jerusalem. A new period of revelation is thus commenced, the Spirit of God is richly poured out, and with this a plenitude of such gifts of grace as were possessed in a typical manner by the apostolic church. And this rich spiritual life has also its perfect external manifestation both in a priestly and a regal form. The priesthood of Israel was more especially seen by Ezekiel, the son of a priest, in his mysterious vision in Eze. 40-48; the monarchy by Daniel, the statesman; while Jeremiah, for example, unites the two (Jer. 33:17-22). What took place only in an outward way, i.e., in the letter, during the Old Testament times, and withdrew, on the other hand, into the inward and hidden spirit-life during the time of the Christian church, will then manifest itself outwardly also, and assume an external though pneumatic form. In the Old Testament the whole of the national life of Israel in its several forms of manifestation, domestic and political life, labour and art, literature and culture, was regulated by religion, though only at first in an outward and legal way. The church, on the other hand, has, above all, to urge a renewal of the heart, and must give freedom to the outward forms which life assumes, enjoining upon the conscience of individual men, in these also to glorify Christ. In the thousand years’ reign all these departments of life will be truly Christianized, and that from within. Looked at in this light, there will be nothing left to give offence, if we bear in mind that the ceremonial law of Moses corresponds to the priesthood of Israel, and the civil law to the monarchy. The Gentile church has only been able to adopt the moral law, however certainly it has been directed merely to the inwardly working means of the word, or of the prophetic office. But when once the priesthood and the kingly office have been restored, then, without doing violence to the Epistle to the Hebrews, the ceremonial and civil law of Moses will unfold its spiritual depths in the worship and constitution of the thousand years’ reign.”

<sup>150</sup> “All Israel,” says Philippi in the 3rd ed. of his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (p. 537), “as contrasted with ἕκ μέρους (in part) in v. 25, and

also in the connection in which it stands with the train of thought in Rom. 9-11, which, as the chapter before us more especially shows, has only to do with the bringing of the nations as a whole to the Messianic salvation, cannot be understood in any other sense than as signifying the people of Israel as a whole (see also vv. 28-32). The explanation of the words as denoting the spiritual Israel, the 'Israel of God' (Gal. 6:16), according to which all the true children of Abraham and of God are to be saved through the entrance of the chosen Gentiles, and at the same time also of the ἔκλογή of the Israel that has not been hardened, is just as arbitrary as it is to take 'all Israel' as referring merely to the believing portion of the Jews, the portion chosen by God, who have belonged in all ages to the λῆμμα κατ' ἔκλογὴν χάριτος." But in the appendix to the third edition he has not only give full expression to the opposite view, which Besser in his *Bibelstunden* has supported in the most decided manner, after the example of Luther and many of the Lutheran expositors, but is inclined to give preference, even above the view which he preciously upheld, to the idea that "all Israel is the whole of the Israel intended by the prophetic word, and included in the divine word of promise, to which alone the name of Israel truly and justly belongs according to the correct understanding of the Old Testament word of God — that is to say, those lineal sons of Abraham who walk in the footsteps of his faith (ch. 4:12), those Jews who are so not merely outwardly in the flesh, but also inwardly in the spirit, through circumcision of heart (ch. 2:28, 29);" and also to the following exposition which Calovius gives of the whole passage, namely, that "it does not relate to a simultaneous or universal conversion of the Israelites, or to the conversion of a great multitude, which is to take place at the last times of the world, and is to be looked forward to still, but rather to successive conversions continuing even to the end of the world."

<sup>ft51</sup> Aug. Kueper (*Jeremias librr. sacrr., interpr. atque vindex*, p. 82) has correctly observed concerning this verse, that "it is evident enough that there is no reference here to prophecies concerning Gog and Magog, which have been lost; but those general prophecies, which are met with on every hand directed against the enemies of the church, are here referred to Gog." And before him, J. F. Starck had already said: "In my opinion, we are to understand all those passages in the prophets which treat of the enemies of the church and its persecutions...these afflictions were preludes and shadows of the bloody persecution of Gog."

