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COMMENTARY

CLARKE'S COMMENTARY
OT, VOLUME 1
GENESIS - DEUTERONOMY

by Adam Clarke

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The

HOLY BIBLE

CONTAINING THE

OLD TESTAMENT

THE TEXT

CAREFULLY PRINTED FROM THE MOST CORRECT COPIES OF THE PRESENT

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION,

WITH

A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES;

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

BY ADAM CLARKE,
LL.D., F.S.A., etc

FOR WHATSOEVER THINGS WERE WRITTEN AFORETIME FOR OUR
LEARNIONG; THAT WE, THROUGH PATIENCE AND COMFORT OF THE
SCRIPTURES, MIGHT HAVE HOPE. — ROMANS 15:4

VOLUME 1 — GENESIS Through DEUTERONOMY.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Preparing Clarke's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments for an electronic format has been a task of considerable dimensions. The Digital Library edition is the labor of love of Sulu Kelley of Concord, NC, USA. "Mr. Sulu" converted the original text from the six volume edition (originally published in 8 volumes) authored by Adam Clarke between 1810 and 1826. We thank Mr. Kelley for giving us permission to include this the first electronic edition of a most helpful and inspiring work.

The reader is advised to note the following characteristics of this version:

1. There are no Hebrew vowel pointings nor are there any Greek accents. These were not a part of the published editions of Clarke's Commentary.
2. Most capitalizations and many breathing marks were omitted from the Greek text.
3. Adam Clarke had an exceptional knowledge of Biblical languages and the languages of the earliest (known) Biblical texts. The author provides numerous references to versions in various languages which contain nuances and/or insight into the meaning of a given text. These references frequently contained phrases printed in Arabic and Anglo-Saxon among others. We anticipated few of the Library readers would have an appreciation for these references, particularly since the script and dialects of many of them were outside the scope of almost anyone's experience or education. Since these references are usually transliterated and/or explained by Mr. Clarke, we have omitted these scripts. We have observed the following abbreviation conventions when the associated language/script has been removed from the text: [AS] Anglo-Saxon; [A] Arabic, Arabian; [P], Persic, Persian; [S] Syriac, Syrian; [H] Hindu.
4. The printed version contains material not included in this electronic version: The King James text, from which the author worked, and associated cross references are omitted as each phrase discussed is quoted in the analysis itself. Several tables with obscure material are

omitted as it was felt that archaic data on, for example, the motion of the planets, information long since revised and corrected, would not enhance and may even obscure the timeless portions of the commentary.

5. The printed version contains a number of archaic forms of punctuation and capitalization. These were retained if they did not seem to obscure the meaning of the text.

PREFACE TO THE BOOK

OF

GENESIS

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

That there are a few things in the Pentateuch which seem to have been added by a later hand there can be little doubt; among these some have reckoned, perhaps without reason, the following passage, Genesis 12:6: "And the Canaanite was then in the land"; but see the note on this place. Numbers 21:14, "In the book of the wars of the Lord," was probably a marginal note, which in process of time got into the text; see the note on this passage also. To these may be added the five first verses of Deuteronomy, chap. i; the twelfth of chap. ii; and the eight concluding verses of the last chapter, in which we have an account of the death of

Moses. These last words could not have been added by Moses himself, but are very probably the work of Ezra, by whom, according to uninterrupted tradition among the Jews, the various books which constitute the canon of the Old Testament were collected and arranged, and such expository notes added as were essential to connect the different parts; but as he acted under Divine inspiration, the additions may be considered of equal authority with the text. A few other places might be added, but they are of little importance, and are mentioned in the notes.

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

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

relatives in the most proper sense of the terms; for they lived in an insulated state under a patriarchal government.

Thus it was easy for Moses to be satisfied of the truth of all he relates in the book of Genesis, as the accounts came to him through the medium of very few persons. From Adam to Noah there was but one man necessary to the correct transmission of the history of this period of 1656 years. Now this history was, without doubt, perfectly known to Methuselah, who lived to see them both. In like manner Shem connected Noah and Abraham, having lived to converse with both; as Isaac did with Abraham and Joseph, from whom these things might be easily conveyed to Moses by Amram, who was contemporary with Joseph. See the plate, chap. 11. Supposing, then, all the curious facts recorded in the book of Genesis had no other authority than the tradition already referred to, they would stand upon a foundation of credibility superior to any that the most reputable of the ancient Greek and Latin historians can boast. Yet to preclude all possibility of mistake, the unerring Spirit of God directed Moses in the selection of his facts and the ascertaining of his dates. Indeed, the narrative is so simple, so much like truth, so consistent everywhere with itself, so correct in its dates, so impartial in its biography, so accurate in its philosophical details, so pure in its morality, and so benevolent in its design, as amply to demonstrate that it never could have had an earthly origin. In this case, also, Moses constructed every thing according to the pattern which God showed him in the mount.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES

CALLED

GENESIS

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

CHAPTER 1

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

including both male and female, 27. Their peculiar blessing, 28. Vegetables appointed as the food of man and all other animals, 29, 30. The judgment which God passed on his works at the conclusion of his creative acts, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ Bereshith bara Elohim eth hashshamayim veeth haarets; GOD in the beginning created the heavens and the earth.

Many attempts have been made to define the term GOD: as to the word itself, it is pure Anglo-Saxon, and among our ancestors signified, not only the Divine Being, now commonly designated by the word, but also good; as in their apprehensions it appeared that God and good were correlative terms; and when they thought or spoke of him, they were doubtless led from the word itself to consider him as THE GOOD BEING, a fountain of infinite benevolence and beneficence towards his creatures.

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

The original word אֱלֹהִים Elohim, God, is certainly the plural form of אֵל El, or אֱלֹהָ Eloah, and has long been supposed, by the most eminently

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

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

"Genesis 1:26 3:22 11:7 20:13 31:7, 53 35:7. "Deuteronomy 4:7 5:23 Joshua 24:19 1 Samuel 4:8 2 Samuel 7:23 "Psalm 58:6 Isaiah 6:8 Jeremiah 10:10 23:36. "See also Proverbs 9:10 30:3 Psalm 149:2 Ecclesiastes 5:7 12:1; "Job 5:1 Isaiah 6:3 54:5 62:5 Hosea 11:12, or Hosea 12:1 Malachi 1:6 Daniel 5:18, 20 7:18, 22."-PARKHURST.

As the word Elohim is the term by which the Divine Being is most generally expressed in the Old Testament, it may be necessary to consider it here more at large. It is a maxim that admits of no controversy, that every noun in the Hebrew language is derived from a verb, which is usually termed the radix or root, from which, not only the noun, but all the different flections of the verb, spring. This radix is the third person singular of the preterite or past tense. The ideal meaning of this root expresses some essential property of the thing which it designates, or of which it is an appellative. The root in Hebrew, and in its sister language,

the Arabic, generally consists of three letters, and every word must be traced to its root in order to ascertain its genuine meaning, for there alone is this meaning to be found. In Hebrew and Arabic this is essentially necessary, and no man can safely criticise on any word in either of these languages who does not carefully attend to this point.

I mention the Arabic with the Hebrew for two reasons. 1. Because the two languages evidently spring from the same source, and have very nearly the same mode of construction. 2. Because the deficient roots in the Hebrew Bible are to be sought for in the Arabic language. The reason of this must be obvious, when it is considered that the whole of the Hebrew language is lost except what is in the Bible, and even a part of this book is written in Chaldee. Now, as the English Bible does not contain the whole of the English language, so the Hebrew Bible does not contain the whole of the Hebrew. If a man meet with an English word which he cannot find in an ample concordance or dictionary to the Bible, he must of course seek for that word in a general English dictionary. In like manner, if a particular form of a Hebrew word occur that cannot be traced to a root in the Hebrew Bible, because the word does not occur in the third person singular of the past tense in the Bible, it is expedient, it is perfectly lawful, and often indispensably necessary, to seek the deficient root in the Arabic. For as the Arabic is still a living language, and perhaps the most copious in the universe, it may well be expected to furnish those terms which are deficient in the Hebrew Bible. And the reasonableness of this is founded on another maxim, viz., that either the Arabic was derived from the Hebrew, or the Hebrew from the Arabic. I shall not enter into this controversy; there are great names on both sides, and the decision of the question in either way will have the same effect on my argument. For if the Arabic were derived from the Hebrew, it must have been when the Hebrew was a living and complete language, because such is the Arabic now; and therefore all its essential roots we may reasonably expect to find there: but if, as Sir William Jones supposed, the Hebrew were derived from the Arabic, the same expectation is justified, the deficient roots in Hebrew may be sought for in the mother tongue. If, for example, we meet with a term in our ancient English language the meaning of which we find difficult to ascertain, common sense teaches us that we should seek for it in the Anglo-Saxon, from which our language springs; and, if necessary, go up to

the Teutonic, from which the Anglo-Saxon was derived. No person disputes the legitimacy of this measure, and we find it in constant practice. I make these observations at the very threshold of my work, because the necessity of acting on this principle (seeking deficient Hebrew roots in the Arabic) may often occur, and I wish to speak once for all on the subject.

The first sentence in the Scripture shows the propriety of having recourse to this principle. We have seen that the word אֱלֹהִים Elohim is plural; we have traced our term God to its source, and have seen its signification; and also a general definition of the thing or being included under this term, has been tremblingly attempted. We should now trace the original to its root, but this root does not appear in the Hebrew Bible. Were the Hebrew a complete language, a pious reason might be given for this omission, viz., “As God is without beginning and without cause, as his being is infinite and underived, the Hebrew language consults strict propriety in giving no root whence his name can be deduced.” Mr. Parkhurst, to whose pious and learned labors in Hebrew literature most Biblical students are indebted, thinks he has found the root in אֱלָה alah, he swore, bound himself by oath; and hence he calls the ever-blessed Trinity אֱלֹהִים Elohim, as being bound by a conditional oath to redeem man, etc., etc. Most pious minds will revolt from such a definition, and will be glad with me to find both the noun and the root preserved in Arabic. ALLAH [A] is the common name for GOD in the Arabic tongue, and often the emphatic [A] is used. Now both these words are derived from the root alaha, he worshipped, adored, was struck with astonishment, fear, or terror; and hence, he adored with sacred horror and veneration, cum sacro horrore ac veneratione coluit, adoravit. — WILMET. Hence ilahon, fear, veneration, and also the object of religious fear, the Deity, the supreme God, the tremendous Being. This is not a new idea; God was considered in the same light among the ancient Hebrews; and hence Jacob swears by the fear of his father Isaac, Genesis 31:53. To complete the definition, Golius renders alaha, juvit, liberavit, et tutatus fuit, “he succoured, liberated, kept in safety, or defended.” Thus from the ideal meaning of this most expressive root, we acquire the most correct notion of the Divine nature; for we learn that God is the sole object of adoration; that the perfections of his nature are such as must astonish all those who piously contemplate them, and fill with horror all who would dare to give his glory to another, or break his commandments; that

consequently he should be worshipped with reverence and religious fear; and that every sincere worshipper may expect from him help in all his weaknesses, trials, difficulties, temptations, etc.; freedom from the power, guilt, nature, and consequences of sin; and to be supported, defended, and saved to the uttermost, and to the end.

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

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

Created— Caused existence where previously to this moment there was no being. The rabbins, who are legitimate judges in a case of verbal criticism on their own language, are unanimous in asserting that the word **ברא** *bara* expresses the commencement of the existence of a thing, or egression from nonentity to entity. It does not in its primary meaning denote the preserving or new forming things that had previously existed, as some imagine, but creation in the proper sense of the term, though it has some other acceptations in other places. The supposition that God formed all things out of a pre-existing, eternal nature, is certainly absurd, for if there had been an eternal nature besides an eternal God, there must have been two self-existing, independent, and eternal beings, which is a most palpable contradiction.

את השמים *eth hashshamayim*. The word **את** *eth*, which is generally considered as a particle, simply denoting that the word following is in the accusative or oblique case, is often understood by the rabbins in a much more extensive sense. “The particle **את**,” says Aben Ezra, “signifies the substance of the thing.” The like definition is given by Kimchi in his Book

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

The heaven and the earth.— As the word שָׁמַיִם shamayim is plural, we may rest assured that it means more than the atmosphere, to express which some have endeavored to restrict its meaning. Nor does it appear that the atmosphere is particularly intended here, as this is spoken of, Genesis 1:6, under the term firmament. The word heavens must therefore comprehend the whole solar system, as it is very likely the whole of this was created in these six days; for unless the earth had been the center of a system, the reverse of which is sufficiently demonstrated, it would be unphilosophic to suppose it was created independently of the other parts of the system, as on this supposition we must have recourse to the almighty power of God to suspend the influence of the earth’s gravitating power till the fourth day, when the sun was placed in the center, round which the earth began then to revolve. But as the design of the inspired penman was to relate what especially belonged to our world and its inhabitants, therefore he passes by the rest of the planetary system,

leaving it simply included in the plural word heavens. In the word earth every thing relative to the terraqueaerial globe is included, that is, all that belongs to the solid and fluid parts of our world with its surrounding atmosphere. As therefore I suppose the whole solar system was created at this time, I think it perfectly in place to give here a general view of all the planets, with every thing curious and important hitherto known relative to their revolutions and principal affections.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRECEDING TABLES

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

This is a small but accurate sketch of the vast solar system; to describe it fully, even in all its known revolutions and connections, in all its astonishing energy and influence, in its wonderful plan, structure,

operations, and results, would require more volumes than can be devoted to the commentary itself.

As so little can be said here on a subject so vast, it may appear to some improper to introduce it at all; but to any observation of this kind I must be permitted to reply, that I should deem it unpardonable not to give a general view of the solar system in the very place where its creation is first introduced. If these works be stupendous and magnificent, what must He be who formed, guides, and supports them all by the word of his power! Reader, stand in awe of this God, and sin not. Make him thy friend through the Son of his love; and, when these heavens and this earth are no more, thy soul shall exist in consummate and unutterable felicity.

See the remarks on the sun, moon, and stars, after Genesis 1:16. See Clarke note on “Genesis 1:16”.

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

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

OVID.

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

DRYDEN.

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

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

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

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

Verse 3. *And God said, Let there be light*— הַי אֹר וַיְהִי אֹר YEHI OR, vaihi or. Nothing can be conceived more dignified than this form of expression. It argues at once uncontrollable authority, and omnific power;

and in human language it is scarcely possible to conceive that God can speak more like himself. This passage, in the Greek translation of the Septuagint, fell in the way of Dionysius Longinus, one of the most judicious Greek critics that ever lived, and who is highly celebrated over the civilized world for a treatise he wrote, entitled **περι υψους**, Concerning the SUBLIME, both in prose and poetry; of this passage, though a heathen, he speaks in the following terms:-**ταυτη και ο των ιουδαιων θεσμοθετης (ουχ ο τυχων ανηρ,) επειδη την του θειου δυναμιν κατα την αξιαν εχωρησε, καζεφηενεν ευθως εν τν εισβολη γραφας των νομων, ειπεν ο θεος, φησι, τι; γενεσθω φως και εγενετο. γενεσθω γε και εγενετο.** “So likewise the Jewish lawgiver (who was no ordinary man) having conceived a just idea of the Divine power, he expressed it in a dignified manner; for at the beginning of his laws he thus speaks: GOD SAID-What? LET THERE BE LIGHT! and there was light. LET THERE BE EARTH! and there was earth.”-Longinus, sect. ix. edit. Pearce.

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

That there is latent light, which is probably the same with latent heat, may be easily demonstrated: take two pieces of smooth rock crystal, agate, cornelian or flint, and rub them together briskly in the dark, and the latent light or matter of caloric will be immediately produced and become visible. The light or caloric thus disengaged does not operate in the same powerful manner as the heat or fire which is produced by striking with flint and

steel, or that produced by electric friction. The existence of this caloric — latent or primitive light, may be ascertained in various other bodies; it can be produced by the flint and steel, by rubbing two hard sticks together, by hammering cold iron, which in a short time becomes red hot, and by the strong and sudden compression of atmospheric air in a tube. Friction in general produces both fire and light. God therefore created this universal agent on the first day, because without It no operation of nature could be carried on or perfected.

Light is one of the most astonishing productions of the creative skill and power of God. It is the grand medium by which all his other works are discovered, examined, and understood, so far as they can be known. Its immense diffusion and extreme velocity are alone sufficient to demonstrate the being and wisdom of God. Light has been proved by many experiments to travel at the astonishing rate of 194, 188 miles in one second of time! and comes from the sun to the earth in eight minutes 11 $\frac{43}{50}$ seconds, a distance of 95, 513, 794 English miles.

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

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

extensive sense, and to include the whole of the planetary vortex, or the space which is occupied by the whole solar system.

Verse 10. *And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas*— These two constitute what is called the terraqueous globe, in which the earth and the water exist in a most judicious proportion to each other. Dr. Long took the papers which cover the surface of a seventeen inch terrestrial globe, and having carefully separated the land from the sea, he weighed the two collections of papers accurately, and found that the sea papers weighed three hundred and forty-nine grains, and the land papers only one hundred and twenty-four; by which experiment it appears that nearly three-fourths of the surface of our globe, from the arctic to the antarctic polar circles, are covered with water. The doctor did not weigh the parts within the polar circles, because there is no certain measurement of the proportion of land and water which they contain. This proportion of three-fourths water may be considered as too great, if not useless; but Mr. Ray, by most accurate experiments made on evaporation, has proved that it requires so much aqueous surface to yield a sufficiency of vapors for the purpose of cooling the atmosphere, and watering the earth. See Ray's Physico-theological Discourses.

An eminent chemist and philosopher, Dr. Priestley, has very properly observed that it seems plain that Moses considered the whole terraqueous globe as being created in a fluid state, the earthy and other particles of matter being mingled with the water. The present form of the earth demonstrates the truth of the Mosaic account; for it is well known that if a soft or elastic globular body be rapidly whirled round on its axis, the parts at the poles will be flattened, and the parts on the equator, midway between the north and south poles, will be raised up. This is precisely the shape of our earth; it has the figure of an oblate spheroid, a figure pretty much resembling the shape of an orange. It has been demonstrated by admeasurement that the earth is flatted at the poles and raised at the equator. This was first conjectured by Sir Isaac Newton, and afterwards confirmed by M. Cassini and others, who measured several degrees of latitude at the equator and near the north pole, and found that the difference perfectly justified Sir Isaac Newton's conjecture, and consequently confirmed the Mosaic account. The result of the experiments instituted to determine this point, proved that the diameter of the earth at

the equator is greater by more than twenty-three and a half miles than it is at the poles, allowing the polar diameter to be 1/334th part shorter than the equatorial, according to the recent admeasurements of several degrees of latitude made by Messrs. Mechain and Delambre. — L'Histoire des Mathem. par M. de la Lande, tom. iv., part v., liv. 6.

And God saw that it was good.— This is the judgment which God pronounced on his own works. They were beautiful and perfect in their kind, for such is the import of the word טוב *tob*. They were in weight and measure perfect and entire, lacking nothing. But the reader will think it strange that this approbation should be expressed once on the first, fourth, fifth, and sixth days; twice on the third, and not at all on the second! I suppose that the words, And God saw that it was good, have been either lost from the conclusion of the eighth verse, or that the clause in the tenth verse originally belonged to the eighth. It appears, from the Septuagint translation, that the words in question existed originally at the close of the eighth verse, in the copies which they used; for in that version we still find, *και ειδεν ο θεος οτι καλον* And God saw that it was good. This reading, however, is not acknowledged by any of Kennicott's or Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS., nor by any of the other versions. If the account of the second day stood originally as it does now, no satisfactory reason can be given for the omission of this expression of the Divine approbation of the work wrought by his wisdom and power on that day.

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

in the endlessly varied forests that appear through the microscope in the mould of cheese, stale paste, etc., etc.

Verse 12. *Whose seed was in itself*— Which has the power of multiplying itself by seeds, slips, roots, etc., ad infinitum; which contains in itself all the rudiments of the future plant through its endless generations. This doctrine has been abundantly confirmed by the most accurate observations of the best modern philosophers. The astonishing power with which God has endued the vegetable creation to multiply its different species, may be instanced in the seed of the elm. This tree produces one thousand five hundred and eighty-four millions of seeds; and each of these seeds has the power of producing the same number. How astonishing is this produce! At first one seed is deposited in the earth; from this one a tree springs, which in the course of its vegetative life produces one thousand five hundred and eighty-four millions of seeds. This is the first generation. The second generation will amount to two trillions, five hundred and nine thousand and fifty-six billions. The third generation will amount to three thousand nine hundred and seventy-four quadrillions, three hundred and forty-four thousand seven hundred and four trillions! And the fourth generation from these would amount to six sextillions two hundred and ninety-five thousand three hundred and sixty-two quintillions, eleven thousand one hundred and thirty-six quadrillions! Sums too immense for the human mind to conceive; and, when we allow the most confined space in which a tree can grow, it appears that the seeds of the third generation from one elm would be many myriads of times more than sufficient to stock the whole superficies of all the planets in the solar system! But plants multiply themselves by slips as well as by seeds. Sir Kenelm Digby saw in 1660 a plant of barley, in the possession of the fathers of the Christian doctrine at Paris, which contained 249 stalks springing from one root or grain, and in which he counted upwards of 18, 000 grains. See my experiments on Tilling in the Methodist Magazine.

Verse 14. *And God said, Let there be lights, etc.*— One principal office of these was to divide between day and night. When night is considered a state of comparative darkness, how can lights divide or distinguish it? The answer is easy: The sun is the monarch of the day, which is the state of light; the moon, of the night, the state of darkness. The rays of the sun, falling on the atmosphere, are refracted and diffused over the whole of that

hemisphere of the earth immediately under his orb; while those rays of that vast luminary which, because of the earth's smallness in comparison of the sun, are diffused on all sides beyond the earth, falling on the opaque disc of the moon, are reflected back upon what may be called the lower hemisphere, or that part of the earth which is opposite to the part which is illuminated by the sun: and as the earth completes a revolution on its own axis in about twenty-four hours, consequently each hemisphere has alternate day and night. But as the solar light reflected from the face of the moon is computed to be 50, 000 times less in intensity and effect than the light of the sun as it comes directly from himself to our earth, (for light decreases in its intensity as the distance it travels from the sun increases,) therefore a sufficient distinction is made between day and night, or light and darkness, notwithstanding each is ruled and determined by one of these two great lights; the moon ruling the night, i.e., reflecting from her own surface back on the earth the rays of light which she receives from the sun. Thus both hemispheres are to a certain degree illuminated: the one, on which the sun shines, completely so; this is day: the other, on which the sun's light is reflected by the moon, partially; this is night. It is true that both the planets and fixed stars afford a considerable portion of light during the night, yet they cannot be said to rule or to predominate by their light, because their rays are quite lost in the superior splendor of the moon's light.

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

For seasons— **מוֹעֲדִים** moadim; For the determination of the times on which the sacred festivals should be held. In this sense the word frequently occurs; and it was right that at the very opening of his revelation God should inform man that there were certain festivals which should be annually celebrated to his glory. Some think we should understand the

original word as signifying months, for which purpose we know the moon essentially serves through all the revolutions of time.

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

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

Verse 16. And God made two great lights— Moses speaks of the sun and moon here, not according to their bulk or solid contents, but according to the proportion of light they shed on the earth. The expression has been cavilled at by some who are as devoid of mental capacity as of candour. “The moon,” say they, “is not a great body; on the contrary, it is the very smallest in our system.” Well, and has Moses said the contrary? He has said it is a great LIGHT; had he said otherwise he had not spoken the truth. It is, in reference to the earth, next to the sun himself, the greatest light in the solar system; and so true is it that the moon is a great light, that it affords more light to the earth than all the planets in the solar system, and all the innumerable stars in the vault of heaven, put together. It is worthy of remark that on the fourth day of the creation the sun was formed, and then “first tried his beams athwart the gloom profound;” and that at the conclusion of the fourth millenary from the creation, according to the Hebrew, the Sun of righteousness shone upon the world, as deeply sunk in that mental darkness produced by sin as the ancient world was, while teeming darkness held the dominion, till the sun was created as the dispenser of light. What would the natural world be without the sun? A howling waste, in which neither animal nor vegetable life could possibly be sustained. And what would the moral world be without Jesus Christ, and the light of his word and Spirit? Just what those parts of it now are where his light has not yet shone: “dark places of the earth, filled with the habitations of cruelty,” where error prevails without end, and superstition,

engendering false hopes and false fears, degrades and debases the mind of man.

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

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

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

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

OF THE SUN

On the nature of the sun there have been various conjectures. It was long thought that he was a vast globe of fire 1, 384, 462 times larger than the earth, and that he was continually emitting from his body innumerable millions of fiery particles, which, being extremely divided, answered for the purpose of light and heat without occasioning any ignition or burning, except when collected in the focus of a convex lens or burning glass. Against this opinion, however, many serious and weighty objections have been made; and it has been so pressed with difficulties that philosophers have been obliged to look for a theory less repugnant to nature and probability. Dr. Herschel's discoveries by means of his immensely magnifying telescopes, have, by the general consent of philosophers, added a new habitable world to our system, which is the SUN. Without stopping to enter into detail, which would be improper here, it is sufficient to say that these discoveries tend to prove that what we call the sun is only the atmosphere of that luminary; "that this atmosphere consists of various elastic fluids that are more or less lucid and transparent; that as the clouds

belonging to our earth are probably decompositions of some of the elastic fluids belonging to the atmosphere itself, so we may suppose that in the vast atmosphere of the sun, similar decompositions may take place, but with this difference, that the decompositions of the elastic fluids of the sun are of a phosphoric nature, and are attended by lucid appearances, by giving out light." The body of the sun he considers as hidden generally from us by means of this luminous atmosphere, but what are called the maculae or spots on the sun are real openings in this atmosphere, through which the opaque body of the sun becomes visible; that this atmosphere itself is not fiery nor hot, but is the instrument which God designed to act on the caloric or latent heat; and that heat is only produced by the solar light acting upon and combining with the caloric or matter of fire contained in the air, and other substances which are heated by it. This ingenious theory is supported by many plausible reasons and illustrations, which may be seen in the paper he read before the Royal Society. On this subject see the note on Genesis 1:3.

OF THE MOON

There is scarcely any doubt now remaining in the philosophical world that the moon is a habitable globe. The most accurate observations that have been made with the most powerful telescopes have confirmed the opinion. The moon seems, in almost every respect, to be a body similar to our earth; to have its surface diversified by hill and dale, mountains and valleys, rivers, lakes, and seas. And there is the fullest evidence that our earth serves as a moon to the moon herself, differing only in this, that as the earth's surface is thirteen times larger than the moon's, so the moon receives from the earth a light thirteen times greater in splendor than that which she imparts to us; and by a very correct analogy we are led to infer that all the planets and their satellites, or attendant moons, are inhabited, for matter seems only to exist for the sake of intelligent beings.

OF THE STARS

The STARS in general are considered to be suns, similar to that in our system, each having an appropriate number of planets moving round it; and, as these stars are innumerable, consequently there are innumerable worlds, all dependent on the power, protection, and providence of God.

Where the stars are in great abundance, Dr. Herschel supposes they form primaries and secondaries, i.e., suns revolving about suns, as planets revolve about the sun in our system. He considers that this must be the case in what is called the milky way, the stars being there in prodigious quantity. Of this he gives the following proof: On August 22, 1792, he found that in forty-one minutes of time not less than 258, 000 stars had passed through the field of view in his telescope. What must God be, who has made, governs, and supports so many worlds! For the magnitudes, distances, revolutions, etc., of the sun, moon, planets, and their satellites, see the preceding TABLES. See Clarke note on “Genesis 1:1”.

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

Verse 21. *And God created great whales*— **הַתַּנִּינִים הַגְּדֹלִים** hattanninim hagedolim. Though this is generally understood by the different versions as signifying whales, yet the original must be understood rather as a general than a particular term, comprising all the great aquatic animals, such as the various species of whales, the porpoise, the dolphin, the monoceros or narwal, and the shark. God delights to show himself in little as well as in great things: hence he forms animals so minute that 30, 000 can be

contained in one drop of water; and others so great that they seem to require almost a whole sea to float in.

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

Verse 24. *Let the earth bring forth the living creature, etc.*— **נפש חיה** nephesh chayah; a general term to express all creatures endued with animal life, in any of its infinitely varied gradations, from the half-reasoning elephant down to the stupid potto, or lower still, to the polype, which seems equally to share the vegetable and animal life. The word **חיתו** chaito, in the latter part of the verse, seems to signify all wild animals, as lions, tigers, etc., and especially such as are carnivorous, or live on flesh, in contradistinction from domestic animals, such as are graminivorous, or live on grass and other vegetables, and are capable of being tamed, and applied to domestic purposes. See on Genesis 1:29. These latter are probably meant by **בהמה** behemah in the text, which we translate cattle, such as horses, kine, sheep, dogs, etc. Creeping thing, **רמש** remes, all the different genera of serpents, worms, and such animals as have no feet. In beasts also God has shown his wondrous skill and power; in the vast elephant, or still more colossal mammoth or mastodon, the whole race of which appears to be extinct, a few skeletons only remaining. This animal, an astonishing

effect of God's power, he seems to have produced merely to show what he could do, and after suffering a few of them to propagate, he extinguished the race by a merciful providence, that they might not destroy both man and beast. The mammoth appears to have been a carnivorous animal, as the structure of the teeth proves, and of an immense size; from a considerable part of a skeleton which I have seen, it is computed that the animal to which it belonged must have been nearly twenty-five feet high, and sixty in length! The bones of one toe are entire; the toe upwards of three feet in length. But this skeleton might have belonged to the megalonyx, a kind of sloth, or bradypus, hitherto unknown. Few elephants have ever been found to exceed eleven feet in height. How wondrous are the works of God! But his skill and power are not less seen in the beautiful chevrotin, or tragulus, a creature of the antelope kind, the smallest of all bifid or cloven-footed animals, whose delicate limbs are scarcely so large as an ordinary goose quill; and also in the shrew mouse, perhaps the smallest of the many-toed quadrupeds. In the reptile kind we see also the same skill and power, not only in the immense snake called boa constrictor, the mortal foe and conqueror of the royal tiger, but also in the cobra de manille, a venomous serpent, only a little larger than a common sewing needle.

Verse 25. *And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, etc.*—

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

Verse 26. *And God said, Let us make man*—

It is evident that God intends to impress the mind of man with a sense of something extraordinary in the formation of his body and soul, when he introduces the account of his creation thus; Let Us make man. The word אָדָם Adam, which we translate man, is intended to designate the species of animal, as חַיְתוֹ chaito, marks the wild beasts that live in general a solitary life; בְּהֵמָה behemah, domestic or gregarious animals; and רֶמֶשׂ remes, all kinds of reptiles, from the largest snake to the microscopic eel. Though the same kind of organization may be found in man as appears in the lower animals,

yet there is a variety and complication in the parts, a delicacy of structure, a nice arrangement, a judicious adaptation of the different members to their great offices and functions, a dignity of mien, and a perfection of the whole, which are sought for in vain in all other creatures. See Genesis 3:22.

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

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

And let them have dominion— Hence we see that the dominion was not the image. God created man capable of governing the world, and when

fitted for the office, he fixed him in it. We see God's tender care and parental solicitude for the comfort and well-being of this masterpiece of his workmanship, in creating the world previously to the creation of man. He prepared every thing for his subsistence, convenience, and pleasure, before he brought him into being; so that, comparing little with great things, the house was built, furnished, and amply stored, by the time the destined tenant was ready to occupy it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

source of all perfection, by having made thee in his own image, and in his own likeness! It is true thou art fallen; but he has found out a ransom. God so loved thee in conjunction with the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Believe on HIM; through him alone cometh salvation; and the fair and holy image of God in which thou wast created shall be again restored; he will build thee up as at the first, restore thy judges and counsellors as at the beginning, and in thy second creation, as in thy first, will pronounce thee to be very good, and thou shalt show forth the virtues of him by whom thou art created anew in Christ Jesus. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

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

Verse 2. *On the SEVENTH day God ended, etc.*— It is the general voice of Scripture that God finished the whole of the creation in six days, and rested the seventh! giving us an example that we might labor six days, and rest the seventh from all manual exercises. It is worthy of notice that the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Samaritan, read the sixth day instead of the seventh; and this should be considered the genuine reading, which appears

from these versions to have been originally that of the Hebrew text. How the word sixth became changed into seventh may be easily conceived from this circumstance. It is very likely that in ancient times all the numerals were signified by letters, and not by words at full length. This is the case in the most ancient Greek and Latin MSS., and in almost all the rabbinical writings. When these numeral letters became changed for words at full length, two letters nearly similar might be mistaken for each other; וּ vau stands for six, ז zain for seven; how easy to mistake these letters for each other when writing the words at full length, and so give birth to the reading in question.

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

Because that in it he had rested— שָׁבַת shabath, he rested; hence Sabbath, the name of the seventh day, signifying a day of rest — rest to the body from labor and toil, and rest to the soul from all worldly care and anxieties. He who labors with his mind by worldly schemes and plans on the Sabbath day is as culpable as he who labors with his hands in his accustomed calling. It is by the authority of God that the Sabbath is set

apart for rest and religious purposes, as the six days of the week are appointed for labor. How wise is this provision! It is essentially necessary, not only to the body of man, but to all the animals employed in his service: take this away and the labor is too great, both man and beast would fail under it. Without this consecrated day religion itself would fail, and the human mind, becoming sensualized, would soon forget its origin and end. Even as a political regulation, it is one of the wisest and most beneficent in its effects of any ever instituted. Those who habitually disregard its moral obligation are, to a man, not only good for nothing, but are wretched in themselves, a curse to society, and often end their lives miserably. See Clarke note on “Exodus 20:8”; See Clarke note on “Exodus 23:12”; See Clarke note on “Exodus 24:16”; and See Clarke note on “Exodus 31:13”; to which the reader is particularly desired to refer.

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

Verse 4. *In the day that the Lord God made, etc.*— The word יהוה Yehovah is for the first time mentioned here. What it signifies see on Exodus 34:5, 6. Wherever this word occurs in the sacred writings we translate it LORD, which word is, through respect and reverence, always printed in capitals. Though our English term Lord does not give the particular meaning of the original word, yet it conveys a strong and noble sense. Lord is a contraction of the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], Hlaford, afterwards written [A.S.] Loverd, and lastly Lord, from [A.S.] bread; hence our word loaf, and [A.S.] ford, to supply, to give out. The word, therefore, implies the giver of bread, i.e., he who deals out all the necessaries of life. Our ancient English noblemen were accustomed to keep a continual open house, where all their vassals, and all strangers, had full liberty to enter and eat as much as they would; and hence those noblemen had the honorable name of lords, i.e., the dispensers of bread. There are about three of the ancient nobility who still keep up this honorable custom, from which the very name of their nobility is derived. We have already seen, Genesis 1:1,

with what judgment our Saxon ancestors expressed Deus, the Supreme Being, by the term God; and we see the same judgment consulted by their use of the term Lord to express the word Dominus, by which terms the Vulgate version, which they used, expresses Elohim and Jehovah, which we translate LORD GOD. GOD is the good Being, and LORD is the dispenser of bread, the giver of every good and perfect gift, who liberally affords the bread that perisheth to every man, and has amply provided the bread that endures unto eternal life for every human soul. With what propriety then does this word apply to the Lord Jesus, who is emphatically called the bread of life; the bread of God which cometh down from heaven, and which is given for the life of the world! John 6:33, 48, 51. What a pity that this most impressive and instructive meaning of a word in such general use were not more extensively known, and more particularly regarded! See the postscript to the general preface. I know that Mr. H. Tooke has endeavored to render this derivation contemptible; but this has little weight with me. I have traced it through the most accredited writers in Saxony and on Saxon affairs, and I am satisfied that this and this only, is its proper etymology and derivation.

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

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

driven into one, become too heavy to be any longer suspended, and then, through their own gravity, fall down in the form which we term rain.

Verse 7. *God formed man of the dust*— In the most distinct manner God shows us that man is a compound being, having a body and soul distinctly, and separately created; the body out of the dust of the earth, the soul immediately breathed from God himself. Does not this strongly mark that the soul and body are not the same thing? The body derives its origin from the earth, or as עפר aphar implies, the dust; hence because it is earthly it is decomposable and perishable. Of the soul it is said, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; נשמת חיים nishmath chayim, the breath of LIVES, i.e., animal and intellectual. While this breath of God expanded the lungs and set them in play, his inspiration gave both spirit and understanding.

Verse 8. *A garden eastward in Eden*— Though the word עדן Eden signifies pleasure or delight, it is certainly the name of a place. See Genesis 4:16 2 Kings 19:12 Isaiah 37:12 Ezekiel 27:23 Amos 1:5. And such places probably received their name from their fertility, pleasant situation, etc. In this light the Septuagint have viewed it, as they render the passage thus: ἐφύτευσεν ὁ θεὸς παράδεισον ἐν ἔδεν, God planted a paradise in Eden. Hence the word paradise has been introduced into the New Testament, and is generally used to signify a place of exquisite pleasure and delight. From this the ancient heathens borrowed their ideas of the gardens of the Hesperides, where the trees bore golden fruit; the gardens of Adonis, a word which is evidently derived from the Hebrew עדן Eden; and hence the origin of sacred gardens or enclosures dedicated to purposes of devotion, some comparatively innocent, others impure. The word paradise is not Greek; in Arabic and Persian it signifies a garden, a vineyard, and also the place of the blessed. The Mohammedans say that God created the [A] Jennet al Ferdoos, the garden of paradise, from light, and the prophets and wise men ascend thither. Wilmet places it after the root [A] farada, to separate, especially a person or place, for the purposes of devotion, but supposes it to be originally a Persian word, vox originis Persicae quam in sua lingua conservarunt Armeni. As it is a word of doubtful origin, its etymology is uncertain.

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

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

The tree of life— חַיִּים chaim; of lives, or life-giving tree, every medicinal tree, herb, and plant, whose healing virtues are of great consequence to man in his present state, when through sin diseases of various kinds have seized on the human frame, and have commenced that process of dissolution which is to reduce the body to its primitive dust. Yet by the use of these trees of life — those different vegetable medicines, the health of the body may be preserved for a time, and death kept at a distance. Though the exposition given here may be a general meaning for these general terms, yet it is likely that this tree of life which was placed in the midst of the garden was intended as an emblem of that life which man should ever live, provided he continued in obedience to his Maker. And probably the use of this tree was intended as the means of preserving the body of man in a state of continual vital energy, and an antidote against death. This seems strongly indicated from Genesis 3:22.

And the tree of knowledge of good and evil.— Considering this also in a merely literal point of view, it may mean any tree or plant which possessed the property of increasing the knowledge of what was in nature, as the esculent vegetables had of increasing bodily vigor; and that there are some ailments which from their physical influence have a tendency to strengthen the understanding and invigorate the rational faculty more than others, has been supposed by the wisest and best of men; yet here much more seems intended, but what is very difficult to be ascertained. Some very eminent men have contended that the passage should be understood allegorically! and that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil means simply that prudence, which is a mixture of knowledge, care, caution, and judgment, which was prescribed to regulate the whole of man's conduct. And it is certain that to know good and evil, in different parts of Scripture,

means such knowledge and discretion as leads a man to understand what is fit and unfit, what is not proper to be done and what should be performed. But how could the acquisition of such a faculty be a sin? Or can we suppose that such a faculty could be wanting when man was in a state of perfection? To this it may be answered: The prohibition was intended to exercise this faculty in man that it should constantly teach him this moral lesson, that there were some things fit and others unfit to be done, and that in reference to this point the tree itself should be both a constant teacher and monitor. The eating of its fruit would not have increased this moral faculty, but the prohibition was intended to exercise the faculty he already possessed. There is certainly nothing unreasonable in this explanation, and viewed in this light the passage loses much of its obscurity. Vitringa, in his dissertation *Deuteronomy arbore prudentiae in Paradiso, ejusque mysterio*, strongly contends for this interpretation. See more on Genesis 3:6.

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

The most probable account of its situation is that given by Hadrian Reland. He supposes it to have been in Armenia, near the sources of the great rivers Euphrates, Tigris, Phasis, and Araxes. He thinks Pison was the

Phasis, a river of Colchis, emptying itself into the Euxine Sea, where there is a city called Chabala, the pronunciation of which is nearly the same with that of Havilah, or חַוִּילָה Chavilah, according to the Hebrew, the *vau* ו being changed in Greek to beta β. This country was famous for gold, whence the fable of the Golden Fleece, attempted to be carried away from that country by the heroes of Greece. The Gihon he thinks to be the Araxes, which runs into the Caspian Sea, both the words having the same signification, viz., a rapid motion. The land of Cush, washed by the river, he supposes to be the country of the Cussaei of the ancients. The Hiddekel all agree to be the Tigris, and the other river Phrat, or פְּרָת Perath, to be the Euphrates. All these rivers rise in the same tract of mountainous country, though they do not arise from one head.

Verse 12. *There is bdellium (בְּדֹלַח *bedolach*) and the onyx stone, עֶבֶן הַשְּׁהָם *eben hashshoham*.*—Bochart thinks that the *bedolach* or *bdellium* means the pearl-oyster; and *shoham* is generally understood to mean the onyx, or species of agate, a precious stone which has its name from *ovvξ* a man's nail, to the color of which it nearly approaches. It is impossible to say what is the precise meaning of the original words; and at this distance of time and place it is of little consequence.

Verse 15. *Put him into the garden-to dress it, and to keep it.*—Horticulture, or gardening, is the first kind of employment on record, and that in which man was engaged while in a state of perfection and innocence. Though the garden may be supposed to produce all things spontaneously, as the whole vegetable surface of the earth certainly did at the creation, yet dressing and tilling were afterwards necessary to maintain the different kinds of plants and vegetables in their perfection, and to repress luxuriance. Even in a state of innocence we cannot conceive it possible that man could have been happy if inactive. God gave him work to do, and his employment contributed to his happiness; for the structure of his body, as well as of his mind, plainly proves that he was never intended for a merely contemplative life.

Verse 17. *Of the tree of the knowledge-thou shalt not eat*—This is the first positive precept God gave to man; and it was given as a test of obedience, and a proof of his being in a dependent, probationary state. It was necessary that, while constituted lord of this lower world, he should

know that he was only God's vicegerent, and must be accountable to him for the use of his mental and corporeal powers, and for the use he made of the different creatures put under his care. The man from whose mind the strong impression of this dependence and responsibility is erased, necessarily loses sight of his origin and end, and is capable of any species of wickedness. As God is sovereign, he has a right to give to his creatures what commands he thinks proper. An intelligent creature, without a law to regulate his conduct, is an absurdity; this would destroy at once the idea of his dependency and accountableness. Man must ever feel God as his sovereign, and act under his authority, which he cannot do unless he have a rule of conduct. This rule God gives: and it is no matter of what kind it is, as long as obedience to it is not beyond the powers of the creature who is to obey. God says: There is a certain fruit-bearing tree; thou shalt not eat of its fruit; but of all the other fruits, and they are all that are necessary, for thee, thou mayest freely, liberally eat. Had he not an absolute right to say so? And was not man bound to obey?

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

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

a state of excellence and a state of perfection; but let them remember that the word of God says the reverse.

Verse 19. *Out of the ground, etc.*— Concerning the formation of the different kinds of animals, see the preceding chapter.

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

1. Adam gave names; but how? From an intimate knowledge of the nature and properties of each creature. Here we see the perfection of his knowledge; for it is well known that the names affixed to the different animals in Scripture always express some prominent feature and essential characteristic of the creatures to which they are applied. Had he not possessed an intuitive knowledge of the grand and distinguishing properties of those animals, he never could have given them such names. This one circumstance is a strong proof of the original perfection and excellence of man, while in a state of innocence; nor need we wonder at the account. Adam was the work of an infinitely wise and perfect Being, and the effect must resemble the cause that produced it.

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

Verse 21. *The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, etc.*— This was neither swoon nor ecstasy, but what our translation very properly terms a deep sleep.

And he took one of his ribs— It is immaterial whether we render צלע *tsela* a rib, or a part of his side, for it may mean either: some part of man was to be used on the occasion, whether bone or flesh it matters not; though it is likely, from verse Genesis 2:23, that a part of both was taken; for Adam, knowing how the woman was formed, said, This is flesh of my

flesh, and bone of my bone. God could have formed the woman out of the dust of the earth, as he had formed the man; but had he done so, she must have appeared in his eyes as a distinct being, to whom he had no natural relation. But as God formed her out of a part of the man himself, he saw she was of the same nature, the same identical flesh and blood, and of the same constitution in all respects, and consequently having equal powers, faculties, and rights. This at once ensured his affection, and excited his esteem.

Verse 23. Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, etc.— There is a very delicate and expressive meaning in the original which does not appear in our version. When the different genera of creatures were brought to Adam, that he might assign them their proper names, it is probable that they passed in pairs before him, and as they passed received their names. To this circumstance the words in this place seem to refer. Instead of this now is **זֹאת הַפֶּאִם** zoth happaam, we should render more literally this turn, this creature, which now passes or appears before me, is flesh of my flesh, etc. The creatures that had passed already before him were not suitable to him, and therefore it was said, For Adam there was not a help meet found, Genesis 2:20; but when the woman came, formed out of himself, he felt all that attraction which consanguinity could produce, and at the same time saw that she was in her person and in her mind every way suitable to be his companion. See Parkhurst, sub voce.

She shall be called Woman— A literal version of the Hebrew would appear strange, and yet a literal version is the only proper one. **אִישׁ** ish signifies man, and the word used to express what we term woman is the same with a feminine termination, **אִשָּׁה** ishshah, and literally means she-man. Most of the ancient versions have felt the force of the term, and have endeavored to express it as literally as possible. The Vulgate Latin renders the Hebrew virago, which is a feminine form of vir, a man. Symmachus uses **ανδρις**, andris, a female form of **ανηρ**, aner, a man. Our own term is equally proper when understood. Woman has been defined by many as compounded of wo and man, as if called man's wo because she tempted him to eat the forbidden fruit; but this is no meaning of the original word, nor could it be intended, as the transgression was not then committed. The

truth is, our term is a proper and literal translation of the original, and we may thank the discernment of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors for giving it. [A.S.], of which woman is a contraction, means the man with the womb. A very appropriate version of the Hebrew אִשְׁשָׁה ishshah, rendered by terms which signify she-man, in the versions already specified. Hence we see the propriety of Adam's observation: This creature is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bones; therefore shall she be called WOMB-MAN, or female man, because she was taken out of man. See Verstegan. Others derive it from [A.S.] or [A.S.], man's wife or she-man. Either may be proper, the first seems the most likely.

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

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

And they shall be one flesh.— These words may be understood in a twofold sense. 1. These two shall be one flesh, shall be considered as one body, having no separate or independent rights, privileges, cares, concerns, etc., each being equally interested in all things that concern the marriage state. 2. These two shall be for the production of one flesh; from their union a posterity shall spring, as exactly resembling themselves as they do each other. Our Lord quotes these words, Matthew 19:5, with some variation from this text: They TWAIN shall be one flesh. So in Mark 10:8. St. Paul quotes in the same way, 1 Corinthians 6:16, and in Ephesians 5:31. The Vulgate Latin, the Septuagint, the Syriac, the Arabic, and the Samaritan, all read the word Two. That this is the genuine reading I have no doubt. The word שְׁנֵיהֶם sheneyhem, they two or both of them, was, I suppose, omitted at first from the Hebrew text, by mistake, because it occurs three words after in the following verse, or more probably it originally occurred in Genesis 2:24, and not in Genesis 2:25; and a copyist having found that he had written it twice, in correcting his copy, struck out the word in Genesis 2:24 instead of Genesis 2:25. But of what consequence is it? In the controversy concerning polygamy, it has been made of very great consequence. Without the word, some have contended a man may have as many wives as he chooses, as the terms are indefinite,

THEY shall be, etc., but with the word, marriage is restricted. A man can have in legal wedlock but ONE wife at the same time.

We have here the first institution of marriage, and we see in it several particulars worthy of our most serious regard. 1. God pronounces the state of celibacy to be a bad state, or, if the reader please, not a good one; and the Lord God said, It is not good for man to be alone. This is GOD'S judgment. Councils, and fathers, and doctors, and synods, have given a different judgment; but on such a subject they are worthy of no attention. The word of God abideth for ever. 2. God made the woman for the man, and thus he has shown us that every son of Adam should be united to a daughter of Eve to the end of the world. See on 1 Corinthians 7:3. God made the woman out of the man, to intimate that the closest union, and the most affectionate attachment, should subsist in the matrimonial connection, so that the man should ever consider and treat the woman as a part of himself: and as no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and supports it, so should a man deal with his wife; and on the other hand the woman should consider that the man was not made for her, but that she was made for the man, and derived, under God, her being from him; therefore the wife should see that she reverence her husband, Ephesians 5:33. Genesis 2:23, 24 contain the very words of the marriage ceremony: This is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone, therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. How happy must such a state be where God's institution is properly regarded, where the parties are married, as the apostle expresses it, in the Lord; where each, by acts of the tenderest kindness, lives only to prevent the wishes and contribute in every possible way to the comfort and happiness of the other! Marriage might still be what it was in its original institution, pure and suitable; and in its first exercise, affectionate and happy; but how few such marriages are there to be found! Passion, turbulent and irregular, not religion; custom, founded by these irregularities, not reason; worldly prospects, originating and ending in selfishness and earthly affections, not in spiritual ends, are the grand producing causes of the great majority of matrimonial alliances. How then can such turbid and bitter fountains send forth pure and sweet waters? See the ancient allegory of Cupid and Psyche, by which marriage is so happily illustrated, explained in the notes on Matthew 19:4-6.

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

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

Of this rest, the garden of Eden, that paradise of God formed for man, appears also to have been a type and pledge; and the institution of marriage, the cause, bond, and cement of the social state, was probably designed to prefigure that harmony, order, and blessedness which must reign in the kingdom of God, of which the condition of our first parents in the garden of paradise is justly supposed to have been an expressive emblem. What a pity that this heavenly institution should have ever been perverted! that, instead of becoming a sovereign help to all, it is now,

through its prostitution to animal and secular purposes, become the destroyer of millions! Reader, every connection thou formest in life will have a strong and sovereign influence on thy future destiny. Beware! an unholy cause, which from its peculiar nature must be ceaselessly active in every muscle, nerve, and passion, cannot fail to produce incessant effects of sin, misery, death, and perdition. Remember that thy earthly connections, no matter of what kind, are not formed merely for time, whatsoever thou mayest intend, but also for eternity. With what caution there fore shouldst thou take every step in the path of life! On this ground, the observations made in the preceding notes are seriously recommended to thy consideration.

CHAPTER 3

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

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

of the fall of man. The chief difficulty in the account is found in the question, Who was the agent employed in the seduction of our first parents?

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

In Ecclesiastes 10:11, the creature called nachash, of whatever sort, is compared to the babbler: Surely the serpent (נחש nachash) will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.

In Isaiah 27:1, the crocodile or alligator seems particularly meant by the original: In that day the Lord shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, etc. And in Isaiah 65:25, the same creature is meant as in Genesis 3:1, for in the words, And dust shall be the serpent's meat, there is an evident allusion to the text of Moses. In Amos 9:3, the crocodile is evidently intended: Though they be hid in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, (הנחש hannachash,) and he shall bite them. No person can suppose that any of the snake or serpent kind can be intended here; and we see from the various acceptations of the word, and the different senses which it bears in various places in the sacred writings, that it appears to be a sort of general term confined to no one sense. Hence it

will be necessary to examine the root accurately, to see if its ideal meaning will enable us to ascertain the animal intended in the text. We have already seen that נחש nachash signifies to view attentively, to acquire knowledge or experience by attentive observation; so נחשתִי nichashti, Genesis 30:27: I have learned by experience; and this seems to be its most general meaning in the Bible. The original word is by the Septuagint translated οφις, a serpent, not because this was its fixed determinate meaning in the sacred writings, but because it was the best that occurred to the translators: and they do not seem to have given themselves much trouble to understand the meaning of the original, for they have rendered the word as variously as our translators have done, or rather our translators have followed them, as they give nearly the same significations found in the Septuagint: hence we find that οφις is as frequently used by them as serpent, its supposed literal meaning, is used in our version. And the New Testament writers, who seldom quote the Old Testament but from the Septuagint translation, and often do not change even a word in their quotations, copy this version in the use of this word. From the Septuagint therefore we can expect no light, nor indeed from any other of the ancient versions, which are all subsequent to the Septuagint, and some of them actually made from it. In all this uncertainty it is natural for a serious inquirer after truth to look everywhere for information. And in such an inquiry the Arabic may be expected to afford some help, from its great similarity to the Hebrew. A root in this language, very nearly similar to that in the text, seems to cast considerable light on the subject. [A] chanas or khanasa signifies he departed, drew off, lay hid, seduced, slunk away; from this root come [A] akhnas, [A] khanasa, and [A] kanoos, which all signify an ape, or satyrus, or any creature of the simia or ape genus. It is very remarkable also that from the same root comes [A] khanas, the DEVIL, which appellative he bears from that meaning of [A] khanasa, he drew off, seduced, etc., because he draws men off from righteousness, seduces them from their obedience to God, etc., etc. See Golius, sub voce. Is it not strange that the devil and the ape should have the same name, derived from the same root, and that root so very similar to the word in the text? But let us return and consider what is said of the creature in question. Now the nachash was more subtle, ערום arum, more wise, cunning, or prudent, than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. In this account we find, 1. That whatever

this nachash was, he stood at the head of all inferior animals for wisdom and understanding. 2. That he walked erect, for this is necessarily implied in his punishment-on thy belly (i.e., on all fours) shalt thou go. 3. That he was endued with the gift of speech, for a conversation is here related between him and the woman. 4. That he was also endued with the gift of reason, for we find him reasoning and disputing with Eve. 5. That these things were common to this creature, the woman no doubt having often seen him walk erect, talk, and reason, and therefore she testifies no kind of surprise when he accosts her in the language related in the text; and indeed from the manner in which this is introduced it appears to be only a part of a conversation that had passed between them on the occasion: Yea, hath God said, etc.

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

very probable that our Lord alludes to this very place when he exhorts his disciples to be wise — prudent or intelligent, as serpents, **φρονιμοι ως οι οπεις** and it is worthy of remark that he uses the same term employed by the Septuagint in the text in question: **οφις ην φρονιμωτατος**, the serpent was more prudent or intelligent than all the beasts, etc. All these things considered, we are obliged to seek for some other word to designate the nachash in the text, than the word serpent, which on every view of the subject appears to me inefficient and inapplicable. We have seen above that khanas, akhnas, and khanoos, signify a creature of the ape or satyrus kind. We have seen that the meaning of the root is, he lay hid, seduced, slunk away, etc.; and that khanas means the devil, as the inspirer of evil, and seducer from God and truth. See Golius and Wilmet. It therefore appears to me that a creature of the ape or ouran outang kind is here intended; and that Satan made use of this creature as the most proper instrument for the accomplishment of his murderous purposes against the life and soul of man. Under this creature he lay hid, and by this creature he seduced our first parents, and drew off or slunk away from every eye but the eye of God. Such a creature answers to every part of the description in the text: it is evident from the structure of its limbs and their muscles that it might have been originally designed to walk erect, and that nothing less than a sovereign controlling power could induce them to put down hands in every respect formed like those of man, and walk like those creatures whose claw-armed paws prove them to have been designed to walk on all fours. Dr. Tyson has observed in his anatomy of an ouran outang, that the seminal vessels passed between the two coats of the peritoneum to the scrotum, as in man; hence he argues that this creature was designed to walk erect, as it is otherwise in all quadrupeds. Philos. Trans., vol. xxi., p. 340. The subtlety, cunning, endlessly varied pranks and tricks of these creatures, show them, even now, to be more subtle and more intelligent than any other creature, man alone excepted. Being obliged now to walk on all fours, and gather their food from the ground, they are literally obliged to eat the dust; and though exceedingly cunning, and careful in a variety of instances to separate that part which is wholesome and proper for food from that which is not so, in the article of cleanliness they are lost to all sense of propriety; and though they have every means in their power of cleansing the aliments they gather off the ground, and from among the dust, yet they never in their savage state make use of any, except a slight rub

against their side, or with one of their hands, more to see what the article is than to cleanse it. Add to this, their utter aversion to walk upright; it requires the utmost discipline to bring them to it, and scarcely anything irritates them more than to be obliged to do it. Long observation on some of these animals enables me to state these facts.

Should any person who may read this note object against my conclusions, because apparently derived from an Arabic word which is not exactly similar to the Hebrew, though to those who understand both languages the similarity will be striking; yet, as I do not insist on the identity of the terms, though important consequences have been derived from less likely etymologies, he is welcome to throw the whole of this out of the account. He may then take up the Hebrew root only, which signifies to gaze, to view attentively, pry into, inquire narrowly, etc., and consider the passage that appears to compare the nachash to the babbler. Ecclesiastes 10:11, and he will soon find, if he have any acquaintance with creatures of this genus, that for earnest, attentive watching, looking, etc., and for chattering or babbling, they have no fellows in the animal world. Indeed, the ability and propensity to chatter is all they have left, according to the above hypothesis, of their original gift of speech, of which I suppose them to have been deprived at the fall as a part of their punishment.

I have spent the longer time on this subject, 1. Because it is exceedingly obscure; 2. Because no interpretation hitherto given of it has afforded me the smallest satisfaction; 3. Because I think the above mode of accounting for every part of the whole transaction is consistent and satisfactory, and in my opinion removes many embarrassments, and solves the chief difficulties. I think it can be no solid objection to the above mode of solution that Satan, in different parts of the New Testament, is called the serpent, the serpent that deceived Eve by his subtlety, the old serpent, etc., for we have already seen that the New Testament writers have borrowed the word from the Septuagint, and the Septuagint themselves use it in a vast variety and latitude of meaning; and surely the ouran outang is as likely to be the animal in question as נחש nachash and οφίς ophis are likely to mean at once a snake, a crocodile, a hippopotamus, fornication, a chain, a pair of fetters, a piece of brass, a piece of steel, and a conjurer; for we have seen above that all these are acceptations of the original word. Besides, the New Testament writers seem to lose sight of the animal or

instrument used on the occasion, and speak only of Satan himself as the cause of the transgression, and the instrument of all evil. If, however, any person should choose to differ from the opinion stated above, he is at perfect liberty so to do; I make it no article of faith, nor of Christian communion; I crave the same liberty to judge for myself that I give to others, to which every man has an indisputable right; and I hope no man will call me a heretic for departing in this respect from the common opinion, which appears to me to be so embarrassed as to be altogether unintelligible. See farther on Genesis 3:7-14, etc.

Yea, hath God said— This seems to be the continuation of a discourse of which the preceding part is not given, and a proof that the creature in question was endued with the gift of reason and speech, for no surprise is testified on the part of Eve.

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

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

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

as God, (for knowledge is power,) and be able to exist for ever, independently of him.

Verse 6. *The tree was good for food*— 1. The fruit appeared to be wholesome and nutritive. And that it was pleasant to the eyes. 2. The beauty of the fruit tended to whet and increase appetite. And a tree to be desired to make one wise, which was, 3. An additional motive to please the palate. From these three sources all natural and moral evil sprang: they are exactly what the apostle calls the desire of the flesh; the tree was good for food: the desire of the eye; it was pleasant to the sight: and the pride of life; it was a tree to be desired to make one wise. God had undoubtedly created our first parents not only very wise and intelligent, but also with a great capacity and suitable propensity to increase in knowledge. Those who think that Adam was created so perfect as to preclude the possibility of his increase in knowledge, have taken a very false view of the subject. We shall certainly be convinced that our first parents were in a state of sufficient perfection when we consider, 1. That they were endued with a vast capacity to obtain knowledge. 2. That all the means of information were within their reach. 3. That there was no hinderance to the most direct conception of occurring truth. 4. That all the objects of knowledge, whether natural or moral, were ever at hand. 5. That they had the strongest propensity to know; and, 6. The greatest pleasure in knowing. To have God and nature continually open to the view of the soul; and to have a soul capable of viewing both, and fathoming endlessly their unbounded glories and excellences, without hinderance or difficulty; what a state of perfection! what a consummation of bliss! This was undoubtedly the state and condition of our first parents; even the present ruins of the state are incontestable evidences of its primitive excellence. We see at once how transgression came; it was natural for them to desire to be increasingly wise. God had implanted this desire in their minds; but he showed them that this desire should be gratified in a certain way; that prudence and judgment should always regulate it; that they should carefully examine what God had opened to their view; and should not pry into what he chose to conceal. He alone who knows all things knows how much knowledge the soul needs to its perfection and increasing happiness, in what subjects this may be legitimately sought, and where the mind may make excursions and discoveries to its prejudice and ruin. There are

doubtless many subjects which angels are capable of knowing, and which God chooses to conceal even from them, because that knowledge would tend neither to their perfection nor happiness. Of every attainment and object of pursuit it may be said, in the words of an ancient poet, who conceived correctly on the subject, and expressed his thoughts with perspicuity and energy:—

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

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

Such limits God certainly assigned from the beginning: Thou shalt come up to this; thou shalt not pass it. And as he assigned the limits, so he assigned the means. It is lawful for thee to acquire knowledge in this way; it is unlawful to seek it in that. And had he not a right to do so? And would his creation have been perfect without it?

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

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

1. From the New Testament we learn that Satan associated himself with the creature which we term the serpent, and the original the nachash, in order to seduce and ruin mankind; 2 Corinthians 11:3 Revelation 12:9 20:2.
2. That this creature was the most suitable to his purpose, as being the most subtle, the most intelligent and cunning of all beasts of the field, endowed with the gift of speech and reason, and consequently one in which he could best conceal himself. 3. As he knew that while they depended on God they could not be ruined, he therefore endeavored to seduce them from this dependence. 4. He does this by working on that propensity of the mind to desire an increase of knowledge, with which God, for the most

gracious purposes, had endured it. 5. In order to succeed, he insinuates that God, through motives of envy, had given the prohibition-God doth know that in the day ye eat of it, ye shall be like himself, etc. 6. As their present state of blessedness must be inexpressibly dear to them, he endeavors to persuade them that they could not fall from this state: Ye shall not surely die -ye shall not only retain your present blessedness, but it shall be greatly increased; a temptation by which he has ever since fatally succeeded in the ruin of multitudes of souls, whom he persuaded that being once right they could never finally go wrong. 7. As he kept the unlawfulness of the means proposed out of sight, persuaded them that they could not fall from their steadfastness, assured them that they should resemble God himself, and consequently be self-sufficient, and totally independent of him; they listened, and fixing their eye only on the promised good, neglecting the positive command, and determining to become wise and independent at all events, they took of the fruit and did eat.

Let us now examine the effects.

1. Their eyes were opened, and they saw they were naked. They saw what they never saw before, that they were stripped of their excellence; that they had lost their innocence; and that they had fallen into a state of indigence and danger. 2. Though their eyes were opened to see their nakedness, yet their mind was clouded, and their judgment confused. They seem to have lost all just notions of honor and dishonor, of what was shameful and what was praise-worthy. It was dishonorable and shameful to break the commandment of God; but it was neither to go naked, when clothing was not necessary. 3. They seem in a moment, not only to have lost sound judgment, but also reflection: a short time before Adam was so wise that he could name all the creatures brought before him, according to their respective natures and qualities; now he does not know the first principle concerning the Divine nature, that it knows all things, and that it is omnipresent, therefore he endeavors to hide himself among the trees from the eye of the all-seeing God! How astonishing is this! When the creatures were brought to him he could name them, because he could discern their respective natures and properties; when Eve was brought to him he could immediately tell what she was, who she was, and for what end made, though he was in a deep sleep when God formed her; and this

seems to be particularly noted, merely to show the depth of his wisdom, and the perfection of his discernment. But alas! how are the mighty fallen! Compare his present with his past state, his state before the transgression with his state after it; and say, is this the same creature? the creature of whom God said, as he said of all his works, He is very good — just what he should be, a living image of the living God; but now lower than the beasts of the field? 4. This account could never have been credited had not the indisputable proofs and evidences of it been continued by uninterrupted succession to the present time. All the descendants of this first guilty pair resemble their degenerate ancestors, and copy their conduct. The original mode of transgression is still continued, and the original sin in consequence. Here are the proofs. 1. Every human being is endeavoring to obtain knowledge by unlawful means, even while the lawful means and every available help are at hand. 2. They are endeavoring to be independent, and to live without God in the world; hence prayer, the language of dependence on God's providence and grace, is neglected, I might say detested, by the great majority of men. Had I no other proof than this that man is a fallen creature, my soul would bow to this evidence. 3. Being destitute of the true knowledge of God they seek privacy for their crimes, not considering that the eye of God is upon them, being only solicitous to hide them from the eye of man. These are all proofs in point; but we shall soon meet with additional ones. See on Genesis 3:10, 12.

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

Verse 10. *I was afraid, because I was naked*— See the immediate consequences of sin. 1. SHAME, because of the ingratitude marked in the rebellion, and because that in aiming to be like God they were now sunk into a state of the greatest wretchedness. 2. FEAR, because they saw they

had been deceived by Satan, and were exposed to that death and punishment from which he had promised them an exemption. How worthy is it of remark that this cause continues to produce the very same effects! Shame and fear were the first fruits of sin, and fruits which it has invariably produced, from the first transgression to the present time.

Verse 12. *And the man said, etc.*— We have here some farther proofs of the fallen state of man, and that the consequences of that state extend to his remotest posterity. 1. On the question, Hast thou eaten of the tree? Adam is obliged to acknowledge his transgression; but he does this in such a way as to shift off the blame from himself, and lay it upon God and upon the woman! This woman whom THOU didst give to be with me, עִמָּדִי immadi, to be my companion, (for so the word is repeatedly used,) she gave me, and I did eat. I have no farther blame in this transgression; I did not pluck the fruit; she took it and gave it to me. 2. When the woman is questioned she lays the blame upon God and the serpent, (nachash.) The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. Thou didst make him much wiser than thou didst make me, and therefore my simplicity and ignorance were overcome by his superior wisdom and subtlety; I can have no fault here, the fault is his, and his who made him so wise and me so ignorant. Thus we find that, while the eyes of their body were opened to see their degraded state, the eyes of their understanding were closed, so that they could not see the sinfulness of sin; and at the same time their hearts were hardened through its deceitfulness. In this also their posterity copy their example. How few ingenuously confess their own sin! They see not their guilt. They are continually making excuses for their crimes; the strength and subtlety of the tempter, the natural weakness of their own minds, the unfavorable circumstances in which they were placed, etc., etc., are all pleaded as excuses for their sins, and thus the possibility of repentance is precluded; for till a man take his sin to himself, till he acknowledge that he alone is guilty, he cannot be humbled, and consequently cannot be saved. Reader, till thou accuse thyself, and thyself only, and feel that thou alone art responsible for all thy iniquities, there is no hope of thy salvation.

Verse 14. *And the Lord God said unto the serpent*— The tempter is not asked why he deceived the woman; he cannot roll the blame on any other; self-tempted he fell, and it is natural for him, such is his enmity, to deceive and destroy all he can. His fault admits of no excuse, and therefore God

begins to pronounce sentence on him first. And here we must consider a twofold sentence, one on Satan and the other on the agent he employed. The nachash, whom I suppose to have been at the head of all the inferior animals, and in a sort of society and intimacy with man, is to be greatly degraded, entirely banished from human society, and deprived of the gift of speech. Cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field — thou shalt be considered the most contemptible of animals; upon thy belly shalt thou go — thou shalt no longer walk erect, but mark the ground equally with thy hands and feet; and dust shalt thou eat — though formerly possessed of the faculty to distinguish, choose, and cleanse thy food, thou shalt feed henceforth like the most stupid and abject quadruped, all the days of thy life — through all the innumerable generations of thy species. God saw meet to manifest his displeasure against the agent employed in this melancholy business; and perhaps this is founded on the part which the intelligent and subtle nachash took in the seduction of our first parents. We see that he was capable of it, and have some reason to believe that he became a willing instrument.