<sup>ft52</sup> For the exposition of this section, compare the thorough, though critically one-sided, work of Jul. Fr. Böttcher (*Exegetisch kritischer Versuch über die ideale Beschreibung der Tempelgebäude Ezech. Eze. 40-42, 46:19-24*) in the *Proben alttestamentlicher Schrifterklärung*, Lpz. 1833, pp. 218-365,

with two plates of illustrations. — On the other hand, the earlier monographs upon these chapters: Jo. Bapt. Villalpando, *de postrema Ezechielis visione, Pars. II of Pradi et Villalpandi in Ezech. explanatt.*, Rom. 1604; Matth. Hafenreffer, *Templum Ezechielis s. in IX postr. prophetiae capita*, Tüb. 1613; Leonh. Cph. Sturm, *Sciagraphia templi Hierosol...praesertim ex visione Ezech.*, Lips. 1964; and other writings mentioned in Rosenmüller's *Scholia ad Ez. 40*, by no means meet the scientific demands of our age. This also applies to the work of Dr. J. J. Balmer-Rinck, with its typographical beauty, *Des Propheten Ezechiel Ansicht vom Tempel, mit 5 Tafeln und 1 Karte*, Ludwigsc. 1858, and to the description and engraving of Ezekiel's temple in Gust. Unruh's *das alte Jerusalem und seine Bauwerke*, Langensalza 1861.

<sup>ft53</sup> J. H. Michaelis has already explained it correctly, viz.: "The *highest mountain*, such as Isaiah (Isa. 2: 2) had also predicted that Mount Zion would be, not physically, but in the eminence of gospel dignity and glory; cf. Rev. 21:10."

<sup>ft54</sup> The text of the LXX reads thus:...καὶ διεμέτρησε τὸ αἶλ τοῦ αἶλαμ πηχῶν πέντε τὸ πλάτος ἔνθεν καὶ πηχῶν πέντε ἔνθεν, καὶ τὸ εὖρος τοῦ θυρώματος πηχῶν δεκατεσσάρων, καὶ ἐπωμίδες τῆς θυρᾶς τοῦ αἶλαμ πηχῶν τριῶν ἔνθεν καὶ πηχῶν τριῶν ἔνθεν. Καὶ τὸ μήκος τοῦ αἶλαμ πηχῶν εἴκοσι καὶ τὸ εὖρος πηχῶν δώδεκα: καὶ ἐπὶ δέκα ἀναβαθμῶν ἀνέβαινον ἐπ' αὐτό κ.τ.λ.

<sup>ft55</sup> The statement of Kliefoth, that "this space of twenty cubits in breadth did not belong to the inner court at all," cannot be established from Eze. 40:47, where the size of the inner court is given as a hundred cubits in length and the same in breadth. For this measurement simply refers to the space in front of the temple.

<sup>ft56</sup> For no further proof is needed after what has been observed above, that the relative clause, "which were in front of the separate place," belongs to the two subjects: cells of the north and cells of the south, and does not refer to a third cell-building against the eastern wall, as Kliefoth supposes.

<sup>ft57</sup> The **חֲמֵשׁ אַמּוֹת** for **חֲמֵשׁ מְאוֹת** in v. 16 is utterly useless as a proof that cubits and not rods are intended; as it is obviously a copyist's error, a fact which even the Masoretes admit. Rabbi ben-Asher's view of this writing is an interesting one. Prof. Dr. Delitzsch has sent me the following, taken from a fragment in his possession copied from a codex of the Royal Library at Copenhagen. R. ben-Asher reckons **אַמּוֹת** among the **מוֹקְדָם וּמְאוּחָר**, i.e., words written **ὑστερον πρότερον**, of which there are forty-seven in the whole of the Old Testament, the following being quoted by ben-Asher (*l.c.*) by way of example: **גִּלְיוֹן**, Jos. 20: 8; 21:27; **וַיִּקְלְהוּ**, 2Sa. 20:14; **בְּאַבְרֹת**, 2Sa. 15:28; **וַהֲיִמְשְׁנִי**, Jud. 16:26; **וַתִּרְאֶנָּה**, 1Sa. 14:27.



ft58 “The Lord appears, and fills the house with His own glory; showing that the house will not only be built, but will be filled with the power of God” (Theodoret).

ft59 The Rabbins (Targ. Talm. and Masor. according to their accentuation) have endeavoured to obliterate this distinction, by applying the first hemistich to the high priest alone, and explaining the second thus: “The widow, who is really a widow, the priest may take,” interpreting **יְהוָה** by *quidam sacerdotum*, or *aliqui ex ordine sacerdotali*, or *ceteri sacerdotes*. But this is contrary to the usage of the language, as **יְהוָה** cannot possibly be understood in a partitive sense in this passage, where the priests generally are spoken of, and the plural **יְהוָה** follows.

ft60 It is true that Const. l’Empereur has observed, in the *Discursus ad Lectorem* prefixed to the *Paraphrasis Joseph. Jachiadae in Daniele*, that “as God desired that justice should be preserved in all things, He noticed the various coins, and commanded that they should have their just weight. One coin, according to Jewish testimony, was of twenty shekels, a second of twenty-five, and a third of fifteen shekels; and as these together made one mina, according to the command of God, in order that it might be manifest that each had its proper quantity, He directed that they should be weighed against the mina, so that it might be known whether each had its own weight by means of the mina, to which they ought to be equal.” But the Jewish witnesses (*Judaei testes*) are no other than the Rabbins of the Middle Ages, Sal. Jarchi (Raschi), Dav. Kimchi, and Abrabanel, who attest the existence of these pieces of money, not on the ground of historical tradition, but from an inference drawn from this verse. The much earlier Targumist knows nothing whatever of them, but paraphrases the words thus: “the third part of a mina has twenty shekels; a silver mina, five and twenty shekels; the fourth part of a mina, fifteen shekels; all sixty are a mina; and a great mina (i.e., probably one larger than the ordinary, or civil mina) shall be holy to you;” from which all that can be clearly learned is, that he found in the words of the prophet a mina of sixty shekels. A different explanation is given by the LXX, whose rendering, according to the *Cod. Vatic.*

(Tischendorf), runs as follows: **πέντε σίκλοι, πέντε καὶ σίκλοι, δέκα καὶ πενήκοντα σίκλοι ἢ μνᾶ ἔσται ὑμῖν**; and according to the *Cod. Al.*: **οἱ πεντε σικλοι πεντε και οἱ δεκα σικλοι δεκα και πενήκοντα κ.τ.λ.** Boeckh (*Metrol. Untersuch.* pp. 54ff.) and Bertheau (*Zur Gesch. der Isr.* pp. 9ff.) regard the latter as the original text, and punctuate it thus: **οἱ πέντε σίκλοι πέντε, καὶ οἱ δέκα σίκλοι δέκα, καὶ πενήκοντα σίκλοι ἢ μνᾶ ἔσται ὑμῖν**, — interpreting the whole verse as follows: “the weight once fixed shall remain unaltered, and unadulterated in its original value: namely, a shekel shall contain ten *gerahs*; five shekels, or a five-shekel piece, shall contain

exactly five; and so also a ten-shekel piece, exactly ten shekels; and the mina shall contain fifty shekels.” But however this explanation may appear to commend itself, and although for this reason it has been adopted by Hävernick and by the author of this commentary in his *Bibl. Archäol.*, after a repeated examination of the matter I cannot any longer regard it as well-founded, but am obliged to subscribe to the view held by Hitzig and Kliefoth, “that this rendering of the LXX carries on the face of it the probability of its resting upon nothing more than an attempt to bring the text into harmony with the ordinary value of the mina.” For apart from the fact that nothing is known of the existence of five and ten shekel pieces, it is impossible to get any intelligible meaning from the words, that five shekels are to be worth five shekels, and ten shekels worth ten shekels, as it was self-evident that five shekels could not be worth either four shekels or six.

<sup>ft61</sup> Compare W. Neumann, *Die Wasser des Lebens*. An exegetical study on Eze. 47: 1-12. Berlin, 1848.

<sup>ft62</sup> The statement runs thus: λέγεται δέ τις Θαμαρά κώμη διεστώσα Μάψις ἡμέρας ὁδὸν ἀπιόντων ἀπὸ Χεβρών εἰς Αἰλάμ ἥτις νῦν φρούριόν ἐστι τῶν στρατιωτῶν. In Jerome: *est et aliud castellum, unius diei itinere a Mampsis oppido separatum, pergentibus Ailiam de Chebron, ubi nunc romanum praesidium positum est*. But on account of the Μάψις (*Mampsis*), which is evidently a corruption, the passage is obscure. Robinson’s conjecture concerning *Thamara* is founded upon the assumption that the reading should be Μάλις, and that this is the *Malatha* mentioned by later writers as the station of a Roman cohort.