Verse 15. *I will put enmity between thee and the woman*— This has been generally supposed to apply to a certain enmity subsisting between men and serpents; but this is rather a fancy than a reality. It is yet to be discovered that the serpentine race have any peculiar enmity against mankind, nor is there any proof that men hate serpents more than they do other noxious animals. Men have much more enmity to the common rat and magpie than they have to all the serpents in the land, because the former destroy the grain, etc., and serpents in general, far from seeking to do men mischief, flee his approach, and generally avoid his dwelling. If, however, we take the word nachash to mean any of the simia or ape species, we find a more consistent meaning, as there is scarcely an animal in the universe so detested by most women as these are; and indeed men look on them as continual caricatures of themselves. But we are not to look for merely literal meanings here: it is evident that Satan, who actuated this creature, is alone intended in this part of the prophetic declaration. God in his endless mercy has put enmity between men and him; so that, though all mankind love his service, yet all invariably hate himself. Were it otherwise, who could be saved? A great point gained towards the conversion of a sinner is to convince him that it is Satan he has been serving, that it is to

him he has been giving up his soul, body, goods, etc.; he starts with horror when this conviction fastens on his mind, and shudders at the thought of being in league with the old murderer. But there is a deeper meaning in the text than even this, especially in these words, it shall bruise thy head, or rather, **ס17** hu, HE; who? the seed of the woman; the person is to come by the woman, and by her alone, without the concurrence of man. Therefore the address is not to Adam and Eve, but to Eve alone; and it was in consequence of this purpose of God that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin; this, and this alone, is what is implied in the promise of the seed of the woman bruising the head of the serpent. Jesus Christ died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Thus he bruises his head -destroys his power and lordship over mankind, turning them from the power of Satan unto God; Acts 26:18. And Satan bruises his heel — God so ordered it, that the salvation of man could only be brought about by the death of Christ; and even the spiritual seed of our blessed Lord have the heel often bruised, as they suffer persecution, temptation, etc., which may be all that is intended by this part of the prophecy.

Verse 16. *Unto the woman he said*— She being second in the transgression is brought up the second to receive her condemnation, and to hear her punishment: I will greatly multiply, or multiplying I will multiply; i.e., I will multiply thy sorrows, and multiply those sorrows by other sorrows, and this during conception and pregnancy, and particularly so in parturition or child-bearing. And this curse has fallen in a heavier degree on the woman than on any other female. Nothing is better attested than this, and yet there is certainly no natural reason why it should be so; it is a part of her punishment, and a part from which even God's mercy will not exempt her. It is added farther, Thy desire shall be to thy husband -thou shalt not be able to shun the great pain and peril of child-bearing, for thy desire, thy appetite, shall be to thy husband; and he shall rule over thee, though at their creation both were formed with equal rights, and the woman had probably as much right to rule as the man; but subjection to the will of her husband is one part of her curse; and so very capricious is this will often, that a sorer punishment no human being can well have, to be at all in a state of liberty, and under the protection of wise and equal laws.

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

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

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

Another species, called the *Acanthum vulgare*, produces above 100 heads, each containing from 3 to 400 seeds. Suppose we say that these thistles produce at a medium only 80 heads, and that each contains only 300 seeds; the first crop from these would amount to 24, 000. Let these be sown, and their crop will amount to 576 millions. Sow these, and their produce will be 13, 824, 000, 000, 000, or thirteen billions, eight hundred and twenty-four thousand millions; and a single crop from these, which is only the third year’s growth, would amount to 331, 776, 000, 000, 000, 000, or three hundred and thirty-one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six billions; and the fourth year’s growth will amount to 7, 962, 624, 000, 000,

000, 000, 000, or seven thousand nine hundred and sixty-two trillions, six hundred and twenty-four thousand billions. A progeny more than sufficient to stock not only the surface of the whole world, but of all the planets of the solar system, so that no other plant or vegetable could possibly grow, allowing but the space of one square foot for each plant.

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

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

Verse 19. *In the sweat of thy face*— Though the whole body may be thrown into a profuse sweat, if hard labor be long continued, yet the face or forehead is the first part whence this sweat begins to issue; this is occasioned by the blood being strongly propelled to the brain, partly through stooping, but principally by the strong action of the muscles; in consequence of this the blood vessels about the head become turgid through the great flux of blood, the fibres are relaxed, the pores enlarged, and the sweat or serum poured out. Thus then the very commencement of every man's labor may put him in mind of his sin and its consequences.

Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.— God had said that in the day they ate of the forbidden fruit, dying they should die — they should

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

ολιγη δε κεισομεσθα
 κονις, οστεων λυθεντων.
 Anac. Od. 4., v. 9.

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

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

It is probable that God designed by this name to teach our first parents these two important truths: 1. That though they had merited immediate death, yet they should be respited, and the accomplishment of the sentence be long delayed; they should be spared to propagate a numerous progeny on the earth. 2. That though much misery would be entailed on

his posterity, and death should have a long and universal empire, yet ONE should in the fullness of time spring from the woman, who should destroy death, and bring life and immortality to light, 2 Timothy 1:10. Therefore Adam called his wife's name Life, because she was to be the mother of all human beings, and because she was to be the mother of HIM who was to give life to a world dead in trespasses, and dead in sins, Ephesians 2:1, etc.

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

Verse 22. *Behold, the man is become as one of us*— On all hands this text is allowed to be difficult, and the difficulty is increased by our translation, which is opposed to the original Hebrew and the most authentic versions. The Hebrew has **הָיָה** *hayah*, which is the third person preterite tense, and signifies was, not is. The Samaritan text, the Samaritan version, the Syriac, and the Septuagint, have the same tense. These lead us to a very different sense, and indicate that there is an ellipsis of some words which must be supplied in order to make the sense complete. A very learned man has ventured the following paraphrase, which should not be lightly regarded: “And the Lord God said, The man who WAS like one of us in purity and wisdom, is now fallen and robbed of his excellence; he has added **לְדַעַת** *ladaath*, to the knowledge of the good, by his transgression the knowledge of the evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever in this

miserable state, I will remove him, and guard the place lest he should re-enter. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden,” etc. This seems to be the most natural sense of the place. Some suppose that his removal from the tree of life was in mercy, to prevent a second temptation. He before imagined that he could gain an increase of wisdom by eating of the tree of knowledge, and Satan would be disposed to tempt him to endeavor to elude the sentence of death, by eating of the tree of life. Others imagine that the words are spoken ironically, and that the Most High intended by a cutting taunt, to upbraid the poor culprit for his offense, because he broke the Divine command in the expectation of being like God to know good from evil; and now that he had lost all the good that God had designed for him, and got nothing but evil in its place, therefore God taunts him for the total miscarriage of his project. But God is ever consistent with himself; and surely his infinite pity prohibited the use of either sarcasm or irony, in speaking of so dreadful a catastrophe, that was in the end to occasion the agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion, the death and burial, of Him in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, Colossians 2:9.

In Genesis 1:26, 27, we have seen man in the perfection of his nature, the dignity of his office, and the plenitude of his happiness. Here we find the same creature, but stripped of his glories and happiness, so that the word man no longer conveys the same ideas it did before. Man and intellectual excellence were before so intimately connected as to appear inseparable; man and misery are now equally so. In our nervous mother tongue, the Anglo-Saxon, we have found the word [A.S.] *God* signifying, not only the Supreme Being, but also good or goodness; and it is worthy of especial note that the word [A.S.] *man*, in the same language, is used to express, not only the human being so called, both male and female, but also mischief, wickedness, fraud, deceit, and villany. Thus a simple monosyllable, still in use among us in its first sense, conveyed at once to the minds of our ancestors the two following particulars: 1. The human being in his excellence, capable of knowing, loving, and glorifying his Maker. 2. The human being in his fallen state, capable of and committing all kinds of wickedness. “*Obiter hic notandum,*” says old Mr. Somner in his Saxon Dictionary, “*venit, [A.S.] Saxonibus et DEUM significasse et BONUM: uti [A.S.] et hominem et nequitiam.*”

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

Verse 24. *So he drove out the man*— Three things are noted here:

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

He placed at the east— מִכְּדֶם mikkedem, or before the garden of Eden, before what may be conceived its gate or entrance; Cherubims, חַרְבִּיִּים hakkerubim, THE cherubim. Hebrew plurals in the masculine end in general in im: to add an s to this when we introduce such words into English, is very improper; therefore the word should be written cherubim, not cherubims. But what were these? They are utterly unknown. Conjectures and guesses relative to their nature and properties are endless. Several think them to have been emblematical representations of the sacred Trinity, and bring reasons and scriptures in support of their opinion; but as I am not satisfied that this opinion is correct, I will not trouble the reader with it. From the description in Exodus 26:1, 31; 1 Kings 6:29, 32; 2 Chronicles 3:14, it appears that the cherubs were sometimes represented with two faces, namely, those of a lion and of a man; but from Ezekiel 1:5, etc.; Ezekiel 10:20, 21, we find that they had four faces and four wings; the faces were those of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle; but it seems there was but one body to these heads. The two-faced cherubs were such as were represented on the curtains and veil of the tabernacle, and on the wall, doors, and veil of the temple; those with four faces appeared only in the holy of holies.

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

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

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

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

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

If men, now so greatly multiplied on the earth, and fertile in mischievous inventions, were permitted to live nearly a thousand years, as in the ancient world, to mature and perfect their infectious and destructive counsels, what a sum of iniquity and ruin would the face of the earth present! Even while they are laying plans to extend the empire of death, God, by the very means of death itself, prevents the completion of their

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

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

CHAPTER 4

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

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

Verse 2. *And she again bare his brother Abel.*— Literally, She added to bear (וַתִּסֵּף לְלִדְתוֹ vattoseph laledeth) his brother. From the very face of this account it appears evident that Cain and Abel were twins. In most cases where a subject of this kind is introduced in the Holy Scriptures, and the successive births of children of the same parents are noted, the acts of conceiving and bringing forth are mentioned in reference to each child; here it is not said that she conceived and brought forth Abel, but simply she added to bring forth Abel his brother; that is, as I understand it, Cain was the first-born, Abel, his twin brother, came next.

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

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

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

Verse 4. *Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock*— Dr. Kennicott contends that the words he also brought, הֵבִיא גַם הוּא hebi

gam hu, should be translated, Abel brought IT also, i.e. a minchah or gratitude offering; and beside this he brought of the first-born (מבכרות) mibbechoroth) of his flock, and it was by this alone that he acknowledged himself a sinner, and professed faith in the promised Messiah. To this circumstance the apostle seems evidently to allude, Hebrews 11:4: By FAITH Abel offered **πλειονα θυσιαν**, a MORE or GREATER sacrifice; not a more excellent, (for this is no meaning of the word **πλειων**.) which leads us to infer, according to Dr. Kennicott, that Abel, besides his minchah or gratitude offering, brought also **θυσια**, a victim, to be slain for his sins; and this he chose out of the first-born of his flock, which, in the order of God, was a representation of the Lamb of God that was to take away the sin of the world; and what confirms this exposition more is the observation of the apostle: God testifying **ροις δωποις**, of his GIFTS, which certainly shows he brought more than one. According to this interpretation, Cain, the father of Deism, not acknowledging the necessity of a vicarious sacrifice, nor feeling his need of an atonement, according to the dictates of his natural religion, brought a minchah or eucharistic offering to the God of the universe. Abel, not less grateful for the produce of his fields and the increase of his flocks, brought a similar offering, and by adding a sacrifice to it paid a proper regard to the will of God as far as it had then been revealed, acknowledged himself a sinner, and thus, deprecating the Divine displeasure, showed forth the death of Christ till he came. Thus his offerings were accepted, while those of Cain were rejected; for this, as the apostle says, was done by FAITH, and therefore he obtained witness that he was righteous, or a justified person, God testifying with his gifts, the thank-offering and the sin-offering, by accepting them, that faith in the promised seed was the only way in which he could accept the services and offerings of mankind. Dr. Magee, in his Discourses on the Atonement, criticises the opinion of Dr. Kennicott, and contends that there is no ground for the distinction made by the latter on the words he also brought; and shows that though the minchah in general signifies an unbloody offering, yet it is also used to express both kinds, and that the minchah in question is to be understood of the sacrifice then offered by Abel. I do not see that we gain much by this counter-criticism. See Genesis 4:7.

Verse 5. Unto Cain— As being unconscious of his sinfulness, and consequently unhumiliated, and to his offering, as not being accompanied, as

Abel's was, with faith and a sacrifice for sin, he had not respect — He could not, consistently with his holiness and justice, approve of the one or receive the other. Of the manner in which God testified his approbation we are not informed; it was probably, as in the case of Elijah, by sending down fire from heaven, and consuming the sacrifice.

Cain was very wrath— That displeasure which should have been turned against his own unhumbled heart was turned against his innocent brother, who, though not more highly privileged than he, made a much better use of the advantages which he shared in common with his ungodly and unnatural brother.

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

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

The words **חטאת** chattath, and **חטאה** chattaah, frequently signify sin; but I have observed more than a hundred places in the Old Testament where they are used for sin-offering, and translated **ἁμαρτία** by the Septuagint, which is the term the apostle uses, 2 Corinthians 5:21: He hath made him to be sin (**ἁμαρτίαν**, A SIN-OFFERING) for us, who knew no sin. Cain's fault now was his not bringing a sin-offering when his brother brought one, and his neglect and contempt caused his other offering to be rejected. However, God now graciously informs him that, though he had miscarried, his case was not yet desperate, as the means of faith, from the promise, etc., were in his power, and a victim proper for a sin-offering was lying (**רבץ** robots, a word used to express the lying down of a quadruped) at the door of his fold. How many sinners perish, not because there is not a Savior able and willing to save them, but because they will not use that

which is within their power! Of such how true is that word of our Lord,
Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life!

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

Verse 8. Cain talked with Abel his brother— וַיֹּמֶר קַיִן vaiyomer Kayin, and Cain said, etc.; not talked, for this construction the word cannot bear without great violence to analogy and grammatical accuracy. But why should it be thus translated? Because our translators could not find that any thing was spoken on the occasion; and therefore they ventured to intimate that there was a conversation, indefinitely. In the most correct editions of the Hebrew Bible there is a small space left here in the text, and a circular mark which refers to a note in the margin, intimating that there is a hiatus or deficiency in the verse. Now this deficiency is supplied in the principal ancient versions, and in the Samaritan text. In this the supplied words are, LET US WALK OUT INTO THE FIELD. The Syriac has, Let us go to the desert. The Vulgate Egre diamur foras, Let us walk out. The Septuagint, διελθεμεν εις το πεδον, Let us go out into the field. The two Chaldee Targums have the same reading; so has the Coptic version. This addition is completely lost from every MS. of the Pentateuch now known; and yet it is sufficiently evident from the Samaritan text, the Samaritan version, the Syriac, Septuagint, and Vulgate, that it was in the most authentic copies of the Hebrew before and some time since the Christian era. The words may therefore be safely considered as a part of the sacred text, and with them the whole passage reads clear and consistently: "And Cain said unto Abel his brother, Let us go out into the field: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up," etc. The Jerusalem Targum, and the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, pretend to give us the subject of their conversation: as the piece is curious, I shall insert the substance of it, for the sake of those who may not have access to the originals. "And Cain said unto Hebel his brother, Let us go out into the field; and it came to pass that, when they were in the field, Cain answered and said to Hebel his brother, I thought that the world was created in mercy, but it is not governed according to the merit of good

works. nor is there any judgment, nor a Judge, nor shall there be any future state in which good rewards shall be given to the righteous, or punishment executed on the wicked; and now there is respect of persons in judgment. On what account is it that thy sacrifice has been accepted, and mine not received with complacency? And Hebel answered and said, The world was created in mercy, and it is governed according to the fruit of good works; there is a Judge, a future world, and a coming judgment, where good rewards shall be given to the righteous, and the impious punished; and there is no respect of persons in judgment; but because my works were better and more precious than thine, my oblation was received with complacency. And because of these things they contended on the face of the field, and Cain rose up against Hebel his brother, and struck a stone into his forehead, and killed him.”

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

Verse 10. *The voice of thy brother's blood*— It is probable that Cain, having killed his brother, dug a hole and buried him in the earth, hoping thereby to prevent the murder from being known; and that this is what is designed in the words, Thy brother's blood crieth unto me FROM THE GROUND—which hath opened her mouth to receive it from thy hand. Some think that by the voice of thy brother's blood the cries of Abel's widow and children are to be understood, as it is very probable that he was father

of a family; indeed his occupation and sacrifices seem to render this probable, and probability is all we can expect on such a subject. God represents these as calling aloud for the punishment of the murderer; and it is evident that Cain expected to fall by the hands of some person who, from his consanguinity, had the right of the avenger of blood; for now that the murder is found out, he expects to suffer death for it. See Genesis 4:14.

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

Verse 13. *My punishment is greater than I can bear.*— The margin reads, Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven. The original words, **גדול עוני מנשוא** gadol avoni minneso, may be translated, Is my crime too great to be forgiven? words which we may presume he uttered on the verge of black despair. It is most probable that **עו** avon signifies rather the crime than the punishment; in this sense it is used Leviticus 26:41, 43 1 Samuel 28:10; 2 Kings 7:9; and **נשא** nasa signifies to remit or forgive. The marginal reading is, therefore, to be preferred to that in the text.

Verse 14. *Behold, thou hast driven me out*— In verses 11, 12, God states two parts of Cain's punishment: 1. The ground was cursed, so that it was not to yield any adequate recompense for his most careful tillage. 2. He was to be a fugitive and a vagabond having no place in which he could dwell with comfort or security. To these Cain himself adds others. 1. His being hidden from the face of God; which appears to signify his being expelled from that particular place where God had manifested his presence. in or contiguous to Paradise, whither our first parents resorted as to an oracle, and where they offered their daily adorations. So in Genesis 4:16, it is said, Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and was not permitted any more to associate with the family in acts of religious worship. 2. The continual apprehension of being slain, as all the inhabitants of the earth were at that time of the same family, the parents

themselves still alive, and each having a right to kill this murderer of his relative. Add to all this, 3. The terrors of a guilty conscience; his awful apprehension of God's judgments, and of being everlastingly banished from the beatific vision. To this part of the punishment of Cain St. Paul probably alludes, 2 Thessalonians 1:9: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. The words are so similar that we can scarcely doubt of the allusion.

Verse 15. *The Lord set a mark upon Cain*— What this mark was, has given rise to a number of frivolously curious conjectures. Dr. Shuckford collects the most remarkable. Some say he was paralytic; this seems to have arisen from the version of the Septuagint, **στερεος και τρεμος εση**, Groaning and trembling shalt thou be. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel says the sign was from the great and precious name, probably one of the letters of the word [UNKNOWN] Yehovah. The author of an Arabic Catena in the Bodleian Library says, "A sword could not pierce him; fire could not burn him; water could not drown him; the air could not blast him; nor could thunder or lightning strike him." The author of Bereshith Rabba, a comment on Genesis, says the mark was a circle of the sun rising upon him. Abravanel says the sign was Abel's dog, which constantly accompanied him. Some of the doctors in the Talmud say that it was the letter **ט** tau marked on his forehead, which signified his contrition, as it is the first letter in the word **תשובה** teshubah, repentance. Rabbi Joseph, wiser than all the rest, says it was a long horn growing out of his forehead!

Dr. Shuckford farther observes that the Hebrew word **אֵיֶת** oth, which we translate a mark, signifies a sign or token. Thus, Genesis 9:13, the bow was to be **לְאֵיֶת** leoth, for a sign or token that the world should not be destroyed; therefore the words, And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, should be translated, And the Lord appointed to Cain a token or sign, to convince him that no person should be permitted to slay him. To have marked him would have been the most likely way to have brought all the evils he dreaded upon him; therefore the Lord gave him some miraculous sign or token that he should not be slain, to the end that he should not despair, but, having time to repent, might return to a gracious God and find mercy. Notwithstanding the allusion which I suppose St. Paul to have

made to the punishment of Cain, some think that he did repent and find mercy. I can only say this was possible. Most people who read this account wonder why Cain should dread being killed, when it does not appear to them that there were any inhabitants on the earth at that time besides himself and his parents. To correct this mistake, let it be observed that the death of Abel took place in the one hundred and twenty-eighth or one hundred and twenty-ninth year of the world. Now, “supposing Adam and Eve to have had no other sons than Cain and Abel in the year of the world one hundred and twenty-eight, yet as they had daughters married to these sons, their descendants would make a considerable figure on the earth. Supposing them to have been married in the nineteenth year of the world, they might easily have had each eight children, some males and some females, in the twenty-fifth year. In the fiftieth year there might proceed from them in a direct line sixty-four persons; in the seventy-fourth year there would be five hundred and twelve; in the ninety-eighth year, four thousand and ninety-six; in the one hundred and twenty-second they would amount to thirty-two thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight: if to these we add the other children descended from Cain and Abel, their children, and their children’s children, we shall have, in the aforesaid one hundred and twenty-eight years four hundred and twenty-one thousand one hundred and sixty-four men capable of generation, without reckoning the women either old or young, or such as are under the age of seventeen.” See Dodd.

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

Verse 16. *The land of Nod*— As נֹד nod signifies the same as נָד, a vagabond, some think this verse should be rendered, And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, from the east of Eden, and dwelt a

vagabond on the earth; thus the curse pronounced on him, Genesis 4:12, was accomplished.

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

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

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

Verse 21. *Jubal-the father*— i.e. The inventor of musical instruments, such as the **כִּנּוֹר** kinnor, which we translate harp, and the **עוּגָב** ugab, which we render organ; it is very likely that both words are generic, the former including under it all stringed instruments, and the latter, all wind instruments.

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

M. Deuteronomy Lavour, in his Conference de la Fable avec l'Histoire Sainte, supposes that the Greeks and Romans took their smith-god Vulcan from Tubal-cain, the son of Lamech. The probability of this will appear, 1. From the name, which, by the omission of the Tu and turning the b into v,

a change frequently made among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, makes Vulcain or Vulcan. 2. From his occupation he was an artificer, a master smith in brass and iron. 3. He thinks this farther probable from the names and sounds in this verse. The melting metals in the fire, and hammering them, bears a near resemblance to the hissing sound of **צלה** tsillah, the mother of Tubal-cain; and **צלל** tsalal signifies to tinkle or make a sound like a bell, 1 Samuel 3:11 2 Kings 21:12. 4. Vulcan is said to have been lame; M. Deuteronomy Lavour thinks that this notion was taken from the noun **צלע** tsela, which signifies a halting or lameness. 5. Vulcan had to wife Venus, the goddess of beauty; Naamah, the sister of Tubal-cain, he thinks, may have given rise to this part of the fable, as her name in Hebrew signifies beautiful or gracious. 6. Vulcan is reported to have been jealous of his wife, and to have forged nets in which he took Mars and her, and exposed them to the view of the whole celestial court: this idea he thinks was derived from the literal import of the name Tubal-cain; **תבל** tebel signifies an incestuous mixture of relatives, Leviticus 20:12; and **קנא** kana, to burn with jealousy; from these and concomitant circumstances the case of the detected adultery of Mars and Venus might be easily deduced. He is of opinion that a tradition of this kind might have readily found its way from the Egyptians to the Greeks, as the former had frequent intercourse with the Hebrews.

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

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

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

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

This speech is very dark, and has given rise to a great variety of very strange conjectures. Dr. Shuckford supposes there is an ellipsis of some preceding speech or circumstance which, if known, would cast a light on the subject. In the antediluvian times, the nearest of kin to a murdered person had a right to revenge his death by taking away the life of the murderer. This, as we have already seen, appears to have contributed not a little to Cain's horror, Genesis 4:14. Now we may suppose that the descendants of Cain were in continual alarms, lest some of the other family should attempt to avenge the death of Abel on them, as they were not permitted to do it on Cain; and that in order to dismiss those fears, Lamech, the seventh descendant from Adam, spoke to this effect to his wives: “Why should you render yourselves miserable by such ill-founded fears? We have slain no person; we have not done the least wrong to our brethren of the other family; surely then reason should dictate to you that they have no right to injure us. It is true that Cain, one of our ancestors, killed his brother Abel; but God, willing to pardon his sin, and give him space to repent, threatened to punish those with a seven-fold punishment who should dare to kill him. If this be so, then those who should have the boldness to kill any of us who are innocent, may expect a punishment still more rigorous. For if Cain should be avenged seven-fold on the person who should slay him, surely Lamech or any of his innocent family should be avenged seventy-seven-fold on those who should injure them.” The Targums give nearly the same meaning, and it makes a good sense; but who

can say it is the true sense? If the words be read interrogatively, as they certainly may, the sense will be much clearer, and some of the difficulties will be removed:

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

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

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

Though all these persons are mentioned in the following chapter, I shall produce them here in the order of their succession: 1. Adam; 2. Seth; 3. Enos; 4. Cainan; 5. Mahalaleel; 6. Jared; 7. Enoch; 8. Methuselah; 9. Lamech, (the second;) 10. Noah. In order to keep this line distinct, we find particular care was taken that, where there were two or more sons in a family, the one through whom God particularly designed to bring his Son into the world was, by some especial providence, pointed out. Thus in the family of Adam, Seth was chosen; in the family of Noah, Shem; in the family of Abraham, Isaac; and in that of David, Solomon and Nathan. All these things God watched over by an especial providence from the beginning, that when Jesus Christ should come it might be clearly seen that he came by the promise, through grace, and not by nature.

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

“In the days of Enos the sons of Adam erred with great error, and the counsel of the wise men of that age became brutish, and Enos himself was (one) of them that erred; and their error was this: they said, Forasmuch as God hath created these stars and spheres to govern the world, and set them on high, and imparted honor unto them, and they are ministers that minister before him; it is meet that men should laud, and glorify, and give them honor. For this is the will of God, that we magnify and honor whomsoever he magnifieth and honoureth; even as a king would have them honored that stand before him, and this is the honor of the king himself. When this thing was come up into their hearts they began to build temples unto the stars, and to offer sacrifice unto them, and to laud and glorify them with words, and to worship before them, that they might in their evil opinion obtain favor of the Creator; and this was the root of idolatry, etc. And in process of time there stood up false prophets among the sons of Adam, which said that God had commanded and said unto them, Worship such a star, or all the stars, and do sacrifice unto them thus and thus; and build a temple for it, and make an image of it, that all the people, women, and children may worship it. And the false prophet showed them the image which he had feigned out of his own heart, and said it was the image of such a star, which was made known unto him by prophecy. And they began after this manner to make images in temples, and under trees, and on tops of mountains and hills, and assembled together and worshipped them,

etc. And this thing was spread through all the world, to serve images with services different one from another, and to sacrifice unto and worship them. So, in process of time, the glorious and fearful name (of God) was forgotten out of the mouth of all living, and out of their knowledge, and they acknowledged him not.

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

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER 5

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. His religious conduct. He walked with God; **יִתְהַלֵּךְ** yithhallech, he set himself to walk, he was fixedly purposed and determined to live to God.

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

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

4. The astonishing height of piety to which he had arrived; being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and having perfected holiness in the fear of God, we find not only his soul but his body purified, so that, without being obliged to visit the empire of death, he was capable of immediate translation to the paradise of God. There are few cases of this kind on record; but probably there might be more, many more, were the followers of God more faithful to the grace they receive.

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

6. If the grace of God could work such a mighty change in those primitive times, when life and immortality were not brought to light by the Gospel, what may we not expect in these times, in which the Son of God

tabernacles among men, in which God gives the Holy Spirit to them who ask him, in which all things are possible to him who believes? No man can prove that Enoch had greater spiritual advantages than any of the other patriarchs, though it seems pretty evident that he made a better use of those that were common to all than any of the rest did; and it would be absurd to say that he had greater spiritual helps and advantages than Christians can now expect, for he lived under a dispensation much less perfect than that of the LAW, and yet the law itself was only the shadow of the glorious substance of Gospel blessings and Gospel privileges.

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

Verse 27. *The days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years*— This is the longest life mentioned in Scripture, and probably the longest ever lived; but we have not authority to say positively that it was the longest. Before the flood, and before artificial refinements were much known and cultivated, the life of man was greatly protracted, and yet of him who lived within thirty-one years of a thousand it is said he died; and the longest life is but as a moment when it is past. Though life is uncertain, precarious, and full of natural evils, yet it is a blessing in all its periods if devoted to the glory of God and the interest of the soul; for while it lasts we may more and more acquaint ourselves with God and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto us; Job 22:21.

Verse 29. *This same shall comfort us*— This is an allusion, as some think, to the name a Noah, which they derive from נחם nacham, to comfort; but it is much more likely that it comes from נח nach or נוּח nuach, to rest, to settle, etc. And what is more comfortable than rest after toil and labor? These words seem to have been spoken prophetically concerning Noah,

who built the ark for the preservation of the human race, and who seems to have been a typical person; for when he offered his sacrifice after the drying up of the waters, it is said that God smelled a savor of REST, and said he would not curse the ground any more for man's sake, Genesis 8:21; and from that time the earth seems to have had upon an average the same degree of fertility; and the life of man, in a few generations after, was settled in the mean at threescore years and ten. See Genesis 9:3.

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

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

From computation it appears, 1. That Adam lived to see Lamech, the ninth generation, in the fifty-sixth year of whose life he died; and as he was the first who lived, and the first that sinned, so he was the first who tasted death in a natural way. Abel's was not a natural but a violent death. 2. That Enoch was taken away next after Adam, seven patriarchs remaining witness of his translation. 3. That all the nine first patriarchs were taken away before the flood came, which happened in the six hundredth year of Noah's life. 4. That Methuselah lived till the very year in which the flood came, of which his name is supposed to have been prophetic **מֵתוּ** methu, "he dieth," and **שָׁלַח** shalach, "he sendeth out;" as if God had designed to

teach men that as soon as Methuselah died the flood should be sent forth to drown an ungodly world. If this were then so understood, even the name of this patriarch contained in it a gracious warning. See the genealogical plate after chap. xi. {See note “Genesis 11:32”}.

CHAPTER 6

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

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

Dr. Wall supposes the first verses of this chapter should be paraphrased thus: “When men began to multiply on the earth, the chief men took wives of all the handsome poor women they chose. There were tyrants in the earth in those days; and also after the antediluvian days powerful men had unlawful connections with the inferior women, and the children which sprang from this illicit commerce were the renowned heroes of antiquity, of whom the heathens made their gods.”

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

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

The same became mighty men-men of renown.— גבורים gibborim, which we render mighty men, signifies properly conquerors, heroes, from גבר gabar, “he prevailed, was victorious.” and אנשי השם anshey hashshem, “men of the name,” ανθρωποι ονομασται, Septuagint; the same as we render men of renown, renominati, twice named, as the word implies,

having one name which they derived from their fathers, and another which they acquired by their daring exploits and enterprises.

It may be necessary to remark here that our translators have rendered seven different Hebrew words by the one term giants, viz., nephilim, gibborim, enachim, rephaim, emim, and zamzummim; by which appellatives are probably meant in general persons of great knowledge, piety, courage, wickedness, etc., and not men of enormous stature, as is generally conjectured.

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

not grieved and quenched the Spirit of God, could he speak of them in the manner he does here? 8. So incensed is the most holy and the most merciful God, that he is determined to destroy the work of his hands: And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created; Genesis 6:7. How great must the evil have been, and how provoking the transgressions, which obliged the most compassionate God, for the vindication of his own glory, to form this awful purpose! Fools make a mock at sin, but none except fools.

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

Verse 11. The earth also was corrupt— See note on “Genesis 6:5”.

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

Verse 14. Make thee an ark— תֵּבַת tebath, a word which is used only to express this vessel, and that in which Moses was preserved, Exodus 2:3, 5. It signifies no more than our word vessel in its common acceptation—a hollow place capable of containing persons, goods, etc., without any particular reference to shape or form.

Gopher wood— Some think the cedar is meant; others, the cypress. Bochart renders this probable, 1. From the appellation, supposing the Greek word κυπαρισσος, cypress, was formed from the Hebrew גֹּפֶר,

gopher; for take away the termination **ισσος**, and then gopher and **κυπαρ** will have a near resemblance. 2. Because the cypress is not liable to rot, nor to be injured by worms. 3. The cypress was anciently used for ship-building. 4. This wood abounded in Assyria, where it is probable Noah built the ark. After all, the word is of doubtful signification, and occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. The Septuagint render the place, **εκ ξυλων τετραγωνων**, “of square timber;” and the Vulgate, *de lignis laevigatis*, “of planed timber;” so it is evident that these translators knew not what kind of wood was intended by the original. The Syriac and Arabic trifle with the passage, rendering it wicker work, as if the ark had been a great basket! Both the Targums render it cedar; and the Persian, pine or fir.

Verse 15. *Thou shalt make-the length of the ark-three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits*— Allowing the cubit, which is the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, to be eighteen inches, the ark must have been four hundred and fifty feet in length, seventy-five in breadth, and forty-five in height. But that the ancient cubit was more than eighteen inches has been demonstrated by Mr. Greaves, who traveled in Greece, Palestine, and Egypt, in order to be able to ascertain the weights, moneys, and measures of antiquity. He measured the pyramids in Egypt, and comparing the accounts which Herodotus, Strabo, and others, give of their size, he found the length of a cubit to be twenty-one inches and eight hundred and eighty-eight decimal parts out of a thousand, or nearly twenty-two inches. Hence the cube of a cubit is evidently ten thousand four hundred and eighty-six inches. And from this it will appear that the three hundred cubits of the ark’s length make five hundred and forty-seven feet; the fifty for its breadth, ninety-one feet two inches; and the thirty for its height, fifty-four feet eight inches. When these dimensions are examined, the ark will be found to be a vessel whose capacity was more than sufficient to contain all persons and animals said to have been in it, with sufficient food for each for more than twelve months. This vessel Dr. Arbuthnot computes to have been eighty-one thousand and sixty-two tons in burden.

As many have supposed the capacity of the ark to have been much too small for the things which were contained in it, it will be necessary to examine this subject thoroughly, that every difficulty may be removed.

The things contained in the ark, besides the eight persons of Noah's family, were one pair of all unclean animals, and seven pairs of all clean animals. with provisions for all sufficient for twelve months.

At the first view the number of animals may appear so immense that no space but the forest could be thought sufficient to contain them. If, however, we come to a calculation, the number of the different genera or kinds of animals will be found much less than is generally imagined. It is a question whether in this account any but the different genera of animals necessary to be brought into the ark should be included Naturalists have divided the whole system of zoology into CLASSES and ORDERS, containing genera and species. There are six classes thus denominated: 1. Mammalia; 2. Aves; 3. Amphibia; 4. Pisces; 5. Insectae; and 6. Vermes. With the three last of these, viz., fishes, insects, and worms, the question can have little to do.

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

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

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

Bishop Wilkins, who has written largely and with his usual accuracy on this subject, supposes that quadrupeds do not amount to one hundred

different kinds, nor birds which could not live in the water to two hundred. Of quadrupeds he shows that only seventy-two species needed a place in the ark, and the birds he divides into nine classes, including in the whole one hundred and ninety-five kinds, from which all the web-footed should be deducted, as these could live in the water.

He computes all the carnivorous animals equivalent, as to the bulk of their bodies and food, to twenty-seven wolves; and all the rest to one hundred and eighty oxen. For the former he allows one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five sheep for their annual consumption; and for the latter, one hundred and nine thousand five hundred cubits of hay: these animals and their food will be easily contained In the two first stories, and much room to spare; as to the third story, no person can doubt its being sufficient for the fowls, with Noah and his family.

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

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

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

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

Verse 18. *With thee will I establish my covenant*—The word **בְּרִית** berith, from **בָּרַךְ** bar, to purify or cleanse, signifies properly a purification or purifier, (see on chap. 15.,) because in all covenants made between God and man, sin and sinfulness were ever supposed to be on man’s side, and that God could not enter into any covenant or engagement with him without a purifier; hence, in all covenants, a sacrifice was offered for the removal of offenses, and the reconciliation of God to the sinner; and hence the word **בְּרִית** berith signifies not only a covenant, but also the sacrifice offered on the occasion, Exodus 24:8; Psalm 50:5; and Jesus Christ, the great atonement and purifier, has the same word for his title, Isaiah 42:6; 49:8; and Zechariah 9:11.

Almost all nations, in forming alliances, etc., made their covenants or contracts in the same way. A sacrifice was provided, its throat was cut, and its blood poured out before God; then the whole carcass was divided

through the spinal marrow from the head to the rump; so as to make exactly two equal parts; these were placed opposite to each other, and the contracting parties passed between them, or entering at opposite ends met in the center, and there took the covenant oath. This is particularly referred to by Jeremiah, Jeremiah 34:18, 19, 20: “I will give the men (into the hands of their enemies, Jeremiah 34:20) that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,” etc. See also Deuteronomy 29:12.

A covenant, says Mr. Ainsworth, is a disposition of good things faithfully declared, which God here calls his, as arising from his grace towards Noah (Genesis 6:8) and all men; but implying also conditions on man’s part, and therefore is called our covenant, Zechariah 9:11. The apostles call it **διαθηκη**, a testament or disposition; and it is mixed of the properties both of covenant and testament, as the apostle shows, Hebrews 9:16, etc., and of both may be named a testamental covenant, whereby the disposing of God’s favors and good things to us is declared. The covenant made with Noah signified, on God’s part, that he should save Noah and his family from death by the ark. On Noah’s part, that he should in faith and obedience make and enter into the ark—Thou shalt come into the ark, etc., so committing himself to God’s preservation, Hebrews 11:7. And under this the covenant or testament of eternal salvation by Christ was also implied, the apostle testifying, 1 Peter 3:21, that the antitype, baptism, doth also now save us; for baptism is a seal of our salvation, Mark 16:16. To provide a Savior, and the means of salvation, is GOD’S part: to accept this Savior, laying hold on the hope set before us, is ours. Those who refuse the way and means of salvation must perish; those who accept of the great Covenant Sacrifice cannot perish, but shall have eternal life. See on Genesis 15:10, etc.

Verse 19. To keep them alive— God might have destroyed all the animal creation, and created others to occupy the new world, but he chose rather to preserve those already created. The Creator and Preserver of the universe does nothing but what is essentially necessary to be done. Nothing should be wantonly wasted; nor should power or skill be lavished where no necessity exists; and yet it required more means and economy to preserve the old than to have created new ones. Such respect has God to

the work of his hands, that nothing but what is essential to the credit of his justice and holiness shall ever induce him to destroy any thing he has made.

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

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

CHAPTER 7

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *Thee have I seen righteous*— See note on “Genesis 6:8”

Verse 2. *Of every clean beast*— So we find the distinction between clean and unclean animals existed long before the Mosaic law. This distinction seems to have been originally designed to mark those animals which were proper for sacrifice and food, from those that were not. See Leviticus 11.

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

Forty days— This period became afterwards sacred, and was considered a proper space for humiliation. Moses fasted forty days, Deuteronomy 9:9, 11; so did Elijah, 1 Kings 19:8; so did our Lord, Matthew 4:2. Forty days' respite were given to the Ninevites that they might repent, Jon 3:4; and thrice forty (one hundred and twenty) years were given to the old world for the same gracious purpose, Genesis 6:3. The forty days of Lent, in

commemoration of our Lord's fasting, have a reference to the same thing; as each of these seems to be deduced from this primitive judgment.

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

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

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

By the opening of the windows of heaven is probably meant the precipitating all the aqueous vapours which were suspended in the whole atmosphere, so that, as Moses expresses it, Genesis 1:7, the waters that were above the firmament were again united to the waters which were

below the firmament, from which on the second day of creation they had been separated. A multitude of facts have proved that water itself is composed of two airs, oxygen and hydrogen; and that 85 parts of the first and 15 of the last, making 100 in the whole, will produce exactly 100 parts of water. And thus it is found that these two airs form the constituent parts of water in the above proportions. The electric spark, which is the same as lightning, passing through these airs, decomposes them and converts them to water. And to this cause we may probably attribute the rain which immediately follows the flash of lightning and peal of thunder. God therefore, by the means of lightning, might have converted the whole atmosphere into water, for the purpose of drowning the globe, had there not been a sufficiency of merely aqueous vapours suspended in the atmosphere on the second day of creation. And if the electric fluid were used on this occasion for the production of water, the incessant glare of lightning, and the continual peals of thunder, must have added indescribable horrors to the scene. See the note on "Genesis 8:1". These two causes concurring were amply sufficient, not only to overflow the earth, but probably to dissolve the whole terrene fabric, as some judicious naturalists have supposed: indeed, this seems determined by the word **מבול** mabbul, translated flood, which is derived from **בל** bal **בלל** or balal, to mix, mingle, confound, confuse, because the aqueous and terrene parts of the globe were then mixed and confounded together; and when the supernatural cause that produced this mighty change suspended its operations, the different particles of matter would settle according to their specific gravities, and thus form the various strata or beds of which the earth appears to be internally constructed. Some naturalists have controverted this sentiment, because in some cases the internal structure of the earth does not appear to justify the opinion that the various portions of matter had settled according to their specific gravities; but these anomalies may easily be accounted for, from the great changes that have taken place in different parts of the earth since the flood, by volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, etc. Some very eminent philosophers are of the opinion "that, by the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, we are to understand an eruption of waters from the Southern Ocean." Mr. Kirwan supposes "that this is pretty evident from such animals as the elephant and rhinoceros being found in great masses in Siberia, mixed with different marine substances; whereas no animals or other substances

belonging to the northern regions have been ever found in southern climates. Had these animals died natural deaths in their proper climate, their bodies would not have been found in such masses. But that they were carried no farther northward than Siberia, is evident from there being no remains of any animals besides those of whales found in the mountains of Greenland. That this great rush of waters was from the south or south-east is farther evident, he thinks, from the south and south-east sides of almost all great mountains being much steeper than their north or north-west sides, as they necessarily would be if the force of a great body of water fell upon them in that direction." On a subject like this men may innocently differ. Many think the first opinion accords best with the Hebrew text and with the phenomena of nature, for mountains do not always present the above appearance.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER 8

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

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

assuaged, and the atmosphere having its due proportion of vapours restored, the quantity below must be greatly lessened. By the second, the earth was gradually dried, the waters, as they found passage, lessening by degrees till the seas and gulfs were formed, and the earth completely drained. This appears to be what is intended in the third and fifth verses by the waters decreasing continually, or, according to the margin, they were in going and decreasing, Genesis 8:5.

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

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

Verse 7. *He sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro*— It is generally supposed that the raven flew off, and was seen no more, but this meaning the Hebrew text will not bear; **וַיֵּצֵא יָצוֹא** vaiyetse yatso vashob, and it went forth, going forth and returning. From which it is evident that she did return, but was not taken into the ark. She made frequent excursions, and continued on the wing as long as she could, having

picked up such aliment as she found floating on the waters; and then, to rest herself, regained the ark, where she might perch, though she was not admitted. Indeed this must be allowed, as it is impossible she could have continued twenty one days upon the wing, which she must have done had she not returned. But the text itself is sufficiently determinate.

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

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

forty-second, and according to Dr. Hales, the two thousand two hundred and fifty-sixth. See on Genesis 11:12.

Verse 20. Noah builded an altar— As we have already seen that Adam, Cain, and Abel, offered sacrifices, there can be no doubt that they had altars on which they offered them; but this, builded by Noah, is certainly the first on record. It is worthy of remark that, as the old world began with sacrifice, so also did the new. Religion or the proper mode of worshipping the Divine Being, is the invention or institution of God himself; and sacrifice, in the act and design, is the essence of religion. Without sacrifice, actually offered or implied, there never was, there never can be, any religion. Even in the heavens, a lamb is represented before the throne of God as newly slain, Revelation 5:6, 12, 13. The design of sacrificing is two-fold: the slaying and burning of the victim point out, 1st, that the life of the sinner is forfeited to Divine justice; 2dly, that his soul deserves the fire of perdition.

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

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

Burnt-offerings— See the meaning of every kind of offering and sacrifice largely explained on Leviticus 7:1-38.

Verse 21. The Lord smelled a sweet savor— That is, he was well pleased with this religious act, performed in obedience to his own appointment, and in faith of the promised Savior. That this sacrifice prefigured that which was offered by our blessed Redeemer in behalf of the world, is sufficiently evident from the words of St. Paul, Ephesians 5:2: Christ hath loved us, and given himself for its an offering and a sacrifice to God for a

SWEET-SMELLING SAVOR; where the words **οσμην ευωδιας** of the apostle are the very words used by the Septuagint in this place.

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

Verse 22. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, etc.— There is something very expressive in the original, **וְהָאָרֶץ עַד כָּל יְמֵי** od col yemey haarets, until all the DAYS of the earth; for God does not reckon its duration by centuries, and the words themselves afford a strong presumption that the earth shall not have an endless duration.

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

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

There are certainly regions of the earth to which neither this nor our own mode of division can apply: there are some where summer and winter appear to divide the whole year, and others where, besides summer,

winter, autumn, and spring, there are distinct seasons that may be denominated the hot season, the cold season, the rainy season, etc., etc.

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

Thus ends the account of the general deluge, its cause, circumstances, and consequences. An account that seems to say to us, Behold the goodness and severity of God! Both his justice and long-suffering are particularly marked in this astonishing event. His justice, in the punishment of the incorrigibly wicked, and his mercy, in giving them so fair and full a warning, and in waiting so long to extend his grace to all who might seek him. Such a convincing proof has the destruction of the world by water given of the Divine justice, such convincing testimony of the truth of the sacred writings, that not only every part of the earth gives testimony of this extraordinary revolution, but also every nation of the universe has preserved records or traditions of this awful display of the justice of God.

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

In ancient times almost every thing was typical, and no doubt the ark among the rest; but of what and in what way farther than revelation guides, it is both difficult and unsafe to say. It has been considered a type of our blessed Lord; and hence it has been observed, that “as all those who were out of the ark perished by the flood, so those who take not refuge in the

meritorious atonement of Christ Jesus must perish everlastingly.” Of all those who, having the opportunity of hearing the Gospel, refuse to accept of the sacrifice it offers them, this saying is true; but the parallel is not good. Myriads of those who perished during the flood probably repented, implored mercy, and found forgiveness; for God ever delights to save, and Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And though, generally, the people continued in carnal security and sensual gratifications till the flood came, there is much reason to believe that those who during the forty days’ rain would naturally flee to the high lands and tops of the highest mountains, would earnestly implore that mercy which has never been denied, even to the most profligate, when under deep humiliation of heart they have returned to God. And who can say that this was not done by multitudes while they beheld the increasing flood; or that God, in this last extremity, had rendered it impossible?

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

CHAPTER 9

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

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

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

and employed in, the most useful and important purposes; and even willingly submits, when tortured for the sport and amusement of his more brutish oppressor. Tigers, wolves, lions, and hyaenas, the determinate foes of man, incapable of being tamed or domesticated, flee, through the principle of terror, from the dwelling of man, and thus he is providentially safe. Hence, by fear and by dread man rules every beast of the earth, every fowl of the air, and every fish of the sea. How wise and gracious is this order of the Divine providence! and with what thankfulness should it be considered by every human being!

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

Verse 4. *But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood*— Though animal food was granted, yet the blood was most solemnly forbidden, because it was the life of the beast, and this life was to be offered to God as an atonement for sin. Hence the blood was ever held sacred, because it was the grand instrument of expiation, and because it was typical of that blood by which we enter into the holiest. 1. Before the deluge it was not eaten, because animal food was not in use. 2. After the deluge it was

prohibited, as we find above; and, being one of the seven Noahic precepts, it was not eaten previously to the publication of the Mosaic law. 3. At the giving of the law, and at several times during the ministry of Moses, the prohibition was most solemnly, and with awful penalties renewed. Hence we may rest assured that no blood was eaten previously to the Christian era, nor indeed ever since by the Jewish people. 4. That the prohibition has been renewed under the Christian dispensation, can admit of little doubt by any man who dispassionately reads Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25, where even the Gentile converts are charged to abstain from it on the authority, not only of the apostles, but of the Holy Ghost, who gave them there and then especial direction concerning this point; see Acts 15:28; not for fear of stumbling the converted Jews, the gloss of theologians, but because it was one **των επαναγκες τουτων**, of those necessary points, from the burden (**βαρος**) of obedience to which they could not be excused. 5. This command is still scrupulously obeyed by the oriental Christians, and by the whole Greek Church; and why? because the reasons still subsist. No blood was eaten under the law, because it pointed out the blood that was to be shed for the sin of the world; and under the Gospel it should not be eaten, because it should ever be considered as representing the blood which has been shed for the remission of sins. If the eaters of blood in general knew that it affords a very crude, almost indigestible, and unwholesome ailment, they certainly would not on these physical reasons, leaving moral considerations out of the question, be so much attached to the consumption of that from which they could expect no wholesome nutriment, and which, to render it even pleasing to the palate, requires all the skill of the cook. See Leviticus 17:10.

Verse 5. Surely your blood-will I require; at the hand of every beast— This is very obscure, but if taken literally it seems to be an awful warning against cruelty to the brute creation; and from it we may conclude that horse-racers, hare-hunters, bull-baiters, and cock-fighters shall be obliged to give an account to God for every creature they have wantonly destroyed. Instead of **חַיָּה** chayah, “beast,” the Samaritan reads [Sam. Yod Kaph] chai, “living,” any “living creature or person;” this makes a very good sense, and equally forbids cruelty either to men or brutes.

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

A man is accused of the crime of murder; of this crime he is guilty or he is not: if he be guilty of murder he should die; if not, let him be punished according to the demerit of his crime; but for no offense but murder should he lose his life. Taking away the life of another is the highest offense that can be committed against the individual, and against society; and the highest punishment that a man can suffer for such a crime is the loss of his own life. As punishment should be ever proportioned to crimes, so the highest punishment due to the highest crime should not be inflicted for a minor offense. The law of God and the eternal dictates of reason say, that if a man kill another, the loss of his own life is at once the highest penalty he can pay, and an equivalent for his offense as far as civil society is concerned. If the death of the murderer be the highest penalty he can pay for the murder he has committed, then the infliction of this punishment for any minor offense is injustice and cruelty; and serves only to confound the claims of justice, the different degrees of moral turpitude and vice, and to render the profligate desperate: hence the adage so frequent among almost every order of delinquents, “It is as good to be hanged for a sheep as a lamb;” which at once marks their desperation, and the injustice of those penal laws which inflict the highest punishment for almost every species of crime. When shall a wise and judicious legislature see the absurdity and injustice of inflicting the punishment of death for stealing a sheep or a horse, forging a twenty shillings’ note, and MURDERING A MAN; when the latter, in its moral turpitude and ruinous consequences, infinitely exceeds the others? { * On this head the doctor’s pious wish has been realized since this paragraph was written-PUBLISHERS }

Verse 13. *I do set my bow in the cloud*— On the origin and nature of the rainbow there had been a great variety of conjectures, till Anthony de Dominis, bishop of Spalatro, in a treatise of his published by Bartholus in 1611, partly suggested the true cause of this phenomenon, which was afterwards fully explained and demonstrated by Sir Isaac Newton. To enter into this subject here in detail would be improper; and therefore the less informed reader must have recourse to treatises on Optics for its full explanation. To readers in general it may be sufficient to say that the

rainbow is a mere natural effect of a natural cause: 1. It is never seen but in showery weather. 2. Nor then unless the sun shines. 3. It never appears in any part of the heavens but in that opposite to the sun. 4. It never appears greater than a semicircle, but often much less. 5. It is always double, there being what is called the superior and inferior, or primary and secondary rainbow. 6. These bows exhibit the seven prismatic colors, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. 7. The whole of this phenomenon depends on the rays of the sun falling on spherical drops of water, and being in their passage through them, refracted and reflected.

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

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

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

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

τρισσιν εοικότες, ας τε κρονων.
εν νεφει στηριξε, τερας μεροπων ανθρωπων.

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

IRIM de caelo misit Saturnia Juno.

“Juno, the daughter of Saturn, sent down the rainbow from heaven;” and again, AEn. ix., ver. 803:—

aeriam caelo nam Jupiter IRIM Demisit.

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

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

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

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

The word husband first occurs here, and scarcely appears proper, because it is always applied to man in his married state, as wife is to the woman. The etymology of the term will at once show its propriety when applied to the head of a family. Husband, [A.S. husband], is Anglo-Saxon, and simply signifies the bond of the house or family; as by him the family is formed, united, and bound together, which, on his death, is disunited and scattered.

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

Verse 21. He drank of the wine, etc.— It is very probable that this was the first time the wine was cultivated; and it is as probable that the strength or intoxicating power of the expressed juice was never before known. Noah, therefore, might have drunk it at this time without the least blame, as he knew not till this trial the effects it would produce. I once knew a case which I believe to be perfectly parallel. A person who had scarcely ever heard of cider, and whose beverage through his whole life had

been only milk or water, coming wet and very much fatigued to a farmer's house in Somersetshire, begged for a little water or milk. The good woman of the house, seeing him very much exhausted, kindly said, "I will give you a little cider, which will do you more good." The honest man, understanding no more of cider than merely that it was the simple juice of apples, after some hesitation drank about a half pint of it; the consequence was, that in less than half an hour he was perfectly intoxicated, and could neither speak plain nor walk! This case I myself witnessed. A stranger to the circumstances, seeing this person, would pronounce him drunk; and perhaps at a third hand he might be represented as a drunkard, and thus his character be blasted; while of the crime of drunkenness he was as innocent as an infant.

This I presume to have been precisely the case with Noah; and no person without an absolute breach of every rule of charity and candour, can attach any blame to the character of Noah on this ground, unless from a subsequent account they were well assured that, knowing the power and effects of the liquor, he had repeated the act. Some expositors seem to be glad to fix on a fact like this, which by their distortion becomes a crime; and then, in a strain of sympathetic tenderness, affect to deplore "the failings and imperfections of the best of men;" when, from the interpretation that should be given of the place, neither failing nor imperfection can possibly appear.

Verse 22. — 24. *And Ham, the father of Canaan, etc.*— There is no occasion to enter into any detail here; the sacred text is circumstantial enough. Ham, and very probably his son Canaan, had treated their father on this occasion with contempt or reprehensible levity. Had Noah not been innocent, as my exposition supposes him, God would not have endued him with the spirit of prophecy on this occasion, and testified such marked disapprobation of their conduct. The conduct of Shem and Japheth was such as became pious and affectionate children, who appear to have been in the habit of treating their father with decency, reverence, and obedient respect. On the one the spirit of prophecy (not the incensed father) pronounces a curse: on the others the same spirit (not parental tenderness) pronounces a blessing. These things had been just as they afterwards occurred had Noah never spoken. God had wise and powerful reasons to induce him to sentence the one to perpetual servitude, and to

allot to the others prosperity and dominion. Besides, the curse pronounced on Canaan neither fell immediately upon himself nor on his worthless father, but upon the Canaanites; and from the history we have of this people, in Leviticus 18:6, 7, 24, 29, 30, Leviticus 20:9, 22-24, 26; and Deuteronomy 9:4; 12:31, we may ask, Could the curse of God fall more deservedly on any people than on these? Their profligacy was great, but it was not the effect of the curse; but, being foreseen by the Lord, the curse was the effect of their conduct. But even this curse does not exclude them from the possibility of obtaining salvation; it extends not to the soul and to eternity, but merely to their bodies and to time; though, if they continued to abuse their liberty, resist the Holy Ghost, and refuse to be saved on God's terms, then the wrath of Divine justice must come upon them to the uttermost. How many, even of these, repented, we cannot tell.

Verse 23. See note on "Genesis 9:22"

Verse 24. See note on "Genesis 9:22"

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

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

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

The Hamites in general, like the Canaanites of old, were a seafaring race, and sooner arrived at civilization and the luxuries of life than their simpler pastoral and agricultural brethren of the other two families. The first great empires of Assyria and Egypt were founded by them, and the republics of Sidon, Tyre, and Carthage were early distinguished for their commerce but they sooner also fell to decay; and Egypt, which was one of the first,

became the last and basest of the kingdoms, Ezekiel 29:15, and has been successively in subjection to the Shemites and Japhethites, as have also the settlements of the other branches of the Hamites.

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

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

“JAPHETH signifies enlargement; and how wonderfully did Providence enlarge the boundaries of Japheth! His posterity diverged eastward and westward throughout the whole extent of Asia, north of the great range of Taurus, as far as the Eastern Ocean, whence they probably crossed over to America by Behring’s Straits from Kamtschatka, and in the opposite direction throughout Europe to the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean; from whence also they might have crossed over to America by Newfoundland, where traces of early settlements remain in parts now desert. Thus did they gradually enlarge themselves till they literally encompassed the earth, within the precincts of the northern temperate zone, to which their roving hunter’s life contributed not a little. Their progress northwards was checked by the much greater extent of the Black Sea in ancient times, and the increasing rigour of the climates: but their hardy race, and enterprising, warlike genius, made them frequently encroach southwards on the settlements of Shem, whose pastoral and agricultural occupations rendered them more inactive, peaceable. and unwarlike; and so they dwelt in the tents of Shem when the Scythians invaded Media, and subdued western Asia southwards as far as Egypt, in the days of Cyaxares; when the Greeks, and afterwards the Romans, overran and subdued the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians in the east, and

the Syrians and Jews in the south; as foretold by the Syrian prophet Balaam, Numbers 24:24:—

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

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

Though what is left undone should not cause us to lose sight of what is done, yet we have reason to lament that the inhabitants of the British isles, who of all nations under heaven have the purest light of Divine revelation, and the best means of diffusing it, have been much more intent on spreading their conquests and extending their commerce, than in propagating the Gospel of the Son of God. But the nation, by getting the Bible translated into every living language, and sending it to all parts of the habitable globe, and, by its various missionary societies, sending men of God to explain and enforce the doctrines and precepts of this sacred book, is rapidly redeeming its character, and becoming great in goodness and benevolence over the whole earth!

CHAPTER 10

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

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

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

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

Moses also, in this genealogy, seems to have introduced even the name of some places that were remarkable in the sacred history, instead of the original settlers. Such as Hazarmaveth, Genesis 10:26; and probably Ophir and Havilah, Genesis 10:29. But this is not infrequent in the sacred writings, as may be seen 1 Chronicles 2:51, where Salma is called the father of Bethlehem, which certainly never was the name of a man, but of a place sufficiently celebrated in the sacred history; and in 1 Chronicles 4:14, where Joab is called the father of the valley of Charashim, which no person could ever suppose was intended to designate an individual, but the society of craftsmen or artificers who lived there.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tubal— Some think he was the father of the Iberians, and that a part at least of Spain was peopled by him and his descendants; and that Meshech, who is generally in Scripture joined with him, was the founder of the Cappadocians, from whom proceeded the Muscovites.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Verse 7. *Seba*— The founder of the Sabaeans. There seem to be three different people of this name mentioned in this chapter, and a fourth in Genesis 25:3.

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

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

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

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

Sheba— Supposed to have had his residence beyond the Euphrates, in the environs of Charran, Eden, etc.

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

Verse 8. Nimrod— Of this person little is known, as he is not mentioned except here and in 1 Chronicles 1:10, which is evidently a copy of the text in Genesis. He is called a mighty hunter before the Lord; and from Genesis 10:10, we learn that he founded a kingdom which included the cities Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Though the words are not definite, it is very likely he was a very bad man. His name Nimrod comes from מַרְדַּד, marad, he rebelled; and the Targum, on 1 Chronicles 1:10, says: Nimrod began to be a mighty man in sin, a murderer of innocent men, and a rebel before the Lord. The Jerusalem Targum says: “He was mighty in hunting (or in prey) and in sin before God, for he was a hunter of the children of men in their languages; and he said unto them, Depart from the religion of Shem, and cleave to the institutes of Nimrod.” The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel says: “From the foundation of the world none was ever found like Nimrod, powerful in hunting, and in rebellions against the Lord.” The Syriac calls him a warlike giant. The word צַיִד tsayid, which we render hunter, signifies prey; and is applied in the Scriptures to the hunting of men by persecution, oppression, and tyranny. Hence it is likely that Nimrod, having acquired power, used it in tyranny and oppression; and by rapine and violence founded that domination which was the first distinguished by the name of a kingdom on the face of the earth. How many kingdoms have been founded in the same way, in various ages and nations from that time to the present! From the Nimrods of the earth, God deliver the world!

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

Verse 10. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel— בָּבֶל babel signifies confusion; and it seems to have been a very proper name for the

commencement of a kingdom that appears to have been founded in apostasy from God, and to have been supported by tyranny, rapine, and oppression.

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

Verse 11. *Out of that land went forth Asshur*— The marginal reading is to be preferred here. He — Nimrod, went out into Assyria and built Nineveh; and hence Assyria is called the land of Nimrod, Micah 5:6. Thus did this mighty hunter extend his dominions in every possible way. The city of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, is supposed to have had its name from Ninus, the son of Nimrod; but probably Ninus and Nimrod are the same person. This city, which made so conspicuous a figure in the history of the world, is now called Mossul; it is an inconsiderable place, built out of the ruins of the ancient Nineveh.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Caphtorim— Inhabitants of Cyprus according to Calmet.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Aram.— The father of the Arameans, afterwards called Syrians.

Verse 23. Uz— Who peopled Caelosyria, and is supposed to have been the founder of Damascus.

Hul— Who peopled a part of Armenia.

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

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

Verse 24. Salah— The founder of the people of Susiana.

Eber.— See Genesis 10:21. The Septuagint add Cainan here, with one hundred and thirty to the chronology.

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

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

In confirmation that all men have been derived from one family, let it be observed that there are many customs and usages, both sacred and civil, which have prevailed in all parts of the world; and that these could owe their origin to nothing but a general institution, which could never have existed, had not mankind been originally of the same blood, and instructed in the same common notions before they were dispersed. Among these usages may be reckoned, 1. The numbering by tens. 2. Their computing time by a cycle of seven days. 3. Their setting apart the seventh day for religious purposes. 4. Their use of sacrifices, propitiatory and eucharistical. 5. The consecration of temples and altars. 6. The institution of sanctuaries or places of refuge, and their privileges. 7. Their giving a tenth part of the produce of their fields, etc., for the use of the altar. 8. The custom of worshipping the Deity bare-footed. 9. Abstinence of the men from all sensual gratifications previously to their offering sacrifice. 10. The order of priesthood and its support. 11. The notion of legal pollutions, defilements, etc. 12. The universal tradition of a general deluge. 13. The universal opinion that the rainbow was a Divine sign, or portent, etc., etc. See Dodd. The wisdom and goodness of God are particularly manifested in re-peopling the earth by means of three persons, all of the same family, and who had witnessed that awful display of Divine justice in the destruction of the world by the flood, while themselves were preserved in the ark. By this very means the true religion was propagated over the earth; for the sons of Noah would certainly teach their children, not only the precepts delivered to their father by God himself, but also how in his justice he had brought the flood on the world of the ungodly, and by his merciful providence preserved them from the general ruin. It is on this ground alone that we can account for the uniformity and universality of the above traditions, and for the grand outlines of religious truth which are found in every quarter of the world. God has so done his marvellous works that they may be had in everlasting remembrance.

Verse 27. See note "Genesis 10:26".

Verse 28. See note "Genesis 10:26".

Verse 29. See note "Genesis 10:26".

Verse 30. See note "Genesis 10:26".

CHAPTER 11

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

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

this probably gave rise to the necessity of explaining the Hebrew Scriptures in the Chaldee tongue, that the children might understand as well as their fathers. As we may safely presume the parents could not have forgotten the Hebrew, so we may conclude the children in general could not have learned it, as they did not live in an insulated state, but were mixed with the Babylonians. This conjecture removes the difficulty with which many have been embarrassed; one party supposing that the knowledge of the Hebrew language was lost during the Babylonish captivity, and hence the necessity of the Chaldee Targums to explain the Scriptures; another party insisting that this was impossible in so short a period as seventy years.

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

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

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

Verse 3. *Let us make brick*— It appears they were obliged to make use of brick, as there was an utter scarcity of stones in that district; and on the same account they were obliged to use slime, that is, bitumen, (Vulg.) **ασφαλτος**, (Septuagint) for mortar: so it appears they had neither common stone nor lime-stone; hence they had brick for stone, and asphaltus or bitumen instead of mortar.

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

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

idolatrous worship; and that they intended to place an image on the top of the tower with a sword in its hand, probably to act as a talisman against their enemies. Whatever their design might have been, it is certain that this temple or tower was afterwards devoted to idolatrous purposes. Nebuchadnezzar repaired and beautified this tower, and it was dedicated to Bel, or the sun.

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

giants waging war with the gods, and piling mountain upon mountain in order to scale heaven. See Bochart as above.

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

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

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

*“Bring me,” quoth one, “a trowel, quickly, quick!”
 One brings him up a hammer. “Hew this brick,”
 Another bids; and then they cleave a tree;
 “Make fast this rope,” and then they let it flee.
 One calls for planks, another mortar lacks;
 They bear the first a stone, the last an axe.
 One would have spikes, and him a spade they give;
 Another asks a saw, and gets a sieve.
 Thus crossly crost, they prate and point in vain:
 What one hath made another mars again*

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

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

prejudice and worst passions of men! But through a just judgment of God, the language of all those who have attempted to do this has been confounded, and the word of the Lord abideth for ever.

Verse 7. *Go to*— A form of speech which, whatever it might have signified formerly, now means nothing. The Hebrew **הָעָה** habah signifies come, make preparation, as it were for a journey, the execution of a purpose, etc. Almost all the versions understand the word in this way; the Septuagint have **δευτε**, the Vulgate *venite*, both signifying come, or come ye. This makes a very good sense, Come, let its go down, etc. For the meaning of these latter words see Genesis 1:26, and Genesis 18:21.

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

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

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

We have already seen that the Scripture chronology, as it exists in the Hebrew text, the Samaritan, the Septuagint, Josephus, and some of the

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The building of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and the first call of Abram, are three remarkable particulars in this chapter; and these led to the accomplishment of three grand and important designs: 1. The peopling of the whole earth; 2. The preservation of the true religion by the means of one family; and 3. The preservation of the line uncorrupted by which the Messiah should come. When God makes a discovery of himself by a

particular revelation, it must begin in some particular time, and be given to some particular person, and in some particular place. Where, when, and to whom, are comparatively matters of small importance. It is God's gift; and his own wisdom must determine the time, the person, and the place. But if this be the case, have not others cause to complain because not thus favored? Not at all, unless the favoring of the one for a time should necessarily cut off the others for ever. But this is not the case. Abram was first favored; that time, that country, and that person were chosen by infinite wisdom, for there and then God chose to commence these mighty operations of Divine goodness. Isaac and Jacob also received the promises, the twelve patriarchs through their father, and the whole Jewish people through them. Afterwards the designs of God's endless mercy were more particularly unfolded; and the word, which seemed to be confined for two thousand years to the descendants of a single family, bursts forth on all hands, salvation is preached to the Gentiles, and thus in Abram's seed all the nations of the earth are blessed.

Hence none can find fault, and none can have cause to complain; as the salvation which for a time appeared to be restricted to a few, is now on the authority of God, liberally offered to the whole human race!

CHAPTER 12

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

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

Dr. Hales, in his Chronology, contends for two calls: “The first,” says he, “is omitted in the Old Testament, but is particularly recorded in the New, Acts 7:2-4: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was (at Ur of the Chaldees) in Mesopotamia, BEFORE HE DWELT IN CANAAN; and said unto him, Depart from thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land (אֶרֶץ, a land) which I will show thee. Hence it is evident that God had called Abram before he came to Haran or Charran.” The SECOND CALL is recorded only in this chapter: “The Lord said (not

HAD said) unto Abram, Depart from thy land, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto THE LAND, **הארץ** HA-arets, (Septuagint, THN γην,) which I will show thee." "The difference of the two calls," says Dr. Hales, "more carefully translated from the originals, is obvious: in the former the land is indefinite, which was designed only for a temporary residence; in the latter it is definite, intimating his abode. A third condition is also annexed to the latter, that Abram shall now separate himself from his father's house, or leave his brother Nahor's family behind at Charran. This call Abram obeyed, still not knowing whither he was going, but trusting implicitly to the Divine guidance."

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

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

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

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

Verse 4. *And Abram was seventy and five years old*— As Abram was now seventy-five years old, and his father Terah had just died, at the age of two hundred and five, consequently Terah must have been one hundred and thirty when Abram was born; and the seventieth year of his age mentioned Genesis 11:26, was the period at which Haran, not Abram, was born. See on the preceding chapter.

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

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

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

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

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

Verse 8. *Beth-el*— The place which was afterwards called Beth-el by Jacob, for its first name was Luz. See Genesis 28:19. בית אל beith El literally signifies the house of God.

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

And called upon the name of the Lord.— Dr. Shuckford strongly contends that קרא בשם kara beshem does not signify to call ON the name, but to invoke IN the name. So Abram invoked Jehovah in or by the name of Jehovah, who had appeared to him. He was taught even in these

early times to approach God through a Mediator; and that Mediator, since manifested in the flesh, was known by the name Jehovah. Does not our Lord allude to such a discovery as this when he says, Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad? John 8:56. Hence it is evident that he was informed that the Christ should be born of his seed, that the nations of the world should be blessed through him; and is it then to be wondered at if he invoked God in the name of this great Mediator?

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

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

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

Europeans! To this subject a learned British traveler elegantly applied those words of Virgil, Ecl. ii., ver. 18:—

Alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur.

*White lilies lie neglected on the plain,
While dusky hyacinths for use remain.*

DRYDEN.

Verse 13. *Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister*— Abram did not wish his wife to tell a falsehood, but he wished her to suppress a part of the truth. From Genesis 20:12, it is evident she was his step-sister, i.e., his sister by his father, but by a different mother. Some suppose Sarai was the daughter of Haran, and consequently the grand-daughter of Terah: this opinion seems to be founded on Genesis 11:29, where Ischah is thought to be the same with Sarai, but the supposition has not a sufficiency of probability to support it.

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

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

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

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

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

HE-ASSES; חֲמֹרִים chamorim, from חָמַר chamar, to be disturbed, muddy; probably from the dull, stupid appearance of this animal, as if it were always affected with melancholy. Scheuchzer thinks the sandy-coloured domestic Asiatic ass is particularly intended. The word is applied to asses in general, though most frequently restrained to those of the male kind.

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

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

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

considerable time, they undoubtedly cultivated the ground to produce grain.

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

Verse 20. *Commanded his men concerning him*— Gave particular and strict orders to afford Abram and his family every accommodation for their journey; for having received a great increase of cattle and servants, it was necessary that he should have the favor of the king, and his permission to remove from Egypt with so large a property; hence, a particular charge is given to the officers of Pharaoh to treat him with respect, and to assist him in his intended departure.

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

How greatly must the faith of this blessed man have been tried, when, coming to the very land in which he is promised so much blessedness, he finds instead of plenty a grievous famine! Who in his circumstances would not have gone back to his own country, and kindred? Still he is not

stumbled; prudence directs him to turn aside and go to Egypt, till God shall choose to remove this famine. Is it to be wondered at that, in this tried state, he should have serious apprehensions for the safety of his life? Sarai, his affectionate wife and faithful companion, he supposes he shall lose; her beauty, he suspects, will cause her to be desired by men of power, whose will he shall not be able to resist. If he appear to be her husband, his death he supposes to be certain; if she pass for his sister, he may be well used on her account; he will not tell a lie, but he is tempted to prevaricate by suppressing a part of the truth. Here is a weakness which, however we may be inclined to pity and excuse it, we should never imitate. It is recorded with its own condemnation. He should have risked all rather than have prevaricated. But how could he think of lightly giving up such a wife? Surely he who would not risk his life for the protection and safety of a good wife, is not worthy of one. Here his faith was deficient. He still credited the general promise, and acted on that faith in reference to it; but he did not use his faith in reference to intervening circumstances, to which it was equally applicable. Many trust God for their souls and eternity, who do not trust in him for their bodies and for time. To him who follows God fully in simplicity of heart, every thing must ultimately succeed. Had Abram and Sarai simply passed for what they were, they had incurred no danger; for God, who had obliged them to go to Egypt, had prepared the way before them. Neither Pharaoh nor his courtiers would have noticed the woman, had she appeared to be the wife of the stranger that came to sojourn in their land. The issue sufficiently proves this. Every ray of the light of truth is an emanation from the holiness of God, and awfully sacred in his eyes. Considering the subject thus, a pious ancient spoke the following words, which refiners in prevarication have deemed by much too strong: "I would not," said he, "tell a lie to save the souls of the whole world." Reader, be on thy guard; thou mayest fall by comparatively small matters, while resolutely and successfully resisting those which require a giant's strength to counteract them. In every concern God is necessary; seek him for the body and for the soul; and do not think that any thing is too small or insignificant to interest him that concerns thy present or eternal peace.

CHAPTER 13

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. Abram went up out of Egypt-into the south.— Probably the south of Canaan, as in leaving Egypt he is said to come from the south, Genesis 13:3, for the southern part of the promised land lay north-east of Egypt.

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

Verse 3. Beth-el— See chap. 8.

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

They could not dwell together— 1. Because their flocks were great. 2. Because the Canaanites and the Perizzites had already occupied a considerable part of the land. 3. Because there appears to have been envy between the herdmen of Abram and Lot. To prevent disputes among them,

that might have ultimately disturbed the peace of the two families, it was necessary that a separation should take place.

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

That is, they were there at the time Abram and Lot came to fix their tents in the land. See note on “Genesis 12:6”.

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

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

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

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

This choice, as we shall see in the sequel, had nearly proved the ruin of his body, soul, and family.

Verse 13. *The men of Sodom were wicked*— רעים raim, from רע, ra, to break in pieces, destroy, and afflict; meaning persons who broke the established order of things, destroyed and confounded the distinctions between right and wrong, and who afflicted and tormented both themselves and others. And sinners, חטאים chattaim, from חטא chata, to miss the mark, to step wrong, to miscarry; the same as αμαρτανω in Greek, from α, negative, and μαρπω to hit a mark; so a sinner is one who is ever aiming at happiness and constantly missing his mark; because, being wicked — radically evil within, every affection and passion depraved and out of order, he seeks for happiness where it never can be found, in worldly honors and possessions, and in sensual gratifications, the end of which is disappointment, affliction, vexation, and ruin. Such were the companions Lot must have in the fruitful land he had chosen. This, however, amounts to no more than the common character of sinful man; but the people of Sodom were exceedingly sinful and wicked before, or against, the Lord — they were sinners of no common character; they excelled in unrighteousness, and soon filled up the measure of their iniquities. See chap. xix.

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

Verse 15. *To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.*— This land was given to Abram, that it might lineally and legally descend to his posterity; and though Abram himself cannot be said to have possessed it, Acts 7:5, yet it was the gift of God to him in behalf of his seed; and this was always the design of God, not that Abram himself should possess it, but that his posterity should, till the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. And this is chiefly what is to be understood by the words for ever, אד עולם ad olam, to the end of the present dispensation, and the commencement of the new.

עולם olam means either ETERNITY, which implies the termination of all time or duration, such as is measured by the celestial luminaries: or a hidden, unknown period, such as includes a completion or final termination of a particular era, dispensation, etc.; therefore the first is its proper meaning, the latter its accommodated meaning. See note on “Genesis 17:7” See note on “Genesis 21:33”.

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

Built there an altar unto the Lord.— On which he offered sacrifice, as the word **מזבח** mizbach, from **זבח** zabach, to slay, imports.

THE increase of riches in the family of Abram must, in the opinion of many, be a source of felicity to them. If earthly possessions could produce happiness, it must be granted that they had now a considerable share of it in their power. But happiness must have its seat in the mind, and, like that, be of a spiritual nature; consequently earthly goods cannot give it; so far are they from either producing or procuring it, that they always engender care and anxiety, and often strifes and contentions. The peace of this amiable family had nearly been destroyed by the largeness of their possessions. To prevent the most serious misunderstandings, Abram and his nephew were obliged to separate. He who has much in general wishes to have more, for the eye is not satisfied with seeing. Lot, for the better accommodation of his flocks and family, chooses the most fertile district in that country, and even sacrifices reverence and filial affection at the shrine of worldly advantage; but the issue proved that a pleasant worldly prospect may not be the most advantageous, even to our secular affairs. Abram prospered greatly in the comparatively barren part of the land, while Lot lost all his possessions, and nearly the lives of himself and

family, in that land which appeared to him like the garden of the Lord, like a second paradise. Rich and fertile countries have generally luxurious, effeminate, and profligate inhabitants; so it was in this case. The inhabitants of Sodom were sinners, and exceedingly wicked, and their profligacy was of that kind which luxury produces; they fed themselves without fear, and they acted without shame. Lot however was, through the mercy of God, preserved from this contagion: he retained his religion; and this supported his soul and saved his life, when his goods and his wife perished. Let us learn from this to be jealous over our own wills and wishes; to distrust flattering prospects, and seek and secure a heavenly inheritance. "Man wants but little; nor that little long." A man's life-the comfort and happiness of it-does not consist in the multitude of the things he possesses. "One house, one day's food, and one suit of raiment," says the Arabic proverb, "are sufficient for thee; and if thou die before noon, thou hast one half too much." The example of Abram, in constantly erecting an altar wherever he settled, is worthy of serious regard; he knew the path of duty was the way of safety, and that, if he acknowledged God in all his ways, he might expect him to direct all his steps: he felt his dependence on God, he invoked him through a Mediator, and offered sacrifices in faith of the coming Savior; he found blessedness in this work-it was not an empty service; he rejoiced to see the day of Christ-he saw it and was glad. See note on "Genesis 12:8". Reader, has God an altar in thy house? Dost thou sacrifice to him? Dost thou offer up daily by faith, in behalf of thy soul and the souls of thy family, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world? No man cometh unto the Father but by me, said Christ: this was true, not only from the incarnation, but from the foundation of the world. And to this another truth, not less comfortable, may be added: Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no-wise cast out.

CHAPTER 14

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

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

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

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

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

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

Verse 5. *Rephaims*— A people of Canaan: Genesis 15:20.

Asheroth— A city of Basan, where Og afterwards reigned; Joshua 13:31.

Zuzims— Nowhere else spoken of, unless they were the same with the Zamzummims, Deuteronomy 2:20, as some imagine.

Emims— A people great and many in the days of Moses, and tall as the Anakim. They dwelt among the Moabites, by whom they were reputed giants; Deuteronomy 2:10, 11.

Shaveh Kiriathaim— Rather, as the margin, the plain of Kiriathaim, which was a city afterwards belonging to Sihon king of Heshbon; Joshua 13:19.

Verse 6. *The Horites*— A people that dwelt in Mount Seir, till Esau and his sons drove them thence; Deuteronomy 2:22.

El-paran— The plain or oak of Paran, which was a city in the wilderness of Paran; Genesis 21:21.

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

Amalekites— So called afterwards, from Amalek, son of Esau; Genesis 36:12.

Hazezon-tamar.— Called, in the Chaldee, Engaddi; a city in the land of Canaan, which fell to the lot of Judah; Joshua 15:62. See also 2 Chronicles 20:2. It appears, from Canticles So 1:14, to have been a very fruitful place.

Verse 8. *Bela, the same is Zoar*— That is, it was called Zoar after the destruction of Sodom, etc., mentioned in chap. 19.

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

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

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

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

Verse 13. *Abram the Hebrew*— See note on “Genesis 10:21”. It is very likely that Abram had this appellation from his coming from beyond the river Euphrates to enter Canaan; for הֵעֲבְרִי haibri, which we render the Hebrew, comes from עָבַר abar, to pass over, or come from beyond. It is

supposed by many that he got this name from Eber or Heber, son of Salah; see Genesis 11:15. But why he should get a name from Heber, rather than from his own father, or some other of his progenitors, no person has yet been able to discover. We may, therefore, safely conclude that he bears the appellation of Hebrew or Ibrite from the above circumstance, and not from one of his progenitors, of whom we know nothing but the name, and who preceded Abram not less than six generations; and during the whole of that time till the time marked here, none of his descendants were ever called Hebrews; this is a demonstration that Abram was not called the Hebrew from Heber; see Genesis 11:15-27.

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

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

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

Verse 16. *And he brought back-the women also*— This is brought in by the sacred historian with peculiar interest and tenderness. All who read the account must be in pain for the fate of wives and daughters fallen into the hands of a ferocious, licentious, and victorious soldiery. Other spoils the routed confederates might have left behind; and yet on their swift asses, camels, and dromedaries, have carried off the female captives. However, Abram had disposed his attack so judiciously, and so promptly executed

his measures, that not only all the baggage, but all the females also, were recovered.

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

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

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

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

Melchizedek is called here king of Salem, and the most judicious interpreters allow that by Salem, Jerusalem is meant. That it bore this name anciently is evident from Psalm 76:1, 2: “In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel. In SALEM also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.” From the use made of this part of the sacred history by David, Psalm 110:4, and by St. Paul, Hebrews 7:1-10, we learn that there was something very mysterious, and at the same time typical, in the person, name, office, residence, and government of this Cannanitish prince.

1. In his person he was a representative and type of Christ; see the scriptures above referred to. 2. His name, מלכי צדק *malki tsedek*, signifies my righteous king, or king of righteousness. This name he probably had from the pure and righteous administration of his government; and this is one of the characters of our blessed Lord, a

character which can be applied to him only, as he alone is essentially righteous, and the only Potentate; but a holy man, such as Melchizedek, might bear this name as his type or representative. 3. Office; he was a priest of the most high God. The word כֹּהֵן *cohen*, which signifies both prince and priest, because the patriarchs sustained this double office, has both its root and proper signification in the Arabic; [A] *kahana* signifies to approach, draw near, have intimate access to; and from hence to officiate as priest before God, and thus have intimate access to the Divine presence: and by means of the sacrifices which he offered he received counsel and information relative to what was yet to take place, and hence another acceptation of the word, to foretell, predict future events, unfold hidden things or mysteries; so the lips of the priests preserved knowledge, and they were often the interpreters of the will of God to the people. Thus we find that Melchizedek, being a priest of the most high God, represented Christ in his sacerdotal character, the word priest being understood as before explained. 4. His residence; he was king of Salem. שָׁלֵם *shalam* signifies to make whole, complete, or perfect; and hence it means peace, which implies the making whole the breaches made in the political and domestic union of kingdoms, states, families, etc., making an end of discord, and establishing friendship. Christ is called the Prince of peace, because, by his incarnation, sacrifice, and mediation, he procures and establishes peace between God and man; heals the breaches and dissensions between heaven and earth, reconciling both; and produces glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will among men. His residence is peace and quietness and assurance for ever, in every believing upright heart. He governs as the Prince and Priest of the most high God, ruling in righteousness, mighty to save; and he ever lives to make intercession for, and save to the uttermost all who come unto the Father by him. See the notes on Heb. vii.

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

Verse 20. *And he gave him tithes*— A tenth part of all the spoils he had taken from the confederate kings. These Abram gave as a tribute to the most high God, who, being the possessor of heaven and earth, dispenses

all spiritual and temporal favors, and demands the gratitude, and submissive, loving obedience, of all his subjects. Almost all nations of the earth have agreed in giving a tenth part of their property to be employed in religious uses. The tithes were afterwards granted to the Levites for the use of the sanctuary, and the maintenance of themselves and their families, as they had no other inheritance in Israel.

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

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

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

THE great variety of striking incidents in this chapter the attentive reader has already carefully noted. To read and not understand is the property of the foolish and the inconsiderate. 1. We have already seen the danger to which Lot exposed himself in preferring a fertile region, though peopled with the workers of iniquity. His sorrows commence in the captivity of himself and family, and the loss of all his property, though by the good

providence of God he and they were rescued. 2. Long observation has proved that the company a man keeps is not an indifferent thing; it will either be the means of his salvation or destruction. 3. A generous man cannot be contented with mere personal safety while others are in danger, nor with his own prosperity while others are in distress. Abram, hearing of the captivity of his nephew, determines to attempt his rescue; he puts himself at the head of his own servants, three hundred and eighteen in number, and the few assistants with which his neighbors, Mamre, Aner, and Eshcol, could furnish him; and, trusting in God and the goodness of his cause, marches off to attack four confederate kings! 4. Though it is not very likely that the armies of those petty kings could have amounted to many thousands, yet they were numerous enough to subdue almost the whole land of Canaan; and consequently, humanly speaking, Abram must know that by numbers he could not prevail, and that in this case particularly the battle was the Lord's. 5. While depending on the Divine blessing and succor he knew he must use the means he had in his power; he therefore divided his troops skilfully that he might attack the enemy at different points at the same time, and he chooses the night season to commence his attack, that the smallness of his force might not be discovered. God requires a man to use all the faculties he has given him in every lawful enterprise, and only in the conscientious use of them can he expect the Divine blessing; when this is done the event may be safely trusted in the hands of God. 6. Here is a war undertaken by Abram on motives the most honorable and conscientious; it was to repel aggression, and to rescue the innocent from the heaviest of sufferings and the worst of slavery, not for the purpose of plunder nor the extension of his territories; therefore he takes no spoils, and returns peaceably to his own possessions. How happy would the world be were every sovereign actuated by the same spirit! 7. We have already noticed the appearance, person, office, etc., of Melchizedek; and, without indulging in the wild theories of either ancient or modern visionaries, have considered him as the Scriptures do, a type of Christ. All that has been already spoken on this head may be recapitulated in a few words. 1. The Redeemer of the world is the King of righteousness; he creates it, maintains it, and rules by it. 2. His empire is the empire of peace; this he proclaims to them who are afar off, and to them that are nigh; to the Jew and to the Gentile. 3. He is Priest of the most high God, and has laid down his life for the sin of the world; and

through this sacrifice the blessing of God is derived on them that believe. Reader, take him for thy King as well as thy Priest; he saves those only who submit to his authority. and take his Spirit for the regulator of their heart, and his word for the director of their conduct. How many do we find, among those who would be sorry to be rated so low as to rank only with nominal Christians, talking of Christ as their Prophet, Priest, and King, who are not taught by his word and Spirit, who apply not for redemption in his blood, and who submit not to his authority! Reader, learn this deep and important truth: “Where I am there also shall my servant be; and he that serveth me, him shall my Father honor.”

CHAPTER 15

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord came unto Abram*— This is the first place where God is represented as revealing himself by his word. Some learned men suppose that the **דְבַר יְהוָה** *debar Yehovah*, translated here word of the Lord, means the same with the **λογος του θεου** of St. John, John 1:1, and, by the Chaldee paraphrases in the next clause, called **מִימְרֵי** *meimeri*, “my word,” and in other places **מִמְרֵא דַיָּא** *meimera daiya*, the word of Yeya, a contraction for Jehovah, which they appear always to consider as a person; and which they distinguish from **פְּתֻגָמָא** *pithgama*, which signifies merely a word spoken, or any part of speech. There have been various conjectures concerning the manner in which God revealed his will, not only to the patriarchs, but also to the prophets, evangelists, and apostles. It seems to have been done in different ways. 1. By a personal appearance of him who was afterwards incarnated for the salvation of mankind. 2. By an audible voice, sometimes accompanied with emblematical appearances. 3. By visions which took place either in the night in ordinary sleep, or when the persons were cast into a temporary trance by daylight, or when about their ordinary business, 4. By the

ministry of angels appearing in human bodies, and performing certain miracles to accredit their mission. 5. By the powerful agency of the Spirit of God upon the mind, giving it a strong conception and supernatural persuasion of the truth of the things perceived by the understanding. We shall see all these exemplified in the course of the work. It was probably in the third sense that the revelation in the text was given; for it is said, God appeared to Abram in a vision, מַחֲזֵה מַחֲזֵה machazeh, from חָזָה chazah, to see, or according to others, to fix, fasten, settle; hence chozeh, a SEER, the person who sees Divine things, to whom alone they are revealed, on whose mind they are fastened, and in whose memory and judgment they are fixed and settled. Hence the vision which was mentally perceived, and, by the evidence to the soul of its Divine origin, fixed and settled in the mind.

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

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

the immortality of the soul, the truth of religion, and the eternity of another life, than to see that in this life the righteous seldom receive the reward of their virtue, and that in temporal things they are often less happy than the workers of iniquity.

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

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

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

Verse 5. *Look now toward heaven*— It appears that this whole transaction took place in the evening; see on Genesis 13:14. Abram had either two visions, that recorded in Genesis 15:1, and that in Genesis 15:12, etc.; or what is mentioned in the beginning of this chapter is a part of the occurrences which took place after the sacrifice mentioned Genesis 15:9, etc.: but it is more likely that there was a vision of that kind already described, and afterwards a second, in which he received the revelation mentioned Genesis 15:13-16. After the first vision he is brought forth abroad to see if he can number the stars; and as he finds this impossible, he is assured that as they are to him innumerable, so shall his posterity be; and that all should spring from one who should proceed from his own bowels—one who should be his own legitimate child.

Verse 6. *And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*— This I conceive to be one of the most important passages in the whole Old Testament. It properly contains and specifies that doctrine of justification by faith which engrosses so considerable a share of the epistles of St. Paul, and at the foundation of which is the atonement made by the Son of God: And he (Abram) believed **הֵאֱמַן** heemin, he put faith) in Jehovah, **וַיַּחְשְׁבֵהָ לּוֹ** vaiyachshebeita lo, and he counted it — the faith he put in Jehovah, to HIM for righteousness, **צְדָקָה** tsedakak, or justification; though there was no act in the case but that of the mind and heart, no work of any kind. Hence the doctrine of justification by faith, without any merit of works; for in this case there could be none—no works of Abram which could merit the salvation of the whole human race. It was the promise of God which he credited, and in the blessedness of which he became a partaker through faith. See at the close of the chapter; see also on Romans 4.

Verse 7. *Ur of the Chaldees*— See on chap. 40.

Verse 8. *And he said, Lord God*— **אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה** Adonai Yehovah, my Lord Jehovah. Adonai is the word which the Jews in reading always substitute for Jehovah, as they count it impious to pronounce this name. Adonai signifies my director, basis, supporter, prop, or stay; and scarcely a more appropriate name can be given to that God who is the framer and director of every righteous word and action; the basis or foundation on which every rational hope rests; the supporter of the souls and bodies of men, as well

as of the universe in general; the prop and stay of the weak and fainting, and the buttress that shores up the building, which otherwise must necessarily fall. This word often occurs in the Hebrew Bible, and is rendered in our translation Lord; the same term by which the word Jehovah is expressed: but to distinguish between the two, and to show the reader when the original is יהוה Yehovah, and when אדני Adonai, the first is always put in capitals, LORD, the latter in plain Roman characters, Lord. For the word Jehovah see on Genesis 2:4, and on Exodus 34:6.

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

Verse 9. Take me a heifer— עגלה eglah, a she-calf; a she-goat, עז ez, a goat, male or female, but distinguished here by the feminine adjective; משלשת meshullesheth, a three-yearling; a ram, איל ayil; a turtle-dove, תר, tor, from which come turtur and turtle; young pigeon, גוזל gozal, a word signifying the young of pigeons and eagles. See Deuteronomy 32:11. It is worthy of remark, that every animal allowed or commanded to be sacrificed under the Mosaic law is to be found in this list. And is it not a proof that God was now giving to Abram an epitome of that law and its sacrifices which he intended more fully to reveal to Moses; the essence of which consisted in its sacrifices, which typified the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world?

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

Verse 10. Divided them in the midst— The ancient method of making covenants. as well as the original word, have been already alluded to, and in a general way explained. See Genesis 6:18. The word covenant from con,

together, and venio, I come, signifies an agreement, association, or meeting between two or more parties; for it is impossible that a covenant can be made between an individual and himself, whether God or man. This is a theological absurdity into which many have run; there must be at least two parties to contract with each other. And often there was a third party to mediate the agreement, and to witness it when made. Rabbi Solomon Jarchi says, "It was a custom with those who entered into covenant with each other to take a heifer and cut it in two, and then the contracting parties passed between the pieces." See this and the scriptures to which it refers particularly explained, Genesis 6:18. A covenant always supposed one of these four things: 1. That the contracting parties had been hitherto unknown to each other, and were brought by the covenant into a state of acquaintance. 2. That they had been previously in a state of hostility or enmity, and were brought by the covenant into a state of pacification and friendship. 3. Or that, being known to each other, they now agree to unite their counsels, strength, property, etc., for the accomplishment of a particular purpose, mutually subservient to the interests of both. Or, 4. It implies an agreement to succor and defend a third party in cases of oppression and distress. For whatever purpose a covenant was made, it was ever ratified by a sacrifice offered to God; and the passing between the divided parts of the victim appears to have signified that each agreed, if they broke their engagements, to submit to the punishment of being cut asunder; which we find from Matthew 24:51; Luke 12:46, was an ancient mode of punishment. This is farther confirmed by Herodotus, who says that Sabacus, king of Ethiopia, had a vision, in which he was ordered **μεσοῦσ διατεμεῖν**, to cut in two, all the Egyptian priests; lib. ii. We find also from the same author, lib. vii., that Xerxes ordered one of the sons of Pythius **μεσον διατεμεῖν**, to be cut in two, and one half to be placed on each side of the way, that his army might pass through between them. That this kind of punishment was used among the Persians we have proof from Daniel 2:5; Daniel 3:29. Story of Susanna, verses 55, 59. See farther, 2 Samuel 12:31, and 1 Chronicles 20:3. These authorities may be sufficient to show that the passing between the parts of the divided victims signified the punishment to which those exposed themselves who broke their covenant engagements. And that covenant sacrifices were thus divided, even from the remotest antiquity, we learn from Homer, Il. A., v. 460.

μηροῦσ τ' ἐξεταμον κατα τε κνισησ εκαλυψαν,

διπτυχα ποιησαντες, επ' αυτων δ' ωμοθητησαν.

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

But this place may be differently understood.

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

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

But the birds divided he not.— According to the law, Leviticus 1:17, fowls were not to be divided asunder but only cloven for the purpose of taking out the intestines.

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

Verse 12. A deep sleep— תרדמה tardemah, the same word which is used to express the sleep into which Adam was cast, previous to the formation of Eve; Genesis 2:21.

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

Verse 13. Four hundred years— “Which began,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “when Ishmael, son of Hagar, mocked and persecuted Isaac, Genesis 21:9; Galatians 4:29; which fell out thirty years after the promise, Genesis 12:3; which promise was four hundred and thirty years before the law, Galatians 3:17; and four hundred and thirty years after that promise came Israel out of Egypt, Exodus 12:41.”

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

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

2. His body should be buried after a long life, one hundred and seventy-five years, Genesis 25:7. The body was buried; the soul went to the spiritual world, to dwell among the fathers — the patriarchs, who had lived and died in the Lord. See note on “Gen 25:8.

Verse 16. In the fourth generation— In former times most people counted by generations, to each of which was assigned a term of years amounting to 20, 25, 30, 33, 100, 108, or 110; for the generation was of various lengths among various people, at different times. It is probable that the fourth generation here means the same as the four hundred years in the preceding verse. Some think it refers to the time when Eleazar, the son of

Aaron, the son of Amram, the son of Kohath, came out of Egypt, and divided the land of Canaan to Israel, Joshua 14:1. Others think the fourth generation of the Amorites is intended, because it is immediately added, The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full; but in the fourth generation they should be expelled, and the descendants of Abram established in their place. From these words we learn that there is a certain pitch of iniquity to which nations may arrive before they are destroyed, and beyond which Divine justice does not permit them to pass.

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

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

From the river of Egypt— Not the Nile, but the river called Sichor, which was before or on the border of Egypt, near to the isthmus of Suez; see Joshua 13:3; though some think that by this a branch of the Nile is meant. This promise was fully accomplished in the days of David and Solomon. See 2 Samuel 8:3, etc., and 2 Chronicles 9:26.

Verse 19. *The Kenites, etc.*— Here are ten nations mentioned, though afterwards reckoned but seven; see Deuteronomy 7:1; Acts 13:19. Probably some of them which existed in Abram's time had been blended with others before the time of Moses, so that seven only out of the ten then remained; see part of these noticed Gen. x.

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

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

3. The foundation of the doctrine itself is laid in the covenant made between God and Abram in behalf of all the families of the earth, and this covenant is ratified by a sacrifice. By this covenant man is bound to God, and God graciously binds himself to man. As this covenant referred to the incarnation of Christ; and Abram, both as to himself and posterity, was to partake of the benefits of it by faith; hence faith, not works, is the only condition on which God, through Christ, forgives sins, and brings to the promised spiritual inheritance. This covenant still stands open; all the successive generations of men are parties on the one side, and Jesus is at once the sacrifice and Mediator of it. As therefore the covenant still stands

open, and Jesus is still the Lamb slain before the throne, every human soul must ratify the covenant for himself; and no man does so but he who, conscious of his guilt, accepts the sacrifice which God has provided for him. Reader, hast thou done so! And with a heart unto righteousness dost thou continue to believe on the Son of God? How merciful is God, who has found out such a way of salvation by providing a Savior every way suitable to miserable, fallen, sinful man! One who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; and who, being higher than the heavens, raises up his faithful followers to the throne of his own eternal glory! Reader, give God the praise, and avail thyself of the sin-offering which lieth at the door.

CHAPTER 16

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

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

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

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

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

Verse 3. *And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar-and gave her to her husband-to be his wife.*— There are instances of Hindoo women, when barren, consenting to their husbands marrying a second wife for the sake of children; and second marriages on this account, without consent, are very common. — Ward

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

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

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

1. From his promising to perform what God alone could do, and foretelling what God alone could know; "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly," etc., Genesis 16:10; "Thou art with child, and shalt bear a son," etc., Genesis 16:11; "He will be a wild man," etc., Genesis 16:12. All this shows a prescience which is proper to God alone.
2. Hagar considers the person who spoke to her as God, calls him **אל** El, and addresses him in the way of worship, which, had he been a created angel, he would have refused. See Revelation 19:10; 22:9.
3. Moses, who relates the transaction, calls this angel expressly **יהוה**; for, says he, she called **שֵׁם יְהוָה** shem Yehovah, the NAME of the LORD

that spake to her, Genesis 16:13. Now this is a name never given to any created being.

4. This person, who is here called מלאך יהוה malach Yehovah, the Angel of the Lord, is the same who is called המלאך הגאול hammalach haggioel, the redeeming Angel or the Angel the Redeemer, Genesis 48:16; פניו מלאך malach panaiv, the Angel of God's presence, Isaiah 63:9; and מלאך הברית malach habberith, the Angel of the Covenant, Malachi 3:1; and is the same person which the Septuagint, Isaiah 9:6, term *μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος*, the Angel of the Great Counsel or Design, viz., of redeeming man, and filling the earth with righteousness.

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

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

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

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

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

Verse 12. *He will be a wild man*— פֶּרֶא אָדָם pere adam. As the root of this word does not appear in the Hebrew Bible, it is probably found in the Arabic [A] farra, to run away, to run wild; and hence the wild ass, from its fleetness and its untamable nature. What is said of the wild ass, Job 39:5-8, affords the very best description that can be given of the Ishmaelites, (the Bedouins and wandering Arabs,) the descendants of Ishmael: “Who hath sent out the wild ass (פֶּרֶא pere) free? or who hath loosed the bands (עֲרוּדָא arod) of the brayer? Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.” Nothing can be more descriptive of the wandering, lawless, freebooting life of the Arabs than this.

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

It is farther said, His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him. — Many potentates among the Abyssinians, Persians, Egyptians, and Turks, have endeavored to subjugate the wandering or wild Arabs; but, though they have had temporary triumphs, they have been ultimately unsuccessful. Sesostris, Cyrus, Pompey, and Trajan, all endeavored to conquer Arabia, but in vain. From the beginning to the present day they have maintained their independency, and God preserves them as a lasting monument of his providential care, and an incontestable argument of the truth of Divine Revelation. Had the Pentateuch no other argument to evince its Divine origin, the account of Ishmael and the prophecy concerning his descendants, collated with their history and

manner of life during a period of nearly four thousand years, would be sufficient. Indeed the argument is so absolutely demonstrative, that the man who would attempt its refutation, in the sight of reason and common sense would stand convicted of the most ridiculous presumption and folly.

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

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

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

Verse 14. *Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi*— It appears, from Genesis 16:7, that Hagar had sat down by a fountain or well of water in the wilderness of Shur, at which the Angel of the Lord found her; and, to commemorate the wonderful discovery which God had made of himself, she called the name of the well בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי *beer-lachai-roi*, “A well to the Living One who seeth me.” Two things seem implied here: 1. A dedication of the well to Him who had appeared to her; and, 2. Faith in the promise: for he who is the Living One, existing in all generations, must

have it ever in his power to accomplish promises which are to be fulfilled through the whole lapse of time.

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

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

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

It is very difficult to believe that a promise which refers to some natural event can possibly be fulfilled but through some natural means. And yet, what is nature but an instrument in God's hands? What we call natural effects are all performed by supernatural agency; for nature, that is, the whole system of inanimate things, is as inert as any of the particles of matter of the aggregate of which it is composed, and can be a cause to no effect but as it is excited by a sovereign power. This is a doctrine of sound philosophy, and should be carefully considered by all, that men may see that without an overruling and universally energetic providence, no effect whatever can be brought about. But besides these general influences of

God in nature, which are all exhibited by what men call general laws, he chooses often to act supernaturally, i.e., independently of or against these general laws, that we may see that there is a God who does not confine himself to one way of working, but with means, without means, and even against natural means, accomplishes the gracious purposes of his mercy in the behalf of man. Where God has promised let him be implicitly credited, because he cannot lie; and let not hasty nature intermeddle with his work.

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

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

CHAPTER 17

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. The Lord appeared to Abram— See note on “Genesis 15:1”.

I am the Almighty God— **אני אל שדי** ani El shaddai, I am God all-sufficient; from **שדה** shadah, to shed, to pour out. I am that God who pours out blessings, who gives them richly, abundantly, continually.

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

Be thou perfect.— **והיה תמים** vehyeh thamim, and thou shalt be perfections, i.e., a together perfect. Be just such as the holy God would have thee to be, as the almighty God can make thee and live as the

all-sufficient God shall support thee; for he alone who makes the soul holy can preserve it in holiness. Our blessed Lord appears to have had these words pointedly in view, Matthew 5:48: **εσεσθε υμεις τελειοι, ωσπερ ο εν τοις ουρανοις τελειος εστι.** Ye SHALL BE perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. But what does this imply? Why, to be saved from all the power, the guilt, and the contamination of sin. This is only the negative part of salvation, but it has also a positive part; to be made perfect — to be perfect as our Father who is in heaven is perfect, to be filled with the fullness of God, to have Christ dwelling continually in the heart by faith, and to be rooted and grounded in love. This is the state in which man was created, for he was made in the image and likeness of God. This is the state from which man fell, for he broke the command of God. And this is the state into which every human soul must be raised, who would dwell with God in glory; for Christ was incarnated and died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. What a glorious privilege! And who can doubt the possibility of its attainment, who believes in the omnipotent love of God, the infinite merit of the blood of atonement, and the all-pervading and all-purifying energy of the Holy Ghost? How many miserable souls employ that time to dispute and cavil against the possibility of being saved from their sins, which they should devote to praying and believing that they might be saved out of the hands of their enemies! But some may say, “You overstrain the meaning of the term; it signifies only, be sincere; for as perfect obedience is impossible, God accepts of sincere obedience.” If by sincerity the objection means good desires, and generally good purposes, with an impure heart and spotted life, then I assert that no such thing is implied in the text, nor in the original word; but if the word sincerity be taken in its proper and literal sense, I have no objection to it. Sincere is compounded of sine cera, “without wax;” and, applied to moral subjects, is a metaphor taken from clarified honey, from which every atom of the comb or wax is separated. Then let it be proclaimed from heaven, Walk before me, and be SINCERE! purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump unto God; and thus ye shall be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. This is sincerity. Reader, remember that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Ten thousand quibbles on insulated texts can never lessen, much less destroy, the merit and efficacy of the great Atonement.

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

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

Aben Ezra says the name is derived from אַבִּיר הַמּוֹת abir-hamon, “a powerful multitude.”

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

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

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

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

From all these learned as well as puerile conjectures we may see the extreme difficulty of ascertaining the true meaning of the word, though the

concordance makers, and proper name explainers find no difficulty at all in the case; and pronounce on it as readily and authoritatively as if they had been in the Divine council when it was first imposed.

Hottinger, in his *Smegma Orientale*, supposes the word to be derived from the Arabic root [A] rahama, which signifies to be very numerous. Hence [A] ab raham would signify a copious father or father of a multitude. This makes a very good sense, and agrees well with the context. Either this etymology or that which supposes the inserted ה he to be an abbreviation of the word חמון hamon, multitude, is the most likely to be the true one.

But this last would require the word to be written, when full, כראם המו אב ab-ram-hamon.

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

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

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

Verse 7. An everlasting covenant—ברית עולם berith olam. See note on “Genesis 13:15”. Here the word olam is taken in its own proper meaning,

as the words immediately following prove-to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee; for as the soul is to endure for ever, so it shall eternally stand in need of the supporting power and energy of God; and as the reign of the Gospel dispensation shall be as long as sun and moon endure, and its consequences eternal, so must the covenant be on which these are founded.

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

Verse 10. *Every man-child-shall be circumcised*.— Those who wish to invalidate the evidence of the Divine origin of the Mosaic law, roundly assert that the Israelites received the rite of circumcision from the Egyptians. Their apostle in this business is Herodotus, who, lib. ii., p. 116, Edit. Steph. 1592, says: “The Colchians, Egyptians, and Ethiopians, are the only nations in the world who have used circumcision ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, from the remotest period; and the Phoenicians and Syrians who inhabit Palestine acknowledge they received this from the Egyptians.” Herodotus cannot mean Jews by Phoenicians and Syrians; if he does he is incorrect, for no Jew ever did or ever could acknowledge this, with the history of Abraham in his hand. If Herodotus had written before the days of Abraham, or at least before the sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt, and informed us that circumcision had been practiced among them ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, from the beginning, there would then exist a possibility that the Israelites while sojourning among them had learned and adopted this rite. But when we know that Herodotus flourished only 484 years before the Christian era, and that Jacob and his family sojourned in Egypt more than 1800 years before Christ, and that all the descendants of Abraham

most conscientiously observed circumcision, and do so to this day, then the presumption is that the Egyptians received it from the Israelites, but that it was impossible the latter could have received it from the former, as they had practiced it so long before their ancestors had sojourned in Egypt.

Verse 11. *And it shall be a token*— לְאוֹתֶיךָ leoth, for a sign of spiritual things; for the circumcision made in the flesh was designed to signify the purification of the heart from all unrighteousness, as God particularly showed in the law itself. See Deuteronomy 10:16; see also Romans 2:25-29; Colossians 2:11. And it was a seal of that righteousness or justification that comes by faith, Romans 4:11. That some of the Jews had a just notion of its spiritual intention, is plain from many passages in the Chaldee paraphrases and in the Jewish writers. I borrow one passage from the book Zohar, quoted by Ainsworth: “At what time a man is sealed with this holy seal, (of circumcision,) thenceforth he seeth the holy blessed God properly, and the holy soul is united to him. If he be not worthy, and keepeth not this sign, what is written? By the breath of God they perish, (Job 4:9,) because this seal of the holy blessed God was not kept. But if he be worthy, and keep it, the Holy Ghost is not separated from him.”

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

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

Verse 14. *The uncircumcised shall be cut off from his people*— By being cut off some have imagined that a sudden temporal death was implied; but the simple meaning seems to be that such should have no right to nor share in the blessings of the covenant, which we have already seen were both of

a temporal and spiritual kind; and if so, then eternal death was implied, for it was impossible for a person who had not received the spiritual purification to enter into eternal glory. The spirit of this law extends to all ages, dispensations, and people; he whose heart is not purified from sin cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Reader, on what is thy hope of heaven founded?

Verse 15. *Thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah*— See note on “Genesis 17:5.

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

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

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

Verse 20. *Twelve princes shall he beget, etc.*— See the names of these twelve princes, Genesis 25:12-16. From Ishmael proceeded the various tribes of the Arabs, called also Saracens by Christian writers. They were anciently, and still continue to be, a very numerous and powerful people. "It was somewhat wonderful, and not to be foreseen by human sagacity," says Bishop Newton, "that a man's whole posterity should so nearly resemble him, and retain the same inclinations, the same habits, and the same customs, throughout all ages! These are the only people besides the Jews who have subsisted as a distinct people from the beginning, and in some respects they very much resemble each other 1. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are descended from Abraham, and both boast of their descent from the father of the faithful. 2. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are circumcised, and both profess to have derived this ceremony from Abraham. 3. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, had originally twelve patriarchs, who were their princes or governors. 4. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, marry among themselves, and in their own tribes. 5. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are singular in several of their customs, and are standing monuments to all ages of the exactness of the Divine predictions, and of the veracity of Scripture history. We may with more confidence believe the particulars related of Abraham and Ishmael when we see them verified in their posterity at this day. This is having, as it were, ocular demonstration for our faith." See Bp. Newton's Second Dissertation on the Prophecies, and See note on "Genesis 16:12.

Verse 21. *My covenant will I establish with Isaac*— All temporal good things are promised to Ishmael and his posterity, but the establishment of the Lord's covenant is to be with Isaac. Hence it is fully evident that this covenant referred chiefly to spiritual things — to the Messiah, and the

salvation which should be brought to both Jews and Gentiles by his incarnation, death, and glorification.

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

Verse 23. *And Abraham took Ishmael, etc.*— Had not Abraham, his son, (who was of age to judge for himself,) and all the family, been fully convinced that this thing was of God, they could not have submitted to it. A rite so painful, so repugnant to every feeling of delicacy, and every way revolting to nature, could never have sprung up in the imagination of man. To this day the Jews practice it as a Divine ordinance; and all the Arabians do the same. As a distinction between them and other people it never could have been designed, because it was a sign that was never to appear. The individual alone knew that he bore in his flesh this sign of the covenant, and he bore it by the order of God, and he knew it was a sign and seal of spiritual blessings, and not the blessings themselves, though a proof that these blessings were promised, and that he had a right to them. Those who did not consider it in this spiritual reference are by the apostle denominated the concision, Philippians 3:2, i.e., persons whose flesh was cut, but whose hearts were not purified.

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

1. God, in renewing his covenant with Abram, makes an important change in his and Sarai's name; a change which should ever act as a help to their faith, that the promises by which God had bound himself should be punctually fulfilled. However difficult it may be for us to ascertain the precise import of the change then made, we may rest assured that it was perfectly understood by both; and that, as they had received this name from God, they considered it as placing them in a new relation both to their Maker and to their posterity. From what we have already seen, the

change made in Abram's name is inscrutable to us; there is something like this in Revelation 2:17: To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and a NEW NAME-which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. The full import of the change made in a soul that enters into covenant with God through Christ, is only known to itself; a stranger intermeddeth not with its joy. Hence, even men of learning and the world at large have considered experimental religion as enthusiasm, merely because they have not understood its nature, and have permitted themselves to be carried away by prejudices which they have imbibed perhaps at first through the means of ignorant or hypocritical pretenders to deep piety; but while they have the sacred writings before them, their prejudices and opposition to that without which they cannot be saved are as unprincipled as they are absurd.

2. God gives Abraham a precept, which should be observed, not only by himself, but by all his posterity; for this was to be a permanent sign of that covenant which was to endure for ever. Though the sign is now changed from circumcision to baptism, each of them equally significant, yet the covenant is not changed in any part of its essential meaning. Faith in God through the great sacrifice, remission of sins, and sanctification of the heart, are required by the new covenant as well as by the old.

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

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

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

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

7. Those who profess to believe in him must not live as they list, but as he pleases. Though redeemed from the curse of the law, and from the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish Church, they are under the law to Christ, and must walk before him — be in all things obedient to that moral law which is an emanation from the righteousness of God, and of eternal obligation; and let it ever be remembered that Christ is "the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him." Without faith and obedience there can be no holiness, and without holiness none can see the Lord. Be all that God would have thee to be, and God will be to thee "all that thou canst possibly require. He never gives a precept but he offers sufficient grace to enable thee to perform it. Believe as he would have thee, and act as he shall strengthen thee, and thou wilt believe all things savingly, and do all things well.

CHAPTER 18

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

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. *And the Lord appeared*— See note on “Genesis 15:1.

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

Verse 2. *Three men stood by him*— נֹצְבִים עָלָיו nitstsabim alaiiv, were standing over against him; for if they had been standing by him, as our

translation says, he needed not to have “run from the tent door to meet them.” To Abraham these appeared at first as men; but he entertained angels unawares, see Hebrews 13:2.

Verse 3. *And said, My Lord, etc.*— The word is אֲדֹנָי Adonai, not יְהוָה Yehovah, for as yet Abraham did not know the quality of his guests. For an explanation of this word, See note on “Gen 15:8”.

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

Rest yourselves under the tree— We have already heard of the oak grove of Mamre, Genesis 12:6, and this was the second requisite for the refreshment of a weary traveler, viz., rest in the shade.

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

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

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

Verse 6. *Three measures of fine meal*— The סֵאֵה seah, which is here translated measure, contained, according to Bishop Cumberland, about two gallons and a half; and Mr. Ainsworth translates the word peck. On this circumstance the following observations of the judicious and pious Abbe Fleury cannot fail to be acceptable to the reader. Speaking of the frugality

of the patriarchs he says: “We have an instance of a splendid entertainment in that which Abraham made for the three angels. He set a whole calf before them, new bread, but baked on the hearth, together with butter and milk. Three measures of meal were baked into bread on this occasion, which come to more than two of our bushels, and nearly to fifty-six pounds of our weight; hence we may conclude that men were great eaters in those days, used much exercise, were probably of a much larger stature as well as longer lives than we. Homer (Odys. lib. xiv., ver. 74, etc.) makes his heroes great eaters. When Eumaeus entertained Ulysses, he dressed two pigs for himself and his guest.

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

COWPER.

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

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

COWPER.

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

Make cakes upon the hearth.— Or under the ashes. This mode is used in the east to the present day. When the hearth is strongly heated with the

fire that has been kindled on it, they remove the coals, sweep off the ashes, lay on the bread, and then cover it with the hot cinders.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Verse 14. *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?*— **היפלא מיהוה דבר** hayippale meihovah dabar, shall a word (or thing) be wonderful from the Lord? i.e., Can any thing be too great a miracle for him to effect? The Septuagint translate the passage, **μη αδυνατησει παρα τω θεω ρημα**; which St. Luke adopts almost literatim, only making it an affirmative position instead of a question: **ουκ αδυνατησει παρα τω θεω παν**

ρημα, which we translate, “With God nothing shall be impossible,” Luke 1:37. Many copies of the Septuagint insert the word παν before ρημα, as in St. Luke; but it makes little difference in the sense. It was to correct Sarah’s unbelief, and to strengthen her faith, that God spoke these most important words; words which state that where human wisdom, prudence, and energy fall, and where nature herself ceases to be an agent, through lack of energy to act, or laws to direct and regulate energy, there also God has full sway, and by his own omnific power works all things after the counsel of his own will. Is there an effect to be produced? God can produce it as well without as with means. He produced nature, the whole system of causes and effects, when in the whole compass of his own eternity there was neither means nor being. HE spake, and it was done; HE commanded, and it stood fast. How great and wonderful is God!

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

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

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

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

Verse 20. *Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah*— See note on “Genesis 13:13”.

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

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

Verse 23. *Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?*— A form of speech similar to that in Genesis 18:17, an invariable principle of justice, that the righteous shall not be punished for the crimes of the impious. And this Abraham lays down as the foundation of his supplications. Who can pray with any hope of success who cannot assign a reason to God and his conscience for the petitions he offers? The great sacrifice offered by Christ is an infinite reason why a penitent sinner should expect to find the mercy for which he pleads.

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

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

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

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

1. The hospitality and humanity of Abraham are worthy, not only of our most serious regard, but also of our imitation. He sat in the door of his tent in the heat of the day, not only to enjoy the current of refreshing air, but that if he saw any weary and exhausted travelers he might invite them to rest and refresh themselves. Hospitality is ever becoming in one human being towards another; for every destitute man is a brother in distress, and demands our most prompt and affectionate assistance, according to that heavenly precept, "What ye would that men should do unto you, do even so unto them." From this conduct of Abraham a Divine precept is formed: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Hebrews 13:2.

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

3. Abraham trusts much in God, and God reposes much confidence in Abraham. He knows that God is faithful, and will fulfill his promises; and God knows that Abraham is faithful, and will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; Genesis 18:19. No man lives unto himself; and God

gives us neither spiritual nor temporal blessings for ourselves alone; our bread we are to divide with the hungry, and to help the stranger in distress. He who understands the way of God should carefully instruct his household in that way; and he who is the father of a family should pray to God to teach him, that he may teach his household. His ignorance of God and salvation can be no excuse for his neglecting his family: it is his indispensable duty to teach them; and God will teach him, if he earnestly seek it, that he may be able to discharge this duty to his family. Reader, if thy children or servants perish through thy neglect, God will judge thee for it in the great day.

4. The sin of Sodom and the cities of the plain was great and grievous; the measure of their iniquity was full, and God determined to destroy them. Judgment is God's strange work, but though rarely done it must be done sometimes, lest men should suppose that right and wrong, vice and virtue, are alike in the eye of God. And these judgments must be dispensed in such a way as to show they are not the results of natural causes, but come immediately from the incensed justice of the Most High.

5. Every man who loves God loves his neighbor also; and he who loves his neighbor will do all in his power to promote the well-being both of his soul and his body. Abraham cannot prevent the men of Sodom from sinning against God; but he can make prayer and intercession for their souls, and plead, if not in arrest, yet in mitigation, of judgment. He therefore intercedes for the transgressors, and God is well pleased with his intercessions. These are the offspring of God's own love in the heart of his servant.

6. How true is that word, The energetic faithful prayer of a righteous man availeth much! Abraham draws near to God by affection and faith, and in the most devout and humble manner makes prayer and supplication; and every petition is answered on the spot. Nor does God cease to promise to show mercy till Abraham ceases to intercede! What encouragement does this hold out to them that fear God, to make prayer and intercession for their sinful neighbors and ungodly relatives! Faith in the Lord Jesus endues prayer with a species of omnipotence; whatsoever a man asks of the Father in his name, he will do it. Prayer has been termed the gate of heaven, but without faith that gate cannot be opened. He who prays as he

should, and believes as he ought, shall have the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace.

CHAPTER 19

The two angels mentioned in the preceding chapter, come in the evening to Sodom, 1. Lot, who was sitting at the gate, invites them to enter his house, take some refreshment, and tarry all night; which they at first refuse, 2; but on being pressingly solicited, they at last comply, 3. The abominable conduct of the men of Sodom, 4, 5. Lot's deep concern for the honor and safety of his guests, which leads him to make a most exceptionable proposal to those wicked men, 6-8. The violent proceedings of the Sodomites, 9. Lot rescued from their barbarity by the angels, who smite them with blindness, 10, 11. The angels exhort Lot and his family to flee from that wicked place, as God was about to destroy it, 12, 13. Lot's fruitless exhortation to his sons-in-law, 14. The angels hasten Lot and his family to depart, 15, 16. Their exhortation, 17. Lot's request, 18-20. He is permitted to escape to Zoar, 21-23. Fire and brimstone are rained down from heaven upon all the cities of the plain, by which they are entirely destroyed, 24, 25. Lot's wife, looking behind, becomes a pillar of salt, 26. Abraham, early in the morning, discovers the desolation of those iniquitous cities, 27-29. Lot, fearing to continue in Zoar, went with his two daughters to the mountain, and dwelt in a cave, 30. The strange conduct of his daughters, and his unhappy deception, 31-36. Moab and Ammon born, from whom sprang the Moabites and Ammonites, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. Two angels— The two referred to Genesis 18:22.

Sat in the gate— Probably, in order to prevent unwary travelers from being entrapped by his wicked townsmen, he waited at the gate of the city to bring the strangers he might meet with to his own house, as well as to transact his own business. Or, as the gate was the place of judgment, he might have been sitting there as magistrate to hear and determine disputes.

Bowed himself— Not through religious reverence, for he did not know the quality of his guests; but through the customary form of civility. See on verses Genesis 18:3-5 of the preceding chapter.

Verse 2. *Nay; but we will abide in the street*— Instead of **לֹא** lo, nay, some MSS. have **לֹא** lo, to him; “And they said unto him, for we lodge in the street.” where, nevertheless, the negation is understood. Knowing the disposition of the inhabitants, and appearing in the mere character of travelers, they preferred the open street to any house; but as Lot pressed them vehemently, and they knew him to be a righteous man, not yet willing to make themselves known, they consented to take shelter under his hospitable roof. Our Lord, willing for the time being to conceal his person from the knowledge of the disciples going to Emmaus, made as though he would go farther, Luke 24:13; but at last, like the angels here, yielded to the importunity of his disciples, and went into their lodgings.

Verse 5. *Where are the men which came in to thee, etc.*— This account justifies the character given of this depraved people in the preceding chapter, Genesis 18:20, and in Genesis 23:13. As their crime was the deepest disgrace to human nature, so it is too bad to be described; in the sacred text it is sufficiently marked; and the iniquity which, from these most abominable wretches, has been called Sodomy, is punished in our country with death.

Verse 8. *Behold now, I have two daughters*— Nothing but that sacred light in which the rights of hospitality were regarded among the eastern nations, could either justify or palliate this proposal of Lot. A man who had taken a stranger under his care and protection, was bound to defend him even at the expense of his own life. In this light the rights of hospitality are still regarded in Asiatic countries; and on these high notions only, the influence of which an Asiatic mind alone can properly appreciate, Lot’s conduct on this occasion can be at all excused: but even then, it was not only the language of anxious solicitude, but of unwarrantable haste.

Verse 9. *And he will needs be a judge*— So his sitting in the gate is perhaps a farther proof of his being there in a magisterial capacity, as some have supposed.

Verse 11. *And they smote the men-with blindness*— This has been understood two ways: 1. The angels, by the power which God had given them, deprived these wicked men of a proper and regular use of their sight,

so as either totally to deprive them of it, or render it so confused that they could no longer distinguish objects; or, 2. They caused such a deep darkness to take place, that they could not find Lot's door. The author of the book of Wisdom was evidently of this latter opinion, for he says they were compassed about with horrible great darkness, Genesis 19:17. See a similar case of Elisha and the Syrians, 2 Kings 6:18, etc.

Verse 12. *Hast thou here any besides? son-in-law*— Here there appears to be but one meant, as the word **חַתָּן** chathan is in the singular number; but in Genesis 19:14 the word is plural, **חַתָּנָיו** chathanaiv, his sons-in-law.

There were only two in number; as we do not hear that Lot had more than two daughters: and these seem not to have been actually married to those daughters, but only betrothed, as is evident from what Lot says, Genesis 19:8; for they had not known man, but were the spouses elect of those who are here called his sons-in-law. But though these might be reputed as a part of Lot's family, and entitled on this account to God's protection, yet it is sufficiently plain that they did not escape the perdition of these wicked men; and the reason is given, Genesis 19:14, they received the solemn warning as a ridiculous tale, the creature of Lot's invention, or the offspring of his fear. Therefore they made no provision for their escape, and doubtless perished, notwithstanding the sincerely offered grace, in the perdition that fell on this ungodly city.

Verse 16. *While he lingered*— Probably in affectionate though useless entreaties to prevail on the remaining parts of his family to escape from the destruction that was now descending; laid hold upon his hand — pulled them away by mere force, the Lord being merciful; else they had been left to perish in their lingering, as the others were in their gainsaying.

Verse 17. *When they had brought them forth, etc.*— Every word here is emphatic, Escape for thy LIFE; thou art in the most imminent danger of perishing; thy life and thy soul are both at stake. Look not behind thee — thou hast but barely time enough to escape from the judgment that is now descending; no lingering, or thou art lost! one look back may prove fatal to thee, and God commands thee to avoid it. Neither stay thou in all the plain, because God will destroy that as well as the city. Escape to the mountain, on which these judgments shall not light, and which God has appointed thee for a place of refuge; lest thou be CONSUMED. It is not an

ordinary judgment that is coming; a fire from heaven shall burn up the cities, the plain, and all that remain in the cities and in the plain. Both the beginning and end of this exhortation are addressed to his personal feelings. “Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life;” and self-preservation is the first law of nature, to which every other consideration is minor and unimportant.

Verse 19. *I cannot escape to the mountain*— He saw the destruction so near, that he imagined he should not have time sufficient to reach the mountain before it arrived. He did not consider that God could give no command to his creatures that it would be impossible for them to fulfill; but the hurry and perturbation of his mind will at once account for and excuse this gross oversight.

Verse 20. *It is a little one*— Probably Lot wished to have it for an inheritance, and therefore pleaded its being a little one, that his request might be the more readily granted. Or he might suppose, that being a little city, it was less depraved than Sodom and Gomorrah, and therefore not so ripe for punishment; which was probably the case.

Verse 21. *See, I have accepted thee*— How prevalent is prayer with God! Far from refusing to grant a reasonable petition, he shows himself as if under embarrassment to deny any.

Verse 22. *I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither.*— So these heavenly messengers had the strictest commission to take care of Lot and his family; and even the purposes of Divine justice could not be accomplished on the rebellious, till this righteous man and his family had escaped from the place. A proof of Abraham’s assertion, The Judge of all the earth will do right.

The name of the city was called Zoar.— צוֹעַר Tsoar, LITTLE, its former name being Bela.

Verse 24. *The Lord rained-brimstone and fire from the Lord*— As all judgment is committed to the Son of God, many of the primitive fathers and several modern divines have supposed that the words וַיְהוָה vaihovah and מֵאֵת יְהוָה meeth Yehovah imply, Jehovah the Son raining brimstone and fire from Jehovah the Father; and that this place affords no mean proof

of the proper Divinity of our blessed Redeemer. It may be so; but though the point is sufficiently established elsewhere, it does not appear to me to be plainly indicated here. And it is always better on a subject of this kind not to have recourse to proofs which require proofs to confirm them. It must however be granted that two persons mentioned as Jehovah in one verse, is both a strange and curious circumstance; and it will appear more remarkable when we consider that the person called Jehovah, who conversed with Abraham, (see chap. 18.) and sent those two angels to bring Lot and his family out of this devoted place, and seems himself after he left off talking with Abraham to have ascended to heaven, Genesis 19:33, does not any more appear on this occasion till we hear that JEHOVAH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from JEHOVAH out of heaven. This certainly gives much countenance to the opinion referred to above, though still it may fall short of positive proof.

Brimstone and fire. — The word גִּפְרִית gophrith, which we translate brimstone, is of very uncertain derivation. It is evidently used metaphorically, to point out the utmost degrees of punishment executed on the most flagitious criminals, in Deuteronomy 29:23; Job 18:15; Psalm 11:6; Isaiah 34:9; Ezekiel 38:22. And as hell, or an everlasting separation from God and the glory of his power, is the utmost punishment that can be inflicted on sinners, hence brimstone and fire are used in Scripture to signify the torments in that place of punishment. See Isaiah 30:33; Revelation 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8. We may safely suppose that it was quite possible that a shower of nitrous particles might have been precipitated from the atmosphere, here, as in many other places, called heaven, which, by the action of fire or the electric fluid, would be immediately ignited, and so consume the cities; and, as we have already seen that the plains about Sodom and Gomorrah abounded with asphaltus or bitumen pits, (see Genesis 14:10,) that what is particularly meant here in reference to the plain is the setting fire to this vast store of inflammable matter by the agency of lightning or the electric fluid; and this, in the most natural and literal manner, accounts for the whole plain being burnt up, as that plain abounded with this bituminous substance; and thus we find three agents employed in the total ruin of these cities, and all the circumjacent plain: 1. Innumerable nitrous particles precipitated from the atmosphere. 2. The vast quantity of asphaltus or bitumen which abounded

in that country: and, 3. Lightning or the electric spark, which ignited the nitre and bitumen, and thus consumed both the cities and the plain or champaign country in which they were situated.

Verse 25. *And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain*— This forms what is called the lake Asphaltites, Dead Sea, or Salt Sea, which, according to the most authentic accounts, is about seventy miles in length, and eighteen in breadth.

The most strange and incredible tales are told by many of the ancients, and by many of the moderns, concerning the place where these cities stood. Common fame says that the waters of this sea are so thick that a stone will not sink in them, so tough and clammy that the most boisterous wind cannot ruffle them, so deadly that no fish can live in them, and that if a bird happen to fly over the lake, it is killed by the poisonous effluvia proceeding from the waters; that scarcely any verdure can grow near the place, and that in the vicinity where there are any trees they bear a most beautiful fruit, but when you come to open it you find nothing but ashes! and that the place was burning long after the apostles' times. These and all similar tales may be safely pronounced great exaggerations of facts, or fictions of ignorant, stupid, and superstitious monks, or impositions of unprincipled travelers, who, knowing that the common people are delighted with the marvelous, have stuffed their narratives with such accounts merely to procure a better sale for their books.

The truth is, the waters are exceedingly salt, far beyond the usual saltness of the sea, and hence it is called the Salt Sea. In consequence of this circumstance bodies will float in it that would sink in common salt water, and probably it is on this account that few fish can live in it. But the monks of St. Saba affirmed to Dr. Shaw, that they had seen fish caught in it; and as to the reports of any noxious quality in the air, or in the evaporations from its surface, the simple fact is, lumps of bitumen often rise from the bottom to its surface, and exhale a foetid odor which does not appear to have any thing poisonous in it. Dr. Pococke swam in it for nearly a quarter of an hour, and felt no kind of inconvenience; the water, he says, is very clear, and having brought away a bottle of it, he “had it analyzed, and found it to contain no substances besides salt and a little alum.”

As there are frequent eruptions of a bituminous matter from the bottom of this lake, which seem to argue a subterraneous fire, hence the accounts that this place was burning even after the days of the apostles. And this phenomenon still continues, for “masses of bitumen,” says Dr. Shaw, “in large hemispheres, are raised at certain times from the bottom, which, as soon as they touch the surface, and are thereby acted upon by the external air, burst at once, with great smoke and noise, like the pulvis fulminans of the chemists, and disperse themselves in a thousand pieces. But this only happens near the shore, for in greater depths the eruptions are supposed to discover themselves in such columns of smoke as are now and then observed to arise from the lake. And perhaps to such eruptions as these we may attribute that variety of pits and hollows, not unlike the traces of many of our ancient limekilns, which are found in the neighborhood of this lake. The bitumen is in all probability accompanied from the bottom with sulphur, as both of them are found promiscuously upon the shore, and the latter is precisely the same with common native sulphur; the other is friable, yielding upon friction, or by being put into the fire, a foetid smell.” The bitumen, after having been some time exposed to the air, becomes indurated like a stone. I have some portions of it before me, brought by a friend of mine from the spot; it is very black, hard, and on friction yields a foetid odor.

For several curious particulars on this subject, see Dr. Pococke’s Travels, vol. ii., part 1, chap. 9, and Dr. Shaw’s Travels, 4to. edit., p. 346, etc.

Verse 26. *She became a pillar of salt*— The vast variety of opinions, both ancient and modern, on the crime of Lot’s wife, her change, and the manner in which that change was effected, are in many cases as unsatisfactory as they are ridiculous. On this point the sacred Scripture says little. God had commanded Lot and his family not to look behind them; the wife of Lot disobeyed this command; she looked back from behind him — Lot, her husband, and she became a pillar of salt. This is all the information the inspired historian has thought proper to give us on this subject; it is true the account is short, but commentators and critics have made it long enough by their laborious glosses. The opinions which are the most probable are the following: 1. “Lot’s wife, by the miraculous power of God, was changed into a mass of rock salt, probably retaining the human figure.” 2. “Tarrying too long in the plain, she was struck with

lightning and enveloped in the bituminous and sulphuric matter which abounded in that country, and which, not being exposed afterwards to the action of the fire, resisted the air and the wet, and was thus rendered permanent.” 3. “She was struck dead and consumed in the burning up of the plain; and this judgment on her disobedience being recorded, is an imperishable memorial of the fact itself, and an everlasting warning to sinners in general, and to backsliders or apostates in particular.” On these opinions it may be only necessary to state that the two first understand the text literally, and that the last considers it metaphorically. That God might in a moment convert this disobedient woman into a pillar or mass of salt, or any other substance, there can be no doubt. Or that, by continuing in the plain till the brimstone and fire descended from heaven, she might be struck dead with lightning, and indurated or petrified on the spot, is as possible. And that the account of her becoming a pillar of salt may be designed to be understood metaphorically, is also highly probable. It is certain that salt is frequently used in the Scriptures as an emblem of incorruption, durability, etc. Hence a covenant of salt, Numbers 18:19, is a perpetual covenant, one that is ever to be in full force, and never broken; on this ground a pillar of salt may signify no more in this case than an everlasting monument against criminal curiosity, unbelief, and disobedience.

Could we depend upon the various accounts given by different persons who pretend to have seen the wife of Lot standing in her complete human form, with all her distinctive marks about her, the difficulty would be at an end. But we cannot depend on these accounts; they are discordant, improbable, ridiculous, and often grossly absurd. Some profess to have seen her as a heap of salt; others, as a rock of salt; others, as a complete human being as to shape, proportion of parts, etc., etc., but only petrified. This human form, according to others, has still resident in it a miraculous continual energy; break off a finger, a toe, an arm, etc., it is immediately reproduced, so that though multitudes of curious persons have gone to see this woman, and every one has brought away a part of her, yet still she is found by the next comer a complete human form! To crown this absurd description, the author of the poem *Deuteronomy Sodoma*, usually attributed to Tertullian, and annexed to his works, represents her as yet instinct with a portion of animal life, which is unequivocally designated by

certain signs which every month produces. I shall transcribe the whole passage and refer to my author; and as I have given above the sense of the whole, my readers must excuse me from giving a more literal translation:—

— *et simul illic*
In fragilem mutata salem, stetit ipsa sepulchrum,
Ipsaque imago sibi, formam sine corpore servans
Durat adhuc etenim nuda statione sub aethra,
Nec pluviis dilapsa situ, nec diruta ventis.
Quinettam, si quis mutilaverit advena formam,
Protinus ex sese suggestu vulnera complet.
Dicitur et vivens alio sub corpore sexus
Munificos solito dispungere sanguine menses

TEETULLIANI Opera, vol. ii., p. 731. Edit.
OBERTHUR.

The sentiment in the last lines is supported by Irenaeus, who assures us that, though still remaining as a pillar of salt, the statue, in form and other natural accidents, exhibits decisive proofs of its original. *Jam non caro corruptibilis, sed statua salis semper manens, et, per naturalla, ea quae sunt consuetudinis hominis ostendens, lib. iv., c. 51.* To complete this absurdity, this father makes her an emblem of the true Church, which, though she suffers much, and often loses whole members, yet preserves the pillar of salt, that is, the foundation of the true faith, etc. See Calmet.