<sup>ft63</sup> According to Boeckh, one sacred cubit was equal to 234 1/3 Paris lines = 528·62 millimètres; according to Thenius = 214 1/2 P. l. = 481·62 millim. Now as one geographical mile, the 5400th part of the circumference of the globe, which is 40,000,000 metres, is equivalent to 7407·398 metres = 22,803·290 old Paris feet, the geographical mile according to Boeckh is 14,012 1/10 cubits = 2335 1/2 rods (sacred measure); according to Thenius, 15,380 1/6 cubits = 2563 1/3 rods (s. m.), from which the numbers given in the text may easily be calculated.

<sup>ft64</sup> Ephraem Syrus, on Eze. 41, not only interprets the windows of the temple and even the measuring rod allegorically, but says expressly: “It is evident that the rest of the things shown to the prophet in the building of the new temple pertain to the church of Christ, so that we must hold that the priests of that house were types of the apostles, and the calves slain therein prefigured the sacrifice of Christ.” — Theod. indeed restricts himself throughout to a brief paraphrase of the words, without explaining every particular in a spiritual manner; but he nevertheless says expressly (at Eze. 43) that we must ascend from the type to the truth, as God will not

dwell for ever in the type; and therefore he repeatedly opposes the Judaeo-literal interpretation of Apollinaris, although he himself appears to take Eze. 48 as simply referring to the return of the Jews from the Babylonian exile, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple in the time of Zerubbabel. — This explanation is expressly opposed by Jerome, as the opinion of ignorant Jews; and he observes, on the other hand, that “this temple which is now described, with the order of the priesthood and division of the land and its fertility, is much superior to that which Solomon built; whereas the one which was built under Zerubbabel was so small, and so unworthy of comparison with the earlier one, that they who had seen the first temple, and now looked on this, wept,” etc. Under the type of the restoration of the city destroyed by the Babylonians, there is predicted *futurae aedificationis veritas*.

<sup>ft65</sup> Luthardt also says just the same (pp. 94, 95): “Undoubtedly the age of which the Lord is speaking is not the whole of the present era, nor the nation of Israel, but the generation then existing. And yet the Lord’s prophecy goes to the very end, and reaches far beyond the destruction of Jerusalem.... The existing generation was to live to see the beginning of the end, and did live to see it.”

<sup>ft66</sup> Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, II 2, p. 722) understands the binding of Satan in a similar manner, and writes as follows on the subject: “That which is rendered impossible to Satan, through his being bound and imprisoned in the nether world, and therefore through his exclusion from the upper world, where the history of mankind is proceeding, is *simply* that kind of activity which exerts a determining influence upon the course of history.” And Flacius, in his *Glossa* to the New Testament, gives this explanation: “But Satan is not then so bound or shut up in hell that he cannot do anything, or cause any injury, more especially disobedience in his children; but simply that he cannot act any more either so powerfully or with such success as before.” He also reckons the thousand years “from the resurrection and ascension of the Lord, when Christ began in the most powerful manner to triumph over devils and ungodly men throughout the world,” etc.

<sup>ft67</sup> Of all such pictures it may certainly be said that we “cannot see how an Old Testament prophet, when speaking of Canaan, Jerusalem, Zion, and their future glorification, can have thought of anything else than the earthly sites of the Old Testament kingdom of God” (Volck); but this objection proves nothing against their typical explanation, as we know that the prophets of the Old Testament, who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us, inquired and searched diligently what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify (1Pe. 1:10, 11). Even, therefore, if the prophets in their uninspired meditation upon that which they had

prophesied, when moved by the Holy Ghost, did not discern the typical meaning of their own utterances, we, who are living in the times of the fulfilment, and are acquainted not only with the commencement of the fulfilment in the coming of our Lord, in His life, sufferings, and death, and His resurrection and ascension to heaven, as well as in His utterances concerning His second coming, but also with a long course of fulfilment in the extension for eighteen hundred years of the kingdom of heaven established by Him on earth, have not so much to inquire what the Old Testament prophets thought in their searching into the prophecies which they were inspired to utter by the Spirit of Christ, even if it were possible to discover what their thoughts really were, but rather, in the light of the fulfilment that has already taken place, to inquire what the Spirit of Christ, which enabled the prophets to see and to predict the coming of His kingdom in pictures drawn from the Old Testament kingdom of God, has foretold and revealed to us through the medium of these figures.