Josephus says that this pillar was standing in his time, and that himself had seen it: *Εισ στηλην αλων μετεβαλεν, ιοτορηκα δ' αυτην ετι γαρ και νυν δοιμενει.* Ant. lib. i., c. xi. 3, 4.

St. Clement, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. ii., follows Josephus, and asserts that Lot's wife was remaining even at that time as a pillar of salt.

Authors of respectability and credit who have since traveled into the Holy Land, and made it their business to inquire into this subject in the most particular and careful manner, have not been able to meet with any remains of this pillar; and all accounts begin now to be confounded in the pretty general concession, both of Jews and Gentiles, that either the statue does not now remain, or that some of the heaps of salt or blocks of salt rock which are to be met with in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, may be the remains of Lot's wife! All speculations on this subject are perfectly idle;

and if the general prejudice in favor of the continued existence of this monument of God's justice had not been very strong, I should not have deemed myself justified in entering so much at length into the subject. Those who profess to have seen it, have in general sufficiently invalidated their own testimony by the monstrous absurdities with which they have encumbered their relations. Had Lot's wife been changed in the way that many have supposed, and had she been still preserved somewhere in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, surely we might expect some account of it in after parts of the Scripture history; but it is never more mentioned in the Bible, and occurs nowhere in the New Testament but in the simple reference of our Lord to the judgment itself, as a warning to the disobedient and backsliding, Luke 17:32: Remember Lot's wife!

Verse 27. *Abraham gat up early in the morning*— Anxious to know what was the effect of the prayers which he had offered to God the preceding day; what must have been his astonishment when he found that all these cities, with the plain which resembled the garden of the Lord, Genesis 13:10, burnt up, and the smoke ascending like the smoke of a furnace, and was thereby assured that even God himself could not discover ten righteous persons in four whole cities!

Verse 29. *God remembered Abraham*— Though he did not descend lower than ten righteous persons, (see Genesis 18:32,) yet the Lord had respect to the spirit of his petitions, and spared all those who could be called righteous, and for Abraham's sake offered salvation to all the family of Lot, though neither his sons-in-law elect nor his own wife ultimately profited by it. The former ridiculed the warning; and the latter, though led out by the hands of the angel, yet by breaking the command of God perished with the other gainsayers.

Verse 30. *Lot went up out of Zoar*— From seeing the universal desolation that had fallen upon the land, and that the fire was still continuing its depredations, he feared to dwell in Zoar, lest that also should be consumed, and then went to those very mountains to which God had ordered him at first to make his escape. Foolish man is ever preferring his own wisdom to that of his Maker. It was wrong at first not to betake himself to the mountain; it was wrong in the next place to go to it when God had given him the assurance that Zoar should be spared for his sake.

Both these cases argue a strange want of faith, not only in the truth, but also in the providence, of God. Had he still dwelt at Zoar, the shameful transaction afterwards recorded had in all probability not taken place.

Verse 31. *Our father is old*— And consequently not likely to re-marry; and there is not a man in the earth — none left, according to their opinion in all the land of Canaan, of their own family and kindred; and they might think it unlawful to match with others, such as the inhabitants of Zoar, who they knew had been devoted to destruction as well as those of Sodom and Gomorrah, and were only saved at the earnest request of their father; and probably while they lived among them they found them ripe enough for punishment, and therefore would have thought it both dangerous and criminal to have formed any matrimonial connections with them.

Verse 32. *Come, let us make our father drink wine*— On their flight from Zoar it is probable they had brought with them certain provisions to serve them for the time being, and the wine here mentioned among the rest.

After considering all that has been said to criminate both Lot and his daughters in this business, I cannot help thinking that the transaction itself will bear a more favorable construction than that which has been generally put on it. 1. It does not appear that it was through any base or sensual desires that the daughters of Lot wished to deceive their father. 2. They might have thought that it would have been criminal to have married into any other family, and they knew that their husbands elect, who were probably of the same kindred, had perished in the overthrow of Sodom. 3. They might have supposed that there was no other way left to preserve the family, and consequently that righteousness for which it had been remarkable, but the way which they now took.

4. They appear to have supposed that their father would not come into the measure, because he would have considered it as profane; yet, judging the measure to be expedient and necessary, they endeavored to sanctify the improper means used, by the goodness of the end at which they aimed; a doctrine which, though resorted to by many, should be reprobated by all. Acting on this bad principle they caused their father to drink wine. See note on “Genesis 19:38”.

Verse 33. *And he perceived not when she lay down, nor when, etc.*—

That is, he did not perceive the time she came to his bed, nor the time she quitted it; consequently did not know who it was that had lain with him. In this transaction Lot appears to me to be in many respects excusable. 1. He had no accurate knowledge of what took place either on the first or second night, therefore he cannot be supposed to have been drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. That he must have been sensible that some person had been in his bed, it would be ridiculous to deny; but he might have judged it to have been some of his female domestics, which it is reasonable to suppose he might have brought from Zoar. 2. It is very likely that he was deceived in the wine, as well as in the consequences; either he knew not the strength of the wine, or wine of a superior power had been given to him on this occasion. As he had in general followed the simple pastoral life, it is not to be wondered at if he did not know the intoxicating power of wine, and being an old man, and unused to it, a small portion would be sufficient to overcome him; sound sleep would soon, at his time of life, be the effect of taking the liquor to which he was unaccustomed, and cause him to forget the effects of his intoxication. Except in this case, his moral conduct stands unblemished in the sacred writings; and as the whole transaction, especially as it relates to him, is capable of an interpretation not wholly injurious to his piety, both reason and religion conjoin to recommend that explanation. As to his daughters, let their ignorance of the real state of the case plead for them, as far as that can go; and let it be remembered that their sin was of that very peculiar nature as never to be capable of becoming a precedent. For it is scarcely possible that any should ever be able to plead similar circumstances in vindication of a similar line of conduct.

Verse 37. *Called his name Moab*— This name is generally interpreted of the father, or, according to Calmet, מואב Moab, the waters of the father.

Verse 38. *Ben-ammi*— ב עמי Ben-ammi, the son of my people. Both these names seem to justify the view taken of this subject above, viz., that it was merely to preserve the family that the daughters of Lot made use of the above expedient; and hence we do not find that they ever attempted to repeat it, which, had it been done for any other purpose, they certainly would not have failed to do. On this subject Origen, in his fifth homily on Genesis, has these remarkable words: Ubi hic libidinis culpa, ubi incesti

criminis arguitur? · Quomodo dabitur in VITLO QUOD NON ITERATUR IN FACTO? Vercor proloqui quod sentio, vereor, inquam, ne castior fuerit harum incestus, quam pudicitia multarum. “Where, in all this transaction, can the crime of lust or of incest be proved? How can this be proved to be a vice when the fact was never repeated? I am afraid to speak my whole mind on the subject, lest the incest of these should appear more laudable than the chastity of multitudes.” There is a distinction made here by Origen which is worthy of notice; a single bad act, though a sin, does not necessarily argue a vicious heart, as in order to be vicious a man must be habituated to sinful acts.

The generation which proceeded from this incestuous connection, whatever may be said in extenuation of the transaction, (its peculiar circumstances being considered,) was certainly a bad one. The Moabites soon fell from the faith of God, and became idolaters, the people of Chemosh, and of Baal-peor, Numbers 21:29; 25:1-3; and were enemies to the children of Abraham. See Numbers 22.; Judges 3:14, etc. And the Ammonites, who dwelt near to the Moabites, united with them in idolatry, and were also enemies to Israel. See Judges 11:4, 24; Deuteronomy 23:3, 4. As both these people made afterwards a considerable figure in the sacred history, the impartial inspired writer takes care to introduce at this early period an account of their origin. See what has been said on the case of Noah’s drunkenness, Genesis 9:20, etc.

THIS is an awful history, and the circumstances detailed in it are as distressing to piety as to humanity. It may, however, be profitable to review the particulars.

1. From the commencement of the chapter we find that the example and precepts of Abraham had not been lost on his nephew Lot. He also, like his uncle, watches for opportunities to call in the weary traveler. This Abraham had taught his household, and we see the effect of his blessed teaching. Lot was both hospitable and pious, though living in the midst of a crooked and perverse race. It must be granted that from several circumstances in his history he appears to have been a weak man, but his weakness was such as was not inconsistent with general uprightness and sincerity. He and his family were not forgetful to entertain strangers, and they alone were free from the pollutions of this accursed people. How

powerful are the effects of a religious education, enforced by pious example! It is one of God's especial means of grace. Let a man only do justice to his family, by bringing them up in the fear of God, and he will crown it with his blessing. How many excuse the profligacy of their family, which is often entirely owing to their own neglect, by saying, "O, we cannot give them grace!" No, you cannot; but you can afford them the means of grace. This is your work, that is the Lord's. If, through your neglect of precept and example, they perish, what an awful account must you give to the Judge of quick and dead! It was the sentiment of a great man, that should the worst of times arrive, and magistracy and ministry were both to fall, yet, if parents would but be faithful to their trust, pure religion would be handed down to posterity, both in its form and in its power.

2. We have already heard of the wickedness of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain, the cup of their iniquity was full; their sin was of no common magnitude, and what a terrible judgment fell upon them! Brimstone and fire are rained down from heaven upon these traders in iniquity; and what a correspondence between the crime and the punishment? They burned in lust towards each other, and God burned them up with fire and brimstone. Their sin was unnatural, and God punished it by supernatural means. Divine justice not only observes a proportion between the crime and the degree of punishment, but also between the species of crime and the kind of punishment inflicted.

3. Disobedience to the command of God must ever meet with severe reprehension, especially in those who have already partaken of his grace, because these know his salvation, and are justly supposed to possess, by his grace, the power of resisting all solicitations to sin. The servant who knew his lord's will and did it not, was to be beaten with many stripes; see Luke 12:47. Lot's wife stands as an everlasting monument of admonition and caution to all backsliders. She ran well, she permitted Satan to hinder, and she died in her provocation! While we lament her fate, we should profit by her example. To begin in the good way is well; to continue in the path is better; and to persevere unto the end, best of all. The exhortation of our blessed Lord on this subject should awaken our caution, and strongly excite our diligence: Remember Lot's wife! On the conduct of Lot and his daughters, See note on "Genesis 19:31".

CHAPTER 20

Abraham leaves Mamre, and, after having sojourned at Kadesh and Shur, settles in Gerar, 1. Abimelech takes Sarah, Abraham having acknowledged her only as his sister, 2. Abimelech is warned by God in a dream to restore Sarah, 3. He asserts his innocence, 4, 5. He is farther warned, 6, 7. Expostulates with Abraham, 8-10. Abraham vindicates his conduct, 11-13. Abimelech restores Sarah, makes Abraham a present of sheep, oxen, and male and female slaves, 14; offers him a residence in any part of the land, 15; and reproves Sarah, 16. At the intercession of Abraham, the curse of barrenness is removed from Abimelech and his household, 17, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. *And Abraham journeyed*— It is very likely that this holy man was so deeply affected with the melancholy prospect of the ruined cities, and not knowing what was become of his nephew Lot and his family, that he could no longer bear to dwell within sight of the place. Having, therefore, struck his tents, and sojourned for a short time at Kadesh and Shur, he fixed his habitation in Gerar, which was a city of Arabia Petraea, under a king of the Philistines called Abimelech, my father king, who appears to have been not only the father of his people, but also a righteous man.

Verse 2. *She is my sister*— See the parallel account, chap. 12., and the notes there. Sarah was now about ninety years of age, and probably pregnant with Isaac. Her beauty, therefore, must have been considerably impaired since the time she was taken in a similar manner by Pharaoh, king of Egypt; but she was probably now chosen by Abimelech more on the account of forming an alliance with Abraham, who was very rich, than on account of any personal accomplishments. A petty king, such as Abimelech, would naturally be glad to form an alliance with such a powerful chief as Abraham was: we cannot but recollect his late defeat of

the four confederate Canannitish kings. See note on “Genesis 14:14”, etc. This circumstance was sufficient to establish his credit, and cause his friendship to be courted; and what more effectual means could Abimelech use in reference to this than the taking of Sarah, who he understood was Abraham’s sister, to be his concubine or second wife, which in those times had no kind of disgrace attached to it?

Verse 3. *But God came to Abimelech*— Thus we find that persons who were not of the family of Abraham had the knowledge of the true God. Indeed, all the Gerarites are termed גוי צדיק *goi tsaddik*, a righteous nation, Genesis 20:4.

Verse 5. *In the integrity of my heart, etc.*— Had Abimelech any other than honorable views in taking Sarah, he could not have justified himself thus to his Maker; and that these views were of the most honorable kind, God himself, to whom the appeal was made, asserts in the most direct manner, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart.

Verse 7. *He is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee*— The word prophet, which we have from the Greek *προφητης*, and which is compounded of *προ*, before, and *φημι*, I speak, means, in its general acceptance, one who speaks of things before they happen, i.e., one who foretells future events. But that this was not the original notion of the word, its use in this place sufficiently proves. Abraham certainly was not a prophet in the present general acceptance of the term, and for the Hebrew נביא *nabi*, we must seek some other meaning. I have, in a discourse entitled “The Christian Prophet and his Work,” proved that the proper ideal meaning of the original word is to pray, entreat, make supplication, etc., and this meaning of it I have justified at large both from its application in this place, and from its pointed use in the case of Saul, mentioned 1 Samuel 10, and from the case of the priests of Baal, 1 Kings 18., where prophesying most undoubtedly means making prayer and supplication. As those who were in habits of intimacy with God by prayer and faith were found the most proper persons to communicate his mind to man, both with respect to the present and the future, hence, נביא *nabi*, the intercessor, became in process of time the public instructor or preacher, and also the predictor of future events, because to such faithful praying men God revealed the secret of his will. Hence St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 14:3, seems to restrain the word

wholly to the interpreting the mind of God to the people, and their instruction in Divine things, for, says he, he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort. See the discourse on this text referred to above. The title was also given to men eminent for eloquence and for literary abilities; hence Aaron, because he was the spokesman of Moses to the Egyptian king, was termed נביא nabi, prophet; Exodus 4:16; 7:1. And Epimenides, a heathen poet, is expressly styled προφητης, a prophet, by St. Paul, Titus 1:12, just as poets in general were termed vates among the Romans, which properly signifies the persons who professed to interpret the will of the gods to their votaries, after prayers and sacrifices duly performed. In Arabic the word [A] naba has nearly the same meaning as in Hebrew, but in the first conjugation it has a meaning which may cast light upon the subject in general. It signifies to itinerate, move from one place or country to another, compelled thereto either by persecution or the command of God; exivit de una regione in aliam. — [A] migrans de loco in locum. — GOLIUS. Hence Mohammed was called [A] an nabi, because of his sudden removal from Mecca to Medina, when, pretending to a Divine commission, his townsmen sought to take away his life: e Mecca exiens Medinam, unde Muhammed suis [A] Nabi Allah dictus fuit. — GOLIUS. If this meaning belonged originally to the Hebrew word, it will apply with great force to the case of Abraham, whose migratory, itinerant kind of life, generally under the immediate direction of God, might have given him the title nabi. However this may be, the term was a title of the highest respectability and honor, both among the Hebrews and Arabs, and continues so to this day. And from the Hebrews the word, in all the importance and dignity of its meaning, was introduced among the heathens in the προφητης and vates of the Greeks and Romans. See note on the word seer, “Genesis 15:1”.

Verse 8. Abimelech rose early, etc.— God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and we find as the day broke he arose, assembled his servants, (what we would call his courtiers,) and communicated to them what he had received from God. They were all struck with astonishment, and discerned the hand of God in this business. Abraham is then called, and in a most respectful and pious manner the king expostulates with him for bringing him and his people under the Divine displeasure, by withholding from him

the information that Sarah was his wife; when, by taking her, he sought only an honorable alliance with his family.

Verse 11. *And Abraham said*— The best excuse he could make for his conduct, which in this instance is far from defensible.

Verse 12. *She is my sister*— I have not told a lie; I have suppressed only a part of the truth. In this place it may be proper to ask, What is a lie? It is any action done or word spoken, whether true or false in itself, which the doer or speaker wishes the observer or hearer to take in a contrary sense to that which he knows to be true. It is, in a word, any action done or speech delivered with the intention to deceive, though both may be absolutely true and right in themselves. See note on “Genesis 12:13.

The daughter of my father, but not-of my mother— Ebn Batrick, in his annals, among other ancient traditions has preserved the following: “Terah first married Yona, by whom he had Abraham; afterwards he married Tehevita, by whom he had Sarah.” Thus she was the sister of Abraham, being the daughter of the same father by a different mother.

Verse 13. *When God caused me to wander*— Here the word אלהים Elohim is used with a plural verb, (התעו hithu, caused me to wander,) which is not very usual in the Hebrew language, as this plural noun is generally joined with verbs in the singular number. Because there is a departure from the general mode in this instance, some have contended that the word Elohim signifies princes in this place, and suppose it to refer to those in Chaldea, who expelled Abraham because he would not worship the fire; but the best critics, and with them the Jews, allow that Elohim here signifies the true God. Abraham probably refers to his first call.

Verse 16. *And unto Sarah he said*— But what did he say? Here there is scarcely any agreement among interpreters; the Hebrew is exceedingly obscure, and every interpreter takes it in his own sense.

A thousand pieces of silver— SHEKELS are very probably meant here, and so the Targum understands it. The Septuagint has χίλια διδραχμα, a thousand didrachma, no doubt meaning shekels; for in Genesis 23:15, 16, this translation uses διδραχμα for the Hebrew שקל shekel. As shakal signifies literally to weigh, and the shekel was a coin of such a weight, Mr.

Ainsworth and others think this to be the origin of our word scale, the instrument to weigh with.

The shekel of the sanctuary weighed twenty gerahs, Exodus 30:13. And according to the Jews, the gerah weighed sixteen grains of barley. R. Maimon observes, that after the captivity the shekel was increased to three hundred and eighty-four grains or barley-corns. On the subject of ancient weights and measures, very little that is satisfactory is known.

Behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes— It — the one thousand shekels, (not he — Abraham,) is to thee for a covering — to procure thee a veil to conceal thy beauty (unto all that are with thee, and with all other) from all thy own kindred and acquaintance, and from all strangers, that none, seeing thou art another mans wife; may covet thee on account of thy comeliness.

Thus she was reprov'd— The original is ונכחתי vnochachath, but the word is probably the second person preterite, used for the imperative mood, from the root נכח nachach, to make straight, direct, right; or to speak rightly, correctly; and may, in connection with the rest of the text, be thus paraphrased: Behold, I have given thy BROTHER (Abraham, gently alluding to the equivocation, Genesis 20:2, 5) a thousand shekels of silver; behold, It is (that is, the silver is, or may be, or let it be) to thee a covering of the eyes (to procure a veil; see above) with regard to all those who are with thee; and to all (or and in all) speak thou the truth. Correctly translated by the Septuagint, και παντα αληθευσον, and in all things speak the truth — not only tell a part of the truth, but tell the whole; say not merely he is my brother, but say also, he is my husband too. Thus in ALL things speak the truth. I believe the above to be the sense of this difficult passage, and shall not puzzle my readers with criticisms. See Kennicott.

Verse 17. So Abraham prayed— This was the prime office of the נביא nabi; see Genesis 20:7.

Verse 18. For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs— Probably by means of some disease with which he had smitten them, hence it is said they were healed at Abraham's intercession; and this seems necessarily to imply that they had been afflicted by some disease that rendered it

impossible for them to have children till it was removed. And possibly this disease, as Dr. Dodd conjectures, had afflicted Abimelech, and by this he was withheld, Genesis 20:6, from defiling Abraham's bed.

1. ON the prevarication of Abraham and Sarah, see the notes and concluding observations on chap. 12.;{See note "Genesis 12:20"} and while we pity this weakness, let us take it as a warning.

2. The cause why the patriarch did not acknowledge Sarah as his wife, was a fear lest he should lose his life on her account, for he said, Surely the fear, i.e., the true worship, of the true God is not in this place. Such is the natural bigotry and narrowness of the human heart, that we can scarcely allow that any besides ourselves possess the true religion. To indulge a disposition of this kind is highly blamable. The true religion is neither confined to one spot nor to one people; it is spread in various forms over the whole earth. He who fills immensity has left a record of himself in every nation and among every people under heaven. Beware of the spirit of intolerance! for bigotry produces uncharitableness; and uncharitableness, harsh judging; and in such a spirit a man may think he does God service when he tortures, or makes a burnt-offering of the person whom his narrow mind and hard heart have dishonored with the name of heretic. Such a spirit is not confined to any one community, though it has predominated in some more than in others. But these things are highly displeasing in the sight of God. HE, as the Father of the spirits of all flesh, loves every branch of his vastly extended family; and as far as we love one another, no matter of what sect of party, so far we resemble HIM. Had Abraham possessed more charity for man and confidence in God at this time, he had not fallen into that snare from which he barely escaped. A hasty judgment is generally both erroneous and harsh; and those who are the most apt to form it are generally the most difficult to be convinced of the truth.

CHAPTER 21

Isaac is born according to the promise, 1-3; and is circumcised when eight days old, 4. Abraham's age, and Sarah's exultation at the birth of their son, 5-7. Isaac is weaned, 8. Ishmael mocking on the occasion, Sarah requires that both he and his mother Hagar shall be dismissed, 9, 10. Abraham, distressed on the account, is ordered by the Lord to comply, 11, 12. The promise renewed to Ishmael, 13. Abraham dismisses Hagar and her son, who go to the wilderness of Beer-sheba, 14. They are greatly distressed for want of water, 15, 16. An angel of God appears to and relieves them, 17-19. Ishmael prospers and is married, 20, 21. Abimelech, and Phichol his chief captain, make a covenant with Abraham, and surrender the well of Beersheba for seven ewe lambs, 22-32. Abraham plants a grove, and invokes the name of the everlasting God, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. *The Lord visited Sarah*— That is, God fulfilled his promise to Sarah by giving her, at the advanced age of ninety, power to conceive and bring forth a son.

Verse 3. *Isaac*.— See the reason and interpretation of this name in the note on chap. 17. 7. {See note “Genesis 17:7”.}

Verse 4. *And Abraham circumcised his son*— See note on “Genesis 17:10”, etc.

Verse 6. *God hath made me to laugh*— Sarah alludes here to the circumstance mentioned Genesis 18:12; and as she seems to use the word to laugh in this place, not in the sense of being incredulous but to express such pleasure or happiness as almost suspends the reasoning faculty for a time, it justifies the observation on the above-named verse. See a similar case in Luke 24:41, where the disciples were so overcome with the good news of our Lord's resurrection, that it is said, They believed not for joy.

Verse 8. *The child grew and was weaned*— [----Anglo-Saxon----].

Anglo-Saxon VERSION. Now the child waxed and became weaned. We have the verb to wean from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.] awendan, to convert, transfer, turn from one thing to another, which is the exact import of the Hebrew word גַּמַּל gamal in the text. Hence [A.S.] wenan, to wean, to turn the child from the breast to receive another kind of ailment. And hence, probably, the word WEAN, a young child, which is still in use in the northern parts of Great Britain and Ireland, and which from its etymology seems to signify a child taken from the breast; surely not from the Scotch wee-ane, a little one, much less from the German wenig, little, as Dr. Johnson and others would derive it. At what time children were weaned among the ancients, is a disputed point. St. Jerome says there were two opinions on this subject. Some hold that children were always weaned at five years of age; others, that they were not weaned till they were twelve. From the speech of the mother to her son, 2Mac 7:27, it seems likely that among the Jews they were weaned when three years old: O my son, have pity upon me that bare thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee SUCK THREE YEARS, and nourished thee and brought thee up. And this is farther strengthened by 2 Chronicles 31:16, where Hezekiah, in making provision for the Levites and priests, includes the children from three years old and upwards; which is a presumptive proof that previously to this age they were wholly dependent on the mother for their nourishment. Samuel appears to have been brought to the sanctuary when he was just weaned, and then he was capable of ministering before the Lord, 1 Samuel 1:22-28; and this certainly could not be before he was three years of age. The term among the Mohammedans is fixed by the Koran, chap. 31:14, at two years of age.

Verse 9. *Mocking*.— What was implied in this mocking is not known. St. Paul, Galatians 4:29, calls it persecuting; but it is likely he meant no more than some species of ridicule used by Ishmael on the occasion, and probably with respect to the age of Sarah at Isaac's birth, and her previous barrenness. Jonathan ben Uzziel and the Jerusalem Targum represent Ishmael as performing some idolatrous rite on the occasion, and that this had given the offense to Sarah. Conjectures are as useless as they are endless. Whatever it was, it became the occasion of the expulsion of himself and mother. Several authors are of opinion that the Egyptian

bondage of four hundred years, mentioned Genesis 15:13, commenced with this persecution of the righteous seed by the son of an Egyptian woman.

Verse 10. *Cast out this bondwoman and her son*— Both Sarah and Abraham have been accused of cruelty in this transaction, because every word reads harsh to us. Cast out; גָּרַשׁ *garash* signifies not only to thrust out, drive away, and expel, but also to divorce; (see Leviticus 21:7;) and it is in this latter sense the word should be understood here. The child of Abraham by Hagar might be considered as having a right at least to a part of the inheritance; and as it was sufficiently known to Sarah that God had designed that the succession should be established in the line of Isaac, she wished Abraham to divorce Hagar, or to perform some sort of legal act by which Ishmael might be excluded from all claim on the inheritance.

Verse 12. *In Isaac shall thy seed be called*.— Here God shows the propriety of attending to the counsel of Sarah; and lest Abraham, in whose eyes the thing was grievous, should feel distressed on the occasion, God renews his promises to Ishmael and his posterity.

Verse 14. *Took bread, and a bottle*— By the word bread we are to understand the food or provisions which were necessary for her and Ishmael, till they should come to the place of their destination; which, no doubt, Abraham particularly pointed out. The bottle, which was made of skin, ordinarily a goat's skin, contained water sufficient to last them till they should come to the next well; which, it is likely, Abraham particularly specified also. This well, it appears, Hagar missed, and therefore wandered about in the wilderness seeking more water, till all she had brought with her was expended. We may therefore safely presume that she and her son were sufficiently provided for their journey, had they not missed their way. Travelers in those countries take only, to the present day, provisions sufficient to carry them to the next village or encampment; and water to supply them till they shall meet with the next well. What adds to the appearance of cruelty in this case is, that our translation seems to represent Ishmael as being a young child; and that Hagar was obliged to carry him, the bread, and the bottle of water on her back or shoulder at the same time. But that Ishmael could not be carried on his mother's shoulder will be sufficiently evident when his age is considered; Ishmael was born when Abraham was eighty-six years of age, Genesis 16:16; Isaac was born

when he was one hundred years of age, Genesis 21:5; hence Ishmael was fourteen years old at the birth of Isaac. Add to this the age of Isaac when he was weaned, which, from Genesis 21:8, (See note “Genesis 21:8”) was probably three, and we shall find that Ishmael was at the time of his leaving Abraham not less than seventeen years old; an age which, in those primitive times, a young man was able to gain his livelihood, either by his bow in the wilderness, or by keeping flocks as Jacob did.

Verse 15. *And she cast the child*— וַתְּשִׁלֵּךְ אֶת הַיֶּלֶד vattashlech eth haiyeled, and she sent the lad under one of the shrubs, viz., to screen him from the intensity of the heat. Here Ishmael appears to be utterly helpless, and this circumstance seems farther to confirm the opinion that he was now in a state of infancy; but the preceding observations do this supposition entirely away, and his present helplessness will be easily accounted for on this ground: 1. Young persons can bear much less fatigue than those who are arrived at mature age. 2. They require much more fluid from the greater quantum of heat in their bodies, strongly marked by the impetuosity of the blood; because from them a much larger quantity of the fluids is thrown off by sweat and insensible perspiration, than from grown up or aged persons. 3. Their digestion is much more rapid, and hence they cannot bear hunger and thirst as well as the others. On these grounds Ishmael must be much more exhausted with fatigue than his mother.

Verse 19. *God opened her eyes*— These words appear to me to mean no more than that God directed her to a well, which probably was at no great distance from the place in which she then was; and therefore she is commanded, Genesis 21:18, to support the lad, literally, to make her hand strong in his behalf — namely, that he might reach the well and quench his thirst.

Verse 20. *Became an archer*.— And by his skill in this art, under the continual superintendence of the Divine Providence, (for God was with the lad,) he was undoubtedly enabled to procure a sufficient supply for his own wants and those of his parent.

Verse 21. *He dwelt in the wilderness of Paran*— This is generally allowed to have been a part of the desert belonging to Arabia Petraea, in the vicinity of Mount Sinai; and this seems to be its uniform meaning in the sacred writings.

Verse 22. *At that time*— This may either refer to the transactions recorded in the preceding chapter, or to the time of Ishmael's marriage, but most probably to the former.

God is with thee— מִמְרָא דַיִי melmera daiya, the WORD of Jehovah; see before, Genesis 15:1. That the Chaldee paraphrasts use this term, not for a word spoken, but in the same sense in which St. John uses the **λογος του θεου**, the WORD of God, {John 1:1}, must be evident to every unprejudiced reader. See on Genesis 15:1.

Verse 23. *Now therefore swear unto me*— The oath on such occasions probably meant no more than the mutual promise of both the parties, when they slew an animal, poured out the blood as a sacrifice to God, and then passed between the pieces. See this ceremony, Genesis 15:18, and on chap. 15.

According to the kindness that I have done— The simple claims of justice were alone set up among virtuous people in those ancient times, which constitute the basis of the famous *lex talionis*, or law of like for like, kind office for kind office, and breach for breach.

Verse 25. *Abraham reproved Abimelech*— Wells were of great consequence in those hot countries, and especially where the flocks were numerous, because the water was scarce, and digging to find it was accompanied with much expense of time and labor.

Verse 26. *I wot not who hath done this thing*— The servants of Abimelech had committed these depredations on Abraham without any authority from their master, who appears to have been a very amiable man, possessing the fear of God, and ever regulating the whole of his conduct by the principles of righteousness and strict justice.

Verse 27. *Took sheep and oxen*— Some think that these were the sacrifices which were offered on the occasion, and which Abraham furnished at his own cost, and, in order to do Abimelech the greater honor, gave them to him to offer before the Lord.

Verse 28. *Seven ewe lambs*— These were either given as a present, or they were intended as the price of the well; and being accepted by

Abimelech, they served as a witness that he had acknowledged Abraham's right to the well in question.

Verse 31. *He called that place Beer-sheba*— באר שבע Beer-shaba, literally, the well of swearing or of the oath, because they both swore there—mutually confirmed the covenant.

Verse 33. *Abraham planted a grove*— The original word אשל eshel has been variously translated a grove, a plantation, an orchard, a cultivated field, and an oak. From this word, says Mr. Parkhurst, may be derived the name of the famous asylum, opened by Romulus between two groves of oaks at Rome; (μεθοριον δυοιν δρυμωζ, Dionys. Hal., lib. ii. c. 16:) and as Abraham, Genesis 21:33, agreeably, no doubt, to the institutes of the patriarchal religion, planted an oak in Beer-sheba, and called on the name of Jehovah, the everlasting God, (compare Genesis 12:8; 18:1,) so we find that oaks were sacred among the idolaters also. Ye shall be ashamed of the OAKS ye have chosen, says Isaiah, Isaiah 1:29, to the idolatrous Israelites. And in Greece we meet in very early times with the oracle of Jupiter at the oaks of Dodona. Among the Greeks and Romans we have sacra Jovi quercus, the oak sacred to Jupiter, even to a proverb. And in Gaul and Britain we find the highest religious regard paid to the same tree and to its mistletoe, under the direction of the Druids, that is, the oak prophets or priests, from the Celtic deru, and Greek δρυς, an oak. Few are ignorant that the mistletoe is indeed a very extraordinary plant, not to be cultivated in the earth, but always growing on some other tree. "The druids," says Pliny, Nat. Hist., lib. xvii., c. 44, "hold nothing more sacred than the mistletoe, and the tree on which it is produced, provided it be the oak. They make choice of groves of oak on this account, nor do they perform any of their sacred rites without the leaves of those trees; so that one may suppose that they are for this reason called, by a Greek etymology, Druids. And whatever mistletoe grows on the oak they think is sent from heaven, and is a sign that God himself has chosen that tree. This however is very rarely found, but when discovered is treated with great ceremony. They call it by a name which signifies in their language the curer of all ills; and having duly prepared their feasts and sacrifices under the tree, they bring to it two white bulls, whose horns are then for the first time tied; the priest, dressed in a white robe, ascends the tree, and with a golden pruning hook cuts off the mistletoe, which is received into a white sagum or sheet.

Then they sacrifice the victims, praying that God would bless his own gift to those on whom he has bestowed it.” It is impossible for a Christian to read this account without thinking of HIM who was the desire of all nations, of the man whose name was the BRANCH, who had indeed no father upon earth, but came down from heaven, was given to heal all our ills, and, after being cut off through the Divine counsel, was wrapped in fine linen and laid in the sepulcher for our sakes. I cannot forbear adding that the mistletoe was a sacred emblem to other Celtic nations, as, for instance, to the ancient inhabitants of Italy. The golden branch, of which Virgil speaks so largely in the sixth book of the AENEIS, and without which, he says, none could return from the infernal regions, (see line 126,) seems an allusion to the mistletoe, as he himself plainly intimates by comparing it to that plant, line 205, etc. See Parkhurst, under the word **אשל** eshel.

In the first ages of the world the worship of God was exceedingly simple; there were no temples nor covered edifices of any kind; an altar, sometimes a single stone, sometimes consisting of several, and at other times merely of turf, was all that was necessary; on this the fire was lighted and the sacrifice offered. Any place was equally proper, as they knew that the object of their worship filled the heavens and the earth. In process of time when families increased, and many sacrifices were to be offered, groves or shady places were chosen, where the worshippers might enjoy the protection of the shade, as a considerable time must be employed in offering many sacrifices. These groves became afterwards abused to impure and idolatrous purposes, and were therefore strictly forbidden. See Exodus 34:13; Deuteronomy 12:3; 16:21.

And called there on the name of the Lord— On this important passage Dr. Shuckford speaks thus: “Our English translation very erroneously renders this place, he called upon the name of Jehovah; but the expression **קרא בשם** kara beshem never signifies to call upon the name; **קרא שם** kara shem would signify to invoke or call upon the name, or **קרא אל שם** kara el shem would signify to cry unto the name; but **קרא בשם** kara beshem signifies to invoke IN the name, and seems to be used where the true worshippers of God offered their prayers in the name of the true Mediator, or where the idolaters offered their prayers in the name of false

ones, 1 Kings 18:26; for as the true worshippers had but one God and one Lord, so the false worshippers had gods many and lords many, 1 Corinthians 8:5. We have several instances of קרא *kara*, and a noun after it, sometimes with and sometimes without the particle אל *el*, and then it signifies to call upon the person there mentioned; thus, קרא יהוה *kara Yehovah* is to call upon the Lord, Psalm 14:4; 17:6; 31:17; 53:4; 118:5, etc.; and קרא אל יהוה *kara el Yehovah* imports the same, 1 Samuel 12:17; Jon 1:6, etc.; but קרא בשם *kara beshem* is either to name BY the name, Genesis 4:17; Numbers 32:42; Psalm 49:11; Isaiah 43:7; or to invoke IN the name, when it is used as an expression of religious worship.” CONNEX. vol. i., p. 293. I believe this to be a just view of the subject, and therefore I admit it without scruple.

The everlasting God.— יהוה אל עולם *Yehovah el olam*, JEHOVAH, the STRONG GOD, the ETERNAL ONE. This is the first place in Scripture in which עולם *olam* occurs as an attribute of God, and here it is evidently designed to point out his eternal duration; that it can mean no limited time is self-evident, because nothing of this kind can be attributed to God. The Septuagint render the words θεος αἰωνιος, the ever-existing God; and the Vulgate has *Invocavit ibi nomen Do mini, Dei aeterni*, There he invoked the name of the Lord, the eternal God. The Arabic is nearly the same. From this application of both the Hebrew and Greek words we learn that עולם *olam* and αἰων *aion* originally signified ETERNAL, or duration without end. עולם *alam* signifies he was hidden, concealed, or kept secret; and αἰων, according to Aristotle, (Deuteronomy Caelo, lib. i., chap. 9, and a higher authority need not be sought,) is compounded of αει, always, and ων, being, αἰων εστις, απο του αει ειναι. The same author informs us that God was termed Aisa, because he was always existing, λεγεσθαι αιαισας δε, αει ουσαν. Deuteronomy Mundo, chap. xi., in fine. Hence we see that no words can more forcibly express the grand characteristics of eternity than these. It is that duration which is concealed, hidden, or kept secret from all created beings; which is always existing, still running ON but never running OUT; an interminable, incessant, and immeasurable duration; it is THAT, in the whole of which God alone can be said to exist, and that which the eternal mind can alone comprehend.

In all languages words have, in process of time, deviated from their original acceptations, and have become accommodated to particular purposes, and limited to particular meanings. This has happened both to the Hebrew **עלם** alam, and the Greek **αἰων**; they have been both used to express a limited time, but in general a time the limits of which are unknown; and thus a pointed reference to the original ideal meaning is still kept up. Those who bring any of these terms in an accommodated sense to favor a particular doctrine, etc., must depend on the good graces of their opponents for permission to use them in this way. For as the real grammatical meaning of both words is eternal, and all other meanings are only accommodated ones, sound criticism, in all matters of dispute concerning the import of a word or term, must have recourse to the grammatical meaning, and its use among the earliest and most correct writers in the language, and will determine all accommodated meanings by this alone. Now the first and best writers in both these languages apply **alam** and **αἰων** to express eternal, in the proper meaning of that word; and this is their proper meaning in the Old and New Testaments when applied to God, his attributes, his operations taken in connection with the ends for which he performs them, for whatsoever he doth, it shall be for ever — **יהיה לעולם** yihyeh leolam, it shall be for eternity, Ecclesiastes 3:14; forms and appearances of created things may change, but the counsels and purposes of God relative to them are permanent and eternal, and none of them can be frustrated; hence the words, when applied to things which from their nature must have a limited duration, are properly to be understood in this sense, because those things, though temporal in themselves, shadow forth things that are eternal. Thus the Jewish dispensation, which in the whole and in its parts is frequently said to be **לעולם** leolam, for ever, and which has terminated in the Christian dispensation, has the word properly applied to it, because it typified and introduced that dispensation which is to continue not only while time shall last, but is to have its incessant accumulating consummation throughout eternity. The word is, with the same strict propriety, applied to the duration of the rewards and punishments in a future state. And the argument that pretends to prove (and it is only pretension) that in the future punishment of the wicked “the worm shall die,” and “the fire “shall be quenched,” will apply as forcibly to the state of happy spirits, and as

fully prove that a point in eternity shall arrive when the repose of the righteous shall be interrupted, and the glorification of the children of God have an eternal end! See note on “Genesis 17:7”. See note on “Genesis 17:8”.

1. FAITHFULNESS is one of the attributes of God, and none of his promises can fall. According to the promise to Abraham, Isaac is born; but according to the course of nature it fully appears that both Abraham and Sarah had passed that term of life in which it was possible for them to have children. Isaac is the child of the promise, and the promise is supernatural. Ishmael is born according to the ordinary course of nature, and cannot inherit, because the inheritance is spiritual, and cannot come by natural birth; hence we see that no man can expect to enter into the kingdom of God by birth, education, profession of the true faith, etc., etc. Those alone who are born from above, and are made partakers of the Divine nature, can be admitted into the family of God in heaven, and everlastingly enjoy that glorious inheritance. Reader, art thou born again? Hath God changed thy heart and thy life? If not, canst thou suppose that in thy present state thou canst possibly enter into the paradise of God? I leave thy conscience to answer.

2. The actions of good men may be misrepresented, and their motives suspected, because those motives are not known; and those who are prone to think evil are the last to take any trouble to inform their minds, so that they may judge righteous judgment. Abraham, in the dismissal of Hagar and Ishmael, has been accused of cruelty. Though objections of this kind have been answered already, yet it may not be amiss farther to observe that what he did he did in conformity to a Divine command, and a command so unequivocally given that he could not doubt its Divine origin; and this very command was accompanied with a promise that both the child and his mother should be taken under the Divine protection. And it was so; nor does it appear that they lacked any thing but water, and that only for a short time, after which it was miraculously supplied. God will work a miracle when necessary, and never till then; and at such a time the Divine interposition can be easily ascertained, and man is under no temptation to attribute to second causes what has so evidently flowed from the first. Thus, while he is promoting his creatures' good, he is securing his own glory; and he brings men into straits and difficulties, that

he may have the fuller opportunity to convince his followers of his providential care, and to prove how much he loves them.

3. Did we acknowledge God in all our ways, he would direct our steps. Abimelech, king of Gerar, and Phichol, captain of his host, seeing Abraham a worshipper of the true God, made him swear by the object of his worship that there should be a lasting peace between them and him; for as they saw that God was with Abraham, they well knew that he could not expect the Divine blessing any longer than he walked in integrity before God; they therefore require him to swear by God that he would not deal falsely with them or their posterity. From this very circumstance we may see the original purpose, design, and spirit of an oath, viz., Let God prosper or curse ME in all that I do, as I prove true or false to my engagements! This is still the spirit of all oaths where God is called to witness, whether the form be by the water of the Ganges, the sign of the cross, kissing the Bible, or lifting up the hand to heaven. Hence we may learn that he who falsifies an oath or promise, made in the presence and name of God, thereby forfeits all right and title to the approbation and blessing of his Maker.

But it is highly criminal to make such appeals to God upon trivial occasions. Only the most solemn matters should be thus determined. Legislators who regard the morals of the people should take heed not to multiply oaths in matters of commerce and revenue, if they even use them at all. Who can take the oaths presented by the custom house or excise, and be guiltless? I have seen a person kiss his pen or thumb nail instead of the book, thinking that he avoided the condemnation thereby of the false oath he was then taking!

CHAPTER 22

The faith and obedience of Abraham put to a most extraordinary test, 1. He is commanded to offer his beloved son Isaac for a burnt-offering, 2. He prepares, with the utmost promptitude, to accomplish the will of God, 3-6. Affecting speech of Isaac, 7; and Abraham's answer, 8. Having arrived at mount Moriah he prepares to sacrifice his son, 9, 10; and is prevented by an angel of the Lord, 11, 12. A ram is offered in the stead of Isaac, 13; and the place is named Jehovah-jireh, 14. The angel of the Lord calls to Abraham a second time, 15; and, in the most solemn manner, he is assured of innumerable blessings in the multiplication and prosperity of his seed, 16-18. Abraham returns and dwells at Beer-sheba, 19; hears that his brother Nahor has eight children by his wife Milcah, 20; their names, 21-23; and four by his concubine Reumah, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. God did tempt Abraham— The original here is very emphatic: **והאלהים הסנ את אברהם** vhaelohim nissah eth Abraham, “And the Elohim he tried this Abraham;” God brought him into such circumstances as exercised and discovered his faith, love, and obedience. Though the word tempt, from tento, signifies no more than to prove or try, yet as it is now generally used to imply a solicitation to evil, in which way God never tempts any man, it would be well to avoid it here. The Septuagint used the word **επειρασε**, which signifies tried, pierced through; and Symmachus translates the Hebrew **נסה** nissah by **εδοξαζες**, God glorified Abraham, or rendered him illustrious, supposing the word to be the same with **נש** nas, which signifies to glister with light, whence **נש** nes, an ensign or banner displayed. Thus then, according to him, the words should be understood: “God put great honor on Abraham by giving him this opportunity of showing to all successive ages the nature and efficacy of an unshaken faith in the power, goodness, and truth of God.” The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the place thus: “And it happened that

Isaac and Ishmael contended, and Ishmael said, I ought to be my father's heir, because I am his first-born; but Isaac said, It is more proper that I should be my father's heir, because I am the son of Sarah his wife, and thou art only the son of Hagar, my mother's slave. Then Ishmael answered, I am more righteous than thou, because I was circumcised when I was thirteen years of age, and if I had chosen, I could have prevented my circumcision; but thou wert circumcised when thou wert but eight days old, and if thou hadst had knowledge, thou wouldst probably not have suffered thyself to be circumcised. Then Isaac answered and said, Behold, I am now thirty-six years old, and if the holy and blessed God should require all my members, I would freely surrender them. These words were immediately heard before the Lord of the universe, and **מִמְרָא דַּיָּי** meimera daiya, the WORD of the LORD, did try Abraham." I wish once for all to remark, though the subject has been referred to before, that the Chaldee term **מִמְרָא** meimera, which we translate word, is taken personally in some hundreds of places in the Targums. When the author, Jonathan, speaks of the Divine Being as doing or saying any thing, he generally represents him as performing the whole by his meimera, which he appears to consider, not as a speech or word spoken, but as a person quite distinct from the Most High. St. John uses the word **λογος** in precisely the same sense with the Targumists, John 1:1; see the notes there, and see before on Genesis 21:22, and Genesis 15:1.

Verse 2. Take now thy son— Bishop Warburton's observations on this passage are weighty and important. "The order in which the words are placed in the original gradually increases the sense, and raises the passions higher and higher: Take now thy son, (rather, take I beseech thee **נָא** na,) thine only son whom thou lovest, even Isaac. Jarchi imagines this minuteness was to preclude any doubt in Abraham. Abraham desired earnestly to be let into the mystery of redemption; and God, to instruct him in the infinite extent of the Divine goodness to mankind, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, let Abraham feel by experience what it was to lose a beloved son, the son born miraculously when Sarah was past child-bearing, as Jesus was miraculously born of a virgin. The duration, too, of the action, Genesis 22:4, was the same as that between Christ's death and resurrection, both which are designed to be represented in it; and still farther not only the final archetypical sacrifice of

the Son of God was figured in the command to offer Isaac, but the intermediate typical sacrifice in the Mosaic economy was represented by the permitted sacrifice of the ram offered up, Genesis 22:13, instead of Isaac.” See Dodd.

Only son— All that he had by Sarah his legal wife.

The land of Moriah— This is supposed to mean all the mountains of Jerusalem, comprehending Mount Gihon or Calvary, the mount of Sion and of Acra. As Mount Calvary is the highest ground to the west, and the mount of the temple is the lowest of the mounts, Mr. Mann conjectures that it was upon this mount Abraham offered up Isaac, which is well known to be the same mount on which our blessed Lord was crucified. Beer-sheba, where Abraham dwelt, is about forty-two miles distant from Jerusalem, and it is not to be wondered at that Abraham, Isaac, the two servants, and the ass laden with wood for the burnt-offering, did not reach this place till the third day; see Genesis 22:4.

Verse 3. Two of his young men— Eliezer and Ishmael, according to the Targum.

Clave the wood— Small wood, fig and palm, proper for a burnt-offering. — Targum.

Verse 4. The third day— “As the number SEVEN,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “is of especial use in Scripture because of the Sabbath day, Genesis 2:2, so THREE is a mystical number because of Christ’s rising from the dead the third day, Matthew 17:23; 1 Corinthians 15:4; as he was crucified the third hour after noon, Mark 15:25: and Isaac, as he was a figure of Christ, in being the only son of his father, and not spared but offered for a sacrifice, Romans 8:32, so in sundry particulars he resembled our Lord: the third day Isaac was to be offered up, so it was the third day in which Christ also was to be perfected, Luke 13:32; Isaac carried the wood for the burnt-offering, Genesis 22:6, so Christ carried the tree whereon he died, John 19:17; the binding of Isaac, Genesis 21:9, was also typical, so Christ was bound, Matthew 27:2.

“In the following remarkable cases this number also occurs. Moses desired to go three days’ journey in the wilderness to sacrifice, Exodus 5:3; and they traveled three days in it before they found water, Exodus 15:22; and

three days' journey the ark of the covenant went before them, to search out a resting place, Numbers 10:33; by the third day the people were to be ready to receive God's law, Exodus 19:11; and after three days to pass over Jordan into Canaan, Joshua 1:14; the third day Esther put on the apparel of the kingdom, Esther 5:1; on the third day Hezekiah, being recovered from his illness, went up to the house of the Lord, 2 Kings 20:5; on the third day, the prophet said, God will raise us up and we shall live before him, Hosea 6:2; and on the third day, as well as on the seventh, the unclean person was to purify himself, Numbers 19:12: with many other memorable things which the Scripture speaks concerning the third day, and not without mystery. See Genesis 40:12, 13; 42:17, 18; Jonah 1:17; Joshua 2:16; unto which we may add a Jew's testimony in Bereshith Rabba, in a comment on this place: There are many THREE DAYS mentioned in the Holy Scripture, of which one is the resurrection of the Messiah."-Ainsworth.

Saw the place afar off.— He knew the place by seeing the cloud of glory smoking on the top of the mountain. — Targum.

Verse 5. *I and the lad will go and come again*— How could Abraham consistently with truth say this, when he knew he was going to make his son a burnt-offering? The apostle answers for him: By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac-accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure, Hebrews 11:17, 19. He knew that previously to the birth of Isaac both he and his wife were dead to all the purposes of procreation; that his birth was a kind of life from the dead; that the promise of God was most positive, In Isaac shall thy seed be called, Genesis 21:12; that this promise could not fail; that it was his duty to obey the command of his Maker; and that it was as easy for God to restore him to life after he had been a burnt-offering, as it was for him to give him life in the beginning. Therefore he went fully purposed to offer his son, and yet confidently expecting to have him restored to life again. We will go yonder and worship — perform a solemn act of devotion which God requires, and come again to you.

Verse 6. *Took the wood-and laid it upon Isaac*— Probably the mountain-top to which they were going was too difficult to be ascended

by the ass; therefore either the father or the son must carry the wood, and it was most becoming in the latter.

Verse 7. *Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb*— Nothing can be conceived more tender, affectionate, and affecting, than the question of the son and the reply of the father on this occasion. A paraphrase would spoil it; nothing can be added without injuring those expressions of affectionate submission on the one hand, and dignified tenderness and simplicity on the other.

Verse 8. *My son, God will provide himself a lamb*— Here we find the same obedient unshaken faith for which this pattern of practical piety was ever remarkable. But we must not suppose that this was the language merely of faith and obedience; the patriarch spoke prophetically, and referred to that Lamb of God which HE had provided for himself, who in the fullness of time should take away the sin of the world, and of whom Isaac was a most expressive type. All the other lambs which had been offered from the foundation of the world had been such as MEN chose and MEN offered; but THIS was the Lamb which GOD had provided — emphatically, THE LAMB OF GOD.

Verse 9. *And bound Isaac his son*— If the patriarch had not been upheld by the conviction that he was doing the will of God, and had he not felt the most perfect confidence that his son should be restored even from the dead, what agony must his heart have felt at every step of the journey, and through all the circumstances of this extraordinary business? What must his affectionate heart have felt at the questions asked by his innocent and amiable son? What must he have suffered while building the altar, laying on the wood, binding his lovely son, placing him on the wood, taking the knife, and stretching out his hand to slay the child of his hopes? Every view we take of the subject interests the heart, and exalts the character of this father of the faithful. But has the character of Isaac been duly considered? Is not the consideration of his excellence lost in the supposition that he was too young to enter particularly into a sense of his danger, and too feeble to have made any resistance, had he been unwilling to submit? Josephus supposes that Isaac was now twenty-five, (see the chronology on Genesis 22:1;) some rabbins that he was thirty-six; but it is more probable that he was now about thirty-three, the age at which his

great Antitype was offered up; and on this medium I have ventured to construct the chronology, of which I think it necessary to give this notice to the reader. Allowing him to be only twenty-five, he might have easily resisted; for can it be supposed that an old man of at least one hundred and twenty-five years of age could have bound, without his consent, a young man in the very prime and vigor of life? In this case we cannot say that the superior strength of the father prevailed, but the piety, filial affection, and obedience of the son yielded. All this was most illustriously typical of Christ. In both cases the father himself offers up his only-begotten son, and the father himself binds him on the wood or to the cross; in neither case is the son forced to yield, but yields of his own accord; in neither case is the life taken away by the hand of violence; Isaac yields himself to the knife, Jesus lays down his life for the sheep.

Verse 11. *The angel of the Lord*— The very person who was represented by this offering; the Lord Jesus, who calls himself Jehovah, Genesis 22:16, and on his own authority renews the promises of the covenant. HE was ever the great Mediator between God and man. See this point proved, Genesis 15:7.

Verse 12. *Lay not thine hand upon the lad*— As Isaac was to be the representative of Jesus Christ's real sacrifice, it was sufficient for this purpose that in his own will, and the will of his father, the purpose of the immolation was complete. Isaac was now fully offered both by his father and by himself. The father yields up the son, the son gives up his life; on both sides, as far as will and purpose could go, the sacrifice was complete. God simply spares the father the torture of putting the knife to his son's throat. Now was the time when it might properly be said, "Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offering, and sacrifice for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure in them: then said the Angel of the Covenant, Lo! I come to do thy will, O God." Lay not thy hand upon the lad; an irrational creature will serve for the purpose of a representative sacrifice, from this till the fullness of time. But without this most expressive representation of the father offering his beloved, only-begotten son, what reference can such sacrifices be considered to have to the great event of the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ? Abraham, the most dignified, the most immaculate of all the patriarchs; Isaac, the true pattern of piety to God and filial obedience, may well represent God the Father so loving the world as to

give his only-begotten Son, JESUS CHRIST, to die for the sin of man. But the grand circumstances necessary to prefigure these important points could not be exhibited through the means of any or of the whole brute creation. The whole sacrificial system of the Mosaic economy had a retrospective and prospective view, referring FROM the sacrifice of Isaac TO the sacrifice of Christ; in the first the dawning of the Sun of righteousness was seen; in the latter, his meridian splendor and glory. Taken in this light (and this is the only light in which it should be viewed) Abraham offering his son Isaac is one of the most important facts and most instructive histories in the whole Old Testament. See farther on this subject, Genesis 23:2.

Verse 14. *Jehovah-jireh*— **יְהוָה יִרְאֵה** Yehovah-yireh, literally interpreted in the margin, The Lord will see; that is, God will take care that every thing shall be done that is necessary for the comfort and support of them who trust in him: hence the words are usually translated, The Lord will provide; so our translators, Genesis 22:8, **אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֵה** Elohim yireh, God will provide; because his eye ever affects his heart, and the wants he sees his hand is ever ready to supply. But all this seems to have been done under a Divine Impulse, and the words to have been spoken prophetically; hence Houbigant and some others render the words thus: Dominus videbitur, the Lord shall be seen; and this translation the following clause seems to require, As it is said to this day, **בְּהַר יְהוָה יִרְאֵה** behar Yehovah yeraeh, ON THIS MOUNT THE LORD SHALL BE SEEN. From this it appears that the sacrifice offered by Abraham was understood to be a representative one, and a tradition was kept up that Jehovah should be seen in a sacrificial way on this mount. And this renders the opinion stated on Genesis 22:1 more than probable, viz., that Abraham offered Isaac on that very mountain on which, in the fullness of time, Jesus suffered. See Bishop Warburton.

Verse 16. *By myself have I sworn*— So we find that the person who was called the angel of the Lord is here called Jehovah; See note on “Genesis 22:2”. An oath or an appeal to God is, among men, an end to strife; as God could swear by no greater, he swore by himself: being willing more abundantly, says the apostle, to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, he confirmed it by an oath, that two immutable things, (his PROMISE and his OATH,) in which it was impossible

for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. See Hebrews 6:13-18.

Verse 17. *Shall possess the gate of his enemies*— Instead of gate the Septuagint have *πολεις*, cities; but as there is a very near resemblance between *πολεις*, cities, and *πυλας*, gates, the latter might have been the original reading in the Septuagint, though none of the MSS. now acknowledge it. By the gates may be meant all the strength, whether troops, counsels, or fortified cities of their enemies. So Matthew 16:18: On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it — the counsels, stratagems, and powers of darkness shall not be able to prevail against or overthrow the true Church of Christ; and possibly our Lord had this promise to Abraham and his spiritual posterity in view, when he spoke these words.

Verse 18. *And in thy seed, etc.*— We have the authority of St. Paul, Galatians 3:8, 16, 18, to restrain this to our blessed Lord, who was THE SEED through whom alone all God's blessings of providence, mercy, grace, and glory, should be conveyed to the nations of the earth.

Verse 20. *Behold, Milcah, she hath also borne children unto thy brother*— This short history seems introduced solely for the purpose of preparing the reader for the transactions related chap. 24., and to show that the providence of God was preparing, in one of the branches of the family of Abraham, a suitable spouse for his son Isaac.

Verse 21. *Huz*— He is supposed to have peopled the land of Uz or Ausitis, in Arabia Deserta, the country of Job.

Buz his brother— From this person Elihu the Buzite, one of the friends of Job, is thought to have descended.

Kemuel the father of Aram— Kamouel *πατερα συρωσ*, the father of the Syrians, according to the Septuagint. Probably the Kamiletes, a Syrian tribe to the westward of the Euphrates are meant; they are mentioned by Strabo.

Verse 23. *Bethuel begat Rebekah*— Who afterward became the wife of Isaac.

Verse 24. *His concubine*— We borrow this word from the Latin compound *concubina*, from *con*, together, and *cubo*, to lie, and apply it solely to a woman cohabiting with a man without being legally married. The Hebrew word is פִּילְגֶשֶׁת *pilegesh*, which is also a compound term, contracted, according to Parkhurst, from פָּלַג *palag*, to divide or share, and נָגַשׁ *nagash*, to approach; because the husband, in the delicate phrase of the Hebrew tongue, approaches the concubine, and shares the bed, etc., of the real wife with her. The *pilegesh* or concubine, (from which comes the Greek *παλλακή* *pallake*, and also the Latin *pellex*,) in Scripture, is a kind of secondary wife, not unlawful in the patriarchal times; though the progeny of such could not inherit. The word is not used in the Scriptures in that disagreeable sense in which we commonly understand it. Hagar was properly the concubine or *pilegesh* of Abraham, and this annuente Deo, and with his wife's consent. Keturah, his second wife, is called a concubine, Genesis 26:15; 1 Chronicles 1:32; and Pilhah and Zilhah were concubines to Jacob, Genesis 35:22. After the patriarchal times many eminent men had concubines, viz., Caleb, 1 Chronicles 2:46, 48; Manasses, 1 Chronicles 7:14; Gideon, Judges 8:31; Saul, 2 Samuel 3:7; David, 2 Samuel 5:13; Solomon, 2 Kings 11:3; and Rehoboam, 2 Chronicles 11:21. The *pilegesh*, therefore, differed widely from a prostitute; and however unlawful under the New Testament, was not so under the Old.

FROM this chapter a pious mind may collect much useful instruction. From the trial of Abraham we again see, 1. That God may bring his followers into severe straits and difficulties, that they may have the better opportunity of both knowing and showing their own faith and obedience; and that he may seize on those occasions to show them the abundance of his mercy, and thus confirm them in righteousness all their days. There is a foolish saying among some religious people, which cannot be too severely reprobated: Untried grace is no grace. On the contrary, there may be much grace, though God, for good reasons, does not think proper for a time to put it to any severe trial or proof. But grace is certainly not fully known but in being called to trials of severe and painful obedience. But as all the gifts of God should be used, (and they are increased and strengthened by exercise,) it would be unjust to deny trials and exercises to grace, as this would be to preclude it from the opportunities of being strengthened and increased. 2. The offering up of Isaac is used by several religious people in

a sort of metaphorical way, to signify their easily-besetting sins, beloved idols, etc. But this is a most reprehensible abuse of the Scripture. It is both insolent and wicked to compare some abominable lust or unholy affection to the amiable and pious youth who, for his purity and excellence, was deemed worthy to prefigure the sacrifice of the Son of God. To call our vile passions and unlawful attachments by the name of our Isaac is unpardonable; and to talk of sacrificing such to God is downright blasphemy. Such sayings as these appear to be legitimated by long use; but we should be deeply and scrupulously careful not to use any of the words of God in any sense in which he has not spoken them. If, in the course of God's providence, a parent is called to give up to death an amiable, only son, then there is a parallel in the case; and it may be justly said, if pious resignation fill the parent's mind, such a person, like Abraham, has been called to give his Isaac back to God.

Independently of the typical reference to this transaction, there are two points which seem to be recommended particularly to our notice. 1. The astonishing faith and prompt obedience of the father. 2. The innocence, filial respect, and passive submission of the son. Such a father and such a son were alone worthy of each other.

CHAPTER 23

The age and death of Sarah, 1, 2. Abraham mourns for her, and requests a burial-place from the sons of Heth, 24. They freely offer him the choice of all their sepulchers, 5, 6. Abraham refuses to receive any as a free gift, and requests to buy the cave of Machpelah from Ephron, 7-9. Ephron proffers the cave and the field in which it was situated as a free gift unto Abraham, 10, 11. Abraham insists on giving its value in money, 12, 13. Ephron at last consents, and names the sum of four hundred shekels, 14, 15. Abraham weighs him the money in the presence of the people; in consequence of which the cave, the whole field, trees, etc., are made sure to him and his family for a possession, 16-18. The transaction being completed, Sarah is buried in the cave, 19. The sons of Heth ratify the bargain, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. *And Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years old*— It is worthy of remark that Sarah is the only woman in the sacred writings whose age, death, and burial are distinctly noted. And she has been deemed worthy of higher honor, for St. Paul, Galatians 4:22, 23, makes her a type of the Church of Christ; and her faith in the accomplishment of God's promise, that she should have a son, when all natural probabilities were against it, is particularly celebrated in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Hebrews 11:11. Sarah was about ninety-one years old when Isaac was born, and she lived thirty-six years after, and saw him grown up to man's estate. With SARAH the promise of the incarnation of Christ commenced, though a comparatively obscure prophecy of it had been delivered to Eve, Genesis 3:15; and with MARY it terminated, having had its exact completion. Thus God put more honor upon these two women than upon all the daughters of Eve besides. Sarah's conception of Isaac was supernatural; she had passed the age and circumstances in which it was possible, naturally speaking, to have a child; therefore she laughed when the promise was given, knowing that the thing was impossible, because it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women. God allows this natural impossibility,

and grants that the thing must be the effect of Divine interposition; and therefore asks, Is any thing too hard for God? The physical impossibility was increased in the case of Mary, she having no connection with man; but the same power interposed as in the case of Sarah: and we find that when all aptitude for natural procreation was gone, Sarah received strength to conceive seed, and bore a son, from whom, in a direct line, the Messiah, the Savior of the world, was to descend; and through this same power we find a virgin conceiving and bearing a son against all natural impossibilities. Every thing is supernatural in the births both of the type and antitype; can it be wondered at then, if the spiritual offspring of the Messiah must have a supernatural birth likewise? hence the propriety of that saying, Unless a man be born again-born from above-born, not only of water, but of the Holy Ghost, he cannot see the kingdom of God. These may appear hard sayings, and those who are little in the habit of considering spiritual things may exclaim, It is enthusiasm! Who can bear it? Such things cannot possibly be.” To such persons I have only to say, God hath spoken. This is sufficient for those who credit his being and his Bible; nor is there any thing too hard for him. He, by whose almighty power, Sarah had strength to conceive and bear a son in her old age, and by whose miraculous interference a virgin conceived, and the man Christ Jesus was born of her, can by the same power transform the sinful soul, and cause it to bear the image of the heavenly as it has borne the image of the earthly.

Verse 2. Sarah died in Kirjath-arba— Literally in the city of the four. Some suppose this place was called the city of the four because it was the burial place of Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; others, because according to the opinion of the rabbins, Eve was buried there. with Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah. But it seems evidently to have had its name from a Canaanite, one of the Anakim, probably called Arba (for the text, Joshua 14:14, does not actually say this was his name,) who was the chief of the four brothers who dwelt there; the names of the others being Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. See Judges 1:10. These three were destroyed by the tribe of Judah; probably the other had been previously dead.

Abraham came to mourn for Sarah— From verse 19 of the preceding chapter {Genesis 22:19} it appears that Abraham had settled at Beer-sheba; and here we find that Sarah died at Hebron, which was about twenty-four miles distant from Beersheba. For the convenience of feeding

his numerous flocks, Abraham had probably several places of temporary residence, and particularly one at Beer-sheba, and another at Hebron; and it is likely that while he sojourned at Beersheba, Sarah died at Hebron; and his coming to mourn and weep for her signifies his coming from the former to the latter place on the news of her death.

Verse 3. *Abraham stood up from before his dead*— He had probably sat on the ground some days in token of sorrow, as the custom then was, (see Tobit 2:12, 13; Isaiah 47:1; and Genesis 37:35;) and when this time was finished he arose and began to treat about a burying place.

Verse 4. *I am a stranger and a sojourner*— It appears from Hebrews 11:13-16; 1 Peter 2:11, that these words refer more to the state of his mind than of his body. He felt that he had no certain dwelling place, and was seeking by faith a city that had foundations.

Give me a possession of a burying place— It has been remarked that in different nations it was deemed ignominious to be buried in another's ground; probably this prevailed in early times in the east, and it may be in reference to a sentiment of this kind that Abraham refuses to accept the offer of the children of Heth to bury in any of their sepulchers, and earnestly requests them to sell him one, that he might bury his wife in a place that he could claim as his own.

Verse 6. *Thou art a mighty prince*— נְשִׂיא אֱלֹהִים nesi Elohim, a prince of God — a person whom we know to be Divinely favored, and whom, in consequence, we deeply respect and reverence.

Verse 8. *Entreat for me to Ephron*— Abraham had already seen the cave and field, and finding to whom they belonged, and that they would answer his purpose, came to the gate of Hebron, where the elders of the people sat to administer justice, etc., and where bargains and sales were made and witnessed, and having addressed himself to the elders, among whom Ephron was, though it appears he was not personally known to Abraham, he begged them to use their influence with the owner of the cave and field to sell it to him, that it might serve him and his family for a place of sepulture.

Verse 10. *And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth*— And Ephron **יֹשֶׁב** yosheb, was sitting among the children of Heth, but, as was before conjectured, was personally unknown to Abraham; he therefore answered for himself, making a free tender of the field, etc., to Abraham, in the presence of all the people, which amounted to a legal conveyance of the whole property to the patriarch.

Verse 13. *If thou wilt give it*— Instead of, if thou wilt give it, we should read, But if thou wilt sell it, I will give thee money for the field; **כֶּסֶף** keseph, silver, not coined money, for it is not probable that any such was then in use.

Verse 15. *The land is worth four hundred shekels of silver*— Though the words is worth are not in the text, yet they are necessarily expressed here to adapt the Hebrew to the idiom of our tongue. A shekel, according to the general opinion, was equal to two shillings and sixpence; but according to Dr. Prideaux, whose estimate I shall follow, three shillings English, four hundred of which are equal to sixty pounds sterling; but it is evident that a certain weight is intended, and not a coin, for in Genesis 23:16 it is said, And Abraham weighed **וַיִּשְׁקַל** vaiyishkol, the silver, and hence it appears that this weight itself passed afterwards as a current coin, for the word **שֶׁקֶל** is not only used to express a coin or piece of silver, but also to weigh; See note on “Genesis 20:16”.

Verse 16. *Current with the merchant*— **עֵבֶר לַסֹּחֵר** ober lassocher, passing to or with the traveler — such as was commonly used by those who traveled about with merchandise of any sort. The word signifies the same as hawker or pedlar among us.

Verse 17. *All the trees that were in the field*— It is possible that all these were specified in the agreement.

Verse 20. *And the field, etc. were made sure*— **וַיִּקָּם** vaiyakom, were established, caused to stand; the whole transaction having been regulated according to all the forms of law then in use.

1. In this transaction between Abraham and the sons of Heth concerning the cave and field of Machpelah, we have the earliest account on record of

the purchase of land. The simplicity, openness, and candour on both sides cannot be too much admired.

2. Sarah being dead, Abraham being only a sojourner in that land, shifting from place to place for the mere purpose of pasturing his flocks, and having no right to any part of the land, wished to purchase a place in which he might have the continual right of sepulture. For this purpose, 1. He goes to the gate of the city, the place where, in all ancient times, justice was administered, and bargains and sales concluded, and where for these purposes the elders of the people sat. 2. He there proposes to buy the cave known by the name of the Cave of Machpelah, the cave of the turning or the double cave, for a burying place for his family. 3. To prevent him from going to any unnecessary expense, the people with one voice offer him the privilege of burying his wife in any of their sepulchers; this appearing to them to be no more than the common rights of hospitality and humanity required. 4. Abraham, intent on making a purchase, Ephron, the owner of the field and cave, values them at four hundred shekels, but at the same time wishes Abraham to receive the whole as a gift. 5. Abraham refuses the gift and weighs down the silver specified. 6. The people who enter in at the gate, i.e., the inhabitants coming from or going to their ordinary occupations in the country, witness the transaction, and thus the conveyance to Abraham is made sure without the intervention of those puzzlers of civil affairs by whose tricks and chicanery property often becomes insecure, and right and succession precarious and uncertain. But this censure does not fall on lawyers properly so called, who are men of honor, and whose office, in every well-regulated state, is as useful as it is respectable. But the accumulation and complex nature of almost all modern systems of law puzzle even justice herself, and often induce decisions by which truth falls in the streets and equity goes backwards. In the first ages of mankind, suspicion, deceit, and guile seem to have had a very limited influence. Happy days of primitive simplicity! When shall they return?

3. We often hear of the rudeness and barbarity of the primitive ages, but on what evidence? Every rule of politeness that could be acted upon in such a case as that mentioned here, is brought into full practice. Is it possible to read the simple narration in this place without admiring the amiable, decent, and polite conduct displayed on both sides? Had even Lord Chesterfield read this account, his good sense would have led him to

propose it as a model in all transactions between man and his fellows. There is neither awkward, stiff formality on the one hand, nor frippery or affectation on the other. Decent respect, good sense, good nature, and good breeding, are all prominently displayed. And how highly laudable and useful is all this! A pedant or a boor on either side might have destroyed the simplicity of the whole transaction; the one by engendering caution and suspicion, and the other by exciting disgust. In all such transactions the beau and the boor are equally to be avoided.

From the first no sincerity can be expected, and the manners of the latter render him intolerable. The religion of the Bible recommends and inculcates orderly behavior, as well as purity of heart and life. They who, under the sanction of religion, trample under foot the decent forms of civil respect, supposing that because they are religious they have a right to be rude, totally mistake the spirit of Christianity, for love or charity (the soul and essence of that religion) behaveth not itself unseemly. Every attentive reader of the thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, will clearly discern that the description of true religion given in that place applies as forcibly to good breeding as to inward and outward holiness. What lessons of honesty, decent respect, and good manners could a sensible man derive from Abraham treating with the sons of Heth for the cave of Machpelah, and William Penn treating with the American Indians for the tract of land now called Pennsylvania! I leave others to draw the parallel, and to show how exactly the conduct and spirit of patriarch the first were exemplified in the conduct and spirit of patriarch the second. Let the righteous be had in everlasting remembrance!

CHAPTER 24

Abraham, being solicitous to get his son Isaac property married, calls his confidential servant, probably Eliezer, and makes him swear that he will not take a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites, 1-3, but from among his own kindred, 4. The servant proposes certain difficulties, 5, which Abraham removes by giving him the strongest assurances of God's direction in the business, 6, 7, and then specifies the conditions of the oath, 8. The form of the oath itself, 9. The servant makes preparations for his journey, and sets out for Mesopotamia, the residence of Abraham's kindred, 10. Arrives at a well near to the place, 11. His prayer to God, 12-14. Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, comes to the well to draw water, 15. She is described, 16. Conversation between her and Abraham's servant, in which every thing took place according to his prayer to God, 17-21. He makes her presents, and learns whose daughter she is, 22-24. She invites him to her father's house, 25. He returns thanks to God for having thus far given him a prosperous journey, 26, 27. Rebekah runs home and informs her family, 28; on which her brother Laban comes out, and invites the servant home, 29-31. His reception, 32, 33. Tells his errand, 34, and how he had proceeded in executing the trust reposed in him, 35-48. Requests an answer, 49. The family of Rebekah consent that she should become the wife of Isaac, 50, 51. The servant worships God, 52, and gives presents to Milcah, Laban, and Rebekah, 53. He requests to be dismissed, 54-56. Rebekah, being consulted, consents to go, 57, 58. She is accompanied by her nurse, 59; and having received the blessing of her parents and relatives, 60, she departs with the servant of Abraham, 61. They are met by Isaac, who was on an evening walk for the purpose of meditation, 62-65. The servant relates to Isaac all that he had done, 66. Isaac and Rebekah are married, 67.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. *And Abraham was old*— He was now about one hundred and forty years of age, and consequently Isaac was forty, being born when his father was one hundred years old. See Genesis 21:5; 25:20.

Verse 2. *Eldest servant*— As this eldest servant is stated to have been the ruler over all that he had, it is very likely that Eliezer is meant. See Genesis 15:2, 3.

Put, I pray thee, thy hand— See note on “Genesis 24:9”.

Verse 3. *I will make thee swear*— See note on “Genesis 24:9”.

Of the Canaanites— Because these had already been devoted to slavery, etc., and it would have been utterly inconsistent as well with prudence as with the design of God to have united the child and heir of the promise with one who was under a curse, though that curse might be considered to be only of a political nature. See the curse of Canaan, Genesis 9:25.

Verse 4. *My country*— Mesopotamia, called here Abraham’s country, because it was the place where the family of Haran, his brother, had settled; and where himself had remained a considerable time with his father Terah. In this family, as well as in that of Nahor, the true religion had been in some sort preserved, though afterwards considerably corrupted; see Genesis 31:19.

And take a wife unto my son— A young man in Bengal is precisely in the same circumstances as Isaac; he has nothing to do in the choice of a wife; parents employ others to seek wives for their sons. Those who leave their homes in search of employment always marry their children in their own country, and among their acquaintance at home; never among the people with whom they reside. In Asiatic countries this custom has prevailed from the infancy of the human race. See Ward’s Hindoo Customs.

Verse 5. *Peradventure the woman will not be willing*— We may see, says Calmet, by this and other passages of Scripture, Joshua 9:18, what the sentiments of the ancients were relative to an oath. They believed they

were bound precisely by what was spoken, and had no liberty to interpret the intentions of those to whom the oath was made.

Verse 7. *The Lord God, etc.*— He expresses the strongest confidence in God, that the great designs for which he had brought him from his own kindred to propagate the true religion in the earth would be accomplished; and that therefore, when earthly instruments failed, heavenly ones should be employed. He shall send his angel, probably meaning the Angel of the Covenant, of whom see Genesis 15:7.

Verse 9. *Put his hand under the thigh of Abraham*— This form of swearing has greatly puzzled the commentators; but it is useless to detail opinions which I neither believe myself, nor would wish my readers to credit. I believe the true sense is given in the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, and that called the Jerusalem Targum. In the former it is said, Put now thy hand **בגזירת מהולתי** bigzirath mehulathi, in sectione circumcisionis meoe; in the latter **תחות ירך קימי** techoth yerech keyami, sub femore foederis mei. When we put the circumstances mentioned in this and the third verse together, we shall find that they fully express the ancient method of binding by oath in such transactions as had a religious tendency. 1. The rite or ceremony used on the occasion: the person binding himself put his hand under the thigh of the person to whom he was to be bound; i.e., he put his hand on the part that bore the mark of circumcision, the sign of God's covenant, which is tantamount to our kissing the book, or laying the hand upon the New Testament or covenant of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. The form of the oath itself: the person swore by Jehovah, the God of heaven and the God of the earth. Three essential attributes of God are here mentioned: 1. His self-existence and eternity in the name Jehovah. 2. His dominion of glory and blessedness in the kingdom of heaven. 3. His providence and bounty in the earth. The meaning of the oath seems to be this: "As God is unchangeable in his nature and purposes, so shall I be in this engagement, under the penalty of forfeiting all expectation of temporal prosperity, the benefits of the mystical covenant, and future glory." An oath of this kind, taken at such a time, and on such an occasion, can never be deemed irreligious or profane. Thou shalt swear by his name — shalt acknowledge and bind thyself unto the true God, as the just Judge of thy motives and actions, is a command of the Most High; and such an oath as the above is at once (on such an occasion) both proper and rational. The

person binding himself proposes for a pattern the unchangeable and just God; and as HE is the avenger of wrong and the punisher of falsehood, and has all power in the heavens and in the earth, so he can punish perjury by privation of spiritual and temporal blessings, by the loss of life, and by inflicting the perdition due to ungodly men, among whom liars and perjured persons occupy the most distinguished rank. Our ideas of delicacy may revolt from the rite used on this occasion; but, when the nature of the covenant is considered, of which circumcision was the sign, we shall at once perceive that this rite could not be used without producing sentiments of reverence and godly fear, as the contracting party must know that the God of this covenant was a consuming fire.

Verse 10. Took ten camels— It appears that Abraham had left the whole management of this business to the discretion of his servant, to take with him what retinue and what dowry he pleased; for it is added, All the goods of his master were in his hand; and in those times it was customary to give a dowry for a wife, and not to receive one with her.

Verse 11. He made his camels to kneel down— To rest themselves, or lie down, as the Septuagint has very properly expressed it, **καὶ ἐκοιμίσεν τὰς καμηλοῦς**.

The time that women go out to draw water.— In Bengal it is the universal practice for the women to go to pools and rivers to fetch water.

Companies of four, six, ten, or more, may be seen in every town daily going to fetch water, with the pitchers resting upon their sides; and, on their return from bathing, women frequently bring water home. — WARD.

Verse 12. And he said, O Lord God, etc.— “The conduct of this servant,” says Dr. Dodd, “appears no less pious than rational. By supplicating for a sign, he acknowledges God to be the great superintendent and director of the universe, and of that event in particular; and at the same time, by asking a natural sign, such as betokened humanity, condescension, and other qualities which promised a discreet and virtuous wife, he puts his prayer upon such a discreet, rational footing, as to be a proper example for all to imitate who would not tempt the providence of God, by expecting extraordinary signs to be given them for the determination of cases which they are capable of deciding by a proper use of their rational faculties.” This is all very good; but certainly the case referred to here is such a one as

required especial direction from God; a case which no use of the rational faculties, without Divine influence, could be sufficient to determine. It is easy to run into extremes, and it is very natural so to do. In all things the assistance and blessing of God are necessary, even where human strength and wisdom have the fullest and freest sphere of action; but there are numberless cases, of infinite consequence to man, where his strength and prudence can be of little or no avail, and where the God of all grace must work all things according to the counsel of his own will. To expect the accomplishment of any good end, without a proper use of the means, is the most reprehensible enthusiasm; and to suppose that any good can be done or procured without the blessing and mercy of God, merely because proper means are used, is not less reprehensible. Plan, scheme, and labor like Eliezer, and then, by earnest faith and prayer, commit the whole to the direction and blessing of God.

Verse 15. *Behold, Rebekah came out*— How admirably had the providence of God adapted every circumstance to the necessity of the case, and so as in the most punctual manner to answer the prayer which his servant had offered up!

Verse 19. *I will draw water for thy camels also*— Had Rebekah done no more than Eliezer had prayed for, we might have supposed that she acted not as a free agent, but was impelled to it by the absolutely controlling power of God; but as she exceeds all that was requested, we see that it sprang from her native benevolence, and sets her conduct in the most amiable point of view.

Verse 21. *The man, wondering at her*— And he was so lost in wonder and astonishment at her simplicity, innocence, and benevolence, that he permitted this delicate female to draw water for ten camels, without ever attempting to afford her any kind of assistance! I know not which to admire most, the benevolence and condescension of Rebekah, or the cold and apparently stupid indifference of the servant of Abraham. Surely they are both of an uncommon cast.

Verse 22. *The man took a golden ear-ring*— נֶזֶם זָהָב *nezem zahab*. That this could not be an ear-ring is very probable from its being in the singular number. The margin calls it a jewel for the forehead; but it most likely means a jewel for the nose, or nose-ring, which is in universal use through

all parts of Arabia and Persia, particularly among young women. They are generally worn in the left nostril. The word is very properly translated *επιρρινον*, an ornament for the nose, by Symmachus.

Half a shekel— For the weight of a shekel, See note “Genesis 20:16”.

And two bracelets— *שְׁנֵי צְמִידִים* usheney tsemidim. As tsemidim comes from *צָמַד* tsamad, to join or couple together, it may very properly mean bracelets, or whatever may clasp round the arms or legs; for rings and ornaments are worn round both by females in India and Persia. The small part of the leg is generally decorated in this way, and so is the whole arm from the shoulder to the wrist. As these tsemidim were given to Rebekah for her hands, it sufficiently distinguishes them from a similar ornament used for the ankles.

In different parts of the sacred writings there are allusions to ornaments of various kinds still in use in different Asiatic countries. They are of seven different sorts. 1. for the forehead; 2. for the nose; 3. for the ears; 4. for the arms; 5. for the fingers; 6. for the neck and breast; 7. for the ankles. See Genesis 24:22, 47; also Ezekiel 16:12; Proverbs 11:22; Isaiah 3:21; Genesis 35:4; Exodus 32:2, 3; Job 42:11; Judges 8:24. The principal female ornaments are enumerated in the third chapter of Isaiah, which are very nearly the same that are in use in Persia and India to the present time.

Verse 26. Bowed down his head, and worshipped— Two acts of adoration are mentioned here; 1. Bowing the head, *יִקְדּוּ* yikkod; and 2. Prostration upon the earth, *וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ* vaiyishtaehu. The bowing of the head was to Rebekah, to return her thanks for her kind invitation. The prostration was to Jehovah, in gratitude for the success with which he had favored him.

Verse 27. The Lord led me— By desire of his master he went out on this journey; and as he acknowledged God in all his ways, the Lord directed all his steps.

Verse 28. Her mother's house— Some have conjectured from this that her father Bethuel was dead; and the person called Bethuel, Genesis 24:50, was a younger brother. This is possible, but the mother's house might be mentioned were even the father alive; for in Asiatic countries the women

have apartments entirely separate from those of the men, in which their little children and grown-up daughters reside with them. This was probably the case here, though it is very likely that Bethuel was dead, as the whole business appears to be conducted by Rebekah's brothers.

Verse 31. *Thou blessed of the Lord*— Probably a usual mode of wishing prosperity, as he that is blessed of the Lord is worthy of all respect; for, enjoying the Divine favor, he is in possession of the sum of happiness.

Verse 32. *Provender for the camels*— These were the first objects of his care; for a good man is merciful to his beast.

Water to wash his feet— Thus it thus appears that he had servants with him; and as the fatigues of the journey must have fallen as heavily upon them as upon himself, so we find no distinction made, but water is provided to wash their feet also.

Verse 33. *I will not eat until I have told*— In Hindoostan it is not unusual for a Brahmin to enter a house and sit down, and when meat is offered, refuse to eat till he has obtained the object of his errand. Here is a servant who had his master's interest more at heart than his own. He refuses to take even necessary refreshment till he knows whether he is likely to accomplish the object of his journey. Did not our blessed Lord allude to the conduct of Abraham's servant, John 4:34: My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work?

Verse 36. *Unto him hath he given all that he hath*.— He has made Isaac his sole heir. These things appear to be spoken to show the relatives of Rebekah that his master's son was a proper match for her; for even in those primitive times there was regard had to the suitability of station and rank in life, as well as of education, in order to render a match comfortable. Persons of dissimilar habits, as well as of dissimilar religious principles, are never likely to be very happy in a married life. Even the poor and the rich may better meet together in matrimonial alliances than the religious and the profane, the well-bred and the vulgar. A person may be unequally yoked in a great variety of ways: Bear ye one another's burdens is the command of God; but where there is unsuitableness in the dispositions, education, mental capacity, etc., of the persons, then one side

is obliged to bear the whole burden, and endless dissatisfaction is the result. See at the end.

Verse 42. *O Lord God of my master*— As Abraham was the friend of God, Eliezer makes use of this to give weight and consequence to his petitions.

Verse 43. *When the virgin*— העלמה haalmah, from עלם alam, to hide, cover, or conceal; a pure virgin, a woman not uncovered, and in this respect still concealed from man. The same as בתולה bethulah, Genesis 24:16, which, from the explanation there given, incontestably means a virgin in the proper sense of the word—a young woman, not that is covered or kept at home, the common gloss, but who was not uncovered in the delicate sense in which the Scripture uses this word. See this interpretation vindicated on Isaiah 7:14. See note “Isaiah 7:14”.

Verse 45. *Before I had done speaking in mine heart*— So we find that the whole of this prayer, so circumstantially related Genesis 24:12-14, and again Genesis 24:42-44, was mental, and heard only by that God to whom it was directed. It would have been improper to have used public prayer on the occasion, as his servants could have felt no particular interest in the accomplishment of his petitions, because they were not concerned in them, having none of the responsibility of this mission.

Verse 49. *That I may turn to the right hand or to the left*— That is, That I may go elsewhere and seek a proper match for the son of my master. Some have imagined that Eliezer intimated by these expressions that if he did not succeed in obtaining Rebekah, he would go and seek for a wife either among the descendants of Ishmael or the descendants of Lot. This interpretation is fanciful.

Verse 50. *Laban and Bethuel*— These seem both to be brothers, of whom Laban was the eldest and chief; for the opinion of Josephus appears to be very correct, viz., that Bethuel, the father, had been some time dead. See note “Genesis 24:28”.

Bad or good— We can neither speak for nor against; it seems to be entirely the work of God, and we cordially submit: consult Rebekah; if she be willing, take her and go. See note “Genesis 24:58”.

Verse 53. *Jewels of silver, and jewels of gold*— The word כְּלֵי keley, which we here translate jewels signifies properly vessels or instruments; and those presented by Eliezer might have been of various kinds. What he had given before, Genesis 24:22, was in token of respect, what he gave now appears to have been in the way of dowry.

Precious things.— מִגְדָּנוֹת migdanoth. This word is used to express exquisite fruits or delicacies, Deuteronomy 33:13-16; precious plants or flowers, Cant. Song of Solomon 4:16; 7:13. But it may mean gifts in general, though rather of an inferior kind to those mentioned above.

Verse 54. *And they did eat and drink*— When Eliezer had got a favorable answer, then he and his servants sat down to meat; this he had refused to do till he had told his message, Genesis 24:33.

Verse 55. *Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten*— The original is very abrupt and obscure, because we are not acquainted with the precise meaning of the form of speech which is here used; יָמִים אוֹ עֶשְׂרִי yamim o asor DAYS OR TEN, probably meaning a year or ten months, as the margin reads it, or a week or ten days. This latter is the most likely sense, as there would be no propriety after having given their consent that she should go, in detaining her for a year or ten months. In matters of simple phraseology, or in those which concern peculiar customs, the Septuagint translation, especially in the Pentateuch, where it is most accurate and pure, may be considered a legitimate judge; this translation renders the words ἡμερας ὡσαι δεκα, about ten days. Houbigant contends strongly that instead of the words יָמִים אוֹ עֶשְׂרִי yamim o asor, days or ten, we should read יָמִים חֹדֶשׁ chodesh yamim, a month of days, i.e., a full month; without which emendation he asserts, locus explicari non possit, “the passage cannot be explained.” This emendation is supported by the Syriac version, which reads here [A] yerach yomin, a month of days, or a full month. The reader may adopt the Syriac or the Septuagint, as he judges best.

Verse 58. *Wilt thou go with this man?*— So it appears it was left ultimately to the choice of Rebekah whether she would accept the proposals now made to her, unless we suppose that the question meant, Wilt thou go immediately, or stay with us a month longer?

She said, I will go.— It fully appears to be the will of God that it should be so, and I consent. This at once determined the whole business.

Verse 59. *And her nurse*— Whose name, we learn from Genesis 35:8, was Deborah, and who, as a second mother, was deemed proper to accompany Rebekah. This was a measure dictated by good sense and prudence. Rebekah had other female attendants. See Genesis 24:61.

Verse 60. *Be thou the mother of thousands of millions*— לאלפי רבבה lealphay rebabah, for thousands ten thousand, or for myriads of thousands, a large family being ever considered, in ancient times, as a proof of the peculiar blessing and favor of God. Similar addresses to a daughter, when she is going from her father's house to live with her husband, are very common among the Hindoos; such as, "Be thou the mother of a son," "Be thou the wife of a king," etc. See Ward.

Verse 62. *And Isaac came*— Concerning this well see Genesis 16:13, 14, etc. As it appears from Genesis 25:11, that Isaac dwelt at the well Lahai-roi, it has been conjectured that he had now come on a visit to his aged father at Beersheba, where he waited in expectation of his bride.

For he dwelt in the south country.— The southern part of the land of Canaan. See Genesis 12:9.

Verse 63. *Isaac went out to meditate*— לשוח lasuach, to bend down the body, or the mind, or both. He was probably in deep thought, with his eyes fixed upon the ground. What the subject of his meditation was it is useless to inquire; he was a pious man, and could not be triflingly employed.

Verse 65. *She took a veil*— הצעיף hatsaaif. This is the first time this word occurs, and it is of doubtful signification; but most agree to render it a veil or a cloak. The former is the most likely, as it was generally used by women in the east as a sign of chastity, modesty, and subjection.

Verse 67. *Sarah's tent*— Sarah being dead, her tent became now appropriated to the use of Rebekah.

And took Rebekah, etc.— After what form this was done we are not told; or whether there was any form used on the occasion, more than solemnly

receiving her as the person whom God had chosen to be his wife; for it appears from Genesis 24:66 that the servant told him all the especial providential circumstances which had marked his journey. The primitive form of marriage we have already seen, Genesis 2:23, 24, which, it is likely, as far as form was attended to, was that which was commonly used in all the patriarchal times.

In this chapter we have an affecting and edifying display of that providence by which God disposes and governs the affairs of the universe, descending to the minutest particulars, and managing the great whole by directing and influencing all its parts. This particular or especial providence we see is not confined to work by general laws; it is wise and intelligent, for it is the mind, the will, and energy of God; it steps out of common ways, and takes particular directions, as endlessly varied human necessities may need, or the establishment and maintenance of godliness in the earth may require. What a history of providential occurrences, coming all in answer to the prayer and faith of a simple, humble individual, does this chapter exhibit!

As Abraham's servant has God's glory only in view in the errand on which he is going, he may well expect the Divine direction. See with what simplicity and confidence he prays to God! He even prescribes the way in which the Divine choice and approbation shall be made known; and God honors the purity of his motives and his pious faith, by giving him precisely the answer he wished. How honorable in the sight of God is simplicity of heart! It has nothing to fear, and all good to hope for; whereas a spirit warped by self-interest and worldly views is always uncertain and agitated, as it is ever seeking that from its own counsels, projects, and schemes, which should be sought in God alone. In every place the upright man meets with his God; his heart acknowledges his Maker, and his Maker acknowledges him; for such a one the whole economy of providence and grace is ever at work.

Abraham's solicitude to get a suitable wife for his son is worthy of the most serious regard. He was well aware that if Isaac formed a matrimonial alliance with the Canaanites it might be ruinous to his piety, and prevent the dissemination of the true religion; therefore he binds his most trusty servant by a solemn oath not to take a wife for his son from the daughters

of Canaan, but from his own kindred, among whom the knowledge of the true God was best preserved. Others had different rays of the light of truth, but Abraham's family alone had THE truth; and to the descendants of this family were the promises made.

How careful should parents be to procure alliances for their children with those who fear God, as so much of the peace and comfort of the children, and the happiness of their posterity, depend on this circumstance! But alas! how many sacrifice the comfort and salvation of their offspring at the shrine of Mammon! If they can procure rich husbands and wives for their daughters and sons, then all, in their apprehension, is well. Marriages of this kind may be considered as mere bargain and sale; for there is scarcely ever any reference to God or eternity in them. The Divine institution of marriage is left out of sight; and the persons are united, not properly to each other, in the love, fear, and according to the ordinance of God, but they are wedded to so many thousand pounds sterling, and to so many houses, fields, etc. Thus like goes to like, metal to metal, earth to earth. Marriages formed on such principles are mere licensed adulteries. Let such contractors hear these awful words of God: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" James 4:4. See note on "Genesis 24:36".

Although under the patriarchal dispensation parents had a kind of absolute authority over their children, and might dispose of them as they pleased in general cases, yet it appears that in matrimonial connections they were under no compulsion. The suitable person was pointed out and recommended; but it does not appear that children were forced, against the whole tide of their affections, to take those persons who were the objects of the parent's choice. Wilt thou go with this man? was, in all likelihood, deemed essential to the completion of the contract; and by the answer, I will go, was the contract fully ratified. Thus the persons were ultimately left to their own choice, though the most prudent and proper means were no doubt used in order to direct and fix it. Whether this was precisely the plan followed in primitive times we cannot absolutely say: they were times of great simplicity; and probably connections on the mere principle of affection, independently of all other considerations, seldom existed. And it must be allowed that matches formed on the sole principle of conveniency might as well be formed by the parents as by any others; and

in Asiatic countries it was generally so, for there the female seldom presumes to have a choice of her own.

In all cases of this kind the child should invariably consult the experience and wisdom of the parents; and the parents should ever pay much respect to the feelings of the child, nor oppose an alliance which may be in all other respects suitable, because there may be a lack of property on one side of the intended match. If parents would proceed in this way, God would pour his blessing on their seed, and his Spirit upon their offspring.

CHAPTER 25

Abraham marries Keturah, 1. Their issue, 2-4. Makes Isaac his heir, 5; but gives portions to the sons of his concubines, and sends them eastward from Isaac, to find settlements, 6. Abraham's age, 7, and death, 8. Is buried by his sons Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpelah, 9, 10. God's blessing upon Isaac, 11. The generations of Ishmael, 12-16. His age, 17, and death, 18. Of the generations of Isaac, 19, who was married in his fortieth year, 20. Rebekah his wife being barren, on his prayer to God she conceives, 21. She inquires of the Lord concerning her state, 22. The Lord's answer, 23. She is delivered of twins, 24. Peculiarities in the birth of her sons Esau and Jacob, from which they had their names, 25, 26. Their different manner of life, 27, 28. Esau, returning from the field faint, begs pottage from his brother, 29, 30. Jacob refuses to grant him any but on condition of his selling him his birthright, 31. Esau, ready to die, parts with his birthright to save his life, 32. Jacob causes him to confirm the sale with an oath, 33. He receives bread and pottage of lentiles, and departs, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 1. *Then again Abraham took a wife*— When Abraham took Keturah we are not informed; it might have been in the lifetime of Sarah; and the original **וַיֹּסֶף** vaiyoseph, and he added, etc., seems to give some countenance to this opinion. Indeed it is not very likely that he had the children mentioned here after the death of Sarah; and from the circumstances of his age, feebleness, etc., at the birth of Isaac, it is still more improbable. Even at that age, forty years before the marriage of Isaac, the birth of his son is considered as not less miraculous on his part than on the part of Sarah; for the apostle expressly says, Romans 4:19, that Abraham considered not his own body **NOW DEAD**, when he was about a hundred years old, nor the **DEADNESS** of Sarah's womb; hence we learn that they were both past the procreation of children, insomuch that the birth of Isaac is ever represented as supernatural. It is therefore very

improbable that he had any child after the birth of Isaac; and therefore we may well suppose that Moses had related this transaction out of its chronological order, which is not unfrequent in the sacred writings, when a variety of important facts relative to the accomplishment of some grand design are thought necessary to be produced in a connected series. On this account intervening matters of a different complexion are referred to a future time. Perhaps we may be justified in reading the verse: “And Abraham had added, and had taken a wife (besides Hagar) whose name was Keturah,” etc. The chronology in the margin dates this marriage with Keturah A. M. 2154, nine years after the death of Sarah, A. M. 2145. Jonathan ben Uzziel and the Jerusalem Targum both assert that Keturah was the same as Hagar. Some rabbins, and with them Dr. Hammond, are of the same opinion; but both Hagar and Keturah are so distinguished in the Scriptures, that the opinion seems destitute of probability.

Verse 2. *Zimran*—Stephanus Byzantinus mentions a city in Arabia Felix called Zadram, which some suppose to have been named from this son of Keturah; but it is more likely, as Calmet observes, that all these sons of Abraham resided in Arabia Deserta; and Pliny, Hist. Nat., lib. vi., c. 28, mentions a people in that country called Zamarenians, who were probably the descendants of this person.

Jokshan—Several learned men have been of opinion that this Jokshan was the same as Kachtan, the father of the Arabs. The testimonies in favor of this opinion see in Dr. Hunt’s Oration, Deuteronomy Antiquitate, etc., Linguae Arabicae, p. 4. Calmet supposes that the Cataneans, who inhabited a part of Arabia Deserta, sprang from this Jokshan.

Medan, and Midian—Probably those who peopled that part of Arabia Petraea contiguous to the land of Moab eastward of the Dead Sea. St. Jerome terms the people of this country Madinaeans; and Ptolemy mentions a people called Madianites, who dwelt in the same place.

Ishbak—From this person Calmet supposes the brook Jabbok, which has its source in the mountains of Gilead, and falls into the sea of Tiberias, took its name.

Shuah.—Or Shuach. From this man the Sacceans, near to Batanla, at the extremity of Arabia Deserta, towards Syria, are supposed to have sprung.

Bildad the Shuhite, one of Job's friends, is supposed to have descended from this son of Abraham.

Verse 3. *Sheba*— From whom sprang the Sabeans, who robbed Job of his cattle. See Bochart and Calmet.

Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.— We know not who these were, but as each name is plural they must have been tribes or families, and not individuals. Onkelos interprets these words of persons dwelling in camps, tents, and islands; and Jonathan ben Uzziel calls them merchants, artificers, and heads or chiefs of people.

Verse 4. *Ephah, and Epher, etc.*— Of these we know no more than of the preceding; an abundance of conjectures is already furnished by the commentators.

Verse 5. *Gave all that he had unto Isaac.*— His principal flocks, and especially his right to the land of Canaan, including a confirmation to him and his posterity of whatever was contained in the promises of God.

Verse 6. *Unto the sons of the concubines*— Viz., Hagar and Keturah, Abraham gave gifts. Cattle for breed, seed to sow the land, and implements for husbandry, may be what is here intended.

And sent them away-while he yet lived— Lest after his death they should dispute a settlement in the Land of Promise with Isaac; therefore he very prudently sent them to procure settlements during his lifetime, that they might be under no temptation to dispute the settlement with Isaac in Canaan. From this circumstance arose that law which has prevailed in almost all countries, of giving the estates to the eldest son by a lawful wife; for though concubines, or wives of the second rank, were perfectly legitimate in those ancient times, yet their children did not inherit, except in case of the failure of legal issue, and with the consent of the lawful wife; and it is very properly observed by Calmet, that it was in consequence of the consent of Leah and Rachel that the children of their slaves by Jacob had a common and equal lot with the rest. By a law of Solon all natural children were excluded from the paternal inheritance, but their fathers were permitted to give them any sum not beyond a thousand drachma by way of present.

Eastward, unto the east country.— Arabia Deserta, which was eastward of Beer-sheba, where Abraham lived.

Verse 7. *The days of the years, etc.*— There is a beauty in this expression which is not sufficiently regarded. Good men do not live by centuries, though many such have lived several hundred years, nor do they count their lives even by years, but by days, living as if they were the creatures only of A DAY; having no more time than they can with any propriety call their own, and living that day in reference to eternity.

Verse 8. *Then Abraham gave up the ghost*— Highly as I value our translation for general accuracy, fidelity, and elegance, I must beg leave to dissent from this version. The original word יָגוּעַ yigva, from the root גָּיַע gava, signifies to pant for breath, to expire, to cease from breathing, or to breathe one's last; and here, and wherever the original word is used, the simple term expired would be the proper expression. In our translation this expression occurs Genesis 25:8, 17; 35:29; 44:33; Job 3:11; 10:18; 11:20; 13:19; 14:10; Lamentations 1:19; in all of which places the original is גָּיַע gava. It occurs also in our translation, Jeremiah 15:9, but there the original is נָפְחָה נַפְשָׁהּ naphecah naphshah, she breathed out her soul; the verb גָּיַע gava not being used. Now as our English word ghost, from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.] gast, an inmate, inhabitant, guest, (a casual visitant,) also a spirit, is now restricted among us to the latter meaning, always signifying the immortal spirit or soul of man, the guest of the body; and as giving up the spirit, ghost, or soul, is an act not proper to man, though commending it to God, in our last moments, is both an act of faith and piety; and as giving up the ghost, i.e., dismissing his spirit from his body, is attributed to Jesus Christ, to whom alone it is proper, I therefore object against its use in every other case.

Every man since the fall has not only been liable to death, but has deserved it, as all have forfeited their lives because of sin. Jesus Christ, as born immaculate, and having never sinned, had not forfeited his life, and therefore may be considered as naturally and properly immortal. No man, says he, taketh it — my life, from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again: therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again, John 10:17, 18. Hence we rightly translate Matthew 27:50, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα,

he gave up the ghost; i.e., he dismissed his spirit that he might die for the sin of the world. The Evangelist St. John 19:30, makes use of an expression to the same import, which we translate in the same way, **παρεδωκε το πνευμα**, he delivered up his spirit. We translate Mark 15:37, and Luke 23:46, he gave up the ghost, but not correctly, because the word in both these places is very different, **εξεπνευσε**, he breathed his last, or expired, though in the latter place (Luke 23:46) there is an equivalent expression, O Father, into thy hands **παρατιθεμαι το πνευμα μου**, I commit my spirit, i.e., I place my soul in thy hand; proving that the act was his own, that no man could take his life away from him, that he did not die by the perfidy of his disciple, or the malice of the Jews, but by his own free act. Thus HE LAID DOWN his life for the sheep. Of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:5, 10, and of Herod, Acts 12:23, our translation says they gave up the ghost; but the word in both places is **εξεψυξε**, which simply means to breathe out, to expire, or die; but in no case, either by the Septuagint in the Old or any of the sacred writers in the New Testament, is **αφηκε το μνευμα** or **παρεδωκε το πνευμα**, he dismissed his spirit or delivered up his spirit, spoken of any person but Christ. Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, etc., breathed their last; Ananias, Sapphira, and Herod expired; but none, Jesus Christ excepted, gave up the ghost, dismissed, or delivered up his own spirit, and was consequently free among the dead. Of the patriarchs, etc., the Septuagint uses the word **εκλειπων**, failing, or **κατεπαυσε**, he ceased or rested.

An old man— Viz., one hundred and seventy-five, the youngest of all the patriarchs; and full of years. The word years is not in the text; but as our translators saw that some word was necessary to fill up the text, they added this in italics. It is probable that the true word is **יָמִים** yamim, days, as in Genesis 35:29; and this reading is found in several of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS., in the Samaritan text, Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Chaldee. On these authorities it might be safely admitted into the text.

Being full of days, or full of years. — To be satiated with days or life, has been in use among different nations to express the termination of life, and especially life ended without reluctance. It seems to be a metaphor taken from a guest regaled by a plentiful banquet, and is thus used by the Roman poets.

Lucretius, lib. iii., ver. 947, ridiculing those who were unreasonably attached to life, and grievously afflicted at the prospect of death, addresses them in the following manner:—

*Quid mortem congemis, ac fies?
Nam si grata fuit tibi vita antea, priorque,
Et non omnia pertusum congesta quasi in vas
Commoda perfluxere, atque ingrata interiere:
Cur non, ut PLENUS VITAE CONVIVA, RECEDIS?*

*Fond mortal, what's the matter, thou dost sigh?
Why all these fears because thou once must die?
For if the race thou hast already run
Was pleasant, if with joy thou saw'st the sun,
If all thy pleasures did not pass thy mind
As through a sieve, but left some sweets behind,
Why dost thou not then, like a THANKFUL GUEST,
Rise cheerfully from life's ABUNDANT FEAST?
CREECH.*

*Et nec opinanti mors ad caput astitit ante,
Quam SATUR, ac PLENUS possis discedere rerum
Ib. ver. 972.*

*And unexpected hasty death destroys,
Before thy greedy mind is FULL of JOYS. Idem.*

Horace makes use of the same figure:—

*Inde fit, ut raro, qui se vixisse beatum
Dicat, et exacto CONTENTUS tempore vitae
Cedat, ut CONVIVA SATUR, reperire queamus.*

Sat. l. i. Sat. i. ver. 117.

*From hence how few, like SATED GUESTS,
depart From life's FULL BANQUET with a cheerful heart?*

FRANCIS.

The same image is expressed with strong ridicule in his last EPISTLE—

*Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti;
Tempus ABIRE tibi est.*

Epist. l. ii., ver. 216.

*Thou hast eaten, drunk, and play'd ENOUGH;
then why So stark reluctant to leave off, and DIE?*

The poet Statius uses *abire paratum PLENUM vita*, “prepared to depart, being FULL of LIFE,” in exactly the same sense:—

*Dubio quem non in turbine rerum
Deprendet suprema dies; sed abire paratum,
Acts PLENUM VITA. Sylv. l. ii., Villa Surrentina, ver. 128.*

The man whose mighty soul is not immersed in dubious whirl of secular concerns, His final hour ne'er takes him by surprise, But, FULL of LIFE, he stands PREPARED to DIE.

It was the opinion of Aristotle that a man should depart from life as he should rise from a banquet. Thus Abraham died FULL of days, and SATISFIED with life, but in a widely different spirit from that recommended by the above writers—HE left life with a hope full of immortality, which they could never boast; for HE saw the day of Christ, and was glad; and his hope was crowned, for here it is expressly said, He was gathered to his fathers; surely not to the bodies of his sleeping ancestors, who were buried in Chaldea and not in Canaan, nor with his fathers in any sense, for he was deposited in the cave where his WIFE alone slept; but he was gathered to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; Hebrews 12:23.

Verse 9. *His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him*— Though Ishmael and his mother had been expelled from Abraham's family on the account of Isaac, yet, as he was under the same obligation to a most loving affectionate father as his brother Isaac, if any personal feuds remained, they agreed to bury them on this occasion, that both might dutifully join in doing the last offices to a parent who was an honor to them and to human nature: and, considering the rejection of Ishmael from the inheritance, this transaction shows his character in an amiable point of view; for though he was a wild man, (see Genesis 16:12,) yet this appellation appears to be more characteristic of his habits of life than of his disposition.

For the character of Abraham see the conclusion of this chapter.

Verse 11. *God blessed his son Isaac*— The peculiar blessings and influences by which Abraham had been distinguished now rested upon Isaac; but how little do we hear in him of the work of faith, the patience of

hope, and the labor of love! Only one Abraham and one Christ ever appeared among men; there have been some successful imitators, there should have been many.

Verse 12. *These are the generations of Ishmael*— The object of the inspired writer seems to be to show how the promises of God were fulfilled to both the branches of Abraham’s family. Isaac has been already referred to; God blessed him according to the promise. He had also promised to multiply Ishmael, and an account of his generation is introduced to show how exactly the promise had also been fulfilled to him.

Verse 13. *Nebajoth*— From whom came the Nabatheans, whose capital was Petra, or, according to Strabo, Nabathea. They dwelt in Arabia Petraea, and extended themselves on the east towards Arabia Deserta.

Kedar— The founder of the Cedreans, who dwelt near to the Nabatheans. The descendants of Kedar form a part of the Saracens.

Adbeel, and Mibsam— Where these were situated is not known.

Verse 14. *Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa*— Where the first and last of these settled is not known; but it is probable that Dumah gave his name to a place called Dumah in Arabia. See a prophecy concerning this place, Isaiah 21:11, from which we find that it was in the vicinity of Mount Seir.

These three names have passed into a proverb among the Hebrews, because of their signification. **משמע** mishma signifies HEARING; **דומה** dumah, SILENCE; and **משה** massa, PATIENCE. Hence, “Hear much, say little, and bear much,” tantamount to the famous maxim of the Stoics, **ανεχου και απεχου**, “Sustain and abstain,” is supposed to be the spirit of the original words.

Verse 15. *Hadar*— This name should be read Hadad as in 1 Chronicles 1:30. This reading is supported by more than three hundred MSS., versions, and printed editions. See Clarke at “Genesis 25:18”.

Tema— Supposed to be a place in Arabia Deserta, the same of which Job speaks, Job 6:19.

Jetur— From whom came the Itureans, who occupied a small tract of country beyond Jordan, which was afterwards possessed by the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Naphish— These are evidently the same people mentioned 1 Chronicles 5:19, who, with the Itureans and the people of Nadab, assisted the Hagarenes against the Israelites, but were overcome by the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Kedemah— Probably the descendants of this person dwelt at Kedemoth, a place mentioned Deuteronomy 2:26. I wish the reader to observe, that concerning those ancient tribes mentioned here or elsewhere in the Pentateuch little is known; nor of their places of settlement have we more certain information. On this subject many learned men have toiled hard with but little fruit of their labor. Those who wish to enter into discussions of this nature must consult Bochart's *Geographia Sacra*, Calmet, etc.

Verse 16. *These are their names*— By which their descendants were called. Their towns — places of encampment in the wilderness, such as have been used by the Arabs from the remotest times. Their castles, **טִירוֹתָם** tirotham, their towers, probably mountain tops, fortified rocks, and fastnesses of various kinds in woods and hilly countries.

Verse 18. *They dwelt from Havilah unto Shur*— The descendants of Ishmael possessed all that country which extends from east to west, from Havilah on the Euphrates, near its junction with the Tigris, to the desert of Shur eastward of Egypt; and which extends along the isthmus of Suez, which separates the Red Sea from the Mediterranean.

As thou goest toward Assyria— “These words,” says Calmet, “may refer either to Egypt, to Shur, or to Havilah. The desert of Shur is on the road from Egypt to Assyria in traversing Arabia Petraea, and in passing by the country of Havilah. I know not,” adds he, “whether Ashshurah in the text may not mark out rather the Asshurim descended from Keturah, than the Assyrians, who were the descendants of Asshur the son of Shem.”

He died in the presence of all his brethren— The original will not well bear this translation. In Genesis 25:17 it is said, He gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered to his people. Then follows the account of the

district occupied by the Ishmaelites, at the conclusion of which it is added **נפל על פני כל אחיו** al peney col echaiv naphal, “It (the lot or district) FELL (or was divided to him) in the presence of all his brethren:” and this was exactly agreeable to the promise of God, Genesis 16:12, He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren; and to show that this promise had been strictly fulfilled, it is here remarked that his lot or inheritance was assigned him by Divine Providence, contiguous to that of the other branches of the family. The same word, **נפל** naphal, is used Joshua 23:4, for to divide by lot.

On the subject of writing the same proper name variously in our common Bibles, the following observations and tables will not be unacceptable to the reader.

“Men who have read their Bible with care,” says Dr. Kennicott, “must have remarked that the name of the same person is often expressed differently in different places. Indeed the variation is sometimes so great that we can scarcely persuade ourselves that one and the same person is really meant. A uniform expression of proper names is diligently attended to in other books: perhaps in every other book, except the Old Testament. But here we find strange variety in the expression, and consequently great confusion: and indeed there is scarcely any one general source of error which calls for more careful correction than the same proper names now wrongly expressed. I shall add here, from the Pentateuch, some proper names which are strangely varied: first, twenty-three names expressed differently in the Hebrew text itself, and seventeen of them in our English translation; and then thirty-one names expressed uniformly in the Hebrew yet differently in the English.

“Nothing can be more clear than that these fifty-four proper names (at least the far greater part of them) should be expressed with the very same letters, in the places where they are now different. In the second list, instances 6, 10, and 13, have been corrected and expressed uniformly in the English Bible printed at Oxford in 1769. And surely the same justice in the translation should be done to the rest of these proper names, and to all others through the Bible; at least, where the original words are now properly the same. Who would not wonder at seeing the same persons named both Simon and Shimon, Richard and Ricard? And can we then

admit here both Seth and Sheth, Rachel and Rahel? Again: whoever could admit (as above) both Gaza and Azzak, with Rameses and Raamses, should not object to London and Ondon, with Amsterdam and Amstradam. In short, in a history far more interesting than any other, the names of persons and places should be distinguished accurately, and defined with exact uniformity. And no true critic will think lightly of this advice of Origen, *Contemnenda non est accurata circa NOMINA diligentia ei, qui volurit probe intelligere sanctas literas?* No person who desires thoroughly to understand the sacred writings, should undervalue a scrupulous attention to the proper names.”-Kennicott’s Remarks.

Verse 19. *These are the generations of Isaac*— This is the history of Isaac and his family. Here the sixth section of the law begins, called **יעהק תולדת** toledoth yitschak; as the fifth, called **חיי שרה** chaiye Sarah, which begins with chap. xxiii., ends at the preceding verse.

Verse 21. *Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife*— Isaac and Rebekah had now lived nineteen years together without having a child; for he was forty years old when he married Rebekah, Genesis 25:20, and he was threescore years of age when Jacob and Esau were born, Genesis 25:26. Hence it is evident they had lived nineteen years together without having a child.

The form of the original in this place is worthy of notice: Isaac entreated Jehovah, **לנכה אשתו** lenochach ishto, directly, purposely, especially, for his wife. Ainsworth thinks the words imply their praying together for this thing; and the rabbins say that “Isaac and Rebekah went on purpose to Mount Moriah, where he had been bound, and prayed together there that they might have a son.” God was pleased to exercise the faith of Isaac previous to the birth of Jacob, as he had exercised that of Abraham previous to his own birth.

Verse 22. *The children struggled together*— **יתרצצו** yithrotsatsu, they dashed against or bruised each other, there was a violent agitation, so that the mother was apprehensive both of her own and her children’s safety; and, supposing this was an uncommon case, she went to inquire of the Lord, as the good women in the present day would go to consult a surgeon or physician; for intercourse with God is not so common now, as it was in those times of great primitive simplicity. There are different opinions

concerning the manner in which Rebekah inquired of the Lord. Some think it was by faith and prayer simply; others, that she went to Shem or Melchizedek; but Shem is supposed to have been dead ten years before this time; but as Abraham was yet alive, she might have gone to him, and consulted the Lord through his means. It is most likely that a prophet or priest was applied to on this occasion. It appears she was in considerable perplexity, hence that imperfect speech, If so, why am I thus? the simple meaning of which is probably this; if I must suffer such things, why did I ever wish to have a child? A speech not uncommon to mothers in their first pregnancy.

Verse 23. *Two nations are in thy womb*— “We have,” says Bishop Newton, “in the prophecies delivered respecting the sons of Isaac, ample proof that these prophecies were not meant so much of single persons as of whole nations descended from them; for what was predicted concerning Esau and Jacob was not verified in themselves, but in their posterity. The Edomites were the offspring of Esau, the Israelites were of Jacob; and who but the Author and Giver of life could foresee that two children in the womb would multiply into two nations? Jacob had twelve sons, and their descendants were all united and incorporated into one nation; and what an overruling providence was it that two nations should arise from the two sons only of Isaac! and that they should be two such different nations! The Edomites and Israelites have been from the beginning two such different people in their manners, customs, and religion, as to be at perpetual variance among themselves. The children struggled together in the womb, which was an omen of their future disagreement; and when they grew up to manhood, they manifested very different inclinations. Esau was a cunning hunter, and delighted in the sports of the field; Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents — minding his sheep and his cattle. The religion of the Jews is well known; but whatever the Edomites were at first, in process of time they became idolaters. When Amaziah king of Judah overthrew them, he brought their gods, and set them up to be his gods. The king of Edom having refused a passage to the Israelites through his territories on their return from Egypt, the history of the Edomites afterwards is little more than the history of their wars with the Jews.”

The one people shall be stronger than the other people— The same author continues to observe, that “for some time the family of Esau was

the more powerful of the two, there having been dukes and kings in Edom before there was any king in Israel; but David and his captains made an entire conquest of the Edomites, slew several thousands of them, and compelled the rest to become tributaries, and planted garrisons among them to secure their obedience. In this state of servitude they continued about one hundred and fifty years, without a king of their own, being governed by deputies or viceroys appointed by the kings of Judah; but in the days of Jehoram they revolted, recovered their liberties, and set up a king of their own. Afterwards Amaziah, king of Judah, gave them a total overthrow in the valley of Salt; and Azariah took Elath, a commodious harbor on the Red Sea, from them. Judas Maccabeus also attacked and defeated them with a loss of more than twenty thousand at two different times, and took their chief city Hebron. At last Hyrcanus his nephew took other cities from them, and reduced them to the necessity of leaving their country or embracing the Jewish religion; on which they submitted to be circumcised, and become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and were ever afterwards incorporated into the Jewish Church and nation.”

The elder shall serve the younger.— “This passage,” says Dr. Dodd, “serves for a key to explain the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where the words are quoted; for it proves to a demonstration that this cannot be meant of God’s arbitrary predestination of particular persons to eternal happiness or misery, without any regard to their merit or demerit— a doctrine which some have most impiously fathered on God, who is the best of beings, and who cannot possibly hate, far less absolutely doom to misery, any creature that he has made: but that it means only his bestowing greater external favors, or, if you please, higher opportunities for knowing and doing their duty, upon some men, than he does upon others; and that merely according to his own wise purpose, without any regard to their merits or demerits, as having a right to confer greater or smaller degrees or perfection on whom he pleases.”

The doctrine of unconditional predestination to eternal life and eternal death cannot be supported by the example of God’s dealings with Esau and Jacob, or with the Edomites and Israelites. After long reprobation the Edomites were incorporated among the Jews, and have ever since been undistinguishable members in the Jewish Church. The Jews, on the contrary, the elect of God, have been cut off and reprobated, and continue

so to this day. If a time should ever come when the Jews shall all believe in Christ Jesus, which is a general opinion, then the Edomites, which are now absorbed among them, shall also become the elect. And even now Isaac finds both his children within the pale of the Jewish Church, equally entitled to the promises of salvation by Christ Jesus, of whom he was the most expressive and the most illustrious type. See the account of Abraham's offering, chap. 22.

Verse 24. *There were twins*— תומים thomim, from which comes Thomas, properly interpreted by the word διδυμος, Didymus, which signifies a twin; so the first person who was called Thomas or Didymus, we may take for granted, had this name from the circumstance of his being a twin.

Verse 25. *Red, all over like a hairy garment*— This simply means that he was covered all over with red hair or down; and that this must be intended here is sufficiently evident from another part of his history, where Rebekah, in order to make her favourite son Jacob pass for his brother Esau, was obliged to take the skins of kids, and put them upon his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

They called his name Esau.— It is difficult to assign the proper meaning of the original עשו esau or esav; if we derive it from עשה asah it must signify made, performed, and, according to some, perfected; [A] esa in Arabic signifies to make firm or hard, and also to come to man's estate, to grow old. Probably he had this name from his appearing to be more perfect, robust, etc., than his brother.

Verse 26. *His name was called Jacob*— יעקב Yaccob, from עקב akab, to defraud, deceive, to supplant, i.e., to overthrow a person by tripping up his heels. Hence this name was given to Jacob, because it was found he had laid hold on his brother's heel, which was emblematical of his supplanting Esau, and defrauding him of his birthright.

Verse 27. *A man of the field*— איש שדה ish sadeh, one who supported himself and family by hunting and by agriculture.

Jacob was a plain man— איש ועדהתתאם ish tam, a perfect or upright man; dwelling in tents — subsisting by breeding and tending cattle, which was considered in those early times the most perfect employment; and in

this sense the word **וְעֵתְהָתָאֵם** tam, should be here understood, as in its moral meaning it certainly could not be applied to Jacob till after his name was changed, after which time only his character stands fair and unblemished. See Genesis 32:26-30.

Verse 28. Isaac loved Esau-but Rebekah loved Jacob.— This is an early proof of unwarrantable parental attachment to one child in preference to another. Isaac loved Esau, and Rebekah loved Jacob; and in consequence of this the interests of the family were divided, and the house set in opposition to itself. The fruits of this unreasonable and foolish attachment were afterwards seen in a long catalogue of both natural and moral evils among the descendants of both families.

Verse 29. Sod pottage— **יָזַד נָזִיד** yazed nazid, he boiled a boiling; and this we are informed, Genesis 25:34, was of **עֲדָשִׁים** adashim, what the Septuagint render **φάκον**, and we, following them and the Vulgate lens, translate lentiles, a sort of pulse. Dr. Shaw casts some light on this passage, speaking of the inhabitants of Barbary. “Beans, lentiles, kidney beans, and garvancos,” says he, “are the chiefest of their pulse kind; beans, when boiled and stewed with oil and garlic, are the principal food of persons of all distinctions; lentiles are dressed in the same manner with beans, dissolving easily into a mass, and making a pottage of a chocolate color. This we find was the red pottage which Esau, from thence called Edom, exchanged for his birthright.” Shaw’s Travels, p. 140, 4to. edit.

Verse 30. I am faint— It appears from the whole of this transaction, that Esau was so completely exhausted by fatigue that he must have perished had he not obtained some immediate refreshment. He had been either hunting or laboring in the field, and was now returning for the purpose of getting some food, but had been so exhausted that his strength utterly failed before he had time to make the necessary preparations.

Verse 31. Sell me this day thy birthright.— What the **בְּחֹרָה** bechorah or birthright was, has greatly divided both ancient and modern commentators. It is generally supposed that the following rights were attached to the primogeniture: 1. Authority and superiority over the rest of the family. 2. A double portion of the paternal inheritance. 3. The peculiar benediction of the father. 4. The priesthood, previous to its establishment in the family of

Aaron. Calmet controverts most of these rights, and with apparent reason, and seems to think that the double portion of the paternal inheritance was the only incontestable right which the first-born possessed; the others were such as were rather conceded to the first-born, than fixed by any law in the family. However this may be, it appears, 1. That the first-born were peculiarly consecrated to God, Exodus 22:29. 2. Were next in honor to their parents, Genesis 49:3. 3. Had a double portion of their father's goods, Deuteronomy 21:17. 4. Succeeded him in the government of the family or kingdom, 2 Chronicles 21:3. 5. Had the sole right of conducting the service of God, both at the tabernacle and temple; and hence the tribe of Levi, which was taken in lieu of the first-born, had the sole right of administration in the service of God, Numbers 8:14-18; and hence we may presume, had originally a right to the priesthood previous to the giving of the law; but however this might have been, afterwards the priesthood is never reckoned among the privileges of the first-born. That the birthright was a matter of very great importance, there can be no room to doubt; and that it was a transferable property, the transaction here sufficiently proves.

Verse 34. *Pottage of lentiles*— See note “Genesis 25:29”.

Thus Esau despised his birthright.— On this account the apostle, Hebrews 12:16, calls Esau a profane person, because he had, by this act, alienated from himself and family those spiritual offices connected with the rights of primogeniture. While we condemn Esau for this bad action, (for he should rather have perished than have alienated this right,) and while we consider it as a proof that his mind was little affected with Divine or spiritual things, what shall we say of his most unnatural brother Jacob, who refused to let him have a morsel of food to preserve him from death, unless he gave him up his birthright? Surely he who bought it, in such circumstances, was as bad as he who sold it. Thus Jacob verified his right to the name of supplanter, a name which in its first imposition appears to have had no other object in view than the circumstance of his catching his brother by the heel; but all his subsequent conduct proved that it was truly descriptive of the qualities of his mind, as his whole life, till the time his name was changed, (and then he had a change of nature,) was a tissue of cunning and deception, the principles of which had been very

early instilled into him by a mother whose regard for truth and righteousness appears to have been very superficial. See on chap. 27.

THE death of Abraham, recorded in this chapter, naturally calls to mind the virtues and excellences of this extraordinary man. His obedience to the call of God, and faith in his promises, stand supereminent. No wonders, signs, or miraculous displays of the great and terrible God, as Israel required in Egypt, were used or were necessary to cause Abraham to believe and obey. He left his own land, not knowing where he was going, or for what purpose God had called him to remove. Exposed to various hardships, in danger of losing his life, and of witnessing the violation of his wife, he still obeyed and went on; courageous, humane, and disinterested, he cheerfully risked his life for the welfare of others; and, contented with having rescued the captives and avenged the oppressed, he refused to accept even the spoils he had taken from the enemy whom his skill and valor had vanquished. At the same time he considers the excellency of the power to be of God, and acknowledges this by giving to him the tenth of those spoils of which he would reserve nothing for his private use. His obedience to God, in offering up his son Isaac, we have already seen and admired; together with the generosity of his temper, and that respectful decency of conduct towards superiors and inferiors for which he was so peculiarly remarkable; see on chap. 23. Without disputing with his Maker, or doubting in his heart, he credited every thing that God had spoken; hence he always walked in a plain way. The authority of God was always sufficient for Abraham; he did not weary himself to find reasons for any line of conduct which he knew God had prescribed; it was his duty to obey; the success and the event he left with God. His obedience was as prompt as it was complete. As soon as he hears the voice of God, he girds himself to his work! Not a moment is lost! How rare is such conduct! But should not we do likewise? The present moment and its duties are ours; every past moment was once present; every future will be present; and, while we are thinking on the subject, the present is past, for life is made up of the past and the present. Are our past moments the cause of deep regret and humiliation? Then let us use the present so as not to increase this lamentable cause of our distresses. In other words, let us now believe-love-obey. Regardless of all consequences, let us, like Abraham,

follow the directions of God's word, and the openings of his providence, and leave all events to Him who doth all things well.

See to what a state of moral excellence the grace of God can exalt a character, when there is simple, implicit faith, and prompt obedience! Abraham walked before God, and Abraham was perfect. Perhaps no human being ever exhibited a fairer, fuller portrait of the perfect man than Abraham. The more I consider the character of this most amiable patriarch, the more I think the saying of Calmet justifiable: "In the life of Abraham," says he, "we find an epitome of the whole law of nature, of the written law, and of the Gospel of Christ. He has manifested in his own person those virtues, for which reason and philosophy could scarcely find out names, when striving to sketch the character of their sophist — wise or perfect man. St. Ambrose very properly observes that 'philosophy itself could not equal, in its descriptions and wishes, what was exemplified by this great man in the whole of his conduct.' Magnus plane vir, quem votis suis philosophia non potuit aequare; denique minus est quod illa finxit quam quod ille gessit. The LAW which God gave to Moses, and in which he has proposed the great duties of the law of nature, seems to be a copy of the life of Abraham. This patriarch, without being under the law, has performed the most essential duties it requires; and as to the GOSPEL, its grand object was that on which he had fixed his eye—that JESUS Whose day he rejoiced to see; and as to its spirit and design, they were wondrously exemplified in that faith which was imputed to him for righteousness, receiving that grace which conformed his whole heart and life to the will of his Maker, and enabled him to persevere unto death. 'Abraham,' says the writer of Ecclesiasticus, 44:20, etc., 'was a great father of many people: in glory was there none like unto him, who kept the law of the Most high, and was in covenant with him. He established the covenant in his flesh, and when he was tried he was found faithful.'" See Calmet.

As a son, as a husband, as a father, as a neighbor, as a sovereign, and above all as a man of God, he stands unrivalled; so that under the most exalted and perfect of all dispensations, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he is proposed and recommended as the model and pattern according to which the faith, obedience, and perseverance of the followers of the Messiah are to be formed. Reader, while you admire the man, do not forget the God that made him so great, so good, and so useful. Even Abraham had nothing

but what he had received; from the free unmerited mercy of God proceeded all his excellences; but he was a worker together with God, and therefore did not receive the grace of God in vain. Go thou, believe, love, obey, and persevere in like manner.

CHAPTER 26

A famine in the land obliges Isaac to leave Beer-sheba and go to Gerar, 1. God appears to him, and warns him not to go to Egypt, 2. Renews the promises to him which he had made to his father Abraham, 3-5. Isaac dwells at Gerar, 6. Being questioned concerning Rebekah, and fearing to lose his life on her account, he calls her his sister, 7. Abimelech the king discovers, by certain familiarities which he had noticed between Isaac and Rebekah, that she was his wife, 8. Calls Isaac and reproaches him for his insincerity, 9, 10. He gives a strict command to all his people not to molest either Isaac or his wife, 11. Isaac applies himself to husbandry and breeding of cattle, and has a great increase, 12-14. Is envied by the Philistines, who stop up the wells he had digged, 15. Is desired by Abimelech to remove, 16. He obeys, and fixes his tent in the valley of Gerar, 17. Opens the wells dug in the days of Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up, 18. Digs the well, Ezek. 19, 20; and the well Sitnah, 21; and the well Rehoboth, 22. Returns to Beer-sheba, 23. God appears to him, and renews his promises, 24. He builds an altar there, pitches his tent, and digs a well, 25. Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phichol, visit him, 26. Isaac accuses them of unkindness, 27. They beg him to make a covenant with them, 28, 29. He makes them a feast, and they bind themselves to each other by an oath, 30, 31. The well dug by Isaac's servants (ver. 25) called Shebah, 33. Esau, at forty years of age, marries two wives of the Hittites, 34, at which Isaac and Rebekah are grieved, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. *There was a famine*— When this happened we cannot tell; it appears to have been after the death of Abraham. Concerning the first famine, see Genesis 12:10.

Abimelech— As we know not the time when the famine happened, so we cannot tell whether this was the same Abimelech, Phichol, etc., which are mentioned Genesis 20:1, 2, etc., or the sons or other descendants of these persons.

Verse 2. *Go not down into Egypt*— As Abraham had taken refuge in that country, it is probable that Isaac was preparing to go thither also; and God, foreseeing that he would there meet with trials, etc., which might prove fatal to his peace or to his piety, warns him not to fulfill his intention.

Verse 3. *Sojourn in this land*— In Gerar, whither he had gone, Genesis 26:1, and where we find he settled, Genesis 26:6, though the land of Canaan in general might be here intended. That there were serious and important reasons why Isaac should not go to Egypt, we may be fully assured, though they be not assigned here; it is probable that even Isaac himself was not informed why he should not go down to Egypt. I have already supposed that God saw trials in his way which he might not have been able to bear. While a man acknowledges God in all his ways, he will direct all his steps, though he may not choose to give him the reasons of the workings of his providence. Abraham might go safely to Egypt, Isaac might not; in firmness and decision of character there was a wide difference between the two men.

Verse 4. *I will make thy seed-as the stars of heaven*— A promise often repeated to Abraham, and which has been most amply fulfilled both in its literal and spiritual sense.

Verse 5. *Abraham obeyed my voice*— מִמֶּרִי meimeri, my WORD. See Genesis 15:1.

My charge— מִשְׁמַרְתִּי misitmarti, from שָׁמַר shamar, he kept, observed, etc., the ordinances or appointments of God. These were always of two kinds: 1. Such as tended to promote moral improvement, the increase of piety, the improvement of the age, etc. And 2. Such as were typical of the promised seed, and the salvation which was to come by him. For commandments, statutes, etc., the reader is particularly desired to refer to Leviticus 16:15, etc., where these things are all explained in the alphabetical order of the Hebrew words.

Verse 7. *He said, She is my sister*— It is very strange that in the same place, and in similar circumstances, Isaac should have denied his wife, precisely as his father had done before him! It is natural to ask, Did Abraham never mention this circumstance to his son? Probably he did not,

as he was justly ashamed of his weakness on the occasion—the only blot in his character; the son, therefore, not being forewarned, was not armed against the temptation. It may not be well in general for parents to tell their children of their former failings or vices, as this might lessen their authority or respect, and the children might make a bad use of it in extenuation of their own sins. But there are certain cases, which, from the nature of their circumstances, may often occur, where a candid acknowledgment, with suitable advice, may prevent those children from repeating the evil; but this should be done with great delicacy and caution, lest even the advice itself should serve as an incentive to the evil. I had not known lust, says St. Paul, if the law had not said, Thou shalt not covet. Isaac could not say of Rebekah, as Abraham had done of Sarah, She is my sister; in the case of Abraham this was literally true; it was not so in the case of Isaac, for Rebekah was only his cousin. Besides, though relatives, in the Jewish forms of speaking, are often called brothers and sisters, and the thing may be perfectly proper when this use of the terms is generally known and allowed, yet nothing of this kind can be pleaded here in behalf of Isaac; for he intended that the Gerarites should understand him in the proper sense of the term, and consequently have no suspicion that she was his wife. We have already seen that the proper definition of a lie is any word spoken with the intention to deceive. See Genesis 20:12.

Verse 8. *Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.*— Whatever may be the precise meaning of the word, it evidently implies that there were liberties taken and freedom used on the occasion, which were not lawful but between man and wife.

Verse 10. *Thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.*— It is likely that Abimelech might have had some knowledge of God's intentions concerning the family of Abraham, and that it must be kept free from all impure and alien mixtures; and that consequently, had he or any of his people taken Rebekah, the Divine judgment might have fallen upon the land. Abimelech was a good and holy man; and he appears to have considered adultery as a grievous and destructive crime.

Verse 11. *He that toucheth*— He who injures Isaac or defiles Rebekah shall certainly die for it. Death was the punishment for adultery among the Canaanites, Philistines, and Hebrews. See Genesis 38:24.

grow too great.” On this same principle Pharaoh oppressed the Israelites. The Philistines appear to have been jealous of Isaac’s growing prosperity, and to have considered it, not as a due reward of his industry and holiness, but as their individual loss, as though his gain was at their expense; therefore they resolved to drive him out, and take his well-cultivated ground, etc., to themselves, and compelled Abimelech to dismiss him, who gave this reason for it, **עצמת ממנו** *atsamta mimmennu*, Thou hast obtained much wealth among us, and my people are envious of thee. Is not this the better translation? for it can hardly be supposed that Isaac was “mightier” than the king of whole tribes.

Verse 18. *In the days of Abraham*— Instead of **בימי** *bimey*, in the days, Houbigant contends we should read **עבד** *abdey*, servants. Isaac dug again the wells which the servants of Abraham his father had dug. This reading is supported by the Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; and it is probably the true one.

Verse 19. *A well of springing water*.— **באר מים חיים** *beer mayim chaiyim*, A well of living waters. This is the oriental phrase for a spring, and this is its meaning both in the Old and New Testaments: Leviticus 14:5, 50; 15:30; Numbers 19:17; Cant. Song of Solomon 4:15. See also John 4:10-14; 7:38; Revelation 21:6; 22:1. And by these scriptures we find that an unfailing spring was an emblem of the graces and influences of the Spirit of God.

Verse 21. *They digged another well*— Never did any man more implicitly follow the Divine command, Resist not evil, than Isaac; whenever he found that his work was likely to be a subject of strife and contention, he gave place, and rather chose to suffer wrong than to have his own peace of mind disturbed. Thus he overcame evil with good.

Verse 24. *The Lord appeared unto him*— He needed especial encouragement when insulted and outraged by the Philistines; for having returned to the place where his noble father had lately died, the remembrance of his wrongs, and the remembrance of his loss, could not fail to afflict his mind; and God immediately appears to comfort and support him in his trials, by a renewal of all his promises.

Verse 25. *Builed an altar there*— That he might have a place for God’s worship, as well as a place for himself and family to dwell in.

And called upon the name of the Lord— And invoked in the name of Jehovah. See note on “Genesis 12:8”; See note on “Genesis 13:15”.

Verse 26. *Abimelech went to him*— When a man’s ways please God, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him; so Isaac experienced on this occasion. Whether this was the same Abimelech and Phichol mentioned Genesis 21:22, we cannot tell, it is possible both might have been now alive, provided we suppose them young in the days of Abraham; but it is more likely that Abimelech was a general name of the Gerarite kings, and that Phichol was a name of office.

Ahuzzath— The Targum translates this word a company, not considering it as a proper name: “Abimelech and Phichol came with a company of their friends.” The Septuagint calls him *οχοζαθ ο νυμφαγωγος*, Ochozath, the paranymp, he who conducts the bride to the bridegroom’s house. Could we depend on the correctness of this version, we might draw the following curious conclusions from it: 1. That this was the son of that Abimelech the friend of Abraham. 2. That he had been lately married, and on this journey brings with him his confidential friend, to whom he had lately intrusted the care of his spouse.

Verse 27. *Seeing ye hate me*— He was justified in thinking thus, because if they did not injure him, they had connived at their servants doing it.

Verse 28. *Let there be now an oath betwixt us*— Let us make a covenant by which we shall be mutually bound, and let it be ratified in the most solemn manner.

Verse 30. *He made them a feast*— Probably on the sacrifice that was offered on the occasion of making this covenant. This was a common custom.

Verse 31. *They rose up be times*— Early rising was general among the primitive inhabitants of the world, and this was one cause which contributed greatly to their health and longevity.

Verse 33. *He called it Shebah*— This was probably the same well which was called Beersheba in the time of Abraham, which the Philistines had

filled up, and which the servants of Isaac had reopened. The same name is therefore given to it which it had before, with the addition of the emphatic letter **ה** he, by which its signification became extended, so that now it signified not merely an oath or full, but satisfaction and abundance.

The name of the city is Beer-sheba— This name was given to it a hundred years before this time; but as the well from which it had this name originally was closed up by the Philistines, probably the name of the place was abolished with the well; when therefore Isaac reopened the well, he restored the ancient name of the place.

Verse 34. He took to wife—the daughter, etc.— It is very likely that the wives taken by Esau were daughters of chiefs among the Hittites, and by this union he sought to increase and strengthen his secular power and influence.

Verse 35. Which were a grief of mind— Not the marriage, though that was improper, but the persons; they, by their perverse and evil ways, brought bitterness into the hearts of Isaac and Rebekah. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, and that of Jerusalem, say they were addicted to idol worship, and rebelled against and would not hearken to the instructions either of Isaac or Rebekah. From Canaanites a different conduct could not be reasonably expected. Esau was far from being spiritual, and his wives were wholly carnal.

THE same reflections which were suggested by Abraham's conduct in denying his wife in Egypt and Gerar, will apply to that of Isaac; but the case of Isaac was much less excusable than that of Abraham. The latter told no falsity; he only through fear suppressed a part of the truth.

1. A good man has a right to expect God's blessing on his honest industry. Isaac sowed, and received a hundred-fold, and he had possession of flocks, etc., for the Lord blessed him. Worldly men, if they pray at all, ask for temporal things: "What shall we eat? what shall we drink? and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" Most of the truly religious people go into another extreme; they forget the body, and ask only for the soul! and yet there are "things requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul," and things which are only at God's disposal. The body lives for the soul's sake; its life and comfort are in many respects essentially requisite

to the salvation of the soul; and therefore the things necessary for its support should be earnestly asked from the God of all grace, the Father of bounty and providence. Ye have not because ye ask not, may be said to many poor, afflicted religious people; and they are afraid to ask lest it should appear mercenary, or that they sought their portion in this life. They should be better taught. Surely to none of these will God give a stone if they ask bread: he who is so liberal of his heavenly blessings will not withhold earthly ones, which are of infinitely less consequence. Reader, expect God's blessing on thy honest industry; pray for it, and believe that God does not love thee less, who hast taken refuge in the same hope, than he loved Isaac. Plead not only his promises, but plead on the precedents he has set before thee. "Lord, thou didst so and so to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, and to others who trusted in thee; bless my field, bless my flocks, prosper my labor, that I may be able to provide things honest in the sight of all men, and have something to dispense to those who are in want." And will not God hear such prayers? Yea, and answer them too, for he does not willingly afflict the children of men. And we may rest assured that there is more affliction and poverty in the world than either the justice or providence of God requires. There are, however, many who owe their poverty to their want of diligence and economy; they sink down into indolence, and forget that word, Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; nor do they consider that by idleness a man is clothed with rags. Be diligent in business and fervent in spirit, and God will withhold from thee no manner of thing that is good.

2. From many examples we find that the wealth of the primitive inhabitants of the world did not consist in gold, silver, or precious stones, but principally in flocks of useful cattle, and the produce of the field. With precious metals and precious stones they were not unacquainted, and the former were sometimes used in purchases, as we have already seen in the case of Abraham buying a field from the children of Heth. But the blessings which God promises are such as spring from the soil. Isaac sowed in the land, and had possessions of flocks and herds, and great store of servants, Genesis 26:12-14. Commerce, by which nations and individuals so suddenly rise and as suddenly fall, had not been then invented; every man was obliged to acquire property by honest and persevering labor, or be destitute. Lucky hits, fortunate speculations, and

adventurous risks, could then have no place; the field must be tilled, the herds watched and fed, and the proper seasons for ploughing, sowing, reaping, and laying up, be carefully regarded and improved. No man, therefore, could grow rich by accident. Isaac waxed great and went forward, and grew until he became very great, Genesis 26:13. Speculation was of no use, for it could have no object; and consequently many incitements to knavery and to idleness, that bane of the physical and moral health of the body and soul of man, could not show themselves. Happy times! when every man wrought with his hands, and God particularly blessed his honest industry. As he had no luxuries, he had no unnatural and factitious wants, few diseases, and a long life.

O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint, Agricolas!

O thrice happy husbandmen! did they but know their own mercies.

But has not what is termed commerce produced the reverse of all this? A few are speculators, and the many are comparatively slaves; and slaves, not to enrich themselves, (this is impossible,) but to enrich the speculators and adventurers by whom they are employed. Even the farmers become, at least partially, commercial men; and the soil, the fruitful parent of natural wealth, is comparatively disregarded: the consequence is, that the misery of the many, and the luxury of the few, increase; and from both these spring, on the one hand, pride, insolence, contempt of the poor, contempt of GOD'S holy word and commandments, with the long catalogue of crimes which proceed from pampered appetites and unsubdued passions: and on the other, murmuring, repining, discontent, and often insubordination and revolt, the most fell and most destructive of all the evils that can degrade and curse civil society. Hence wars, fightings, and revolutions of states, and public calamities of all kinds. Bad as the world and the times are, men have made them much worse by their unnatural methods of providing for the support of life. When shall men learn that even this is but a subordinate pursuit; and that the cultivator, of the soul in the knowledge, love, and obedience of God, is essentially necessary, not only to future glory, but to present happiness?

CHAPTER 27

Isaac, grown old and feeble, and apprehending the approach of death, desires his son Esau to provide some savory meat for him, that having eaten of it he might convey to him the blessing connected with the right of primogeniture, 1-4. Rebekah hearing of it, relates the matter to Jacob, and directs him how to personate his brother, and by deceiving his father, obtain the blessing, 5-10. Jacob hesitates, 11, 12; but being counseled and encouraged by his mother, he at last consents to use the means she prescribes, 13, 14. Rebekah disguises Jacob, and sends him to personate his brother, 15-17. Jacob comes to his father, and professes himself to be Esau, 18. 19. Isaac doubts, questions, and examines him closely, but does not discover the deception, 20-24. He eats of the savory meat, and confers the blessing upon Jacob, 25-27. In what the blessing consisted, 28, 29. Esau arrives from the field with the meat he had gone to provide, and presents himself before his father, 30, 31. Isaac discovers the fraud of Jacob, and is much affected, 32, 33. Esau is greatly distressed on hearing that the blessing had been received by another, 34. Isaac accuses Jacob of deceit, 35. Esau expostulates, and prays for a blessing, 36. Isaac describes the blessing which he has already conveyed, 37. Esau weeps, and earnestly implores a blessing, 38. Isaac pronounces a blessing on Esau, and prophecies that his posterity should, in process of time, cease to be tributary to the posterity of Jacob, 39, 40. Esau purposes to kill his brother, 41. Rebekah hears of it, and counsels Jacob to take refuge with her brother Laban in Padanaram, 42-45. She professes to be greatly alarmed, lest Jacob should take any of the Canaanites to wife, 41.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 1. Isaac was old— It is conjectured, on good grounds, that Isaac was now about one hundred and seventeen years of age, and Jacob about fifty-seven; though the commonly received opinion makes Isaac one hundred and thirty-seven, and Jacob seventy-seven; but See note on “Genesis 31:55”, etc.

And his eyes were dim— This was probably the effect of that affliction, of what kind we know not, under which Isaac now labored; and from which, as well as from the affliction, he probably recovered, as it is certain he lived forty if not forty-three years after this time, for he lived till the return of Jacob from Padan-aram; Genesis 35:27-29.

Verse 2. I know not the day of my death— From his present weakness he had reason to suppose that his death could not be at any great distance, and therefore would leave no act undone which he believed it his duty to perform. He who lives not in reference to eternity, lives not at all.

Verse 3. Thy weapons— The original word כלי keley signifies vessels and instruments of any kind; and is probably used here for a hunting spear, javelin, sword, etc.

Quiver— תלי teli, from תלה talah, to hang or suspend. Had not the Septuagint translated the word φαρετραν, and the Vulgate pharetram, a quiver, I should rather have supposed some kind of shield was meant; but either can be suspended on the arm or from the shoulder. Some think a sword is meant; and because the original signifies to hang or suspend, hence they think is derived our word hanger, so called because it is generally worn in a pendent posture; but the word hanger did not exist in our language previously to the Crusades, and we have evidently derived it from the Persian [P] khanjar, a poniard or dagger, the use of which, not only in battles, but in private assassinations, was well known.

Verse 4. Savory meat— מטעמים matammim, from טעם taam, to taste or relish; how dressed we know not, but its name declares its nature.

That I may eat— The blessing which Isaac was to confer on his son was a species of Divine right, and must be communicated with appropriate ceremonies. As eating and drinking were used among the Asiatics on almost all religious occasions, and especially in making and confirming covenants, it is reasonable to suppose that something of this kind was essentially necessary on this occasion, and that Isaac could not convey the right till he had eaten of the meat provided for the purpose by him who was to receive the blessing. As Isaac was now old, and in a feeble and languishing condition, it was necessary that the flesh used on this occasion should be prepared so as to invite the appetite, that a sufficiency of it

might be taken to revive and recruit his drooping strength, that he might be the better able to go through the whole of this ceremony.

This seems to be the sole reason why savory meat is so particularly mentioned in the text. When we consider, 1. That no covenant was deemed binding unless the parties had eaten together; 2. That to convey this blessing some rite of this kind was necessary; and, 3. That Isaac's strength was now greatly exhausted, insomuch that he supposed himself to be dying; we shall at once see why meat was required on this occasion, and why that meat was to be prepared so as to deserve the epithet of savory. As I believe this to be the true sense of the place, I do not trouble my readers with interpretations which I suppose to be either exceptionable or false.

Verse 5. *And Rebekah heard*— And was determined, if possible, to frustrate the design of Isaac, and procure the blessing for her favorite son. Some pretend that she received a Divine inspiration to the purpose; but if she had she needed not to have recourse to deceit, to help forward the accomplishment. Isaac, on being informed, would have had too much piety not to prefer the will of his Maker to his own partiality for his eldest son; but Rebekah had nothing of the kind to plead, and therefore had recourse to the most exceptionable means to accomplish her ends.

Verse 12. *I shall bring a curse upon me*— For even in those early times the spirit of that law was understood, Deuteronomy 27:18: Cursed is he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way; and Jacob seems to have possessed at this time a more tender conscience than his mother.

Verse 13. *Upon me be thy curse, my son*— Onkelos gives this a curious turn: It has been revealed to me by prophecy that the curses will not come upon thee, my son. What a dreadful responsibility did this woman take upon her at this time! The sacred writer states the facts as they were, and we may depend on the truth of the statement; but he nowhere says that God would have any man to copy this conduct. He often relates facts and sayings which he never recommends.

Verse 15. *Goodly raiment*— Mr. Ainsworth has a sensible note on this place. “The priest in the law had holy garments to minister in, Exodus 28:2-4, which the Septuagint there and in this place term *την στολην*, THE

robe, and *στολην αγιαν*, the holy robe. Whether the first-born, before the law, had such to minister in is not certain, but it is probable by this example; for had they been common garments, why did not Esau himself, or his wives, keep them? But being, in all likelihood, holy robes, received from their ancestors, the mother of the family kept them in sweet chests from moths and the like, whereupon it is said, Genesis 27:27, Isaac smelled the smell of his garments.” The opinion of Ainsworth is followed by many critics.

Verse 19. *I am Esau thy first-born*— Here are many palpable falsehoods, and such as should neither be imitated nor excused. “Jacob,” says Calmet, “imposes on his father in three different ways. 1. By his words: I am thy first-born Esau. 2. By his actions; he gives him kids’ flesh for venison, and says he had executed his orders, and got it by hunting. 3. By his clothing; he puts on Esau’s garments, and the kids’ skins upon his hands and the smooth of his neck. In short, he made use of every species of deception that could be practiced on the occasion, in order to accomplish his ends.” To attempt to palliate or find excuses for such conduct, instead of serving, disserves the cause of religion and truth. Men have labored, not only to excuse all this conduct of Rebekah and Jacob, but even to show that it was consistent, and that the whole was according to the mind and will of God!

*Non tali auxilio,
non defensoribus istis*

The cause of God and truth is under no obligation to such defenders; their hands are more unhallowed than those of Uzzah; and however the bearers may stumble, the ark of God requires not their support. It was the design of God that the elder should serve the younger, and he would have brought it about in the way of his own wise and just providence; but means such as here used he could neither sanction nor recommend.

Verse 23. *And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy*— From this circumstance we may learn that Isaac’s sense of feeling was much impaired by his present malady. When he could not discern the skin of a kid from the flesh of his son, we see that he was, through his infirmity, in a fit state to be imposed on by the deceit of his wife, and the cunning of his younger son.

Verse 27. *The smell of my son is as the smell of a field*— The smell of these garments, the goodly raiment which had been laid up in the house, was probably occasioned by some aromatic herbs, which we may naturally suppose were laid up with the clothes; a custom which prevails in many countries to the present day. Thyme, lavender, etc., are often deposited in wardrobes, to communicate an agreeable scent, and under the supposition that the moths are thereby prevented from fretting the garments. I have often seen the leaves of aromatic plants, and sometimes whole sprigs, put in eastern MSS., to communicate a pleasant smell, and to prevent the worms from destroying them. Persons going from Europe to the East Indies put pieces of Russia leather among their clothes for the same purpose. Such a smell would lead Isaac's recollection to the fields where aromatic plants grew in abundance, and where he had often been regaled by the scent.

Verse 28. *God give thee of the dew of heaven*— Bp. Newton's view of these predictions is so correct and appropriate, as to leave no wish for any thing farther on the subject.

“It is here foretold, and in Genesis 27:39, of these two brethren, that as to situation, and other temporal advantages, they should be much alike. It was said to Jacob: God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine; and much the same is said to Esau, Genesis 27:39: Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. The spiritual blessing, or the promise of the blessed seed, could be given only to ONE; but temporal good things might be imparted to both. Mount Seir, and the adjacent country, was at first in the possession of the Edomites; they afterwards extended themselves farther into Arabia, and into the southern parts of Judea. But wherever they were situated, we find in fact that the Edomites, in temporal advantages, were little inferior to the Israelites. Esau had cattle and beasts and substance in abundance, and he went to dwell in Seir of his own accord; but he would hardly have removed thither with so many cattle, had it been such a barren and desolate country as some would represent it. The Edomites had dukes and kings reigning over them, while the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. When the Israelites, on their return, desired leave to pass through the territories of Edom, it appears that the country abounded with FRUITFUL FIELDS and VINEYARDS: Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy

country; we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells; Numbers 20:17. And the prophecy of Malachi, which is generally alleged as a proof of the barrenness of the country, is rather a proof of the contrary: I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness, Malachi 1:3; for this implies that the country was fruitful before, and that its present unfruitfulness was rather an effect of war, than any natural defect in the soil. If the country is unfruitful now, neither is Judea what it was formerly.” As there was but little rain in Judea, except what was termed the early rain, which fell about the beginning of spring, and the latter rain, which fell about September, the lack of this was supplied by the copious dews which fell both morning and evening, or rather through the whole of the night. And we may judge, says Calmet, of the abundance of those dews by what fell on Gideon’s fleece, Judges 6:38, which being wrung filled a bowl. And Hushal compares an army ready to fall upon its enemies to a dew falling on the ground, 2 Samuel 17:12, which gives us the idea that this fluid fell in great profusion, so as to saturate every thing. Travellers in these countries assure us that the dews fall there in an extraordinary abundance.

The fatness of the earth— What Homer calls *ουθαρ αρουρης*, Ilias ix., 141, and Virgil *uber glebae*, AENEIS i., 531, both signifying a soil naturally fertile. Under this, therefore, and the former expressions, Isaac wishes his son all the blessings which a plentiful country can produce; for, as Leviticus Clerc rightly observes, if the dews and seasonable rains of heaven fall upon a fruitful soil, nothing but human industry is wanting to the plentiful enjoyment of all temporal good things. Hence they are represented in the Scripture as emblems of prosperity, of plenty, and of the blessing of God, Deuteronomy 33:13, 28; Micah 5:7; Zechariah 8:12; and, on the other hand, the withholding of these denotes barrenness, distress, and the curse of God; 2 Samuel 1:21. See Dodd.

Verse 29. *Let people serve thee*— “However alike their temporal advantages were to each other,” says Bp. Newton, “in all spiritual gifts and graces the younger brother was to have the superiority, was to be the happy instrument of conveying the blessing to all nations: In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed; and to this are to be referred, in their full force, those expressions: Let people serve thee, and

nations bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee. The same promise was made to Abraham in the name of God: I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, Genesis 12:3; and it is here repeated to Jacob, and thus paraphrased in the Jerusalem Targum: ‘He who curseth thee shall be cursed as Balaam the son of Beor; and he who blesseth thee shall be blessed as Moses the prophet, the lawgiver of Israel.’ It appears that Jacob was, on the whole, a man of more religion, and believed the Divine promises more, than Esau. The posterity of Jacob likewise preserved the true religion, and the worship of one God, while the Edomites were sunk in idolatry; and of the seed of Jacob was born at last the Savior of the world. This was the peculiar privilege and advantage of Jacob, to be the happy instrument of conveying these blessings to all nations. This was his greatest superiority over Esau; and in this sense St. Paul understood and applied the prophecy: The elder shall serve the younger, Romans 9:12. The Christ, the Savior of the world, was to be born of some one family; and Jacob’s was preferred to Esau’s, out of the good pleasure of Almighty God, who is certainly the best judge of fitness and expedience, and has undoubted right to dispense his favors as he shall see proper; for he says to Moses, as the apostle proceeds to argue, Romans 9: 15: ‘I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.’ And when the Gentiles were converted to Christianity, the prophecy was fulfilled literally: Let people serve thee, and let nations bow down to thee; and will be more amply fulfilled when the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved.”

Verse 33. *And Isaac trembled*— The marginal reading is very literal and proper, And Isaac trembled with a great trembling greatly. And this shows the deep concern he felt for his own deception, and the iniquity of the means by which it had been brought about. Though Isaac must have heard of that which God had spoken to Rebekah, The elder shall serve the younger, and could never have wished to reverse this Divine purpose; yet he might certainly think that the spiritual blessing might be conveyed to Esau, and by him to all the nations of the earth, notwithstanding the superiority of secular dominion on the other side.

Yea, and he shall be blessed.— From what is said in this verse, collated with Hebrews 12:17. we see how binding the conveyance of the birthright

was when communicated with the rites already mentioned. When Isaac found that he had been deceived by Jacob, he certainly would have reversed the blessing if he could; but as it had been conveyed in the sacramental way this was impossible. I have blessed him, says he, yea, and he must, or will, be blessed. Hence it is said by the apostle. Esau found no place for repentance, *μετανοιας γαρ τοπον ουχ ευρε*, no place for change of mind or purpose in his father, though he sought it carefully with tears. The father could not reverse it because the grant had already been made and confirmed. But this had nothing to do with the final salvation of poor outwitted Esau, nor indeed with that of his unnatural brother.

Verse 35. *Hath taken away thy blessing.*— This blessing, which was a different thing from the birthright, seems to consist of two parts: 1. The dominion, generally and finally, over the other part of the family; and, 2. Being the progenitor of the Messiah. But the former is more explicitly declared than the latter. See note on “Genesis 25:31”.

Verse 36. *Is not he rightly named Jacob?*— See note on “Genesis 25:26”.

He took away my birthright— So he might say with considerable propriety; for though he sold it to Jacob, yet as Jacob had taken advantage of his perishing situation, he considered the act as a species of robbery.

Verse 37. *I have made him thy lord*— See note on “Genesis 27:28”.

Verse 40. *By thy sword shalt thou live*— This does not absolutely mean that the Edomites should have constant wars; but that they should be of a fierce and warlike disposition, gaining their sustenance by hunting, and by predatory excursions upon the possessions of others. Bishop Newton speaks on this subject with his usual good sense and judgment: “The elder branch, it is here foretold, should delight more in war and violence, but yet should be subdued by the younger. By thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother. Esau might be said to live much by the sword; for he was a cunning hunter, a man of the field. He and his children got possession of Mount Seir by force and violence, expelling from thence the Horites, the former inhabitants. By what means they spread themselves farther among the Arabians is not known; but it appears that upon a sedition and separation several of the Edomites came and seized upon the south-west parts of Judea, during the Babylonish captivity, and settled

there ever after. Before and after this they were almost continually at war with the Jews; upon every occasion they were ready to join with their enemies; and when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, they encouraged him utterly to destroy the city, saying, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundations thereof. Psalm 137:7. And even long after they were subdued by the Jews, they retained the same martial spirit; for Josephus in his time gives them the character of ‘a turbulent and disorderly nation, always erect to commotions, and rejoicing in changes; at the least adulation of those who beseech them, beginning war, and hasting to battles as to a feast.’ And a little before the last siege of Jerusalem they came, at the entreaty of the Zealots, to assist them against the priests and people; and there, together with the Zealots, committed unheard-of cruelties, and barbarously murdered Annas, the high priest, from whose death Josephus dates the destruction of the city.” See Dr. Dodd.

And-when thou shalt have the dominion— It is here foretold that there was to be a time when the elder was to have dominion and shake off the yoke of the younger. The word **תָּרִיד** tarid, which we translate have dominion, is rather of doubtful meaning, as it may be deduced from three different roots, **יָרַד** yarad, to descend, to be brought down or brought low; **רָדָה** radah, to obtain rule or have dominion; and **רָוַד** rud, to complain; meaning either that when reduced very low God would magnify his power in their behalf, and deliver them from the yoke of their brethren; or when they should be increased so as to venture to set up a king over them, or when they mourned for their transgressions, God would turn their captivity. The Jerusalem Targum gives the words the following turn: “When the sons of Jacob attend to the law and observe the precepts, they shall impose the yoke of servitude upon thy neck; but when they shall turn away themselves from studying the law and neglect the precepts, thou shalt break off the yoke of servitude from thy neck.”

“It was David who imposed the yoke, and at that time the Jewish people observed the law; but the yoke was very galling to the Edomites from the first; and towards the end of Solomon’s reign Hadad, the Edomite, of the blood royal, who had been carried into Egypt from his childhood, returned into his own country, and raised some disturbances, but was not able to recover his throne, his subjects being over-awed by the garrisons which

David had placed among them; but in the reign of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king. Jehoram made some attempts to subdue them again, but could not prevail; so the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day, 2 Chronicles 21:8, 10, and hereby this part of the prophecy was fulfilled about nine hundred years after it was delivered.” See Bishop Newton.

“Thus,” says Bishop Newton, “have we traced, in our notes on this and the xxvth chapter, the accomplishment of this prophecy from the beginning; and we find that the nation of the Edomites has at several times been conquered by and made tributary to the Jews, but never the nation of the Jews to the Edomites; and the Jews have been the more considerable people, more known in the world, and more famous in history. We know indeed little more of the history of the Edomites than as it is connected with that of the Jews; and where is the name or nation now? They were swallowed up and lost, partly among the Nabathean Arabs, and partly among the Jews; and the very name, as Dr. Prideaux has observed, was abolished and disused about the end of the first century of the Christian era. Thus were they rewarded for insulting and oppressing their brethren the Jews; and hereby other prophecies were fulfilled, viz., Jeremiah 49:7, etc.; Ezekiel 25:12. etc.; Joel 3:19; Amos 1:11, etc.; and particularly Obadiah; for at this day we see the Jews subsisting as a distinct people, while Edom is no more, agreeably to the words of Obadiah, Obadiah 10: For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, in the return of his posterity from Egypt, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. And again, Obadiah 18: There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau, for the Lord hath spoken it. In what a most extensive and circumstantial manner has God fulfilled all these predictions! and what a proof is this of the Divine inspiration of the Pentateuch, and the omniscience of God!”

Verse 41. *The days of mourning for my father are at hand*— Such was the state of Isaac’s health at that time, though he lived more than forty years afterwards, that his death was expected by all; and Esau thought that would be a favorable time for him to avenge himself on his brother Jacob, as, according to the custom of the times, the sons were always present at the burial of the father. Ishmael came from his own country to assist Isaac to bury Abraham; and both Jacob and Esau assisted in burying their father

Isaac, but the enmity between them had happily subsided long before that time.

Verse 42. *Doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.*— לך מתנחם mithnachem lecha, which Houbigant renders cogitat super te, he thinks or meditates to kill thee. This sense is natural enough here, but it does not appear to be the meaning of the original; nor does Houbigant himself give it this sense, in his Racines Hebraïques. There is no doubt that Esau, in his hatred to his brother, felt himself pleased with the thought that he should soon have the opportunity of avenging his wrongs.

Verse 44. *Tarry with him a few days*— It was probably forty years before he returned, and it is likely Rebekah saw him no more; for it is the general opinion of the Jewish rabbins that she died before Jacob's return from Padan-aram, whether the period of his stay be considered twenty or forty years. See note on "Genesis 31:55", etc.

Verse 45. *Why should I be deprived also of you both*— If Esau should kill Jacob, then the nearest akin to Jacob, who was by the patriarchial law, Genesis 9:6, the avenger of blood, would kill Esau; and both these deaths might possibly take place in the same day. This appears to be the meaning of Rebekah. Those who are ever endeavoring to sanctify the means by the end, are full of perplexity and distress. God will not give his blessing to even a Divine service, if not done in his own way, on principles of truth and righteousness. Rebekah and her son would take the means out of God's hands; they compassed themselves with their own sparks, and warmed themselves with their own fire; and this had they at the hand of God, they lay down in sorrow. God would have brought about his designs in a way consistent with his own perfections; for he had fully determined that the elder should serve the younger, and that the Messiah should spring not from the family of Esau but from that of Jacob; and needed not the cunning craftiness or deceits of men to accomplish his purposes. Yet in his mercy he overruled all these circumstances, and produced good, where things, if left to their own operations and issues, would have produced nothing but evil. However, after this reprehensible transaction, we hear no more of Rebekah. The Holy Spirit mentions her no more, her burial excepted, Genesis 49:31. See note on "Genesis 35:8".

Verse 46. *I am weary of my life*— It is very likely that Rebekah kept many of the circumstances related above from the knowledge of Isaac; but as Jacob could not go to Padan-aram without his knowledge, she appears here quite in her own character, framing an excuse for his departure, and concealing the true cause. Abraham had been solicitous to get a wife for his son Isaac from a branch of his own family; hence she was brought from Syria. She is now afraid, or pretends to be afraid, that her son Jacob will marry among the Hittites, as Esau had done; and therefore makes this to Isaac the ostensible reason why Jacob should immediately go to Padan-aram, that he might get a wife there. Isaac, not knowing the true cause of sending him away, readily falls in with Rebekah's proposal, and immediately calls Jacob, gives him suitable directions and his blessing, and sends him away. This view of the subject makes all consistent and natural; and we see at once the reason of the abrupt speech contained in this verse, which should be placed at the beginning of the following chapter.

1. IN the preceding notes I have endeavored to represent things simply as they were. I have not copied the manner of many commentators, who have labored to vindicate the character of Jacob and his mother in the transactions here recorded. As I fear God, and wish to follow him, I dare not bless what he hath not blessed, nor curse what he hath not cursed. I consider the whole of the conduct both of Rebekah and Jacob in some respects deeply criminal, and in all highly exceptionable. And the impartial relation of the facts contained in this and the 25th chapter, gives me the fullest evidence of the truth and authenticity of the sacred original. How impartial is the history that God writes! We may see, from several commentators, what man would have done, had he had the same facts to relate. The history given by God details as well the vices as the virtues of those who are its subjects. How widely different from that in the Bible is the biography of the present day! Virtuous acts that were never performed, voluntary privations which were never borne, piety which was never felt, and in a word lives which were never lived, are the principal subjects of our biographical relations. These may be well termed the Lives of the Saints, for to these are attributed all the virtues which can adorn the human character, with scarcely a failing or a blemish; while on the other hand, those in general mentioned in the sacred writings stand marked with deep shades. What is the inference which a reflecting mind, acquainted

with human nature, draws from a comparison of the biography of the Scriptures with that of uninspired writers? The inference is this—the Scripture history is natural, is probable, bears all the characteristics of veracity, narrates circumstances which seem to make against its own honor, yet dwells on them, and often seeks occasion to REPEAT them. It is true! infallibly true! In this conclusion common sense, reason, and criticism join. On the other hand, of biography in general we must say that it is often unnatural, improbable; is destitute of many of the essential characteristics of truth; studiously avoids mentioning those circumstances which are dishonorable to its subject; ardently endeavors either to cast those which it cannot wholly hide into deep shades, or sublime them into virtues. This is notorious, and we need not go far for numerous examples. From these facts a reflecting mind will draw this general conclusion—an impartial history, in every respect true, can be expected only from God himself.

2. These should be only preliminary observations to an extended examination of the characters and conduct of Rebekah and her two sons; but this in detail would be an ungracious task, and I wish only to draw the reader's attention to what may, under the blessing of God, promote his moral good. No pious man can read the chapter before him without emotions of grief and pain. A mother teaches her favorite son to cheat and defraud his brother, deceive his father, and tell the most execrable lies! And God, the just, the impartial God relates all the circumstances in the most ample and minute detail! I have already hinted that this is a strong proof of the authenticity of the sacred book. Had the Bible been the work of an impostor, a single trait of this history had never appeared. God, it is true, had purposed that the elder should serve the younger; but never designed that the supremacy should be brought about in this way. Had Jacob's unprincipled mother left the matter in the bands of God's providence, her favorite son would have had the precedence in such a way as would not only have manifested the justice and holiness of God, but would have been both honorable and lasting to HIMSELF. He got the birthright, and he got the blessing; and how little benefit did he personally derive from either! What was his life from this time till his return from Padan-aram? A mere tissue of vexations, disappointments, and calamities. Men may endeavor to palliate the iniquity of these transactions; but this must proceed either

from weakness or mistaken zeal. God has sufficiently marked the whole with his disapprobation.

3. The enmity which Esau felt against his brother Jacob seems to have been transmitted to all his posterity; and doubtless the matters of the birthright and the blessing were the grounds on which that perpetual enmity was kept up between the descendants of both families, the Edomites and the Israelites. So unfortunate is an ancient family grudge, founded on the opinion that an injury has been done by one of the branches of the family, in a period no matter how remote, provided its operation still continues, and certain secular privations to one side be the result. How possible it is to keep feuds of this kind alive to any assignable period, the state of a neighboring island sufficiently proves; and on the subject in question, the bloody contentions of the two houses of YORK and LANCASTER in this nation are no contemptible comment. The facts, however, relative to this point, may be summed up in a few words. 1. The descendants of Jacob were peculiarly favored by God. 2. They generally had the dominion, and were ever reputed superior in every respect to the Edomites. 3. The Edomites were generally tributary to the Israelites. 4. They often revolted, and sometimes succeeded so far in their revolts as to become an independent people. 5. The Jews were never subjected to the Edomites. 6. As in the case between Esau and Jacob, who after long enmity were reconciled, so were the Edomites and the Jews, and at length they became one people. 7. The Edomites, as a nation, are now totally extinct; and the Jews still continue as a distinct people from all the inhabitants of the earth! So exactly have all the words of God, which he has spoken by his prophets, been fulfilled!

4. On the blessings pronounced on Jacob and Esau, these questions may naturally be asked. 1. Was there any thing in these blessings of such a spiritual nature as to affect the eternal interests of either? Certainly there was not, at least as far as might absolutely involve the salvation of the one, or the perdition of the other. 2. Was not the blessing pronounced on Esau as good as that pronounced on Jacob, the mere temporary lordship, and being the progenitor of the Messiah, excepted? So it evidently appears. 3. If the blessings had referred to their eternal states, had not Esau as fair a prospect for endless glory as his unfeeling brother? Justice and mercy both say-Yes. The truth is, it was their posterity, and not themselves, that were

the objects of these blessings. Jacob, personally, gained no benefit; Esau, personally, sustained no loss.

CHAPTER 28

Isaac directs Jacob to take a wife from the family of Laban, 1, 2; blesses and sends him away, 3, 4. Jacob begins his journey, 5. Esau, perceiving that the daughters of Canaan were not pleasing to his parents, and that Jacob obeyed them in going to get a wife of his own kindred, 6-8, went and took to wife Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael his father's brother, 9. Jacob, in his journey towards Haran, came to a certain place, (Luz, ver. 19,) where he lodged all night, 10, 11. He sees in a dream a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, on which he beholds the angels of God ascending and descending, 12. God appears above this ladder, and renews those promises which he had made to Abraham and to Isaac, 13, 14; promises Jacob personal protection and a safe return to his own country, 15. Jacob awakes, and makes reflections upon his dream, 16, 17. Sets up one of the stones he had for his pillow, and pours oil on it, and calls the place Beth-el, 18, 19. Makes a vow that if God will preserve him in his journey, and bring him back in safety, the stone should be God's house, and that he would give him the tenths of all that he should have, 20-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 1. *And Isaac called Jacob*— See note on “Genesis 27:46”.

And blessed him— Now voluntarily and cheerfully confirmed to him the blessing, which he had before obtained through subtlety. It was necessary that he should have this confirmation previously to his departure; else, considering the way in which he had obtained both the birthright and the blessing, he might be doubtful, according to his own words, whether he might not have got a curse instead of a blessing. As the blessing now pronounced on Jacob was obtained without any deception on his part, it is likely that it produced a salutary effect upon his mind, might have led him to confession of his sin, and prepared his heart for those discoveries of God's goodness with which he was favored at Luz.

Verse 2. *Go to Padan-aram*— This mission, in its spirit and design, is nearly the same as that in chap. 24., which see. There have been several ingenious conjectures concerning the retinue which Jacob had, or might have had, for his journey; and by some he has been supposed to have been well attended. Of this nothing is mentioned here, and the reverse seems to be intimated elsewhere. It appears, from Genesis 28:11, that he lodged in the open air, with a stone for his pillow; and from Genesis 32:10, that he went on foot with his staff in his hand; nor is there even the most indirect mention of any attendants, nor is it probable there were any. He no doubt took provisions with him sufficient to carry him to the nearest encampment or village on the way, where he would naturally recruit his bread and water to carry him to the next stage, and so on. The oil that he poured on the pillar might be a little of that which he had brought for his own use, and can be no rational argument of his having a stock of provisions, servants, camels, etc., for which it has been gravely brought. He had God alone with him.

Verse 3. *That thou mayest be a multitude of people*— לקהל עמים *likhal ammim*. There is something very remarkable in the original words: they signify literally for an assembly, congregation, or church of peoples; referring no doubt to the Jewish Church in the wilderness, but more particularly to the Christian Church, composed of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue. This is one essential part of the blessing of Abraham. See Genesis 28:4.

Verse 4. *Give thee the blessing of Abraham*— May he confirm the inheritance with all its attendant blessings to thee, to the exclusion of Esau; as he did to me, to the exclusion of Ishmael. But, according to St. Paul, much more than this is certainly intended here, for it appears, from Galatians 3:6-14, that the blessing of Abraham, which is to come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, comprises the whole doctrine of justification by faith, and its attendant privileges, viz., redemption from the curse of the law, remission of sins, and the promise of the Holy Spirit, including the constitution and establishment of the Christian Church.

Verse 5. *Bethuel the Syrian*— Literally the Aramean, so called, not because he was of the race of Aram the son of Shem, but because he dwelt

in that country which had been formerly possessed by the descendants of Aram.

Verse 9. *Then went Esau unto Ishmael*— Those who are apt to take every thing by the wrong handle, and who think it was utterly impossible for Esau to do any right action, have classed his taking a daughter of Ishmael among his crimes; whereas there is nothing more plain than that he did this with a sincere desire to obey and please his parents. Having heard the pious advice which Isaac gave to Jacob, he therefore went and took a wife from the family of his grandfather Abraham, as Jacob was desired to do out of the family of his maternal uncle Laban. Mahalath, whom he took to wife, stood in the same degree of relationship to Isaac his father as Rachel did to his mother Rebekah. Esau married his father's niece; Jacob married his mother's niece. It was therefore most obviously to please his parents that Esau took this additional wife. It is supposed that Ishmael must have been dead thirteen or fourteen years before this time, and that going to Ishmael signifies only going to the family of Ishmael. If we follow the common computation, and allow that Isaac was now about one hundred and thirty-six or one hundred and thirty-seven years of age, and Jacob seventy-seven, and as Ishmael died in the one hundred and thirty-seventh year of his age, which according to the common computation was the one hundred and twenty-third of Isaac, then Ishmael must have been dead about fourteen years. But if we allow the ingenious reasoning of Mr. Skinner and Dr. Kennicott, that Jacob was at this time only fifty-seven years of age, and Isaac consequently only one hundred and seventeen, it will appear that Ishmael did not die till six years after this period; and hence with propriety it might be said, Esau went unto Ishmael, and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael to be his wife. See note on "Genesis 26:34", etc.

Verse 11. *A certain place, and tarried there*— From Genesis 28:19, we find this certain place was Luz, or some part of its vicinity. Jacob had probably intended to reach Luz; but the sun being set, and night coming on, he either could not reach the city, or he might suspect the inhabitants, and rather prefer the open field, as he must have heard of the character and conduct of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah. Or the gates might be shut by the time he reached it, which would prevent his admission; for it frequently happens, to the present day, that travelers not reaching a city in

the eastern countries previously to the shutting of the gates, are obliged to lodge under the walls all night, as when once shut they refuse to open them till the next day. This was probably Jacob's case.

He took of the stones— He took one of the stones that were in that place: from Genesis 28:18 we find it was one stone only which he had for his pillow. Luz was about forty-eight miles distant from Beer-sheba; too great a journey for one day, through what we may conceive very unready roads.

Verse 12. *He dreamed, and behold a ladder*— A multitude of fanciful things have been spoken of Jacob's vision of the ladder, and its signification. It might have several designs, as God chooses to accomplish the greatest number of ends by the fewest and simplest means possible. 1. It is very likely that its primary design was to point out the providence of God, by which he watches over and regulates all terrestrial things; for nothing is left to merely natural causes; a heavenly agency pervades, actuates, and directs all. In his present circumstances it was highly necessary that Jacob should have a clear and distinct view of this subject, that he might be the better prepared to meet all occurrences with the conviction that all was working together for his good. 2. It might be intended also to point out the intercourse between heaven and earth, and the connection of both worlds by the means of angelic ministry. That this is fact we learn from many histories in the Old Testament; and it is a doctrine that is unequivocally taught in the New: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? 3. It was probably a type of CHRIST, in whom both worlds meet, and in whom the Divine and human nature are conjoined. The LADDER was set up on the EARTH, and the TOP of it reached to HEAVEN; for GOD was manifested in the FLESH, and in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Nothing could be a more expressive emblem of the incarnation and its effects; Jesus Christ is the grand connecting medium between heaven and earth, and between God and man. By him God comes down to man; through him man ascends to God. It appears that our Lord applies the vision in this way himself, 1st, In that remarkable speech to Nathanael, Hereafter ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man, John 1:51. 2dly, in his speech to Thomas, John 14:6: I am the Way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

Verse 13. *I am the Lord God of Abraham*— Here God confirms to him the blessing of Abraham, for which Isaac had prayed, Genesis 28:3, 4.

Verse 14. *Thy seed shall be as the dust*— The people that shall descend from thee shall be extremely numerous, and in thee and thy seed — the Lord JESUS descending from thee, according to the flesh, shall all the families of the earth — not only all of thy race, but all the other families or tribes of mankind which have not proceeded from any branch of the Abrahamic family, be blessed; for Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death FOR EVERY MAN, Hebrews 2:9.

Verse 15. *And, behold, I am with thee*— For I fill the heavens and the earth. “My WORD shall be thy help.”-Targum. And will keep thee in all places, *εν τη οδω παση*, in all this way. — Septuagint. I shall direct, help, and support thee in a peculiar manner, in thy present journey, be with thee while thou sojournest with thy uncle, and will bring thee again into this land; so that in all thy concerns thou mayest consider thyself under my especial providence, for I will not leave thee. Thy descendants also shall be my peculiar people, whom I shall continue to preserve as such until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of — until the Messiah shall be born of thy race, and all the families of the earth — the Gentiles, be blessed through thee; the Gospel being preached to them, and they, with the believing Jews, made ONE FOLD under ONE SHEPHERD, and one Bishop or Overseer of souls. And this circumstantial promise has been literally and punctually fulfilled.

Verse 16. *The Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.*— That is, God has made this place his peculiar residence; it is a place in which he meets with and reveals himself to his followers. Jacob might have supposed that this place had been consecrated to God. And it has already been supposed that, his mind having been brought into a humble frame, he was prepared to hold communion with his Maker.

Verse 17. *How dreadful is this place!*— The appearance of the ladder, the angels, and the Divine glory at the top of the ladder, must have left deep, solemn, and even awful impressions on the mind of Jacob; and hence the exclamation in the text, How dreadful is this place!

This is none other but the house of God— The Chaldee gives this place a curious turn: “This is not a common place, but a place in which God delights; and opposite to this place is the gate of heaven.” Onkelos seems to suppose that the gate or entrance into heaven was actually above this spot, and that when the angels of God descended to earth, they came through that opening into this place, and returned by the same way. And it really appears that Jacob himself had a similar notion.

Verse 18. *And Jacob-took the stone-and set it up for a pillar*— He placed the stone in an erect posture, that it might stand as a monument of the extraordinary vision which he had in this place; and he poured oil upon it, thereby consecrating it to God, so that it might be considered an altar on which libations might be poured, and sacrifices offered unto God. See Genesis 35:14.

The Brahmins anoint their stone images with oil before bathing; and some anoint them with sweet-scented oil. This is a practice which arises more from the customs of the Hindoos than from their idolatry. Anointing persons as an act of homage has been transferred to their idols.

There is a foolish tradition that the stone set up by Jacob was afterwards brought to Jerusalem, from which, after a long lapse of time, it was brought to Spain, from Spain to Ireland, from Ireland to Scotland, and on it the kings of Scotland sat to be crowned; and concerning which the following leonine verses were made:—

*Ni fallat fatum,-Scoti quocunque locatum
Invenient lapidem,-regnare tenentur ibidem.*

*Or fate is blind-or Scots shall find
Where'er this stone-the royal throne.*

Camden's Perthshire.

Edward I. had it brought to Westminster; and there this stone, called Jacob's pillar, and Jacob's pillow, is now placed under the chair on which the king sits when crowned! It would be as ridiculous to attempt to disprove the truth of this tradition, as to prove that the stone under the old chair in Westminster was the identical stone which served the patriarch for a bolster.

And poured oil upon the top of it.— Stones, images, and altars, dedicated to Divine worship, were always anointed with oil. This appears to have been considered as a consecration of them to the object of the worship, and a means of inducing the god or goddess to take up their residence there, and answer the petitions of their votaries. Anointing stones, images, etc., is used in idolatrous countries to the present day, and the whole idol is generally smeared over with oil. Sometimes, besides the anointing, a crown or garland was placed on the stone or altar to honor the divinity, who was supposed, in consequence of the anointing, to have set up his residence in that place. It appears to have been on this ground that the seats of polished stone, on which the kings sat in the front of their palaces to administer justice, were anointed, merely to invite the deity to reside there, that true judgment might be given, and a righteous sentence always be pronounced. Of this we have an instance in HOMER, *Odyss. lib. v., ver. 406-410*:—

εκ δ' ελθων, κατ' αρ' εζειτ' επι ξεστοισι λιθοσιν,
 οι οι εσαν προπαροιθε θυραων υψηλων,
 δευκοι, αποστιλβοντες αλειφατος. οισ επι μεν πριν
 νηλευς ιζεσκεν, θεοφιν μηστωρ αταλαντος.

*The old man early rose, walk'd forth, and sate
 On polish'd stone before his palace gate;
 With unguent smooth the lucid marble shone,
 Where ancient Neleus sate, a rustic throne.*

POPE.

This gives a part of the sense of the passage; but the last line, on which much stress should be laid, is very inadequately rendered by the English poet. It should be translated,—

Where Neleus sat, equal in counsel to the gods; because inspired by their wisdom, and which inspiration he and his successor took pains to secure by consecrating with the anointing oil the seat of judgment on which they were accustomed to sit. Some of the ancient commentators on Homer mistook the meaning of this place by not understanding the nature of the custom; and these Cowper unfortunately follows, translating “resplendent as with oil;” which as destroys the whole sense, and obliterates the allusion. This sort of anointing was a common custom in all antiquity, and

was probably derived from this circumstance. Arnobius tells us that it was customary with himself while a heathen, “when he saw a smooth polished stone that had been smeared with oils, to kiss and adore it, as if possessing a Divine virtue.”

*Si quando conspexeram lubricatum lapidem,
et ex olivi unguine sordidatum (ordinatum?)
tanquam inesset vis prasens, adulabar, affabar.*

And Theodoret, in his eighty-fourth question on Genesis, asserts that many pious women in his time were accustomed to anoint the coffins of the martyrs, etc. And in Catholic countries when a church is consecrated they anoint the door-posts, pillars, altars, etc. So under the law there was a holy anointing oil to sanctify the tabernacle, laver, and all other things used in GOD’S service, Exodus 40:9, etc.

Verse 19. He called the name of that place Beth-el— That is, the house of God; for in consequence of his having anointed the stone, and thus consecrated it to God, he considered it as becoming henceforth his peculiar residence; see on the preceding verse. This word should be always pronounced as two distinct syllables, each strongly accented, Beth-El.

Was called Luz at the first.— The Hebrew has אולם לוז Ulam Luz, which the Roman edition of the Septuagint translates ουλαμλουζ Oulamouz; the Alexandrian MS., ουλαμμουζ Oulammaus; the Aldine, ουλαμμαουζ Oulammaous; Symmachus, λαμμαουζ Lammaous; and some others, ουλαμ Oulam. The Hebrew אולם ulam is sometimes a particle signifying as, just as; hence it may signify that the place was called Beth-El, as it was formerly called Luz. As Luz signifies an almond, almond or hazel tree, this place probably had its name from a number of such trees growing in that region. Many of the ancients confounded this city with Jerusalem, to which they attribute the eight following names, which are all expressed in this verse:—

*Solyma, Luza, Bethel, Hierosolyma, Jebus, AElia,
Urbs sacra, Hierusalem dicitur atque Salem.*

*Solyma, Luz, Beth-El, Hierosolyma, Jebus, AElia,
The holy city is call’d, as also Jerusalem and Salem.*

From Beth-El came the Baetylia, Bethyllia, βαιτυλια, or animated stones, so celebrated in antiquity, and to which Divine honors were paid. The tradition of Jacob anointing this stone, and calling the place Beth-El, gave rise to all the superstitious accounts of the Baetylia or consecrated stones, which we find in Sanchoniathon and others. These became abused to idolatrous purposes, and hence God strongly prohibits them, Leviticus 26:1; and it is very likely that stones of this kind were the most ancient objects of idolatrous worship; these were afterwards formed into beautiful human figures, male and female, when the art of sculpture became tolerably perfected, and hence the origin of idolatry as far as it refers to the worshipping of images, for these, being consecrated by anointing, etc., were supposed immediately to become instinct with the power and energy of some divinity. Hence, then, the Bactylia or living stones of the ancient Phoenicians, etc. As oil is an emblem of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, so those who receive this anointing are considered as being alive unto God, and are expressly called by St. Peter living stones, 1 Peter 2:4, 5. May not the apostle have reference to those living stones or Baetyllia of antiquity, and thus correct the notion by showing that these rather represented the true worshippers of God, who were consecrated to his service and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and that these alone could be properly called the living stone, out of which the true spiritual temple is composed?

Verse 20. Vowed a vow— A vow is a solemn, holy promise, by which a man bound himself to do certain things in a particular way, time, etc., and for power to accomplish which he depended on God; hence all vows were made with prayer.

If God will be with me, etc.— Jacob seems to make this vow rather for his posterity than for himself, as we may learn from Genesis 28:13-15; for he particularly refers to the promises which God had made to him, which concerned the multiplication of his offspring, and their establishment in that land. If, then, God shall fulfill these promises, he binds his posterity to build God a house, and to devote for the maintenance of his worship the tenth of all their earthly goods. This mode of interpretation removes that appearance of self-interest which almost any other view of the subject presents. Jacob had certainly, long ere this, taken Jehovah for his God; and so thoroughly had he been instructed in the knowledge of Jehovah, that we

may rest satisfied no reverses of fortune could have induced him to apostatize: but as his taking refuge with Laban was probably typical of the sojourning of his descendants in Egypt, his persecution, so as to be obliged to depart from Laban, the bad treatment of his posterity by the Egyptians, his rescue from death, preservation on his journey, re-establishment in his own country, etc., were all typical of the exodus of his descendants, their travels in the desert, and establishment in the promised land, where they built a house to God, and where, for the support and maintenance of the pure worship of God, they gave to the priests and Levites the tenth of all their worldly produce. If all this be understood as referring to Jacob only, the Scripture gives us no information how he performed his vow.

Verse 22. *This stone shall be God's house*— That is, (as far as this matter refers to Jacob alone,) should I be preserved to return in safety, I shall worship God in this place. And this purpose he fulfilled, for there he built an altar, anointed it with oil, and poured a drink-offering thereon.

For a practical use of Jacob's vision, see note on "Genesis 28:12".

ON the doctrine of tithes, or an adequate support for the ministers of the Gospel, I shall here register my opinion. Perhaps a word may be borne from one who never received any, and has Done in prospect. Tithes in their origin appear to have been a sort of eucharistic offering made unto God, and probably were something similar to the minchah, which we learn from Genesis 4. was in use almost from the foundation of the world. When God established a regular, and we may add an expensive worship, it was necessary that proper provision should be made for the support of those who were obliged to devote their whole time to it, and consequently were deprived of the opportunity of providing for themselves in any secular way. It was soon found that a tenth part of the produce of the whole land was necessary for this purpose, as a whole tribe, that of Levi, was devoted to the public service of God; and when the land was divided, this tribe received no inheritance among their brethren. Hence, for their support, the law of tithes was enacted; and by these the priests and Levites were not only supported as the ministers of God, but as the teachers and intercessors of the people, performing a great variety of religious duties for them which otherwise they themselves were bound to perform. As this mode of supporting the ministers of God was instituted by himself, so we

may rest assured it was rational and just. Nothing can be more reasonable than to devote a portion of the earthly good which we receive from the free mercy of God, to his own service; especially when by doing it we are essentially serving ourselves. If the ministers of God give up their whole time, talents, and strength, to watch over, labor for, and instruct the people in spiritual things, justice requires that they shall receive their support from the work. How worthless and wicked must that man be, who is continually receiving good from the Lord's hands without restoring any part for the support of true religion, and for charitable purposes! To such God says, Their table shall become a snare to them, and that he will curse their blessings. God expects returns of gratitude in this way from every man; he that has much should give plenteously, he that has little should do his diligence to give of that little.

It is not the business of these notes to dispute on the article of tithes; certainly it would be well could a proper substitute be found for them, and the clergy paid by some other method, as this appears in the present state of things to be very objectionable; and the mode of levying them is vexatious in the extreme, and serves to sow dissensions between the clergyman and his parishioners, by which many are not only alienated from the Church, but also from the power as well as the form of godliness. But still the laborer is worthy of his hire; and the maintenance of the public ministry of the word of God should not be left to the caprices of men. He who is only supported for his work, will be probably abandoned when he is no longer capable of public service. I have seen many aged and worn-out ministers reduced to great necessity, and almost literally obliged to beg their bread among those whose opulence and salvation were, under God, the fruits of their ministry! Such persons may think they do God service by disputing against "tithes, as legal institutions long since abrogated," while they permit their worn-out ministers to starve:-but how shall they appear in that day when Jesus shall say, I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not? It is true, that where a provision is established on a certain order of priesthood by the law, it may be sometimes claimed and consumed by the worthless and the profane; but this is no necessary consequence of such establishment, as there are laws which, if put in action, have sufficient energy to expel every wicked and slothful servant from the

vineyard of Christ. This however is seldom done. At all events, this is no reason why those who have served God and their generation should not be comfortably supported during that service; and when incapable of it, be furnished at least with the necessaries of life. Though many ministers have reason to complain of this neglect, who have no claims on a legal ecclesiastical establishment, yet none have cause for louder complaint than the generality of those called curates, or unbeneficed ministers, in the Church of England: their employers clothe themselves with the wool, and feed themselves with the fat; they tend not the flock, and their substitutes that perform the labor and do the drudgery of the office, are permitted at least to half starve on an inadequate remuneration. Let a national worship be supported, but let the support be derived from a less objectionable source than tithes; for as the law now stands relative to them, no one purpose of moral instruction or piety can be promoted by the system. On their present plan tithes are oppressive and unjust; the clergyman has a right by law to the tenth of the produce of the soil, and to the tenth of all that is supported by it. He claims even the tenth egg, as well as the tenth apple; the tenth of all grain, of all hay, and even of all the produce of the kitchen garden; but he contributes nothing to the cultivation of the soil. A comparatively poor man rents a farm; it is entirely out of heart, for it has been exhausted; it yields very little, and the tenth is not much; at the expense of all he has, he dresses and manures this ungrateful soil; to repay him and keep up the cultivation would require three years' produce. It begins to yield well, and the clergyman takes the tenth which is now in quantity and quality more in value than a pound, where before it was not a shilling. But the whole crop would not repay the farmer's expenses. In proportion to the farmer's improvement is the clergyman's tithe, who has never contributed one shilling to aid in this extra produce! Here then not only the soil pays tithes, but the man's property brought upon the soil pays tithes: his skill and industry also are tithed; or if he have been obliged to borrow cash, he not only has to pay tithes on the produce of this borrowed money, but five per cent interest for the money itself. All this is oppressive and cruelly unjust. I say again, let there be a national religion, and a national clergy supported by the state; but let them be supported by a tax, not by tithes, or rather let them be paid out of the general taxation; or, if the tithe system must be continued, let the poor-rates be abolished,

and the clergy, out of the tithes, support the poor in their respective parishes, as was the original custom.

CHAPTER 29

Jacob proceeds on his journey, 1. Comes to a well where the flocks of his uncle Laban, as well as those of several others, were usually watered, 2, 3. Inquires from the shepherds concerning Laban and his family, 4-6. While they are conversing about watering the sheep, 7, 8, Rachel arrives, 9. He assists her to water her flock, 10; makes himself known unto her, 11, 12. She hastens home and communicates the tidings of Jacob's arrival to her father, 12. Laban hastens to the well, embraces Jacob, and brings him home, 13. After a month's stay, Laban proposes to give Jacob wages, 14, 15. Leah and Rachel described, 16, 17. Jacob proposes to serve seven years for Rachel, 18. Laban consents, 19. When the seven years were fulfilled, Jacob demands his wife, 20, 21. Laban makes a marriage feast, 22; and in the evening substitutes Leah for Rachel, to whom he gives Zilpah for handmaid, 23, 24. Jacob discovers the fraud, and upbraids Laban, 25. He excuses himself, 26; and promises to give him Rachel for another seven years of service, 27. After abiding a week with Leah, he receives Rachel for wife, to whom Laban gives Bilhah for handmaid, 28, 29. Jacob loves Rachel more than Leah, and serves seven years for her, 30. Leah being despised, the Lord makes her fruitful, while Rachel continues barren, 31. Leah bears Reuben, 32, and Simeon, 33, and Levi, 34, and Judah; after which she leaves off bearing, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. *Then Jacob went on his journey*— The original is very remarkable: And Jacob lifted up his feet, and he traveled unto the land of the children of the east. There is a certain cheerfulness marked in the original which comports well with the state of mind into which he had been brought by the vision of the ladder and the promises of God. He now saw that having God for his protector he had nothing to fear, and therefore he went on his way rejoicing.

People of the east.— The inhabitants of Mesopotamia and the whole country beyond the Euphrates are called קדם kedem, or easterns, in the sacred writings.

Verse 2. Three flocks of sheep— צֹאן tson, small cattle, such as sheep, goats, etc.; See note on “Genesis 12:16”. Sheep, in a healthy state, seldom drink in cold and comparatively cold countries: but it was probably different in hot climates. The three flocks, if flocks and not shepherds be meant, which were lying now at the well, did not belong to Laban, but to three other chiefs; for Laban’s flock was yet to come, under the care of Rachel, Genesis 29:6.

Verse 3. All the flocks— Instead of הַעֲדָרִים hadarim, flocks, the Samaritan reads [Samaritan] haroim, shepherds; for which reading Houbigant strongly contends, as well in this verse as in Genesis 29:8. It certainly cannot be said that all the flocks rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the sheep: and yet so it appears to read if we prefer the common Hebrew text to the Samaritan. It is probable that the same reading was originally that of the second verse also.

And put the stone again upon the well’s mouth— It is very likely that the stone was a large one, which was necessary to prevent ill-minded individuals from either disturbing the water, or filling up the well; hence a great stone was provided, which required the joint exertions of several shepherds to remove it; and hence those who arrived first waited till all the others were come up, that they might water their respective flocks in concert.

Verse 4. My brethren, whence be ye?— The language of Laban and his family was Chaldee and not Hebrew; (see Genesis 31:47;) but from the names which Leah gave to her children we see that the two languages had many words in common, and therefore Jacob and the shepherds might understand each other with little difficulty. It is possible also that Jacob might have learned the Chaldee or Aramitish language from his mother, as this was his mother’s tongue.

Verse 5. Laban the son of Nahor— Son is here put for grandson, for Laban was the son of Bethuel the son of Nahor.

Verse 6. *Is he well?*— **הַשְּׁלוֹם לוֹ** hashalom lo? Is there peace to him? Peace among the Hebrews signified all kinds of prosperity. Is he a prosperous man in his family and in his property? And they said, He is well, **שָׁלוֹם** shalom, he prospers.

Rachel cometh with the sheep.— **רָחֵל** rachel (the ch sounded strongly guttural) signifies a sheep or ewe; and she probably had her name from her fondness for these animals.

Verse 7. *It is yet high day*— The day is but about half run; neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together — it is surely not time yet to put them into the folds; give them therefore water, and take them again to pasture.

Verse 8. *We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together*— It is a rule that the stone shall not be removed till all the shepherds and the flocks which have a right to this well be gathered together; then, and not before, we may water the sheep. See note on “Genesis 29:3”.

Verse 9. *Rachel came with her father's sheep*— So we find that young women were not kept concealed in the house till the time they were married, which is the common gloss put on **עַלְמָה** almah, a virgin, one concealed. Nor was it beneath the dignity of the daughters of the most opulent chiefs to carry water from the well, as in the case of Rebekah; or tend sheep, as in the case of Rachel. The chief property in those times consisted in flocks: and who so proper to take care of them as those who were interested in their safety and increase? Honest labor, far from being a discredit, is an honor both to high and low. The king himself is served by the field; and without it, and the labor necessary for its cultivation, all ranks must perish. Let every son, let every daughter, learn that it is no discredit to be employed, whenever it may be necessary, in the meanest offices, by which the interests of the family may be honestly promoted.

Verse 10. *Jacob went near, and rolled the stone*— Probably the flock of Laban was the last of those which had a right to the well; that flock being now come, Jacob assisted the shepherds to roll off the stone, (for it is not likely he did it by himself,) and so assisted his cousin, to whom he was as yet unknown, to water her flock.

Verse 11. *Jacob kissed Rachel*— A simple and pure method by which the primitive inhabitants of the earth testified their friendship to each other, first abused by hypocrites, who pretended affection while their vile hearts meditated terror, (see the case of Joab,) and afterwards disgraced by refiners on morals, who, while they pretended to stumble at those innocent expressions of affection and friendship, were capable of committing the grossest acts of impurity.

And lifted up his voice— It may be, in thanksgiving to God for the favor he had shown him, in conducting him thus far in peace and safety.

And wept.— From a sense of the goodness of his heavenly Father, and his own unworthiness of the success with which he had been favored. The same expressions of kindness and pure affection are repeated on the part of Laban, Genesis 29:13.

Verse 14. *My bone and my flesh.*— One of my nearest relatives.

Verse 15. *Because thou art my brother, etc.*— Though thou art my nearest relative, yet I have no right to thy services without giving thee an adequate recompense. Jacob had passed a whole month in the family of Laban, in which he had undoubtedly rendered himself of considerable service. As Laban, who was of a very saving if not covetous disposition, saw that he was to be of great use to him in his secular concerns, he wished to secure his services, and therefore asks him what wages he wished to have.

Verse 17. *Leah was tender-eyed*— רַכּוֹת raccoth, soft, delicate, lovely. I believe the word means just the reverse of the signification generally given to it. The design of the inspired writer is to compare both the sisters together, that the balance may appear to be greatly in favor of Rachel. The chief recommendation of Leah was her soft and beautiful eyes; but Rachel was יֶפֶת תֹּאֵר yephath toar, beautiful in her shape, person, mien, and gait, and יֶפֶת מְרֹאֵה yephath mareh, beautiful in her countenance. The words plainly signify a fine shape and fine features, all that can be considered as essential to personal beauty. Therefore Jacob loved her, and was willing to become a bond servant for seven years, that he might get her to wife; for in his destitute state he could produce no dowry, and it was the custom of those times for the father to receive a portion for his daughter, and not to give one with her. One of the Hindoo lawgivers says, “A person may

become a slave on account of love, or to obtain a wife.” The bad system of education by which women are spoiled and rendered in general good for nothing, makes it necessary for the husband to get a dowry with his wife to enable him to maintain her; whereas in former times they were well educated and extremely useful, hence he who got a wife almost invariably got a prize, or as Solomon says, got a good thing.

Verse 20. *And Jacob served seven years for Rachel.*— In ancient times it appears to have been a custom among all nations that men should give dowries for their wives; and in many countries this custom still prevails. When Shechem asked Dinah for wife, he said, Ask me never so much-dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me. When Eliezer went to get Rebekah for Isaac, he took a profusion of riches with him, in silver, gold, jewels, and raiment, with other costly things, which, when the contract was made, he gave to Rebekah, her mother, and her brothers. David, in order to be Saul’s son-in-law, must, instead of a dowry, kill Goliath; and when this was done, he was not permitted to espouse Michal till he had killed one hundred Philistines. The Prophet Hosea bought his wife for fifteen pieces of silver, and a homer and a half of barley. The same custom prevailed among the ancient Greeks, Indians, and Germans. The Romans also had a sort of marriage entitled per coemptionem, “by purchase.” The Tartars and Turks still buy their wives; but among the latter they are bought as a sort of slaves.

Herodotus mentions a very singular custom among the Babylonians, which may serve to throw light on Laban’s conduct towards Jacob. “In every district they annually assemble all the marriageable virgins on a certain day; and when the men are come together and stand round the place, the crier rising up sells one after another, always bringing forward the most beautiful first; and having sold her for a great sum of gold, he puts up her who is esteemed second in beauty. On this occasion the richest of the Babylonians used to contend for the fairest wife, and to outbid one another. But the vulgar are content to take the ugly and lame with money; for when all the beautiful virgins are sold, the crier orders the most deformed to stand up; and after he has openly demanded who will marry her with a small sum, she is at length given to the man that is contented to marry her with the least. And in this manner the money arising from the sale of the handsome served for a portion to those whose look was

disagreeable, or who had any bodily imperfection. A father was not permitted to indulge his own fancy in the choice of a husband for his daughter; neither might the purchaser carry off the woman which he had bought without giving sufficient security that he would live with her as his own wife. Those also who received a sum of money with such as could bring no price in this market, were obliged also to give sufficient security that they would live with them, and if they did not they were obliged to refund the money.” Thus Laban made use of the beauty of Rachel to dispose of his daughter Leah, in the spirit of the Babylonian custom, though not in the letter.

And they seemed unto him but a few days— If Jacob had been obliged to wait seven years before he married Rachel, could it possibly be said that they could appear to him as a few days? Though the letter of the text seems to say the contrary, yet there are eminent men who strongly contend that he received Rachel soon after the month was finished, (see Genesis 29:14,) and then served seven years for her, which might really appear but a few days to him, because of his increasing love to her; but others think this quite incompatible with all the circumstances marked down in the text, and on the supposition that Jacob was not now seventy-seven years of age, as most chronologers make him, but only fifty-seven, (see on chap. 31.,) there will be time sufficient to allow for all the transactions which are recorded in his history, during his stay with Laban. As to the incredibility of a passionate lover, as some have termed him, waiting patiently for seven years before he could possess the object of his wishes, and those seven years appearing to him as only a few days, it may be satisfactorily accounted for, they think, two ways: 1. He had the continual company of his elect spouse, and this certainly would take away all tedium in the case. 2. Love affairs were not carried to such a pitch of insanity among the patriarchs as they have been in modern times; they were much more sober and sedate, and scarcely ever married before they were forty years of age, and then more for conveniency, and the desire of having an offspring, than for any other purpose. At the very lowest computation Jacob was now fifty-seven, and consequently must have passed those days in which passion runs away with reason. Still, however, the obvious construction of the text shows that he got Rachel the week after he had married Leah.

Verse 21. *My days are fulfilled*— My seven years are now completed, let me have my wife, for whom I have given this service as a dowry.

Verse 22. *Laban-made a feast*.— מִשְׁתֵּה *mishteh* signifies a feast of drinking. As marriage was a very solemn contract, there is much reason to believe that sacrifices were offered on the occasion, and libations poured out; and we know that on festival occasions a cup of wine was offered to every guest; and as this was drunk with particular ceremonies, the feast might derive its name from this circumstance, which was the most prominent and observable on such occasions.

Verse 23. *In the evening-he took Leah his daughter*— As the bride was always veiled, and the bride chamber generally dark, or nearly so, and as Leah was brought to Jacob in the evening, the imposition here practiced might easily pass undetected by Jacob, till the ensuing day discovered the fraud.

Verse 24. *And Laban gave-Zilpah his maid*— Slaves given in this way to a daughter on her marriage, were the peculiar property of the daughter; and over them the husband had neither right nor power.

Verse 26. *It must not be so done in our country*— It was an early custom to give daughters in marriage according to their seniority; and it is worthy of remark that the oldest people now existing, next to the Jews, I mean the Hindoos, have this not merely as a custom, but as a positive law; and they deem it criminal to give a younger daughter in marriage while an elder daughter remains unmarried. Among them it is a high offense, equal to adultery, “for a man to marry while his elder brother remains unmarried, or for a man to give his daughter to such a person, or to give his youngest daughter in marriage while the eldest sister remains unmarried.”-Code of Gentoo Laws, chap. xv., sec. 1, p. 204. This was a custom at Mesopotamia; but Laban took care to conceal it from Jacob till after he had given him Leah. The words of Laban are literally what a Hindoo would say on such a subject.

Verse 27. *Fulfill her week*— The marriage feast, it appears, lasted seven days; it would not therefore have been proper to break off the solemnities to which all the men of the place had been invited, Genesis 29:22, and probably Laban wished to keep his fraud from the public eye; therefore he

informs Jacob that if he will fulfill the marriage week for Leah, he will give him Rachel at the end of it, on condition of his serving seven other years. To this the necessity of the case caused Jacob to agree; and thus Laban had fourteen years' service instead of seven: for it is not likely that Jacob would have served even seven days for Leah, as his affection was wholly set on Rachel, the wife of his own choice. By this stratagem Laban gained a settlement for both his daughters. What a man soweth, that shall he reap. Jacob had before practiced deceit, and is now deceived; and Laban, the instrument of it, was afterwards deceived himself.

Verse 28. *And Jacob did so-and he gave him Rachel*— It is perfectly plain that Jacob did not serve seven years more before he got Rachel to wife; but having spent a week with Leah, and in keeping the marriage feast, he then got Rachel, and served afterwards seven years for her. Connections of this kind are now called incestuous; but it appears they were allowable in those ancient times. In taking both sisters, it does not appear that any blame attached to Jacob, though in consequence of it he was vexed by their jealousies. It was probably because of this that the law was made, Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, besides the other in her life-time. After this, all such marriages were strictly forbidden.

Verse 31. *The Lord saw that Leah was hated*— From this and the preceding verse we get the genuine meaning of the word שָׂנְאָה *sane*, to hate, in certain disputed places in the Scriptures. The word simply signifies a less degree of love; so it is said, Genesis 29:30: “Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah,” i.e., he loved Leah less than Rachel; and this is called hating in Genesis 29:31: When the Lord saw that Leah was hated — that she had less affection shown to her than was her due, as one of the legitimate wives of Jacob, he opened her womb — he blessed her with children. Now the frequent intercourse of Jacob with Leah (see the following verses) sufficiently proves that he did not hate her in the sense in which this term is used among us; but he felt and showed less affection for her than for her sister. So Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, simply means, I have shown a greater degree of affection for Jacob and his posterity than I have done for Esau and his descendants, by giving the former a better earthly portion than I have given to the latter, and by choosing the family of Jacob to be the progenitors of the Messiah. But not one word of all this relates to the eternal states of either of the two nations. Those who endeavor to

support certain peculiarities of their creed by such scriptures as these, do greatly err, not knowing the Scripture, and not properly considering either the sovereignty or the mercy of God.

Verse 32. *She called his name Reuben*— רֵאוּבֵן reuben, literally, see ye or behold a son; for Jehovah hath looked upon, רָאָה raah, beheld, my affliction; behold then the consequence, I have got a son!

Verse 33. *She called his name Simeon*.— שִׁמְעוֹן shimon, hearing; i.e., God had blessed her with another son, because he had heard that she was hated — loved less than Rachel was.

Verse 34. *Therefore was his name called Levi*.— לֵוִי levi, joined; because she supposed that, in consequence of all these children, Jacob would become joined to her in as strong affection, at least, as he was to Rachel. From Levi sprang the tribe of Levites, who instead of the first-born, were joined unto the priests in the service of the sanctuary. See Numbers 18:2, 4.

Verse 35. *She called his name Judah*— יְהוּדָה yehudah, a confessor; one who acknowledges God, and acknowledges that all good comes from his hands, and gives him the praise due to his grace and mercy. From this patriarch the Jews have their name, and could it be now rightly applied to them, it would intimate that they were a people that confess God, acknowledge his bounty, and praise him for his grace.

Left bearing.— That is, for a time; for she had several children afterwards. Literally translated, the original תַּעֲמֹד מִלְדֹת taamod milledeth-she stood still from bearing, certainly does not convey the same meaning as that in our translation; the one appearing to signify that she ceased entirely from having children; the other, that she only desisted for a time, which was probably occasioned by a temporary suspension of Jacob's company, who appears to have deserted the tent of Leah through the jealous management of Rachel.

The intelligent and pious care of the original inhabitants of the world to call their children by those names which were descriptive of some remarkable event in providence, circumstance of their birth, or domestic occurrence, is worthy, not only of respect, but of imitation. As the name itself

continually called to the mind, both of the parents and the child, the circumstance from which it originated, it could not fail to be a lasting blessing to both. How widely different is our custom! Unthinking and ungodly, we impose names upon our offspring as we do upon our cattle; and often the dog, the horse, the monkey, and the parrot, share in common with our children the names which are called Christian! Some of our Christian names, so called, are absurd, others are ridiculous, and a third class impious; these last being taken from the demon gods and goddesses of heathenism. May we hope that the rational and pious custom recommended in the Scriptures shall ever be restored, even among those who profess to believe in, fear, and love God!

CHAPTER 30

Rachel envies her sister, and chides Jacob, 1. He reproves her and vindicates himself, 2. She gives him her maid Bilhah, 3, 4. She conceives, and bears Dan. 5, 6; and afterwards Naphtali, 7, 8. Leah gives Zilpah her maid to Jacob, 9. She conceives and bears Gad, 10, 11, and also Asher, 12, 13. Reuben finds mandrakes, of which Rachel requests a part, 14. The bargain made between her and Leah, 15. Jacob in consequence lodges with Leah instead of Rachel, 16. She conceives, and bears Issachar, 17, 18, and Zebulun, 19, 20, and Dinah, 21. Rachel conceives, and bears Joseph, 22-24. Jacob requests permission from Laban to go to his own country, 25, 26. Laban entreats him to tarry, and offers to give him what wages he shall choose to name, 27, 28. Jacob details the importance of his services to Laban, 29, 30, and offers to continue those services for the speckled and spotted among the goats, and the brown among the sheep, 31-33. Laban consents, 34, and divides all the ring-streaked and spotted among the he-goats, the speckled and spotted among the she-goats, and the brown among the sheep, and puts them under the care of his sons, and sets three days' journey between himself and Jacob, 35, 36. Jacob's stratagem of the pilled rods, to cause the cattle to bring forth the ring-streaked, speckled, and spotted, 37-39. In consequence of which he increased his flock greatly, getting all that was strong and healthy in the flock of Laban, 40-43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. Give me children, or else I die.— This is a most reprehensible speech, and argues not only envy and jealousy, but also a total want of dependence on God. She had the greatest share of her husband's affection, and yet was not satisfied unless she could engross all the privileges which her sister enjoyed! How true are those sayings, Envy is as rottenness of the bones! and, Jealousy is as cruel as the grave!

Verse 2. Amos I in God's stead— Amos I greater than God, to give thee what he has refused?

Verse 3. *She shall bear upon my knees*— The handmaid was the sole property of the mistress, as has already been remarked in the case of Hagar; and therefore not only all her labor, but even the children borne by her, were the property of the mistress. These female slaves, therefore, bore children vicariously for their mistresses; and this appears to be the import of the term, she shall bear upon my knees.

That I may also have children by her.— וַאֲבָנָה מִמֶּנָּה veibbaneh mimmennah, and I shall be built up by her. Hence בן ben, a son or child, from בָּנָה banah, to build; because, as a house is formed of the stones, etc., that enter into its composition, so is a family by children.

Verse 6. *Called she his name Dan.*— Because she found God had judged for her, and decided she should have a son by her handmaid; hence she called his name דָּן dan, judging.

Verse 8. *She called his name Naphtali*— נַפְתָּלִי naphtali, my wrestling, according to the common mode of interpretation; but it is more likely that the root פָּתַל pathal signifies to twist or entwine. Hence Mr. Parkhurst translates the verse, “By the twistings — agency or operation, of God, I am entwisted with my sister; that is, my family is now entwined or interwoven with my sister’s family, and has a chance of producing the promised Seed.” The Septuagint, Aquila, and the Vulgate, have nearly the same meaning. It is, however, difficult to fix the true meaning of the original.

Verse 11. *She called his name Gad.*— This has been variously translated. גָּד gad, may signify a troop, an army, a soldier, a false god, supposed to be the same as Jupiter or Mars; for as Laban appears to have been, if not an idolater, yet a dealer in a sort of judicial astrology, (see Genesis 31:19), Leah, in saying בָּגַד bagad, which we translate a troop cometh, might mean, By or with the assistance of Gad — a particular planet or star, Jupiter possibly, I have gotten this son; therefore she called him after the name of that planet or star from which she supposed the succor came. See note on “Genesis 31:19”. The Septuagint translate it εὐτυχῆ, with good fortune; the Vulgate, feliciter, happily; but in all this diversity our own translation may appear as probable as any, if not the genuine one, בַּגַּד ba gad, for the keri, or marginal reading, has it in two words, a troop

cometh; whereas the textual reading has it only in one, בגד bagad, with a troop. In the Bible published by Becke, 1549, the word is translated as an exclamation, Good luck!

Verse 13. *And Leah said, Happy am I*— באשרי beoshri, in my happiness, therefore she called his name אשר asher, that is, blessedness or happiness.

Verse 14. *Reuben-found mandrakes*— דודאים dudaim. What these were is utterly unknown, and learned men have wasted much time and pains in endeavoring to guess out a probable meaning. Some translate the word lilies, others jessamine, others citrons, others mushrooms, others figs, and some think the word means flowers, or fine flowers in general. Hasselquist, the intimate friend and pupil of Linne, who traveled into the Holy Land to make discoveries in natural history, imagines that the plant commonly called mandrake is intended; speaking of Nazareth in Galilee he says: “What I found most remarkable at this village was a great number of mandrakes which grew in a vale below it. I had not the pleasure to see this plant in blossom, the fruit now (May 5th, O. S.) hanging ripe to the stem, which lay withered on the ground. From the season in which this mandrake blossoms and ripens fruit, one might form a conjecture that it was Rachel’s dudaim. These were brought her in the wheat harvest, which in Galilee is in the month of May, about this time, and the mandrake was now in fruit.” Both among the Greeks and orientals this plant was held in high repute, as being of a prolific virtue, and helping conception; and from it philtres were made, and this is favored by the meaning of the original, loves, i.e., incentives to matrimonial connections: and it was probably on this account that Rachel desired them. The whole account however is very obscure.

Verse 15. *Thou hast taken my husband*— It appears probable that Rachel had found means to engross the whole of Jacob’s affection and company, and that she now agreed to let him visit the tent of Leah, on account of receiving some of the fruits or plants which Reuben had found.

Verse 16. *I have hired thee*— We may remark among the Jewish women an intense desire of having children; and it seems to have been produced, not from any peculiar affection for children, but through the hope of

having a share in the blessing of Abraham, by bringing forth Him in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

Verse 18. *God hath given me my hire*— שְׂכָרִי sechari. And she called his name Issachar, יִשָּׂשכָר, This word is compounded of יֵשׁ yesh, IS, and שָׂכָר sachar, WAGES, from שָׂכַר sachar, to content, satisfy, saturate; hence a satisfaction or compensation for work done, etc.

Verse 20. *Now will my husband dwell with me*— יִזְבֵּלֵנִי yizbeleni; and she called his name Zebulun, זְבֻלֹן a dwelling or cohabitation, as she now expected that Jacob would dwell with her, as he had before dwelt with Rachel.

Verse 21. *And called her name Dinah*.— דִּינָה dinah, judgment. As Rachel had called her son by Bilhah DAN, Genesis 30:6, so Leah calls her daughter DINAH, God having judged and determined for her, as well as for her sister in the preceding instance.

Verse 22. *And God hearkened to her*— After the severe reproof which Rachel had received from her husband, Genesis 30:2, it appears that she sought God by prayer, and that he heard her; so that her prayer and faith obtained what her impatience and unbelief had prevented.

Verse 24. *She called his name Joseph*— יוֹסֵף Yoseph, adding, or he who adds; thereby prophetically declaring that God would add unto her another son, which was accomplished in the birth of Benjamin, Genesis 35:18.

Verse 25. *Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away*— Having now, as is generally conjectured, fulfilled the fourteen years which he had engaged to serve for Leah and Rachel. See Genesis 30:26, and conclusion of chap. 31. {Genesis 31:55.}

Verse 27. *I have learned by experience*— נִחַשְׁתִּי nichashti, from נָחַשׁ nachash, to view attentively, to observe, to pry into. I have diligently considered the whole of thy conduct, and marked the increase of my property, and find that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. For the meaning of the word נָחַשׁ nachash, See note on “Genesis 3:1”, etc.

Verse 30. *For it was little which thou had before I came*— Jacob takes advantage of the concession made by his father-in-law, and asserts that it was for his sake that the Lord had blessed him: Since my coming, לרגלי leragli, according to my footsteps — every step I took in thy service, God prospered to the multiplication of thy flocks and property.

When shall I provide for mine own house— Jacob had already laid his plan; and, from what is afterwards mentioned, we find him using all his skill and experience to provide for his family by a rapid increase of his flocks.

Verse 32. *I will pass through all thy flock*— צא tson, implying, as we have before seen, all smaller cattle, such as sheep, goats, etc.

All the speckled and spotted cattle— שׂה seh, which we translate cattle, signifies the young either of sheep or goats, what we call a lamb or a kid. Speckled, נקד nakod, signifies interspersed with variously colored spots.

Spotted— טלוא talu, spotted with large spot either of the same or different colors, from טלא tala, to patch, to make party-colored or patch-work; see Ezekiel 16:16. I have never seen such sheep as are here described but in the islands of Zetland. There I have seen the most beautiful brown, or fine chocolate color among the sheep; and several of the ring-streaked, spotted, speckled, and piebald among the same; and some of the latter description I have brought over, and can exhibit a specimen of Jacob's flock brought from the North Seas, feeding in Middlesex.

And all the brown— חום chum. I should rather suppose this to signify a lively brown, as the root signifies to be warm or hot.

Verse 35. *The he-goats that were ring-streaked*— התישים העקדים hatteyashim haakuddim, the he-goats that had rings of black or other colored hair around their feet or legs.

It is extremely difficult to find out, from Genesis 30:32 and Genesis 30:35, in what the bargain of Jacob with his father-in-law properly consisted. It appears from Genesis 30:32, that Jacob was to have for his wages all the speckled, spotted, and brown among the sheep and the goats; and of

course that all those which were not party-colored should be considered as the property of Laban. But in Genesis 30:35 it appears that Laban separated all the party-colored cattle, delivered them into the hands of his own sons; which seems as if he had taken these for his own property, and left the others to Jacob. It has been conjectured that Laban, for the greater security, when he had separated the party-colored, which by the agreement belonged to Jacob, see Genesis 30:32, put them under the care of his own sons, while Jacob fed the flock of Laban, Genesis 30:36, three days' journey being between the two flocks. If therefore the flocks under the care of Laban's sons brought forth young that were all of one color, these were put to the flocks of Laban under the care of Jacob; and if any of the flocks under Jacob's care brought forth party-colored young, they were put to the flocks belonging to Jacob under the care of Laban's sons. This conjecture is not satisfactory, and the true meaning appears to be this: Jacob had agreed to take all the party-colored for his wages. As he was now only beginning to act upon this agreement, consequently none of the cattle as yet belonged to him; therefore Laban separated from the flock, Genesis 30:35, all such cattle as Jacob might afterwards claim in consequence of his bargain, (for as yet he had no right;) therefore Jacob commenced his service to Laban with a flock that did not contain a single animal of the description of those to which he might be entitled; and the others were sent away under the care of Laban's sons, three days' journey from those of which Jacob had the care. The bargain, therefore, seemed to be wholly in favor of Laban; and to turn it to his own advantage, Jacob made use of the stratagems afterwards mentioned. This mode of interpretation removes all the apparent contradiction between Genesis 30:32 and Genesis 30:35, with which commentators in general have been grievously perplexed. From the whole account we learn that Laban acted with great prudence and caution, and Jacob with great judgment. Jacob had already served fourteen years; and had got no patrimony whatever, though he had now a family of twelve children, eleven sons and one daughter, besides his two wives, and their two maids, and several servants. See Genesis 30:43. It was high time that he should get some property for these; and as his father-in-law was excessively parsimonious, and would scarcely allow him to live, he was in some sort obliged to make use of stratagem to get an equivalent for his services. But did he not push this so

far as to ruin his father-in-law's flocks, leaving him nothing but the refuse?
See Genesis 30:42.

Verse 37. Rods of green poplar— לבנה לח libneh lach. The libneh is generally understood to mean the white poplar; and the word lach, which is here joined to it, does not so much imply greenness of color as being fresh, in opposition to witheredness. Had they not been fresh — just cut off, he could not have pilled the bark from them.

And of the hazel— לוז luz, the nut or filbert tree, translated by others the almond tree; which of the two is here intended is not known.

And chestnut tree— ערמו armon, the plane tree, from ערם aram, he was naked. The plane tree is properly called by this name, because of the outer bark naturally peeling off, and leaving the tree bare in various places, having smooth places where it has fallen off. A portion of this bark the plane tree loses every year. The Septuagint translate it in the same way, πλατανος, and its name is supposed to be derived from πλατυς, broad, on account of its broad spreading branches, for which the plane tree is remarkable. So we find the Grecian army in Homer, Il. ii., ver. 307, sacrificing καλη υπο πλατανιστω, under a beautiful plane tree. VIRGIL, Geor. iv. 146, mentions,

— *ministrantem platanum potantibus umbras.*

The plane tree yielding the convivial shade.

And PETRONIUS ARBITER in Satyr.:—

Nobilis aestivas platanus diffuderat umbras.

“The noble plane had spread its summer shade.”

See more in Parkhurst. Such a tree would be peculiarly acceptable in hot countries, because of its shade.

Pilled white streaks in them— Probably cutting the bark through in a spiral line, and taking it off in a certain breadth all round the rods, so that the rods would appear party-colored, the white of the wood showing itself where the bark was stripped off.

Verse 38. *And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks*— It has long been an opinion that whatever makes a strong impression on the mind of a female in the time of conception and gestation, will have a corresponding influence on the mind or body of the fetus. This opinion is not yet rationally accounted for. It is not necessary to look for a miracle here; for though the fact has not been accounted for, it is nevertheless sufficiently plain that the effect does not exceed the powers of nature; and I have no doubt that the same modes of trial used by Jacob would produce the same results in similar cases. The finger of God works in nature myriads of ways unknown to us; we see effects without end, of which no rational cause can be assigned; it has pleased God to work thus and thus, and this is all that we know; and God mercifully hides the operations of his power from man in a variety of cases, that he may hide pride from him. Even with the little we know, how apt are we to be puffed up! We must adore God in a reverential silence on such subjects as these, confess our ignorance, and acknowledge that nature is the instrument by which he chooses to work, and that he performs all things according to the counsel of his own will, which is always infinitely wise and infinitely good.

Verse 40. *Jacob did separate the lambs, etc.*— When Jacob undertook the care of Laban's flock, according to the agreement already mentioned, there were no party-colored sheep or goats among them, therefore the ring-streaked, etc., mentioned in this verse, must have been born since the agreement was made; and Jacob makes use of them precisely as he used the pilled rods, that, having these before their eyes during conception, the impression might be made upon their imagination which would lead to the results already mentioned.

Verse 41. *Whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive*— The word **מקשרות** mekushsharoth, which we translate stronger, is understood by several of the ancient interpreters as signifying the early, first-born, or early spring cattle; and hence it is opposed to **עמפים** atuphim, which we translate feeble, and which Symmachus properly renders **δευτερογονοι**, cattle of the second birth, as he renders the word mekushsharoth by **πρωτογονοι**, cattle of the first or earliest birth. Now this does not apply merely to two births from the same female in one year, which actually did take place according to the rabbins, the first in Nisan, about our March, and the second in Tisri, about our September; but it more particularly

refers to early and late lambs, etc., in the same year; as those that are born just at the termination of winter, and in the very commencement of spring, are every way more valuable than those which were born later in the same spring. Jacob therefore took good heed not to try his experiments with those late produced cattle, because he knew these would produce a degenerate breed, but with the early cattle, which were strong and vigorous, by which his breed must be improved. Hence the whole flock of Laban must be necessarily injured, while Jacob's flock was preserved in a state of increasing perfection. All this proves a consummate knowledge in Jacob of his pastoral office. If extensive breeders in this country were to attend to the same plan, our breed would be improved in a most eminent degree. What a fund of instruction upon almost every subject is to be found in the sacred writings!

Verse 43. *And the man increased exceedingly*— No wonder, when he used such means as the above. And had maid-servants, and men-servants — he was obliged to increase these as his cattle multiplied. And camels and asses, to transport his tents, baggage, and family from place to place, being obliged often to remove for the benefit of pasturage.

We have already seen many difficulties in this chapter, and strange incidents, for which we are not able to account. 1. The vicarious bearing of children; 2. The nature and properties of the mandrakes; 3. The bargain of Jacob and Laban; and 4. The business of the party-coloured flocks produced by means of the females looking at the variegated rods. These, especially the three last, may be ranked among the most difficult things in this book. Without encumbering the page with quotations and opinions, I have given the best sense I could; and think it much better and safer to confess ignorance, than, under the semblance of wisdom and learning, to multiply conjectures. Jacob certainly manifested much address in the whole of his conduct with Laban; but though nothing can excuse overreaching or insincerity, yet no doubt Jacob supposed himself justified in taking these advantages of a man who had greatly injured and defrauded him. Had Jacob got Rachel at first, for whom he had honestly and faithfully served seven years, there is no evidence whatever that he would have taken a second wife. Laban, by having imposed his eldest daughter upon him, and by obliging him to serve seven years for her who never was an object of his affection, acted a part wholly foreign to every dictate of

justice and honesty; (for though it was a custom in that country not to give the younger daughter in marriage before the elder, yet, as he did not mention this to Jacob, it cannot plead in his excuse;) therefore, speaking after the manner of men, he had reason to expect that Jacob should repay him in his own coin, and right himself by whatever means came into his power; and many think that he did not transgress the bounds of justice, even in the business of the party-coloured cattle.

The talent possessed by Jacob was a most dangerous one; he was what may be truly called a scheming man; his wits were still at work, and as he devised so he executed, being as fruitful in expedients as he was in plans. This was the principal and the most prominent characteristic of his life; and whatever was excessive here was owing to his mother's tuition; she was evidently a woman who paid little respect to what is called moral principle, and sanctified all kinds of means by the goodness of the end at which she aimed; which in social, civil, and religious life, is the most dangerous principle on which a person can possibly act. In this art she appears to have instructed her son; and, unfortunately for himself, he was in some instances but too apt a proficient. Early habits are not easily rooted out, especially those of a bad kind. Next to the influence and grace of the Spirit of God is a good and religious education. Parents should teach their children to despise and abhor low cunning, to fear a lie, and tremble at an oath; and in order to be successful, they should illustrate their precepts by their own regular and conscientious example. How far God approved of the whole of Jacob's conduct I shall not inquire; it is certain that he attributes his success to Divine interposition, and God himself censures Laban's conduct towards him; see Genesis 31:7-12. But still he appears to have proceeded farther than this interposition authorized him to go, especially in the means he used to improve his own breed, which necessarily led to the deterioration of Laban's cattle; for, after the transactions referred to above, these cattle could be of but little worth. The whole account, with all its lights and shades, I consider as another proof of the impartiality of the Divine historian, and a strong evidence of the authenticity of the Pentateuch. Neither the spirit of deceit, nor the partiality of friendship, could ever pen such an account.

CHAPTER 31

Laban and his sons envy Jacob, 1, 2; on which he is commanded by the Lord to return to his own country, 3. Having called his wives together, he lays before them a detailed statement of his situation in reference to their father, 4-5; the services he had rendered him, 6; the various attempts made by Laban to defraud him of his hire, 7; how, by God's providence, his evil designs had been counteracted, 8-12; and then informs them that he is now called to return to his own country, 13. To the proposal of an immediate departure, Leah and Rachel agree; and strengthen the propriety of the measure by additional reasons, 14-16; on which Jacob collects all his family, his flocks and his goods, and prepares for his departure, 17, 18. Laban having gone to shear his sheep, Rachel secretes his images, 19. Jacob and his family, unknown to Laban, take their departure, 20, 21. On the third day Laban is informed of their flight, 22; and pursues them to Mount Gilead, 23. God appears to Laban in a dream, and warns him not to molest Jacob, 24. He comes up with Jacob at Mount Gilead, 25; reproaches him with his clandestine departure, 26-29; and charges him with having stolen his gods, 30. Jacob vindicates himself, and protests his innocence in the matter of the theft, 31, 32. Laban makes a general search for his images in Jacob's, Leah's, Bilhah's, and Zilpah's tents; and not finding them, proceeds to examine Rachel's, 33. Rachel, having hidden them among the camel's furniture, sat upon them, 34; and making a delicate excuse for not rising up, Laban desists from farther search, 35. Jacob, ignorant of Rachel's theft, reproaches Laban for his suspicions, 36, 37; enumerates his long and faithful services, his fatigues, and Laban's injustice, 38-41; and shows that it was owing to God's goodness alone that he had any property, 42. Laban is moderated, and proposes a covenant, 43, 44. Jacob sets up a stone, and the rest bring stones and make a heap, which Laban calleth Jegar-Sahadutha, and Jacob Galeed, 45-47. They make a covenant, and confirm it by an oath, 48-53. Jacob offers a sacrifice; they eat together; and Laban and his companions, having lodged in the mount all night, take a friendly leave of Jacob and his family next morning, and depart, 54, 55.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 1. *And he heard the words of Laban's sons*— The multiplication of Jacob's cattle, and the decrease and degeneracy of those of Laban, were sufficient to arouse the jealousy of Laban's sons. This, with Laban's unfair treatment, and the direction he received from God, determined him to return to his own country.

Hath he gotten all this glory.— All these riches, this wealth, or property. The original word כָּבֵד signifies both to be rich and to be heavy; and perhaps for this simple reason, that riches ever bring with them heavy weight and burden of cares and anxieties.

Verse 3. *And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return-and I will be with thee.*— I will take the same care of thee in thy return, as I took of thee on thy way to this place. The Targum reads, My WORD shall be for thy help, see Genesis 15:1. A promise of this kind was essentially necessary for the encouragement of Jacob, especially at this time; and no doubt it was a powerful means of support to him through the whole journey; and it was particularly so when he heard that his brother was coming to meet him, with four hundred men in his retinue, Genesis 32:6. At that time he went and pleaded the very words of this promise with God, Genesis 32:9.

Verse 4. *Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah*— He had probably been at some considerable distance with the flocks; and for the greater secrecy, he rather sends for them to the field, to consult them on this most momentous affair, than visit them in their tents, where probably some of the family of Laban might overhear their conversation, though Laban himself was at the time three days' journey off. It is possible that Jacob shored his sheep at the same time; and that he sent for his wives and household furniture to erect tents on the spot, that they might partake of the festivities usual on such occasions. Thus they might all depart without being suspected.

Verse 7. *Changed my wages ten times*— There is a strange diversity among the ancient versions, and ancient and modern interpreters, on the meaning of these words. The Hebrew is מְנִים עֲשָׂרָה asereth monim,

which Aquila translates δεκα αριθμους ten numbers; Symmachus, δεκακις αριθμω, ten times in number; the Septuagint δεκα αμνων, ten lambs, with which Origen appears to agree. St. Augustine thinks that by ten lambs five years' wages is meant: that Laban had withheld from him all the party-coloured lambs which had been brought forth for five years, and because the ewes brought forth lambs twice in the year, bis gravidæ pecudes, therefore the number ten is used, Jacob having been defrauded of his part of the produce of ten births. It is supposed that the Septuagint use lambs for years, as Virgil does aristas.

*En unquam patrios longo post tempore fines,
Pauperis et tuguri congestum cespîte culmen,
Post aliquot mea regna videns mirabor aristas?*

Virg. Ec. i., ver. 68.

Thus inadequately translated by DRYDEN:

*O must the wretched exiles ever mourn;
Nor, after length of rolling years, return?
Are we condemn'd by Fate's unjust decree,
No more our harvests and our homes to see?
Or shall we mount again the rural throng,
And rule the country, kingdoms once our own?*

Here aristas, which signifies ears of corn, is put for harvest, harvest for autumn, and autumn for years. After all, it is most natural to suppose that Jacob uses the word ten times for an indefinite number, which we might safely translate frequently; and that it means an indefinite number in other parts of the sacred writings, is evident from Leviticus 26:26: TEN women shall bake your bread in one oven. Ecclesiastes 7:19: Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than TEN mighty men the city. Numbers 14:22: Because all these men have tempted me now these TEN times. Job 19:3: These TEN times have ye reproached me. Zechariah 8:23: In those days — TEN men shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew. Revelation 2:10: Ye shall have tribulation TEN days.

Verse 11. *The angel of God spake unto me in a dream*— It is strange that we had not heard of this dream before; and yet it seems to have taken place before the cattle brought forth, immediately after the bargain between him and Laban. If we follow the Samaritan the difficulty is at once removed, for

it gives us the whole of this dream after Genesis 30:36 of the preceding chapter,

Verse 12. *Grisled*— **ברד** beruddim; **ברד** barad signifies hail, and the meaning must be, they had white spots on them similar to hail. Our word *grisled* comes from the old French, *gresl*, hail, now written *gràle*; hence *gresl*Ç, *grisled*, spotted with white upon a dark ground.

Verse 15. *Are we not counted of him strangers?*— Rachel and Leah, who well knew the disposition of their father, gave him here his true character. He has treated us as strangers — as slaves whom he had a right to dispose of as he pleased; in consequence, he hath sold us — disposed of us on the mere principle of gaining by the sale.

And hath quite devoured also our money.— Has applied to his own use the profits of the sale, and has allowed us neither portion nor inheritance.

Verse 19. *Laban went to shear his sheep*— Laban had gone; and this was a favorable time not only to take his images, but to return to Canaan without being perceived.

Rachel had stolen the images— **תְּרַפִּים** teraphim. What the teraphim were is utterly unknown. In Genesis 31:30 they are termed **אלהי** elohai, gods; and to some it appears very likely that they were a sort of images devoted to superstitious purposes, not considered as gods, but as representatives of certain Divine attributes, Dr. Shuckford supposes them to be a sort of tiles, on which the names or figures of their ancestors were engraven. Theodoret, in his 89th question, calls them idols; and says that Rachel, who was a type of the true Church, stole them from her father that he might be delivered from idolatry. R. S. Jarchi gives nearly the same reason.

The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel gives a strange turn to the whole passage. “And Rachel stole the images of her father: for they had murdered a man, who was a first-born son; and having cut off his head, they embalmed it with salt and spices, and they wrote divinations upon a plate of gold, and put it under his tongue; and placed it against the wall, and it conversed with them, and Laban worshipped it. And Jacob stole the science of Laban the Syrian, that it might not discover his departure.”

If the word be derived from **רפא** rapha, to heal or restore, then the teraphim may be considered as a sort of talismans, kept for the purpose of averting and curing diseases; and probably were kept by Laban for the same purpose that the Romans kept their lares and penates. It is however possible that **תרפים** teraphim is the same as **שרפים** seraphim, the **ת** tau and **ש** sin being changed, which is very frequent in the Syrian or Chaldee language; and we know that Laban was an Aramean or Syrian. FIRE has been considered from the earliest ages as a symbol of the Deity; and as the word seraphim comes from **שרפ** saraph, to burn, it has been conjectured that the teraphim of Laban were luminous forms, prepared of burnished brass, etc., which he might imagine a proper medium of communication between God and his worshippers. Mr. Parkhurst has observed that the teraphim were in use among believers and unbelievers. Among the former, see this chapter; for he denies that Laban was an idolater. See also Judges 17:5; 18:14, 18, 20; 1 Samuel 19:13, 16. Among the latter, see 2 Kings 23:24; Ezekiel 21:21; Zechariah 10:2. Compare 1 Samuel 15:23, and Hosea 3:4. These are all the places in which the original word is found.

The Persian translator seems to have considered these teraphim as tables or instruments that served for purposes of judicial astrology, and hence translates the word [P] asterlabha, astrolabes. As the astrolabe was an instrument with which they took the altitude of the pole-star, the sun, etc., it might, in the notion of the Persian translator, imply tables, etc., by which the culminating of particular stars might be determined, and the whole serve for purposes of judicial astrology. Now as many who have professed themselves to be believers in Christianity, have nevertheless addicted themselves to judicial astrology, we might suppose such a thing in this case, and still consider Laban as no idolater. If the Persian translator has not hit on the true meaning, he has formed the most likely conjecture.

Verse 21. *Passed over the river*— The Euphrates, as the Targum properly notices. But how could he pass such a river with his flocks, etc.? This difficulty does not seem to have struck critics in general. The rabbins felt it, and assert that God wrought a miracle for Jacob on this occasion, and that he passed over dry shod. As we know not in what other way he could pass, it is prudent to refer it to the power of God, which accompanied him

through the whole of his journey. There might, however, have been fords well known to both Jacob and Laban, by which they might readily pass.

The mount Gilead.— What the ancient name of this mountain was, we know not; but it is likely that it had not the name of Gilead till after the transaction mentioned Genesis 31:47. The mountains of Gilead were eastward of the country possessed by the tribes of Reuben and Gad; and extended from Mount Hermon to the mountains of Moab. — Calmet. It is joined to Mount Libanus, and includes the mountainous region called in the New Testament Trachonitis. — Dodd.

Verse 24. And God came to Laban— God’s caution to Laban was of high importance to Jacob—Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad; or rather, as is the literal meaning of the Hebrew, **מטוב עד רע**, mittob ad ra, from good to evil; for had he neither spoken good nor evil to Jacob, they could have had no intercourse at all. The original is, therefore, peculiarly appropriate; for when people meet, the language at first is the language of friendship; the command therefore implies, “Do not begin with Peace be unto thee, and then proceed to injurious language and acts of violence.” If this Divine direction were attended to, how many of those affairs of honor, so termed, which commence with, “I hope you are well”-“I am infinitely glad to see you”-“I am happy to see you well,” etc., and end with small swords and pistol bullets, would be prevented! Where God and true religion act, all is fair, kind, honest, and upright; but where these are not consulted, all is hollow, deceitful, or malicious. Beware of unmeaning compliments, and particularly of saying what thy heart feels not. God hates a hypocrite and a deceiver.

Verse 27. I might have sent thee away with mirth— **בשמחה**, besimchah, with rejoicing, making a feast or entertainment on the occasion; and with songs, **בשרים**, beshirim, odes either in the praise of God, or to commemorate the splendid acts of their ancestors; with tabret, **בתפ**, bethoph, the tympanum used in the east to the present day, and there called [A] diff, a thin broad wooden hoop, with parchment extended over one end of it, to which are attached small pieces of brass, tin, etc., which make a jingling noise; it is held in the air with one hand, and beat on with the fingers of the other. It appears to have been precisely the same with that which is called the tambourine and which is frequently to be met with

in our streets. And with harp, **בכנור** bekinnor, a sort of stringed instrument, a lute or harp; probably the same as the Greek **κινυρα** kinura, a harp; the name being evidently borrowed from the Hebrew. These four things seem to include all that was used in those primitive times, as expressive of gladness and satisfaction on the most joyous occasions.

Verse 29. *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt*— Literally, My hand is unto God to do you evil, i.e., I have vowed to God that I will punish thee for thy flight, and the stealing of my teraphim; but the God of YOUR father has prevented me from doing it. It is a singular instance that the plural pronoun, when addressing an individual, should be twice used in this place—the God of your father, **אביכם** abichem, for **אביך** abicha, thy father.

Verse 32. *Let him not live*— It appears that anciently theft was punished by death; and we know that the patriarchs had the power of life and death in their hands. But previously to the law, the punishment of death was scarcely ever inflicted but for murder. The rabbins consider that this was an imprecation used by Jacob, as if he had said, Let God take away the life of the person who has stolen them! And that this was answered shortly after in the death of Rachel, Genesis 35:16-19.

Verse 35. *The custom of women is upon me.*— This she knew must be a satisfactory reason to her father; for if the teraphim were used to any religious purpose, and they seem to have been used in this way, as Laban calls them his gods, he therefore could not suspect that a woman in such a situation, whose touch was considered as defiling, would have sat upon articles that were either the objects of his adoration, or used for any sacred purpose. The stratagem succeeded to her wish, and Laban departed without suspicion. It seems very natural to suppose that Rachel did believe that by the use of these teraphim Laban could find out their flight, and the direction they took, and therefore she stole them; and having stolen them she was afraid to acknowledge the theft, and probably might think that they might be of some use to herself. Therefore, for these reasons, she brought them away.

Verse 36. *And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban*— The expostulation of Jacob with Laban, and their consequent agreement, are

told in this place with great spirit and dignity. Jacob was conscious that though he had made use of cunning to increase his flocks, yet Laban had been on the whole a great gainer by his services. He had served him at least twenty years, fourteen for Rachel and Leah, and six for the cattle; and some suppose he had served him twenty years besides the above, which is not unlikely: see the remarks at the conclusion of this chapter. {See Clarke at “Genesis 31:55”} Forty or even twenty years of a man’s life, devoted to incessant labor and constantly exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, (see Genesis 31:40,) deserve more than an ordinary reward. Laban’s constitutional sin was covetousness, and it was an easily besetting sin; for it appears to have governed all his conduct, and to have rendered him regardless of the interests of his children, so long as he could secure his own. That he had frequently falsified his agreement with Jacob, though the particulars are not specified, we have already had reason to conjecture from Genesis 31:7, and with this Jacob charges his father-in-law, in the most positive manner, Genesis 31:41. Perhaps some previous unfair transactions of this kind were the cause why Jacob was led to adopt the expedient of outwitting Laban in the case of the spotted, spangled, ring-streaked, and grised cattle. This if it did take place, though it cannot justify the measure, is some palliation of it; and almost the whole of Jacob’s conduct, as far as relates to Laban, can be better excused than his injuring Laban’s breed, by leaving him none but the weak, unhealthy, and degenerated cattle.

Verse 39. *That which was torn-of my hand didst thou require it*— This more particularly marks the covetous and rigorous disposition of Laban; for the law of God required that what had been torn by beasts the shepherd should not be obliged to make good, Exodus 22:10, 13. And it is very likely that this law was in force from the earliest times.

Verse 40. *In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night*— The being exposed to the heat by day, and frost by night, is made part of the heaviest punishment of Prometheus by AEschylus.

σταθευτος δ' ηλιου φοιβη φλογι, ξροιασ αμειψεισ.
 ασμενω δε σοι ἡ ποικιλεμων νυξ αποκρυσει φαος.
 παχνην θ' εωαν ηλιος σκεδα παλιν.

Opposed to the sun's most fervid beam, The hue of beauty changed; till parch'd by heat The night with spangled stole shall hide its light From thee rejoicing, but again the sun Chases the hoar frost from thy harass'd form.
J. B. B. C.

Verse 41. *Twenty years*— See the remarks at the end. See Clarke at “Genesis 31:55”.

Verse 42. *The fear of Isaac*— It is strange that Jacob should say, the GOD of Abraham and the FEAR of Isaac, when both words are meant of the same Being. The reason perhaps was this; Abraham was long since dead, and God was his unalienable portion for ever. Isaac was yet alive in a state of probation, living in the fear of God, not exempt from the danger of falling; therefore God is said to be his fearnot only the object of his religious worship in a general way, but that holy and just God before whom he was still working out his salvation with fear and tremblinglest he should fall, and trembling lest he should offend.

Verse 46. *Made a heap*— גל gal, translated heap, signifies properly a round heap; and this heap was probably made for the double purpose of an altar and a table, and Jacob's stone or pillar was set on it for the purpose of a memorial.

Verse 47. *Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha*— יגר שהדוּתא yegar sahadutha, the heap or round heap of witness; but Jacob called it גלעד galed, which signifies the same thing. The first is pure Chaldee, the second pure Hebrew. אגר agar signifies to collect, hence יגר yegar and אוגר ogar, a collection or heap made up of gathered stones; and hence also אגורה egora, an altar, used frequently by the Chaldee paraphrast. See 1 Kings 12:33; Judges 6:31; 2 Kings 21:3; Jeremiah 17:1. See Castel's Lexicon. From this example we may infer that the Chaldee language was nearly coequal with the Hebrew. A gloss made by St. Jerome, and which was probably only entered by him in his margin as a note, has crept into the text of the Vulgate. It is found in every copy of this version, and is as follows: Uterque juxta proprietatem linguae suae, Each according to the idiom of his own tongue.

Verse 48. See Clarke at “Genesis 31:49”.

Verse 48. — 49. I think these two verses are badly divided, and should be read thus: Ver. 48. And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Ver. 49. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed and Mizpah; for he said, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

Mizpah— **מעפה** mitspah signifies a watch-tower; and Laban supposes that in consequence of the consecration of the place, and the covenant now solemnly made and ratified, that God would take possession of this heap, and stand on it as on a watch-tower, to prevent either of them from trenching on the conditions of their covenant.

Verse 50. *No man is with us*— Though all were present at the sacrifice offered, yet it appears that in making the contract Jacob and Laban withdrew, and transacted the business in private, calling on God to witness it.

Jacob had already four wives; but Laban feared that he might take others, whose children would naturally come in for a share of the inheritance to the prejudice of his daughters and grandchildren. Though the Koran allows a man to have four wives if he can maintain them, yet we learn that in many cases where a man takes a wife, the parents or relatives of the woman stipulate that the man is not to take another during the lifetime of that one whom he now espouses; and notwithstanding the permission of the Koran, he is obliged to fulfill this agreement.

Verse 51. *And Laban said to Jacob-behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee*— But this pillar, not cast but set up, was certainly set up by Jacob; for in Genesis 31:45 we read, And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar: it is therefore for the honor of one Hebrew and one Samaritan MS. that they have preserved the true reading in Genesis 31:51, **יָרִיתָ** yaritha, THOU hast set up. — Kennicott. Instead of either of the above readings the Samaritan text has [Samaritan] yarata, The pillar which thou SEEST betwixt me and thee.

Verse 53. *The God of their father*— As Laban certainly speaks of the true God here, with what propriety can he say that this God was the God of Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor? It is certain that Terah was an idolater; of this we have the most positive proof, Joshua 24:2. Because the

clause is not in the Septuagint, and is besides wanting in some MSS., Dr. Kennicott considers it an interpolation. But there is no need of having recourse to this expedient if we adopt the reading אֲבִיכֶם abichem, YOUR father, for אֲבֵיהֶם abihem, THEIR father, which is supported by several of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS., and is precisely the same form made use of by Laban, Genesis 31:29, when addressing Jacob, and appears to me to be used here in the same way; for he there most manifestly uses the plural pronoun, when speaking only to Jacob himself. It is therefore to be considered as a form of speech peculiar to Laban; at least we have two instances of his use of it in this chapter.

Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac.— See Clarke on “Genesis 31:42.

Verse 54. Offered sacrifice upon the mount— It is very likely that Laban joined in this solemn religious rite, and that, having offered the blood and fat to God, they feasted upon the sacrifice.

Verse 55. Kissed his sons and his daughters— That is, his grandchildren, Jacob's eleven sons with Dinah their sister, and their mothers Leah and Rachel. All these he calls his children, Genesis 31:43. And blessed them — prayed heartily for their prosperity, though we find from Genesis 31:29 that he came having bound himself by a vow to God to do them some injury. Thus God turned his intended curse into a blessing.

THE most important topics in this chapter have already been considered in the notes, and to those the reader is referred. Jacob's character we have already seen, and hitherto have met in it little to admire; but we shall soon find a blessed change both in his mind and in his conduct. Laban's character appears in almost every instance to disadvantage; he does not seem to be what we commonly term a wicked man, but he was certainly both weak and covetous; and covetousness extinguished in him, as it does in all its votaries, the principles of righteousness and benevolence, and the very charities of human life. Provided he could get an increase of property, he regarded not who was wronged or who suffered. In this case he hid himself even from his own bowels, and cared not that his own children should lack even the necessaries of life, provided he could increase his own store! How watchful should we be against this destructive, unnatural, and

degrading vice! It is impossible for a man who loves money to love either God or man; and consequently he must be in the broad way that leads to destruction.

For the difficulties in the chronology of Jacob's sojourning in Padan-aram, I beg leave to refer to the following remarks.

Remarks upon Genesis 31:38, etc., relative to the time spent by Jacob in the service of his father-in-law Laban, in Mesopotamia; from Dr. Kennicott.

“If every reading which introduces but a single difficulty demands our attention, much greater must that demand be when several difficulties are caused by any one mistake, or any one mistranslation. Of this nature is the passage before us, which therefore shall be here considered more fully, especially as I have not already submitted to the learned any remarks upon this subject. Jacob's age at the time of his going to Laban, has (till very lately) been fixed, perhaps universally, at seventy-seven years. But I think it has been shown by the learned Mr. Skinner, in an excellent dissertation, (4to. 1765,) that the number seventy-seven cannot here be right.

“Jacob was one hundred and thirty when he went down (with sixty-six persons) into Egypt. Joseph had then been governor ten years; and when made governor was thirty; therefore Jacob could not be more than ninety at the birth of Joseph. Now, upon supposition that Jacob was seventy-seven at going to Laban, and that he had no son till he was eighty-five, and that he, with eleven sons, left Laban at ninety-seven, there will follow these amongst other strange consequences which are enumerated by Mr. Skinner page 11, etc.:

1. Though Isaac and Esau married at forty, Jacob goes at seventy-seven to look for a wife, and agrees to marry her seven years after.
2. Issachar is born after the affair of the mandrakes, which Reuben finds and brings home when he (Reuben) was about four years old; that is, if Issachar was born before Joseph, agreeably to Genesis 30:18, 25.
3. Judah begets Er at thirteen; for in the first of the following tables Judah is born in Jacob's year eighty-eight, and Er in one hundred and two.

4. Er marries at nine, and is destroyed for profligacy. Er, born one hundred and two, marries in one hundred and eleven. See also Genesis 38:7.

5. Onan marries at eight; for Onan, born in one hundred and three, marries in one hundred and eleven.

6. Shelah, being grown at ten, ought to be married; for Shelah, born in one hundred and four, is marriageable, but not married to Tamar in one hundred and fourteen. See Genesis 38:14.

7. Pharez kept from marrying while young, yet has a son at thirteen; for Pharez, born in one hundred and fifteen, had two sons at going to Egypt in one hundred and thirty.

8. Esau goes to Ishmael and marries his daughter, after Jacob went to Laban at seventy-seven; though Ishmael died when Jacob was sixty-three.

9. If Jacob had no son till he was eighty-five, and if Joseph was born when his father was ninety, then the eleven sons and Dinah were born in five years.

Lastly, if Jacob had no son till eighty-five, and he went to Egypt at one hundred and thirty, with sixty-six persons, only forty-five years are allowed for his family; whereas the larger sum of sixty-five years seems necessary for the births of so many children and grandchildren. On this subject Leviticus Clerc has pronounced, *Hisce in rebus occurrunt nodi, quos nemo hactenus solvit; neque porro, ut opinor, solvet.* There are difficulties here which have never been explained, and in my opinion never can be explained. But upon the single principle of Mr. Skinner, that Jacob went to Laban at fifty-seven, (instead of seventy-seven,) these difficulties are solved. And it only remains to wish that some authority may be found to support this conjecture, thus strongly founded on the *exigentia loci*. The common opinion is formed by reckoning back from the age of Joseph, when governor of Egypt, to the time of his birth, and from the twenty years which Jacob was with Laban. This number, Mr. Skinner thinks, was originally forty; and I think that the Hebrew text as it now stands confirms the conjecture, and furnishes the very authority which is so much wanted.

“After Jacob had served Laban fourteen years for his two wives, where was Jacob to reside? Esau was still living; and Jacob might well be afraid of

returning to him, till more years of absence had disarmed his resentment; and had the death of Esau happened, Jacob would then have been secure. But let us also remember that Isaac was still alive, and that Esau had determined to kill Jacob whenever their father should die. It would therefore be no wonder if Jacob should have desired to continue longer in Haran. And to carry this point more effectually, he might offer to take care of Laban's cattle, and to live in his neighborhood, upon such terms of advantage to Laban as could not easily be withstood. Lastly, when the good effects to Laban from this connection had been experienced, without profit, nay with some losses, to Jacob, for twenty years, Jacob might naturally grow tired of thus assisting Laban without providing for his own growing family. Accordingly we find that Jacob covenants with Laban for six years of more close attendance and service in Laban's own house, for which the wages were expressly settled. Agreeable to the preceding possibilities seems to have been the fact, Jacob living in Haran forty years, and in this manner:- 14 years in Laban's house, a covenant servant for his wives. 20 in Laban's neighborhood, as a friend. 6 in Laban's house, a covenant servant for cattle. 40 "Now the twenty concurrent years of neighbourly assistance, and the disjointed twenty of covenant service, seem both of them distinguished in the history itself. For upon Laban's pursuit of Jacob he mentions twenty years twice; which two sets of twenty, if really different, make forty. Each mention of the twenty years is introduced with the word זֶה zeh, which word, when repeated, is used by way of distinction; as when we say, this and that, the one or the other. Thus, Exodus 14:20: So that the one came not near the other. Ecclesiastes 6:5: This hath more rest than the other. And with the two words at a great distance, Job 21:23: One dieth; Job 21:25; and another dieth, etc. So here, in Genesis 31:38, Jacob says to Laban, **זֶה עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה אֲנֹכִי עִמָּךְ** zeh esrim shanah anochi immach, during the ONE set of twenty years I was with thee, etc.; meaning the time in which he lived, not in Laban's house, but in his neighborhood; not as a servant, but a friend; after he had served in Laban's house fourteen years for his daughters, and before he served six years for his cattle. But then, as to the other twenty, he tells Laban, at Genesis 31:41, varying the phrase very remarkably **עַבְדְּתִיךָ זֶה לִי עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה בְּבֵיתְךָ** zeh li esrim shanah bebeithecha abadticha, during the other twenty years (לִי li) FOR MYSELF (for my own benefit) IN THY

HOUSE; I served thee fourteen years, and six years, etc. And during this last period, though only six years, he charges Laban with changing his wages ten times. So that Jacob insists upon having well earned his wages through the twenty years when he served for hire; but he makes a far greater merit of having, for another twenty years, assisted him without wages, and even with some losses; and therefore, with particular propriety, he reminds Laban of that set of twenty years in the first place.

The following Tables, taken chiefly from Mr. Skinner, will greatly elucidate the true chronology of Jacob:

TABLE 1. — On Jacob's being at Haran only twenty years.

0	Jacob (and Esau) born.	
40	Esau marries two wives, Hittites	Genesis 26:34.
63	Ishmael dies, aged 137	Genesis 25:17.
77	Jacob goes to Haran.	
84	marries Leah and Rachel	Genesis 29:20, 21, 27,
28.		
85	REUBEN born of Leah	
86	SIMEON do	Genesis 29:32-35.
87	LEVI do.	
88	JUDAH do.	
89	Dan born of Bilhah	
	Naphtali do.	
	Gad born of Zilpah	
	Asher do.	Genesis 30:6-24.
	ISSACHAR born of Leah	
	ZEBULUN and Dinah do.	
91	JOSEPH born of Rachel	
97	Jacob returns from Haran.	
98	dwells in Succoth.	
99	comes to Shalem, and continues there eight years	
101	Judah marries Shuah's daughter.	
102	Er born,-103 Onan,-104 Shelah.	
106	Shechemites destroyed by Simeon and Levi.	
107	BENJAMIN is born, and Rachel dies	
108	Joseph sold when seventeen	Genesis 37:2.

111 Tamar married to Er, and immediately afterwards to Onan.	
114 Tamar's incest with Judah.	
115 Pharez and Zarah born to Judah.	
120 Isaac dies, aged 180	Genesis 35:28.
121 Joseph is made governor of Egypt	Genesis 41:46.
130 Jacob goes into Egypt	Genesis 47:9.
147 and dies.	Genesis 47:28; 49:33.

TABLE 2. — On Jacob's being at Haran forty years.

0 Jacob (and Esau) born.	
40 Esau marries two wives, Hittites	Genesis 26:34. 1
57 Jacob goes to Haran.	
58 Esau goes to Ishmael, and marries his daughter.	Genesis 28:9.
63 Ishmael dies, aged 137	Genesis 25:17.
64 Jacob marries Leah and Rachel	Genesis 29:20, 21, 27,
28.	
65 Reuben born of Leah	
66 Simeon do.	Genesis 29:32-35.
67 Levi do.	
68 Judah do. Rachel, not bearing, gives Bilhah	
69 Dan born of Bilhah	
71 Naphtali do. Leah, not bearing, gives Zilpah	Genesis 30:6-24.
72 Gad born of Zilpah	
74 Asher do.	
78 Reuben at 13 finds the mandrakes	
79 Issachar born of Leah	
81 Zebulun do.	
82 Dinah	
86 Judah at 18 marries Shuah's daughter.	
87 Er born,-88 Onan,-89 Shelah.	
91 Joseph born of Rachel.	
97 Jacob comes from Haran to Succoth and Shalem.	
Dinah defiled, and the Shechemites destroyed.	
98 Benjamin is born, and Rachel dies.	

- 103 Beriah, fourth son of Asher, born.
 105 Tamar married to Er-106 to Onan.
 108 Joseph, at seventeen, is carried into Egypt. Genesis 37:2.
 109 Shelah, at twenty, not given to Tamar.
 110 Pharez and Zarah born of Tamar, by Judah.
 120 Isaac dies, aged 180 Genesis 35:28.
 121 Joseph, at thirty, governor of Egypt Genesis 41:46.
 123 Beriah, at twenty, marries.
 125 Heber-127 Malchiel-born to Beriah.
 128 Pharez, at eighteen, marries.
 129 Hezron-130 Hamul-born to Pharez.
 130 Benjamin, at thirty-two, has ten sons.
 Jacob goes to Egypt Genesis 47:9.
 147 and dies Genesis 47:28; 49:33.

* Not placed in order of time, Genesis 38. 57-71 = 14 years' service. 72-91 = 20 years' assistance. "Our translation now is, Genesis 31:38: THIS TWENTY YEARS HAVE I BEEN WITH THEE; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. Genesis 31:39. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Genesis 31:40. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Genesis 31:41. THUS HAVE I BEEN TWENTY YEARS IN THY HOUSE: I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle; and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

"The alteration here recommended is this, Genesis 31:38: DURING THE ONE TWENTY YEARS I WAS WITH THEE; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams, etc., etc. Genesis 31:41. DURING THE OTHER TWENTY YEARS FOR MYSELF, IN THY HOUSE, I served, etc. The same distinction is expressed in Genesis 30:29: Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me; i.e., how I behaved during the time I was with thee as thy servant, and how thy cattle fared during the time they were with me as thy friend.

"It must not be omitted that Archbishop Usher and Bishop Lloyd ascribe sons to Jacob very soon after his coming to Laban; nay, assert that he was

married almost as soon as he came to Haran, instead of waiting seven years, as he most evidently did. And Mr. Jackson allows that some of the sons of Benjamin, who are expressly numbered as going into Egypt with Jacob, might be born in Egypt! From such distresses, and such contradictions, does the distinction of two sets of twenty years happily deliver us,”

*Hoc temporis intervallo nemo concipere
poterit tot res contingere potuisse. SPINOSA.*

*In such a short space of time, it is impossible
that so many transactions could have taken place.*

I shall leave this subject with chronologers and critics, and shall not attempt to decide on either opinion. That of Dr. Kennicott I think the most likely, and to it I have adapted the chronology in those cases to which it relates; but there are difficulties in both cases. See Clarke on “Genesis 38:1”.

CHAPTER 32

Jacob, proceeding on his Journey, is met by the angels of God, 1, 2. Sends messengers before him to his brother Esau, requesting to be favourably received, 3-5. The messengers return without an answer, but with the intelligence that Esau, with four hundred men, was coming to meet Jacob, 6. He is greatly alarmed, and adopts prudent means for the safety of himself and family, 7, 8. His affecting prayer to God, 9-12. Prepares a present of five droves of different cattle for his brother, 13-15. Sends them forward before him, at a certain distance from each other, and instructs the drivers what to say when met by Esau, 15-20. Sends his wives, servants, children and baggage, over the brook Jabbok, by night, 21-23. Himself stays behind, and wrestles with an angel until the break of day, 24. He prevails and gets a new name, 25-29. Calls the name of the place Peniel, 30. Is lame in his thigh in consequence of his wrestling with the angel, 31, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. *The angels of God met him.*— Our word angel comes from the Greek αγγελος *aggelos*, which literally signifies a messenger; or, as translated in some of our old Bibles, a tidings-bringer. The Hebrew word מלאך *malach*, from לאך *laach*, to send, minister to, employ, is nearly of the same import; and hence we may see the propriety of St. Augustine's remark: *Nomen non naturae sed officii*, "It is a name, not of nature, but of office;" and hence it is applied indifferently to a human agent or messenger, 2 Samuel 2:5; to a prophet, Haggai 1:13; to a priest, Malachi 2:7; to celestial spirits, Psalm 103:19, 20, 22; 104:4. "We often," says Mr. Parkhurst, "read of the יהוה מלאך *malach Yehovah*, or מלאכי אלהים *malakey Elohim*, the angel of Jehovah, or the angels of God, that is, his agent, personator, mean of visibility or action, what was employed by God to render himself visible and approachable by flesh and blood." This angel was evidently a human form, surrounded or accompanied by light or glory, with or in which Jehovah was present; see Genesis 19:1, 12, 16;

Judges 13:6, 21; Exodus 3:2, 6. “By this vision,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “God confirmed Jacob’s faith in him who commanded his angels to keep his people in all their ways, Psalm 91:11. Angels are here called God’s host, camp, or army, as in wars; for angels are God’s soldiers, Luke 2:13; horses and chariots of fire, 2 Kings 2:11; fighting for God’s people against their enemies, Daniel 10:20; of them there are thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, Daniel 7:10; and they are all sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation, Hebrews 1:14; and they pitch a camp about them that fear God, Psalm 34:7.” One of the oldest of the Greek poets had a tolerably correct notion of the angelic ministry:—

αυταρ επειπεν τουτο γενος κατα γαια καλυπεν
 τοι μεν δαιμονες εισι, διος μεγαλου δια βουλας,
 εσθλοι, επιχθονιοι, φυλακες θνητων ανθρωπων. κ. τ. λ.

HESIOD. Op. & Dies, l. i., ver. 120.

When in the grave this race of men was laid, Soon was a world of holy demons made, Aerial spirits, by great Jove design’d To be on earth the guardians of mankind. Invisible to mortal eyes they go, And mark our actions good or bad below; The immortal spies with watchful care preside, And thrice ten thousand round their charges glide: They can reward with glory or with gold, A power they by Divine permission hold. COOKE.

Verse 2. Mahanaim.— The two hosts, if read by the points, the angels forming one, and Jacob and his company forming another; or simply hosts or camps in the plural. There was a city built afterwards here, and inhabited by the priests of God, Joshua 21:38. For what purpose the angels of God met Jacob, does not appear from the text; probably it was intended to show him that he and his company were under the care of an especial providence, and consequently to confirm his trust and confidence in God.

The doctrine of the ministration of angels has been much abused, not only among the heathens, but also among Jews and Christians, and perhaps most among the latter. Angels with feigned names, titles, and influences, have been and still are invoked and worshipped by a certain class of men; because they have found that God has been pleased to employ them to minister to mankind; and hence they have made supplications to them to

extend their protection, to shield, defend, instruct, etc. This is perfectly absurd. 1. They are God's instruments, not self-determining agents. 2. They can only do what they are appointed to perform, for there is no evidence that they have any discretionary power. 3. God helps man by ten thousand means and instruments; some intellectual, as angels; some rational, as men; some irrational, as brutes; and some merely material, as the sun, wind, rain, food, raiment, and the various productions of the earth. He therefore helps by whom he will help, and to him alone belongs all the glory; for should he be determined to destroy, all these instruments collectively could not save. Instead therefore of worshipping them, we should take their own advice: See thou do it not—Worship God.

Verse 3. *Jacob sent messengers*— מַלְאָכִים malachim, the same word which is before translated angels. It is very likely that these messengers had been sent some time before he had this vision at Mahanaim, for they appear to have returned while Jacob encamped at the brook Jabbok, where he had the vision of angels; see Genesis 32:6, 23.

The land of Seir, the country of Edom.— This land, which was, according to Dr. Wells, situated on the south of the Dead Sea, extending from thence to the Arabian Gulf, 1 Kings 9:26, was formerly possessed by the Horites, Genesis 14:6; but Esau with his children drove them out, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead, Deuteronomy 2:22; and thither Esau went from the face of his brother Jacob, Genesis 36:6, 7. Thus we find he verified the prediction, By thy sword shalt thou live, Genesis 27:40.

Verse 4. *Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau*— Jacob acknowledges the superiority of his brother; for the time was not yet come in which it could be said, The elder shall serve the younger.

Verse 6. *Esau cometh and four hundred men with him.*— Jacob, conscious that he had injured his brother, was now apprehensive that he was coming with hostile intentions, and that he had every evil to fear from his displeasure. Conscience is a terrible accuser. It was a fine saying of a heathen,

_____ Ηιχ μυρυσ απηνευσ εστο,
Νιλ χονσχιρε σιβι, νυλλα παλλεσχερε χυλπα.

*Be this thy brazen bulwark of defense,
Still to preserve thy conscious innocence,
Nor e'er turn pale with guilt.*

FRANCIS.

In other words, He that has a good conscience has a brazen wall for his defense; for a guilty conscience needs no accuser; sooner or later it will tell the truth, and not only make the man turn pale who has it, but also cause him to tremble even while his guilt is known only to himself and God.

It does not appear that Esau in this meeting had any hostile intention, but was really coming with a part of his servants or tribe to do his brother honor. If he had had any contrary intention, God had removed it; and the angelic host which Jacob met with before might have inspired him with sufficient confidence in God's protection. But we find that when he needed faith most, he appears to have derived but little benefit from its influence, partly from the sense he had of the injury he had done to his brother, and partly from not attending sufficiently to the assurance which God had given him of his gracious protection.

Verse 7. *He divided the people, etc.*— His prudence and cunning were now turned into a right channel, for he took the most effectual method to appease his brother, had he been irritated, and save at least a part of his family. This dividing and arranging of his flocks, family, and domestics, has something in it highly characteristic. To such a man as Jacob such expedients would naturally present themselves.

Verse 9. *O God of my father Abraham, etc.*— This prayer is remarkable for its simplicity and energy; and it is a model too for prayer, of which it contains the essential constituents:- 1. Deep self-abasement. 2. Magnification of God's mercy. 3. Deprecation of the evil to which he was exposed. 4. Pleading the promises that God had made to him. And, 5. Taking encouragement from what God had already wrought.

Verse 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies*— The marginal reading is more consistent with the original: **ומכל האמת קטנתי מכל החסדים** katonti miccol hachasadim umiccol haemeth, I am less than all the compassions, and than all the faithfulness, which thou hast showed

unto thy servant. Probably St Paul had his eye on this passage when he wrote, Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints. A man who sees himself in the light of God will ever feel that he has no good but what he has received, and that he deserves nothing of all that he has. The archangels of God cannot use a different language, and even the spirits of just men consummated in their plenitude of bliss, cannot make a higher boast.

For with my staff— i.e., myself alone, without any attendants, as the Chaldee has properly rendered it.

Verse 11. *And the mother with the children.*— He must have had an awful opinion of his brother when he used this expression, which implies the utmost cruelty, proceeding in the work of slaughter to total extermination. See Hosea 10:14.

Verse 12. *Make thy seed as the sand*— Having come to the promise by which the covenant was ratified both to Abraham and Isaac, he ceased, his faith having gained strong confirmation in a promise which he knew could not fail, and which he found was made over to him, as it had been to his father and grandfather.

Verse 13. *And took of that which came to his hand*— **הבא בידו** habba beyado, which came under his hand, i.e., what, in the course of God's providence, came under his power.

Verse 14. *Two hundred she-goats, etc.*— This was a princely present, and such as was sufficient to have compensated Esau for any kind of temporal loss he might have sustained in being deprived of his birthright and blessing. The thirty milch camels were particularly valuable, for milch camels among the Arabs constitute a principal part of their riches, the creature being every way so serviceable that the providence of God appears peculiarly kind and wise in providing such a beast for those countries where no other animal could be of equal service. "The she-camel gives milk continually, not ceasing till great with young; the milk of which," as Pliny has remarked, "when mixed with three parts of water, affords the most pleasant and wholesome beverage." *Cameli lac habent, donec iterum gravescant, suavissimumque hoc existimatur, ad unam mensuram tribus aquae additis.* — *Hist. Nat.*, lib. 11., chap. 41.

Verse 15. *Ten bulls*— The Syriac and Vulgate have twenty; but ten is a sufficient proportion to the forty kine. By all this we see that Jacob was led to make restitution for the injury he had done to his brother. Restitution for injuries done to man is essentially requisite if in our power. He who can and will not make restitution for the wrongs he has done, can have no claim even on the mercy of God.

Verse 22. *Passed over the ford Jabbok.*— This brook or rivulet rises in the mountains of Galaad, and falls into the Jordan at the south extremity of the lake of Gennesaret.

Verse 24. *And there wrestled a man with him*— This was doubtless the Lord Jesus Christ, who, among the patriarchs, assumed that human form, which in the fullness of time he really took of a woman, and in which he dwelt thirty-three years among men. He is here styled an angel, because he was *μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος*, (see the Septuagint, Isaiah 9:7,) the Messenger of the great counsel or design to redeem fallen man from death, and bring him to eternal glory; see Genesis 16:7.

But it may be asked, Had he here a real human body, or only its form? The latter, doubtless. How then could he wrestle with Jacob? It need not be supposed that this angel must have assumed a human body, or something analagous to it, in order to render himself tangible by Jacob; for as the soul operates on the body by the order of God, so could an angel operate on the body of Jacob during a whole night, and produce in his imagination, by the effect of his power, every requisite idea of corporeity, and in his nerves every sensation of substance, and yet no substantiality be in the case.

If angels, in appearing to men, borrow human bodies, as is thought, how can it be supposed that with such gross substances they can disappear in a moment? Certainly they do not take these bodies into the invisible world with them, and the established laws of matter and motion require a gradual disappearing, however swiftly it may be effected. But this is not allowed to be the case, and yet they are reported to vanish instantaneously. Then they must render themselves invisible by a cloud, and this must be of a very dense nature in order to hide a human body. But this very expedient would make their departure still more evident, as the cloud must be more dense and apparent than the body in order to hide it. This does not remove the difficulty. But if they assume a quantity of air or vapor so condensed

as to become visible, and modified into the appearance of a human body, they can in a moment dilate and rarefy it, and so disappear; for when the vehicle is rarefied beyond the power of natural vision, as their own substance is invisible they can instantly vanish.

From Hosea 12:4, we may learn that the wrestling of Jacob, mentioned in this place, was not merely a corporeal exercise, but also a spiritual one; He wept and made supplication unto him. See the notes there. See Clarke on “Hosea 12:4”.

Verse 25. *The hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint*— What this implies is difficult to find out; it is not likely that it was complete luxation of the thigh bone. It may mean no more than he received a stroke on the groin, not a touch; for the Hebrew word נגע naga often signifies to smite with violence, which stroke, even if comparatively slight, would effectually disable him for a time, and cause him to halt for many hours, if not for several days. I might add that in this place—the groin, a blow might be of fatal consequence; but as the angel gave it only as a proof of his power, and to show that he could not prevail because he would not, hence the blow was only disabling, without being dangerous; and he was probably cured by the time the sun arose.

Verse 26. *Let me go, for the day breaketh*— Probably meaning, that as it was now morning, Jacob must rejoin his wives and children, and proceed on their journey. Though phantoms are supposed to disappear when the sun rises, that could be no reason in this case. Most of the angelic appearances mentioned in the Old and New Testaments took place in open day, which put their reality out of question.

Verse 28. *Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel*— וִישְׂרָאֵל Yisrael, from שר sar, a prince, or שרה sarah, he ruled as a prince, and אֵל el, God; or rather from אִישׁ ish, a man, (the א aleph being dropped,) and רָאָה raah, he saw, אֵל el, God; and this corresponds with the name which Jacob imposed on the place, calling it פְּנֵי־אֵל peniel, the faces of God, or of Elohim, which faces being manifested to him caused him to say, Genesis 32:30, רָאִיתִי אֱלֹהִים פְּנִים אֶל פְּנִים raithi Elohim panim el panim, i.e., “I have seen the Elohim faces to faces, (i.e., fully and completely, without any medium,) נַפְשִׁי וְתַנְצֵל vattinnatsel napshi, and my soul is redeemed.”

We may learn from this that the redemption of the soul will be the blessed consequence of wrestling by prayer and supplication with God: “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” From this time Jacob became a new man; but it was not till after a severe struggle that he got his name, his heart, and his character changed. After this he was no more Jacob the supplanter, but Israel — the man who prevails with God, and sees him face to face.

And hast prevailed.— More literally, Thou hast had power with God, and with man thou shalt also prevail. **עַם אֱלֹהִים** Im Elohim, with the strong God; **עַם אַנְשִׁים** im anashim, with weak, feeble man. There is a beautiful opposition here between the two words: Seeing thou hast been powerful with the Almighty, surely thou shalt prevail over perishing mortals; as thou hast prevailed with God, thou shalt also prevail with men: God calling the things that were not as though they had already taken place, because the prevalency of this people, the Israelites, by means of the Messiah, who should proceed from them, was already determined in the Divine counsel. He has never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain. He who wrestles must prevail.

Verse 29. Tell me, I pray thee, thy name.— It is very likely that Jacob wished to know the name of this angel, that he might invoke him in his necessities: but this might have led him into idolatry, for the doctrine of the incarnation could be but little understood at this time; hence, he refuses to give himself any name, yet shows himself to be the true God, and so Jacob understood him; (see Genesis 32:28;) but he wished to have heard from his own lips that name by which he desired to be invoked and worshipped.

Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?— Canst thou be ignorant who I am? And he blessed him there — gave him the new heart and the new nature which God alone can give to fallen man, and by the change he wrought in him, sufficiently showed who he was. After this clause the Aldine edition of the Septuagint, and several MSS., add **δ εστι θαυμαστον**, or **και τουτο εστι θαυμαστον**, which is wonderful; but this addition seems to have been taken from Judges 13:18.

Verse 31. *The sun rose upon him*— Did the Prophet Malachi refer to this, Malachi 4:2: Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings? Possibly with the rising of the sun, which may here be understood as emblematical of the Sun of righteousness — the Lord Jesus, the pain and weakness of his thigh passed away, and he felt both in soul and body that he was healed of his plagues.

Verse 32. *Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew*— What this sinew was neither Jew nor Christian can tell; and it can add nothing either to science, or to a true understanding of the text, to multiply conjectures. I have already supposed that the part which the angel touched or struck was the groin; and if this be right, the sinew, nerve, or muscle that shrank, must be sought for in that place.

THE serious reader must meet with much instruction in this chapter.

1. After his reconciliation with Laban, Jacob proceeds on his way to Canaan; and as God, who was continually watching for his welfare, saw the trials to which he would shortly be exposed, therefore he provided for him the instructive vision of angels, that he might see that those who were for him were more than those who could be against him. A proper consideration of God's omniscience is of the utmost advantage to every genuine Christian. He knows whereof we are made, he remembers that we are but dust, he sees our trials and difficulties, and his eye affects his heart. Hence he is ever devising means that his banished-be not expelled from him.

2. Jacob's recollection of his unkindness and injustice to his brother, when he hears that he is coming to meet him, fills his soul with fear, and obliges him to betake himself to God by prayer and supplication. How important is the office of conscience! And how necessary are times of trial and difficulty when its voice is loudest, and the heart is best prepared to receive its reproofs! In how many cases has conscience slumbered till it pleased God to send some trial by which it has been powerfully awakened, and the salvation of the sinner was the result! Before I was afflicted I went astray.

3. Though salvation be the free gift of God, yet he gives it not to any who do not earnestly seek it. The deeper the conviction of guilt and

helplessness is, the more earnest the application to God for mercy is likely to be. They whose salvation costs them strong crying and tears, are not likely (humanly speaking) to part with it lightly; they remember the vinegar and the gall, and they watch and pray that they enter not into temptation.

4. In the strife and agony requisite to enter in at the strait gate, it is highly necessary that we should know that the grace and salvation of God are not purchased by our tears, etc.; for those things which are only proofs and arguments that we have sinned, can never remove the iniquity of our transgressions. A sensible and pious man observes on this subject, "That prayer and wrestling with God should be made as though no other means were to be practiced, and then the best means be adopted as though no prayer or wrestling had been used." God marks even this strife, though highly pleasing in his sight, with such proofs of its own utter insufficiency, that we may carry about with us the memorial of our own weakness, worthlessness, and slowness of heart to believe. God smote the thigh of Jacob, 1. That he might know he had not prevailed by his own strength, but by the power and mercy of his God. 2. That he might, have the most sensible evidence of the reality of the Divine interposition in his behalf. 3. That he might see God's displeasure against his unbelief. And 4. That men in general might be taught that those who will be the disciples of Christ must deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and mortify their members which are upon the earth. Those who have not cut off a right hand or foot, or plucked out a right eye, for the kingdom of heaven's sake, are never likely to see God. The religion that costs us nothing, is to us worth nothing.

CHAPTER 33

Esau, with four hundred men, meets Jacob, 1. He places his children under their respective mothers, passes over before them, and bows himself to his brother, 2, 3. Esau receives him with great affection, 4. Receives the homage of the handmaids, Leah, Rachel, and their children, 5-7. Jacob offers him the present of cattle, which he at first refuses, but after much entreaty accepts, 8-11. Invites Jacob to accompany him to Mount Seir, 12. Jacob excuses himself because of his flocks and his children, but promises to follow him, 13, 14. Esau offers to leave him some of his attendants, which Jacob declines, 15. Esau returns to Seir, 16, and Jacob journeys to Succoth, 17, and to Shalem, in the land of Canaan, 18. Buys a parcel of ground from the children of Hamor, 19, and erects an altar which he calls El-elohe-Israel, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 1. *Behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men.*— It has been generally supposed that Esau came with an intention to destroy his brother, and for that purpose brought with him four hundred armed men. But, 1. There is no kind of evidence of this pretended hostility. 2. There is no proof that the four hundred men that Esau brought with him were at all armed. 3. But there is every proof that he acted towards his brother Jacob with all openness and candour, and with such a forgetfulness of past injuries as none but a great mind could have been capable of. Why then should the character of this man be perpetually vilified? Here is the secret. With some people, on the most ungrounded assumption, Esau is a reprobate, and the type and figure of all reprobates, and therefore he must be everything that is bad. This serves a system; but, whether true or false in itself, it has neither countenance nor support from the character or conduct of Esau.

Verse 2. *He put the handmaids and their children foremost*— There is something so artificial in this arrangement of Jacob's family, that it must have had some peculiar design. Was Jacob still apprehensive of danger, and

put those foremost whom he least esteemed, that if the foremost met with any evil, those who were behind might escape on their swift beasts? Genesis 32:7, 8. Or did he intend to keep his choicest treasure to the last, and exhibit his beautiful Rachel and favourite Joseph after Esau had seen all the rest, in order to make the deeper impression on his mind?

Verse 4. *Esau ran to meet him*— How sincere and genuine is this conduct of Esau, and at the same time how magnanimous! He had buried all his resentment, and forgotten all his injuries; and receives his brother with the strongest demonstrations, not only of forgiveness, but of fraternal affection.

And kissed him— וישקדו valyishshakehu. In the Masoretic Bibles each letter of this word is noted with a point over it to make it emphatic. And by this kind of notation the rabbins wished to draw the attention of the reader to the change that had taken place in Esau, and the sincerity with which he received his brother Jacob. A Hindoo when he meets a friend after absence throws his arms round him, and his head across his shoulders, twice over the right shoulder and once over the left, with other ceremonies according to the rank of the parties.

Verse 10. *Receive my present at my hand*— Jacob could not be certain that he had found favor with Esau, unless the present had been received; for in accepting it Esau necessarily became his friend, according to the custom of those times, and in that country. In the eastern countries, if your present be received by your superior, you may rely on his friendship; if it be not received, you have every thing to fear. It is on this ground that Jacob was so urgent with Esau to receive his present, because he knew that after this he must treat him as a friend.

Verse 14. *Until I come unto my lord unto Seir.*— It is very likely that Jacob was perfectly sincere in his expressed purpose of visiting Esau at Seir, but it is as likely that circumstances afterwards occurred that rendered it either improper or impracticable; and we find that Esau afterwards removed to Canaan, and he and Jacob dwelt there together for several years. See Genesis 36:6.

Verse 17. *Journeyed to Succoth*— So called from סכת succoth, the booths or tents which Jacob erected there for the resting and convenience

of his family, who in all probability continued there for some considerable time.

Verse 18. *And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem*— The word שָׁלֵם shalem, in the Samaritan שְׁלוֹם shalom, should be translated here in peace, or in safety. After resting some time at Succoth, which was necessary for the safety of his flocks and the comfort of his family, he got safely to a city of Shechem, in health of body, without any loss of his cattle or servants, his wives and children being also in safety. Coverdale and Matthews translate this word as above, and with them agree the Chaldee and the Arabic: it is not likely to have been the name of a city, as it is nowhere else to be found. Shechem is called in Acts 7:16, Sychem, and in John 4:5, Sychar; in the Arabic it is called Nablous, and to the present day Neapolis. It was near to Samaria; and the place where the wretched remains of the sect of the Samaritans were lately found, from whom Dr. Huntington received a perfect copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

Verse 19. *For a hundred pieces of money*.— The original, קְשִׁיטָה בְּמֵאָה bemeah kesitah, has been a matter of long and learned discussion among critics. As kesitah signifies a lamb, it may imply that Jacob gave the Hamorites one hundred lambs for the field; but if it be the same transaction that St. Stephen refers to in Acts 7:16, it was money, *τιμης αργυριον*, a sum or price of silver, which was given on the occasion. It has been conjectured that the money had the figure of a lamb stamped on it, because it was on an average the value of a lamb; and hence it might be called a kesitah or lamb from the impression it bore. It is certain that in many countries the coin has had its name from the image it bore; so among our ancestors a coin was called an angel because it bore the image of an angel; hence also a Jacobus, a Carolus, a Lewis, (Louis d' Or,) a Joe, because certain coins in England, Spain, France, and Portugal, bore on one side the image of the kings of those countries, James, Charles, Lewis, Joseph, or Johannes. The Athenians had a coin called bouv, an ox, because it was stamped with the figure of an ox. Hence the saying in AEschylus:

τα δ' αλλα σιγω, βους επι γλωττης
μεγας βεβηκεν AGAM. v. 36.

“I must be silent concerning other matters, a great ox has come upon my tongue;” to signify a person who had received a bribe for secrecy, i.e., a sum of money, on each piece of which an ox was stamped, and hence called **βοῦς**, an ox. The word opes, riches, is a corruption of the word oves, sheep, because these animals in ancient times constituted the principal riches of their owners; but when other cattle were added, the word pecunia, (from pecus, cattle,) which we translate money, and from which we still have our English term pecuniary, appears to have been substituted for oves, because pecus, pecoris, and pecus, pecudis, were used to signify all kinds of cattle large and small. Among our British and Saxon ancestors we find coins stamped with the figure of an ox, horse, hog, goat, etc., and this custom arose in all probability, both among them and other nations, from this circumstance, that in primitive times the coin was the ordinary value of the animal whose image it bore. It is, all circumstances weighed, most likely that a piece of money is here intended, and possibly marked with the image of a lamb; but as the original word **קְשִׁיטָה** kesitah occurs only here, and in Joshua 24:32, and Job 42:11, this is not sufficiently evident, the word itself being of very doubtful signification. Mr. Parkhurst is of opinion that the kesitah bore the image of a lamb; and that these lamb coins of the ancient Hebrews typified the Lamb of God, who in the Divine purpose was considered as slain from the foundation of the world, and who purchased us unto God with his own blood. The conjecture is at least pious, and should lead to useful reflections. Those who wish to see more on this subject may consult the writers in the *Critici Sacri*, and *Calmet*.

Verse 20. And he erected there an altar— It appears that Jacob had a very correct notion of the providence and mercy of God; hence he says, Genesis 33:5: The children which God hath GRACIOUSLY given thy servant; and in Genesis 33:11 he attributes all his substance to the bounty of his Maker: Take, I pray thee, my blessing—because God hath dealt GRACIOUSLY with me, and because I have enough. Hence he viewed God as the God of all grace, and to him he erects an altar, dedicating it to God, the God of Israel, referring particularly to the change of his own name, and the mercies which he then received; and hence perhaps it would be best to translate the words, The strong God (is) the God of Israel; as by the power of his grace and goodness he had rescued, defended, blessed, and

supported him from his youth up until now. The erecting altars with particular names appears in other places; so, Exodus 17:15, Moses calls his altar Jehovah-nissi, “the Lord is my banner.”

1. WHEN a man’s way’s please God, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. When Jacob had got reconciled to God, God reconciled his brother to him. The hearts of all men are in the hands of God, and he turns them howsoever he will.

2. Since the time in which Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the covenant. We see in him much dependence on God, accompanied with a spirit of deep humility and gratitude. God’s grace alone can change the heart of man, and it is by that grace only that we get a sense of our obligations; this lays us in the dust, and the more we receive the lower we shall lie.

3. “The first thing,” says good Bishop Wilson, “that pious men do, is to provide for the honor and worship of God.” Jacob buys a piece of ground, and erects an altar on it in the land of a heathen, that he might acknowledge God among his enemies, and turn them to the true faith; and there is every reason to believe that this expedient would have been successful, had it not been for the base conduct of his sons. How true is the saying, One sinner spoileth much good! Reader, beware, lest thy conduct should become a stumbling block to any.

CHAPTER 34

Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah, going out to see the daughters of the land, is ravished by Shechem, the son of Hamor, 1, 2. He entreats his father to get her for him to wife, 3. Jacob and his sons hear of the indignity offered to Dinah, 5-7. Hamor proposes the suit of Shechem to Jacob and his sons, and offers them a variety of advantages, 8-10. Shechem himself comes forward, begs to have Dinah to wife, and offers dowry to any extent, 11, 12. The sons of Jacob pretend scruples of conscience to give their sister to one who was uncircumcised; and require, as a condition of this marriage, and of intermarriages in general, that all the Shechemites should be circumcised, 13-17. Hamor and Shechem consent, 18, 19. They lay the business before the elders of their city, dwell on the advantages of a connection with Jacob and his family, and propose to them the condition required by the sons of Jacob, 20-23. The elders consent, and all the males are circumcised, 24. While the Shechemites are incapable of defending themselves, on the third day after their circumcision, Simeon and Levi, the brothers of Dinah, came upon the city, slew all the males, sacked the city, took the women and children captives, and seized on all the cattle belonging to the Shechemites, 25-29. Jacob is greatly displeased and alarmed at this treachery and cruelty of his sons, and lays before them the probable consequences, 30. They endeavor to vindicate their conduct, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 1. *And Dinah-went out to see the daughters of the land.*— It is supposed that Jacob had been now about seven or eight years in the land, and that Dinah, who was about seven years of age when Jacob came to Canaan, was now about fourteen or fifteen. Why or on what occasion she went out we know not, but the reason given by Josephus is very probable, viz., that it was on one of their festivals.

Verse 2. *Prince of the country*— i.e., Hamor was prince; Shechem was the son of the prince or chief. Our version appears to represent Shechem as prince, but his father was the chief of the country. See Genesis 34:6, 8, etc.

Verse 3. *Spake kindly unto the damsel*.— Literally, he spake to the heart of the damsel — endeavored to gain her affections, and to reconcile her to her disgrace. It appears sufficiently evident from this and the preceding verse that there had been no consent on the part of Dinah, that the whole was an act of violence, and that she was now detained by force in the house of Shechem. Here she was found when Simeon and Levi sacked the city, Genesis 34:26.

Verse 7. *He had wrought folly in Israel*— The land, afterwards generally called Israel, was not as yet so named; and the sons of Jacob were neither called Israel, Israelites nor Jews, till long after this. How then can it be said that Shechem had wrought folly in Israel? The words are capable of a more literal translation: **בִּישְׂרָאֵל** beyisrael, may be translated, against Israel.

The angel had said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob — not only Jacob, but Israel. It was this that aggravated the offense of Shechem; he wrought folly against Israel, the prince of God, in lying with the daughter of Jacob. Here both the names are given; Jacob, whose daughter was defiled, and Israel, the prince of God, against whom the offense was committed.

Verse 12. *Ask me never so much dowry*— See Clarke on “Genesis 29:20”, etc. See the law relative to this, Exodus 22:16, 17.

Verse 13. *Answered-deceitfully*— Which nothing could excuse; yet, to show that they had had much provocation, it is immediately subjoined **וַיִּדְבְּרוּ** vaidabberu, they spoke thus because he had defiled Dinah their sister; for so this parenthesis should be read.

Verse 14. *That were a reproach unto us*— Because the uncircumcised were not in the covenant of God; and to have given an heiress of the promise to one who had no kind of right to its spiritual blessings, from whom might spring children who would naturally walk in the way of their father would have been absurd, reproachful and wicked. Thus far they were perfectly right; but to make this holy principle a cloak for their deceitful and murderous purposes, was the full sum of all wickedness.

Verse 17. *Then will we take our daughter, and we will he gone.*— It is natural to suppose that the tribe of Hamor was very inconsiderable, else they would not have sought an alliance with the family of Jacob, and have come so readily into a painful, disgraceful measure, without having either the sanction of Divine authority or reason; for it does not appear that the sons of Jacob urged either. And they are threatened here that if they do not agree to be circumcised, Dinah shall be taken from them, and restored to her family; and this is probably what the Shechemites saw they had not power at present to prevent.

Verse 23. Shall not their cattle and their substance — be ours? This was a bait held out for the poor unsuspecting people of Hamor by their prince and his son, who were not much less deceived than the people themselves.

Verse 24. *Every male was circumcised*— These simple people must have had very great affection for their chief and his son, or have been under the influence of the most passive obedience, to have come so readily into this measure, and to have submitted to this rite. But the petty princes in Asiatic countries have ever been absolute and despotic, their subjects paying them the most prompt and blind obedience. I shall give a few examples from Mr. Richardson's Dissertations.—

“Abu Thaher, chief of the Carmathians, about the year nine hundred and thirty, ravaged the territory of Mecca, defiled the temple, and destroyed nearly 40, 000 people. With only 500 horse he went to lay siege to Bagdad: the caliph's general, at the head of 30, 000 men, marched out to seize him, but before he attacked him he sent an officer to summon him to surrender. ‘How many men has the caliph's general?’ said Abu Thaher. ‘Thirty thousand,’ replied the officer. ‘Among them all,’ says the Carmathian chief, ‘has he got three like mine?’ Then, ordering his followers to approach, he commanded one to stab himself, another to throw himself from a precipice, and a third to plunge into the Tigris; all three instantly obeyed, and perished. Then turning to the officer, he said, ‘He who has such troops needs not value the number of his enemies!’

“Hassan Sabat, one of those petty princes formerly known in Asia and Europe by the title Sheekh-ul-jibel, or old man of the mountain, being required by an ambassador to do homage to his master, the Sultan Malekshah Jelealaddin, without giving any answer, ordered one of his

attendants to poniard himself, and another to leap from the battlements of the tower; and he was instantly obeyed! Then turning to the ambassador, he said, ‘Seventy thousand are thus attentive to my commands. Let this be my answer. On a principle of this kind we may account for the prompt obedience of the people of Hamor.

Verse 25. *On the third day, when they were sore*— When the inflammation was at the height, and a fever ensued which rendered the person utterly helpless, and his state critical, Simeon and Levi, the half brothers of Dinah, took each man his sword, probably assisted by that portion of the servants which helped them to take care of the flock, came on the city boldly, **בטח** betach, securely — without being suspected, and being in no danger of meeting with resistance, and slew all the males. Great as the provocation was, and it certainly was very great, this was an act or unparalleled treachery and cruelty.

Verse 27. *The sons of Jacob*— The rest of Jacob’s sons, the remaining brothers of Simeon and Levi, spoiled the city. Though the others could slay the defenceless males, it was not likely that they could have carried away all the booty, with the women, children, and cattle; it is therefore most natural to suppose that the rest of the sons of Jacob assisted at last in the business.

Verse 30. *Ye have troubled me*— Brought my mind into great distress, and endangered my personal safety; to make me to stink — to render me odious to the surrounding tribes, so that there is every reason to suspect that when this deed is come abroad they will join in a confederacy against me, and extirpate my whole family. And had he not been under the peculiar protection of God, this in all human probability would have been the case; but he had prevailed with God, and he was also to prevail with men. That Jacob’s resentment was not dissembled we have the fullest proof in his depriving these two sons of the birthright, which otherwise they had doubtless enjoyed. See Genesis 49:5, 7, where some additional circumstances are related.

Verse 31. *Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?*— On this outrage alone they vindicated their flagitious conduct. The word harlot first occurs here: the original is not **פילגש** pilegsh, which we render

concubine, (see its explanation Genesis 22:24,) but זונה zonah, which ordinarily signifies one who prostitutes herself to any person for hire. Our word harlot is said to have been derived from a very odd circumstance: Robert, duke of Normandy, seeing a fine-looking country girl dancing with her companions on the green, took her to his bed. She was the daughter of a skinner, and her name was Arlotta; and of her William, surnamed The Conqueror, was born. Hence it is said all such women were from her called harlots, as William himself was usually termed the Bastard. But horelet, the diminutive of whore, is not a less likely derivation.

SOLOMON has very properly said, My son, enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away, Proverbs 4:14, 15. Had not Dinah gone out to see the daughters of the land, and very possibly at one of their idolatrous festivals, she had not suffered the foul disgrace mentioned in this chapter. Not only prudence dictates that young women should keep at home, but God expressly commands it, Titus 2:5. Dinah got among idolaters, and thus partook of their iniquities; and this led to the most base and cruel transaction upon record. How true is the saying, Those who wander out of the way of understanding shall abide in the congregation of the dead! In the case before us blame seems to attach to all parties.

1. It was wrong in Jacob to suffer his daughter, alone and unprotected, to visit the daughters of the land.
2. It was excessively wicked in Shechem to take this advantage of the daughter of a respectable stranger, who had sought his friendship, and came to sojourn among his people, and whose righteous dealing they must have witnessed for at least seven years past. In his behalf we may say, and it would be unjust not to say it, that having done the mischief, and sinned deeply against the laws of hospitality, he wished to make all the reparation in his power; and therefore in the most frank and liberal manner he not only offered, but most pressingly entreated, permission to take Dinah to wife. This was the utmost he could do in such a case. And in this he is a saint of the first order when compared with the noble and ignoble profligates who, while blaspheming the Christian name by continuing to assume it, commit all kinds of breaches on the virtue of simple females,

and the peace of respectable families, and not only make no reparation, but glory in their shame.

3. It was diabolical in Jacob's sons to slay a whole tribe for the offense of one man, and especially as that one had offered to make all the restitution in his power. They required that Hamor, Shechem, and all their subjects should be circumcised before they could conscientiously consent to give their sister to Shechem in marriage. This required conformity was made the cloak of the most base and infamous designs. The simple unsuspecting Shechemites agreed to the proposal; and when rendered by this religious rite incapable of defending themselves, they were basely murdered by Simeon and Levi, and their city destroyed. Jacob, to his great honor, remonstrated against this barbarous and bloody act, committed apparently under the sanction of religion; and God showed his abhorrence of it by directing the patriarch, in his dying moments, to proscribe them from the blessings of the covenant, so that they barely retained a name among the tribes of Israel, being in general small, and ever disreputable, except merely in the service of the sanctuary, in which Levi was employed. How often since, notwithstanding this solemn warning, has the pure and benevolent religion of God been made, by wicked and designing men, a political stalking-horse to serve the basest purposes, and a covert to the worst of crimes! But shall we find fault with the holy religion of the blessed God because wicked men have abused it? God forbid! Were it not so good as it really is, it would be incapable of such abuse. An evil cannot be abused, a good may; and the greater and the more acknowledged the good, the more liable to abuse. As every good is so capable of being abused, does he act wisely who argues against the use of the thing on this account? Shall we say that various kinds of grain, fruits, and aliments are a curse, because wicked men abuse them to the purposes of drunkenness and gluttony? This would argue an utter perversion of all reason: and is it not on such a pretext as this that many persons have ventured to call in question even the truths of Christianity?

Whatever such men may be determined to think on the subject of this chapter, with the unprejudiced reader the ample and detailed relation which we have here of this barbarous transaction will appear an additional proof of the veracity and impartiality of the sacred historian.

CHAPTER 35

Jacob is commanded of God to go to Beth-el, and to build an altar there, 1. His exhortation to his family to put away all strange gods, etc., 2, 3. They deliver them all up, and Jacob hides them in the earth, 4. They commence their journey, 5; come to Luz, 6; build there the altar El-beth-el, 7. Burial place of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, 8. God appears again unto Jacob, 9. Blesses him and renews the promises, 10-13. To commemorate this manifestation of God, Jacob sets up a pillar, and calls the place Beth-el, 14, 15. They journey to Ephrath, where Rachel, after hard labor, is delivered of Benjamin, and dies, 16-19. Jacob sets up a pillar on her grave, 20. They journey to Edar, 21. While at this place, Reuben defiles his father's bed, 22. Account of the children of Jacob, according to the mothers, 23-26. Jacob comes to Mamre to his father Isaac, who was probably then in the one hundred and fifty-eighth year of his age, 27. Isaac dies, and is buried by his sons Esau and Jacob, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 1. Arise, go up to Beth-el— The transaction that had lately taken place rendered it unsafe for Jacob to dwell any longer at the city of Shechem; and it seems that while he was reflecting on the horrible act of Simeon and Levi, and not knowing what to do, God graciously appeared to him, and commanded him to go up to Beth-el, build an altar there, and thus perform the vow he had made, Genesis 28:20, 22.

Verse 2. Put away the strange gods— אֱלֹהֵי הַנֹּכְרִים *elohey hannechar*, the gods of the foreigners, which were among them. Jacob's servants were all Syrians, and no doubt were addicted less or more to idolatry and

superstition. These gods might belong to them, or, as some have conjectured, they were the teraphim which Rachel stole; but these have already been supposed to be astrological tables, or something of this kind, called by Laban his gods, because by them he supposed he could predict future events, and that they referred to certain astral and planetary intelligences, by whose influences sublunary things were regulated. But it is more natural to suppose that these gods found now in Jacob's family were images of silver, gold, or curious workmanship, which were found among the spoils of the city of Shechem. Lest these should become incitements to idolatry, Jacob orders them to be put away.

Be clean, and change your garments— Personal or outward purification, as emblematical of the sanctification of the soul, has been in use among all the true worshippers of God from the beginning of the world. In many cases the law of Moses more solemnly enjoined rites and ceremonies which had been in use from the earliest ages. “A Hindoo considers those clothes defiled in which he has been employed in business, and always changes them before eating and worship.”-WARD.

Verse 3. *Answered me in the day of my distress*— Not only when he fled from the face of his brother, but more particularly when he was in his greatest strait at the brook of Jabbok.

Verse 4. *And-ear-rings which were in their ears*— Whether these rings were in the ears of the gods, or in those of Jacob's family, we may rest assured that they were not mere ornaments, but served for superstitious purposes. Ear-rings were certainly worn as amulets and charms, first consecrated to some god, or formed under some constellation, on which magical characters and images were drawn. A very ancient and beautiful one of this kind brought from Egypt, cut out of a solid piece of cornelian, now lies before me. It was evidently intended for the ear, as the opening is too small for any human finger; and it is engraved all over with strange characters and images, which prove that it was intended for a talisman or amulet. It seems to be such a one as St. Augustine describes, Epist. 73,

which was suspended from the tip of the ears both of men and women, not for the purpose of ornament, but through an execrable superstition, for the service of demons. “Execranda superstitio ligaturarum, in quibus etiam in aures virorum in summis ex una parte auriculis suspensae deputantur, non ad placendum hominibus, sed ad serviendum daemonibus.” See Clarke on “Genesis 24:22”.

Verse 5. *The terror of God*— A supernatural awe sent by the Almighty, was upon the cities that were round about, so that they were not molested in their departure. This could be owing to nothing less than the especial providence of God.

Verse 7. *El-beth-el*— אֱלֹהֵי בֵּית אֱלֹהִים the strong God, the house of the strong God. But the first אֱלֹהִים el is wanting in one of Deuteronomy Rossi’s MSS., as it is also in the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and some copies of the Arabic. The sentence reads much better without it, and much more consistent with the parallel passages.

Verse 8. *But Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died*— She was sent with Rebekah when taken by Abraham’s servant to be wife to Isaac, Genesis 24:59. How she came to be in Jacob’s family, expositors are greatly puzzled to find out; but the text does not state that she was in Jacob’s family. Her death is mentioned merely because Jacob and his family had now arrived at the place where she was buried, and the name of that place was called Allon-bachuth, “the oak of weeping,” as it is likely her death had been greatly regretted, and a general and extraordinary mourning had taken place on the occasion. Of Rebekah’s death we know nothing. After her counsel to her son, Genesis 27:5-17, 42-46, we hear no more of her history from the sacred writings, except of her burial in Genesis 49:31. Her name is written in the dust. And is not this designed as a mark of the disapprobation of God? It seems strange that such an inconsiderable person as a nurse should be mentioned, when even the person she brought up is passed by unnoticed! It has been observed that the nurse of Aeneas

is mentioned nearly in the same way by the poet Virgil; and in the circumstances, in both cases, there is a striking resemblance.

*“Tu quoque littoribus nostris,
 AEneia nutrix, AEternam moriens famam,
 Caleta, dedisti:
 Eet nunc servat honos sedem tunus; ossaque nomen,
 Hesperia in magna, (si qua est en gloria,) signat.
 At pius exequils AEneas rite solutis,
 Aggere composito tumuli, postquam alta quierunt
 AEquora, tendit iter veils, portumque relinquit.”
 AEn., lib. vii., ver. 1, etc.*

*“Thou too, Cajeta, whose indulgent cares
 Nursed the great chief, and form’d his tender years,
 Expiring here (an ever-honor’d name!)
 Adorn Hesperia with immortal fame:
 Thy name survives, to please thy pensive ghost;
 Thy sacred relics grace the Latian coast.
 Soon as her funeral rites the prince had paid,
 And raised a tomb in honor of the dead;
 The sea subsiding, and the tempests o’er,
 He spreads the flying sails, and leaves the shore.”
 PITT.*

Verse 9. God appeared unto Jacob again — He appeared to him first at Shechem, when he commanded him to go to Bethel, and now that he is arrived at the place, God appears to him the second time, and confirms to him the Abrahamic blessing. To Isaac and Jacob these frequent appearances of God were necessary, but they were not so to Abraham; for to him one word was sufficient—Abraham believed God.

Verse 13. And God went up from him — This was not a vision, nor a strong mental impression, but a real manifestation of God. Jacob saw and heard him speak, and before his eyes he went up — ascended to heaven. This was no doubt the future Savior, the Angel of the covenant. See Genesis 16:7.

Verse 14. A drink-offering — נֶסֶח nesech, a libation. These were afterwards very common in all countries. At first they consisted probably of water only, afterwards wine was used; see on Leviticus 7:1, etc. The pillar which Jacob set up was to commemorate the appearance of God to him; the drink-offering and the oil were intended to express his gratitude and devotion to his preserver. It was probably the same pillar which he

had set up before, which had since been thrown down, and which he had consecrated afresh to God.

Verse 16. *There was but a little way to come to Ephrath*— The word **כִּבְרָת** kibrath, translated here a little way, has greatly perplexed commentators. It occurs only here, in Genesis 48:7, and 2 Kings 5:19; and it seems to have been some sort of measure applied to land, as we say a mile, an acre, a rood, a perch; but what the exact quantity of the kibrath was cannot be ascertained. Ephrath, called also Bethlehem, and Bethlehem Ephrata, was the birthplace of our blessed Redeemer. See its meaning Matthew 2:6.

Verse 18. *As her soul was in departing*— Is not this a proof that there is an immortal spirit in man, which can exist separate from and independent of the body? Of Rachel's death it is said, **בְּצֵאת נַפְשָׁהּ** betseth naphshah, in the going away of her soul; her body did not go away, therefore her soul and body must have been distinct. If her breath only had been intended, **נֶשְׁמָה** neshamah or **רוּחַ** ruach would have rather been used, as the first means breath, the latter breath or spirit indifferently.

She called his name Ben-oni— **בְּאֵנִי** the Son of my sorrow or affliction, because of the hard labor she had in bringing him into the world; but his father called him Benjamin, **בְּנֵימִן** the son of my right hand, i.e., the son peculiarly dear to me. So man of the right hand, Psalm 80:17, signifies one much loved and regarded of God. The Samaritan has Benyamin, the son of days; i.e., the son of his old age, as Judah calls him, Genesis 44:20; and Houbigant contends that this is the true reading, and that the Chaldee termination in for im is a corruption. If it be a corruption, it is as old as the days of St. Jerome, who translated the place Benjamin, id est, filius dextrae; Benjamin, that is, the son of the right hand.

Verse 20. *Jacob set a pillar upon her grave*— Was not this the origin of funeral monuments? In ancient times, and among rude nations, a heap of stones designated the burial place of the chief; many of these still remain in different countries. Afterwards a rude stone, with a simple inscription, was used, containing only the name of the deceased, and that of his father. But where arts and sciences flourished, superb monuments were erected highly decorated, and pompously inscribed. It is very likely from the

circumstances of Jacob that a single stone constituted the pillar in this case, on which, if writing did then exist, the name, or rather some hieroglyphical device, was probably inscribed. That which is now called Rachel's pillar is allowed, by those who have examined it, to be a comparatively modern structure.

Verse 21. *Tower of Edar.*— Literally, the tower of the flock, and so translated Micah 4:8. It is supposed that this tower was about a mile from Bethlehem, and to have been the place where the angels appeared to the shepherds. The Targum of Jonathan expressly says: "It is the place in which the King Messiah shall be manifested in the end of days." By the tower of the flock we may understand a place built by the shepherds near to some well, for the convenience of watering their flocks, and keeping watch over them by night.

Verse 22. *Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine*— Jonathan, in his Targum, says that Reuben only overthrew the bed of Bilhah, which was set up opposite to the bed of his mother Leah, and that this was reputed to him as if he had lain with her. The colouring given to the passage by the Targumist is, that Reuben was incensed, because he found Bilhah preferred after the death of Rachel to his own mother Leah; and therefore in his anger he overthrew her couch. The same sentiment is repeated by Jonathan, and glanced at by the Jerusalem Targum, Genesis 49:4. Could this view of the subject be proved to be correct, both piety and candour would rejoice.

And Israel heard it.— Not one word is added farther in the Hebrew text; but a break is left in the verse, opposite to which there is a Masoretic note, which simply states that there is a hiatus in the verse. This hiatus the Septuagint has thus supplied: *καὶ πονηρὸν ἔφρανε ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ*, and it appeared evil in his sight.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve— Called afterwards the twelve patriarchs, because they became heads or chiefs of numerous families or tribes, Acts 7:8; and the people that descended from them are called the twelve tribes, Acts 26:7; James 1:1. Twelve princes came from Ishmael, Genesis 25:16, who were heads of families and tribes. And in reference to the twelve patriarchs, our Lord chose twelve apostles. Strictly speaking, there were thirteen tribes among the Hebrews, as Ephraim and Manasses

were counted for tribes, Genesis 48:5, 6; but the Scripture in naming them, says Mr. Ainsworth, usually sets down but twelve, omitting the name now of one, then of another, as may in sundry places be observed, Deuteronomy 33.; Ezekiel 48.; Revelation 12., etc.

Verse 23. *The sons of Leah*— The children are arranged under their respective mothers, and not in order of their birth.

Verse 26. *Born to him in Padan-aram.*— i.e., all but Benjamin was born in Canaan, Genesis 35:16, 17.

It is well known that Padan-aram is the same as Mesopotamia, and hence the Septuagint translate **μεσοποταμια της συριας**, Mesopotamia of Syria. The word signifies between the two rivers, from **μεσος** the midst, and **ποταμος**, a river. It is situated between the Euphrates and Tigris, having Assyria on the east, Arabia Deserta, with Babylonia, on the south, Syria on the west, and Armenia on the north. It is now the province of Diarbek, in Asiatic Turkey, and is sometimes called Maverannahar, the country beyond the river; and Aram Naharaim, Aram or Syria of the two rivers.

Verse 27. *The city of Arbah, (which is Hebron)*— See Genesis 23:2. It has been conjectured that Jacob must have paid a visit to his father before this time, as previously to this he had been some years in Canaan; but now, as he was approaching to his end, Jacob is supposed to have gone to live with and comfort him in his declining days.

Verse 29. *Isaac gave up the ghost-and was gathered unto his people*— See Clarke on “Genesis 25:8”.

Esau and Jacob buried him.— See Genesis 25:9. Esau, as we have seen chap. 33., was thoroughly reconciled to his brother Jacob, and now they both join in fraternal and filial affection to do the last kind office to their amiable father. It is generally allowed that the death of Isaac is mentioned here out of its chronological order, as several of the transactions mentioned in the succeeding chapters, especially 37. and 38., must have happened during his life; but that the history of Joseph might not be disturbed, his death is anticipated in this place. It is supposed that he lived at least twelve years after Joseph was sold into Egypt.

THIS chapter contains several subjects which are well worthy of the reader's most serious attention.

1. That such a family as that of Jacob should have had false gods in it, is a matter not less astonishing than real: and suppose that we allow, as is very probable, that their images and rings were got from strangers, the Syrians and the Shechemites, yet their being tolerated in the family, though it is probable this was for a very short time, cannot be easily accounted for. It is true the LAW was not then given, and the unity of God not so particularly taught as it was afterwards. Besides, we have already seen that certain superstitions were compatible in those early times with general sincerity and attachment to the truth; those times and acts of ignorance were winked at, till superior light shone upon the world. Between many of the practices of Laban's family and those of the surrounding heathenish tribes, there might have been but little difference; and this was probably the reason why Dinah could so readily mix with the daughters of the land, Genesis 34:1, which led to the fatal consequences already reviewed. Sin is like the letting out of water-when once a breach is made in the dyke, the stream becomes determined to a wrong course, and its progress is soon irresistible. Had not Jacob put away these strange gods, the whole family might have been infected with idolatry. This saying of one of the ancients is good, *Vitia transmittit ad posterus, qui praesentibus culpis ignoscit.* — *SENECA.* "He who is indulgent to present offenses, transmits sin to posterity." The first motions of it should be firmly resisted; after struggles are too often fruitless.

2. The doctrine of a particular and especial providence has another proof in this chapter. After the sanguinary conduct of Jacob's sons, is it not surprising that the neighboring tribes did not join together and extirpate the whole family? And so they certainly would, had not the terror of God fallen upon them, Genesis 35:5. Jacob and the major part of his family were innocent of this great transgression; and on the preservation of their lives, the accomplishment of great events depended: therefore God watches over them, and shields them from the hands of their enemies.

3. The impatience and fate of the amiable Rachel, who can read of without deploring? Give me children, said she, or else I die, Genesis 30:1. Her desire was granted, and her death was the consequence! God's way is ever

best. We know not what we ask, nor what we ought to ask, and therefore often ask amiss when we petition for such secular things as belong to the dispensations of God's providence. For things of this kind we have no revealed directory; and when we ask for them, it should be with the deepest submission to the Divine will, as God alone knows what is best for us. With respect to the soul, every thing is clearly revealed, so that we may ask and receive, and have a fullness of joy; but as to our bodies, there is much reason to fear that the answer of our petitions would be, in numerous cases, our inevitable destruction. How many prayers does God in mercy shut out!

4. The transgression of Reuben, of whatsoever kind, was marked, not only by the displeasure of his father, but by that of God also; see Genesis 49:4. It brought a curse upon him, and he forfeited thereby the right of primogeniture and the priesthood: the first was given to Judah, the second to Levi. Is it not in reference to this that our Lord addresses these solemn words to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia: Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN? A man, by sowing a grain of forbidden sweets, may reap an abundant harvest of eternal wretchedness. Reader, let not sin rob thee of the kingdom of God.

5. Here we have the death of Isaac recorded: most that can be said of his character has been already anticipated, see chap. 22., etc. He appears to have been generally pious, deeply submissive and obedient. He was rather an amiable and good, than a great and useful, man. If compared with his son Jacob, in the early part of their lives, he appears to great advantage, as possessing more sincerity and more personal piety. But if compared with his father Abraham, O, what a falling off is here! Abraham is the most perfect character under the Old Testament, and even under the New he has no parallel but St. Paul. Isaac, though falling far short of his father's excellences, will ever remain a pattern of piety and filial obedience.

CHAPTER 36

The genealogy of Esau, i.e., his sons, by his Canaanitish wives Adah, Aholibamah, and Bashemath, 1-3. The children of Adah and Bashemath, 4. Of Aholibamah, 5. Esau departs from Canaan and goes to Mount Seir, 6-8. The generations of Esau, i.e., his grandchildren, while in Seir, 7-19. Anah finds mules (Yemim) in the wilderness, 24. The generations of Seir, the Horite, 29-30. The kings which reigned in Edom, 31-39. The dukes that succeeded them, 40-43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 1. *These are the generations of Esau*— We have here the genealogy of Esau in his sons and grandsons, and also the genealogy of Seir the Horite. The genealogy of the sons of Esau, born in Canaan, is related Genesis 36:1-8; those of his grandchildren born in Seir, Genesis 36:9-19; those of Seir the Horite, Genesis 36:20-30. The generations of Esau are particularly marked, to show how exactly God fulfilled the promises he made to him, chap. 25. and 27.; and those of Seir the Horite are added, because his family became in some measure blended with that of Esau.

Verse 2. *His wives*— It appears that Esau's wives went by very different names. Aholibamah is named Judith, Genesis 26:34; Adah is called Bashemath in the same place; and she who is here called Bashemath is called Mahalath, Genesis 28:9. These are variations which cannot be easily accounted for; and they are not of sufficient importance to engross much time. It is well known that the same persons in Scripture are often called by different names. See the Table of variations, chap. 25., where there are some slight examples. See Clarke on "Genesis 25:18".

Anah the daughter of Zibeon— But this same Anah is said to be the son of Zibeon, Genesis 36:24, though in this and Genesis 36:14 he is said to be the daughter of Zibeon. But the Samaritan, the Septuagint, (and the Syriac, in Genesis 36:2,) read son instead of daughter, which Houbigant and Kennicott contend to be the true reading. Others say that daughter should

be referred to Aholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah, and granddaughter of Zibeon. I should rather prefer the reading of the Samaritan, Septuagint, and Syriac, and read, both here and in Genesis 36:14, “Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the SON of Zibeon,” and then the whole will agree with Genesis 36:24.

Verse 6. *Esau took his wives, etc.*— So it appears that Esau and Jacob dwelt together in Canaan, whither the former removed from Seir, probably soon after the return of Jacob. That they were on the most friendly footing this sufficiently proves; and Esau shows the same dignified conduct as on other occasions, in leaving Canaan to Jacob, and returning again to Mount Seir; certainly a much less fruitful region than that which he now in behalf of his brother voluntarily abandoned.

Verse 12. *Timna was concubine to Eliphaz*— As Timna was sister to Lotan the Horite, Genesis 36:22, we see how the family of Esau and the Horites got intermixed. This might give the sons of Esau a pretext to seize the land, and expel the ancient inhabitants, as we find they did, Deuteronomy 2:12.

Amalek— The father of the Amalekites, afterwards bitter enemies to the Jews, and whom God commanded to be entirely exterminated, Deuteronomy 25:17, 19.

Verse 15. *Dukes of the sons of Esau*— The word duke comes from the Latin dux, a captain or leader. The Hebrew אלוֹפִי alluph has the same signification; and as it is also the term for a thousand, which is a grand capital or leading number, probably the אלוֹפִי alluphey or dukes had this name from being leaders of or captains over a company of one thousand men; just as those among the Greeks called chiliarchs, which signifies the same; and as the Romans called those centurions who were captains over one hundred men, from the Latin word centum, which signifies a hundred. The ducal government was that which prevailed first among the Idumeans, or descendants of Esau. Here fourteen dukes are reckoned to Esau, seven that came of his wife, Adah, four of Bashemath, and three of Aholibamah.

Verse 16. *Duke Korah*— This Dr. Kennicott pronounces to be an interpolation. “It is certain, from Genesis 36:4, that Eliphaz was Esau’s son by Adah; and from Genesis 36:11, 12, that Eliphaz had but six sons,

Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, Kenaz, and Amalek. It is also certain, from Genesis 36:5, 14, that Korah was the son of Esau (not of Eliphaz) by Aholibamah; and as such he is properly mentioned in Genesis 36:18: These are the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife: duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, DUKE KORAH. It is clear, therefore, that some transcriber has improperly inserted duke Korah in Genesis 36:16; from which interpolation both the Samaritan text and the Samaritan version are free."-KENNICOTT'S Remarks. Everything considered, I incline to the opinion that these words were not originally in the text.

Verse 20. *These are the sons of Seir the Horite*— These Horites were the original inhabitants of the country of Seir, called the land of the Horites, and afterwards the land of the Idumeans, when the descendants of Esau had driven them out. These people are first mentioned Genesis 14:6.

Verse 21. *These are the dukes of the Horites*— It appears pretty evident that the Horites and the descendants of Esau were mixed together in the same land, as before observed; and Calmet has very properly remarked, that if we compare this verse with Genesis 36:30, there were princes of Seir in the country of Seir, and in that of Edom; and in comparing the generations of Seir and Esau, we are obliged to consider these princes as contemporary.

Verse 24. *This was that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness*— The words אֶת הַיְמִים *eth kaiyemim*, here translated mules, has given rise to a great variety of conjectures and discordant opinions. St. Jerome, who renders it *aquas calidas*, warm springs, or hot baths, says there are as many opinions concerning it as there are commentators.

The Septuagint has *τον αμειν*, which seems to be the name of a man; but this is expressed in a great variety of ways in different MSS. of that version.

The Syriac renders it [S] *mayÇ*, waters; the author of this version having read in the Hebrew copy from which he translated. מַיִם *mayim*, waters, for מַיִם *yemim*, the two first letters being transposed.

Onkelos translates the word גִּבְרָיָא *gibbaraiya*, giants, or strong or powerful men.

The Samaritan text has [Samaritan] haaimim, and the Samaritan version [Samaritan] am aimai, the Emim, a warlike people, bordering upon the Horites.

The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the place thus: “This is the Anah who united the onager with the tame ass, and in process of time he found mules produced by them.” R. D. Kimchi says, that “Zibeon was both the father and brother of Anah; and this Anah, intent on heterogeneous mixtures, caused asses and horses to copulate, and so produced mules.” R. S. Jarchi is of the same opinion. See his comment on this place.

Bochart believes the Emim are meant; and argues forcibly, 1. That מֵצָא matsa, he found, never signifies to invent, but rather the meeting with or happening on a thing which already exists. 2. That mules are never called יָמִים yemim in the Scriptures, but פֶּרָדִים peradim. 3. That Anah fed ASSES only, not horses. And, 4. That there is no mention of mules in Palestine till the days of David. From the whole he concludes that the Emim are meant, with whom Anah fought; and he brings many places of Scripture where the same form of expression, he or they found, signifies the onset to battle, Judges 1:5; 1 Samuel 31:3; 1 Kings 13:24; 2 Chronicles 22:8; Numbers 35:27; Genesis 4:14; with many others. See the Hierozoicon, vol. i., cap. 21, p. 23S., edit. 1692.

Gusset, in Comment. Heb. Ling., examines what Bochart has asserted, and supposes that mules, not the Emim, were found by Anah.

Wagenseil would credit what Bochart has asserted, did not stronger reasons lead him to believe that the word means a sort of plant!

From the above opinions and versions the reader may choose which he likes best, or invent one for himself. My own opinion is, that mules were not known before the time of Anah; and that he was probably the first who coupled the mare and ass together to produce this mongrel, or the first who met with creatures of this race in some very secluded part of the wilderness. Is it not probable that from this Anah, or עֲנָה enah, the Enetae derived at least their fabulous origin, whom Homer mentions as famous for their race of wild mules?

παφλαγονων δ' ηγειτο πυλαιμενεος λασιον κηρ,
 εξ ενετων, δθεν ημιονων γενος αγροτεραων.

IL., lib. ii., v. 852.

*The Paphlagonians Pylaemenes rules,
 Where rich HENETIA breeds her SAVAGE MULES. POPE.*

The Enetae or Henetae, who were a people contiguous to Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, and Galatia, might have derived their origin from this Anah, or Henah, out of which the **ΕΝΕΤΟΙ** of the ancient Greek writers might have been formed; and according to Theophrastus, Strabo, and Plutarch, the first mules were seen among these people. See Ludov, Deuteronomy Dieu and Scheuchzer.

Verse 31. *Before there reigned any king over-Israel.*— I suppose all the verses, from Genesis 36:31-39 inclusive, have been transferred to this place from 1 Chronicles 1:43-50, as it is not likely they could have been written by Moses; and it is quite possible they might have been, at a very early period, written in the margin of an authentic copy, to make out the regal succession in Edom, prior to the consecration of Saul; which words being afterwards found in the margin of a valuable copy, from which others were transcribed, were supposed by the copyist to be a part of the text, which having been omitted by the mistake of the original writer, had been since added to make up the deficiency; on this conviction he would not hesitate to transcribe them consecutively in his copy. In most MSS. sentences and paragraphs have been left out by the copyists, which, when perceived, have been added in the margin, either by the original writer, or by some later hand. Now, as the margin was the ordinary place where glosses or explanatory notes were written, it is easy to conceive how the notes, as well as the parts of the original text found in the margin, might be all incorporated with the text by a future transcriber; and his MSS., being often copied, would of course multiply the copies with such additions, as we have much reason to believe has been the case. This appears very frequently in the Vulgate and Septuagint; and an English Bible now before me written some time in the fourteenth century, exhibits several proofs of this principle. See the preface to this work.

I know there is another way of accounting for those words on the ground of their being written originally by Moses; but to me it is not satisfactory.

It is simply this: the word king should be considered as implying any kind of regular government, whether by chiefs, dukes, judges, etc., and therefore when Moses says these are the kings which reigned in Edom, before there was any king in Israel, he may be only understood as saying that these kings reigned among the Edomites before the family of Jacob had acquired any considerable power, or before the time in which his twelve sons had become the fathers of those numerous tribes, at the head of which, as king himself in Jeshurun, he now stood.

Esau, after his dukes, had eight kings, who reigned successively over their people, while Israel were in affliction in Egypt.

Verse 33. *Jobab the son of Zerah*— Many have supposed that Jobab is the same as Job, so remarkable for his afflictions and patience; and that Eliphaz, mentioned Genesis 36:10, etc., was the same who in the book of Job is called one of his friends: but there is no proper proof of this, and there are many reasons against it.

Verse 35. *Smote Midian in the field of Moab*— Bishop Cumberland supposes that this was Midian, the son of Abraham by Keturah, and that he was killed by Hadad some time before he was one hundred and nine years of age; and that Moses recorded this, probably, because it was a calamity to the ancestor of Jethro, his father-in-law. — Orig. of Nat., p. 14.

Verse 40. *These are the names of the dukes that came of Esau*— These dukes did not govern the whole nation of the Idumeans, but they were chiefs in their respective families, in their places — the districts they governed, and to which they gave their names. Calmet thinks that those mentioned above were dukes in Edom or Idumea at the time of the exodus of Israel from Egypt.

Verse 43. *He is Esau the father of the Edomites*.— That is, The preceding list contains an account of the posterity of Esau, who was the father of Edom. Thus ends Esau's history; for after this there is no farther account of his life, actions, or death, in the Pentateuch.

1. As Esau is so considerable a person in polemic divinity, it may be necessary, in this place especially, to say something farther of his conduct and character. I have already, in several places, endeavored, and I hope

successfully, to wipe off the odium that has been thrown upon this man, (see the notes on chap. 27. and chap. 33.,) without attempting to lessen his faults; and the unprejudiced reader must see that, previously to this last account we have of him, his character stands without a blot, except in the case of selling his birthright, and his purpose to destroy his brother. To the first he was led by his famishing situation and the unkindness of his brother, who refused to save his life but on this condition; and the latter, made in the heat of vexation and passion, he never attempted to execute, even when he had the most ample means and the fairest opportunity to do it.

Dr. Shuckford has drawn an impartial character of Esau, from which I extract the following particulars: “Esau was a plain, generous, and honest man, for we have no reason, from any thing that appears in his life or actions, to think him wicked beyond other men of his age or times; and his generous and good temper appears from all his behavior towards his brother. When they first met he was all humanity and affection, and he had no uneasiness when he found that Jacob followed him not to Seir, but went to live near his father. And at Isaac’s death we do not find that he made any difficulty of quitting Canaan, which was the very point which, if he had harbored any latent (evil) intentions, would have revived all his resentments. He is indeed called in Scripture the profane Esau; and it is written, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated; but there is, I think, no reason to infer, from any of those expressions, that Esau was a very wicked man, or that God hated or punished him for an immoral life. For, 1. The sentence here against him is said expressly to be founded, not upon his actions, for it was determined before the children had done good or evil. 2. God’s hatred of Esau was not a hatred which induced him to punish him with any evil, for he was as happy in all the blessings of this life as either Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob; and his posterity had a land designed by God to be their possession, as well as the children of Jacob, and they were put in possession of it much sooner than the Israelites; and God was pleased to protect them in the enjoyment of it, and to caution the Israelites against invading them with a remarkable strictness, Deuteronomy 2:4, 5. And as God was pleased thus to bless Esau and his children in the blessings of this life, even as much as he blessed Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, if not more, why may we not hope to find him with them at the last day, as well as Lot or

Job or any other good and virtuous man, who was not designed to be a partaker of the blessing given to Abraham? 3. All the punishment inflicted on Esau was an exclusion from being heir to the blessing promised to Abraham and to his seed, which was a favor not granted to Lot, to Job, to several other very virtuous and good men. 4. St. Paul, in the passage before cited, only intends to show the Jews that God had all along given the favors that led to the Messiah where he pleased; to Abraham, not to Lot; to Jacob, not to Esau; as at the time St. Paul wrote the Gentiles were made the people of God, not the Jews. 5. Esau is indeed called profane, (βεβηλος,) but I think that word does not mean wicked or immoral, ασεβης or αμαρτωλος; he was called profane for not having that due value for the priest's office which he should have had; and therefore, though I think it does not appear that he was cut off from being the heir of the promises by any particular action in his life, yet his turn of mind and thoughts do appear to have been such as to evidence that God's purpose towards Jacob was founded on the truest wisdom."-SHUCKFORD'S Connections, vol. ii., p.174, etc.

The truth is, the Messiah must spring from some ONE family, and God chose Abraham's through Isaac, Jacob, etc., rather than the same through Ishmael, Esau, and the others in that line; but from this choice it does not follow that the first were all necessarily saved, and the others necessarily lost.

2. To some the genealogical lists in this chapter will doubtless appear uninteresting, especially those which concern Esau and his descendants; but it was as necessary to register the generations of Esau as to register those of Jacob, in order to show that the Messiah did not spring from the former, but that he did spring from the latter. The genealogical tables, so frequently met with in the sacred writings, and so little regarded by Christians in general, are extremely useful. 1. As they are standing proofs of the truth of the prophecies, which stated that the Messiah should come from a particular family, which prophecies were clearly fulfilled in the birth of Christ. 2. As they testify, to the conviction of the Jews, that the Messiah thus promised is found in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who incontestably sprang from the last, the only remaining branch of the family of David. These registers were religiously preserved among the Jews till the destruction of Jerusalem, after which they were all destroyed,

insomuch that there is not a Jew in the universe who can trace himself to the family of David; consequently, all expectation of a Messiah to come is, even on their own principles, nugatory and absurd, as nothing remains to legitimate his birth. When Christ came all these registers were in existence. When St. Matthew and St. Luke wrote, all these registers were still in existence; and had they pretended what could not have been supported, an appeal to the registers would have convicted them of a falsehood. But no Jew attempted to do this, notwithstanding the excess of their malice against Christ and his followers; and because they did not do it, we may safely assert no Jew could do it. Thus the foundation standeth sure.

CHAPTER 37

Jacob continues to sojourn in Canaan, 1. Joseph, being seventeen years of age, is employed in feeding the flocks of his father, 2. Is loved by his father more than the rest of his brethren, 3. His brethren envy him, 4. His dream of the sheaves, 5-7. His brethren interpret it, and hate him on the account, 8. His dream of the sun, moon, and eleven stars, 9-12. Jacob sends him to visit his brethren, who were with the flock in Shechem, 13, 14. He wanders in the field, and is directed to go to Dothan, whither his brethren had removed the flocks, 15-17. Seeing him coming they conspire to destroy him, 18-20. Reuben, secretly intending to deliver him, counsels his brethren not to kill, but to put him into a pit, 21, 22. They strip Joseph of his coat of many colors, and put him into a pit, 23, 24. They afterwards draw him out, and sell him to a company of Ishmaelite merchants for twenty pieces of silver, who carry him into Egypt, 25-28. Reuben returns to the pit, and not finding Joseph, is greatly affected, 29, 30. Joseph's brethren dip his coat in goat's blood to persuade his father that he had been devoured by a wild beast, 31-33. Jacob is greatly distressed, 34, 35. Joseph is sold in Egypt to Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard, 36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 37

Verse 1. *Wherein his father was a stranger*—מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו *megurey abiv*, Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojournings, as the margin very properly reads it. The place was probably the vale of Hebron, see Genesis 37:14.

Verse 2. *These are the generations*—תּוֹלְדוֹת *toledoth*, the history of the lives and actions of Jacob and his sons; for in this general sense the original must be taken, as in the whole of the ensuing history there is no particular account of any genealogical succession. Yet the words may be understood as referring to the tables or genealogical lists in the preceding chapter; and if so, the original must be understood in its common acceptation.

The lad was with the sons of Bilhah— It is supposed that our word lad comes from the Hebrew יָלֵד yeled, a child, a son; and that lass is a contraction of ladess, the female of lad, a girl, a young woman. Some have supposed that King James desired the translators to insert this word; but this must be a mistake, as the word occurs in this place in Edmund Becke's Bible, printed in 1549; and still earlier in that of Coverdale, printed in 1535.

Brought unto his father their evil report— Conjecture has been busily employed to find out what this evil report might be; but it is needless to inquire what it was, as on this head the sacred text is perfectly silent. All the use we can make of this information is, that it was one cause of increasing his brothers' hatred to him, which was first excited by his father's partiality, and secondly by his own dreams.

Verse 3. *A coat of many colors.*— כֶּתֶנֶת פַּסִּים kethoneth passim, a coat made up of stripes of differently colored cloth. Similar to this was the toga praetexta of the Roman youth, which was white, striped or fringed with purple; this they wore till they were seventeen years of age, when they changed it for the toga virilis, or toga pura, which was all white. Such vestures as clothing of distinction are worn all over Persia, India, and China to the present day. It is no wonder that his brethren should envy him, when his father had thus made him such a distinguished object of his partial love. We have already seen some of the evils produced by this unwarrantable conduct of parents in preferring one child to all the rest. The old fable of the ape and her favorite cub, which she hugged to death through kindness, was directed against such foolish parental fondnesses as these.

Verse 4. *And could not speak peaceably unto him.*— Does not this imply, in our use of the term, that they were continually quarrelling with him? but this is no meaning of the original: וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַבְּרוּ לְשָׁלוֹם velo yachelu dabbero leshalom, they could not speak peace to him, i. e., they would not accost him in a friendly manner. They would not even wish him well. The eastern method of salutation is, Peace be to thee! שְׁלוֹם לְךָ shalom lecha, among the Hebrews, and [A] salam, peace, or [A] salam kebibi, peace to thee my friend, among the Arabs. Now as peace among those nations comprehends all kinds of blessings spiritual and temporal, so

they are careful not to say it to those whom they do not cordially wish well. It is not an unusual thing for an Arab or a Turk to hesitate to return the salam, if given by a Christian, or by one of whom he has not a favorable opinion: and this, in their own country, may be ever considered as a mark of hostility; not only as a proof that they do not wish you well, but that if they have an opportunity they will do you an injury. This was precisely the case with respect to Joseph's brethren: they would not give him the salam, and therefore felt themselves at liberty to take the first opportunity to injure him.

Verse 7. *We were binding sheaves in the field*— Though in these early times we read little of tillage, yet it is evident from this circumstance that it was practiced by Jacob and his sons. The whole of this dream is so very plain as to require no comment, unless we could suppose that the sheaves of grain might have some reference to the plenty in Egypt under Joseph's superintendence, and the scarcity in Canaan, which obliged the brethren to go down to Egypt for corn, where the dream was most literally fulfilled, his brethren there bowing in the most abject manner before him.

Verse 9. *He dreamed yet another dream*— This is as clear as the preceding. But how could Jacob say, Shall I and thy mother, etc., when Rachel his mother was dead some time before this? Perhaps Jacob might hint, by this explanation, the impossibility of such a dream being fulfilled, because one of the persons who should be a chief actor in it was already dead. But any one wife or concubine of Jacob was quite sufficient to fulfill this part of the dream. It is possible, some think, that Joseph may have had these dreams before his mother Rachel died; but were even this the case, she certainly did not live to fulfill the part which appears to refer to herself.

The sun and the moon and the eleven stars— Why eleven stars? Was it merely to signify that his brothers might be represented by stars? Or does he not rather there allude to the Zodiac, his eleven brethren answering to eleven of the celestial signs, and himself to the twelfth? This is certainly not an unnatural thought, as it is very likely that the heavens were thus measured in the days of Joseph; for the zodiacal constellations have been distinguished among the eastern nations from time immemorial. See Clarke at "Genesis 49:33".

Verse 14. *Go-see whether it be well with thy brethren*— Literally, Go, I beseech thee, and see the peace of thy brethren, and the peace of the flock. Go and see whether they are all in prosperity. See Clarke on “Genesis 37:4”. As Jacob’s sons were now gone to feed the flock on the parcel of ground they had bought from the Shechemites, (see Genesis 33:19,) and where they had committed such a horrible slaughter, their father might feel more solicitous about their welfare, lest the neighboring tribes should rise against them, and revenge the murder of the Shechemites.

As Jacob appears to have been at this time in the vale of Hebron, it is supposed that Shechem was about sixty English miles distant from it, and that Dothan was about eight miles farther. But I must again advertise my readers that all these calculations are very dubious; for we do not even know that the same place is intended, as there are many proofs that different places went by the same names.

Verse 19. *Behold, this dreamer cometh.*— בעל החלמות baal hachalomoth, this master of dreams, this master dreamer. A form of speech which conveys great contempt.

Verse 20. *Come now and let us slay him*— What unprincipled savages these must have been to talk thus coolly about imbruing their hands in an innocent brother’s blood! How necessary is a Divine revelation, to show man what God hates and what he loves! Ferocious cruelty is the principal characteristic of the nations and tribes who receive not the law at his mouth.

Verse 21. *Reuben heard it*— Though Reuben appears to have been a transgressor of no ordinary magnitude, if we take Genesis 35:22 according to the letter, yet his bosom was not the habitation of cruelty. He determined, if possible, to save his brother from death, and deliver him safely to his father, with whose fondness for him he was sufficiently acquainted. Josephus, in his usual way, puts a long flourishing speech in the mouth of Reuben on the occasion, spoken in order to dissuade his brethren from their barbarous purpose; but as it is totally unfounded, it is worthy of no regard.

Verse 23. *They stripped Joseph out of his coat*— This probably was done that, if ever found, he might not be discerned to be a person of distinction, and consequently, no inquiry made concerning him.

Verse 25. *They sat down to eat bread*— Every act is perfectly in character, and describes forcibly the brutish and diabolic nature of their ruthless souls.

A company of Ishmaelites— We may naturally suppose that this was a caravan, composed of different tribes that, for their greater safety, were traveling together, and of which Ishmaelites and Midianites made the chief. In the Chaldee they are called Arabians, which, from ערב arab, to mingle, was in all probability used by the Targumist as the word Arabians is used among us, which comprehends a vast number of clans, or tribes of people. The Jerusalem Targum calls them סרקי Sarkin, what we term Saracens. In the Persian, the clause stands thus: [P] karavaneeh ishmaaleem araban aya. “A caravan of Ishmaelite Arabs came.” This seems to give the true sense.

Verse 28. *For twenty pieces of silver*— In the Anglo-Saxon it is [AS] thirty pence. This, I think, is the first instance on record of selling a man for a slave; but the practice certainly did not commence now, it had doubtless been in use long before. Instead of pieces, which our translators supply, the Persian has [P] miskal, which was probably intended to signify a shekel; and if shekels be intended, taking them at three shillings each, Joseph was sold for about three pounds sterling. I have known a whole cargo of slaves, amounting to eight hundred and thirteen, bought by a slave captain in Bonny river, in Africa, on an average, for six pounds each; and this payment was made in guns, gunpowder, and trinkets! As there were only nine of the brethren present, and they sold Joseph for twenty shekels, each had more than two shekels as his share in this most infamous transaction.

Verse 29. *Ruben returned unto the pit*— It appears he was absent when the caravan passed by, to whom the other brethren had sold Joseph.

Verse 30. *The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?*— The words in the original are very plaintive, אני בא הילד איננו ואני אנה haiyeled einennu, vaani anah, ani ba!

Verse 32. *Sent the coat of many colors-to their father*— What deliberate cruelty to torture the feelings of their aged father, and thus harrow up his soul!

Verse 33. *Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces!*— It is likely he inferred this from the lacerated state of the coat, which, in order the better to cover their wickedness, they had not only besmeared with the blood of the goat, but it is probable reduced to tatters. And what must a father's heart have felt in such a case! As this coat is rent, so is the body of my beloved son rent in pieces! and Jacob rent his clothes.

Verse 35. *All his sons and all his daughters*— He had only one daughter, Dinah; but his sons' wives may be here included. But what hypocrisy in his sons to attempt to comfort him concerning the death of a son who they knew was alive; and what cruelty to put their aged father to such torture, when, properly speaking, there was no ground for it!

Verse 36. *Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's*— The word סָרִיס saris, translated officer, signifies a eunuch; and lest any person should imagine that because this Potiphar had a wife, therefore it is absurd to suppose him to have been a eunuch, let such persons know that it is not uncommon in the east for eunuchs to have wives, nay, some of them have even a harem or seraglio where they keep many women, though it does not appear that they have any progeny; and probably discontent on this ground might have contributed as much to the unfaithfulness of Potiphar's wife, as that less principled motive through which it is commonly believed she acted.

Captain of the guard.— שַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים sar kattabbachim, chief of the butchers; a most appropriate name for the guards of an eastern despot. If a person offend one of the despotic eastern princes, the order to one of the life-guards is, Go and bring me his head; and this command is instantly obeyed, without judge, jury, or any form of law. Potiphar, we may therefore suppose, was captain of those guards whose business it was to take care of the royal person, and execute his sovereign will on all the objects of his displeasure. Reader, if thou hast the happiness to live under the British constitution, be thankful to God. Here, the will, the power, and utmost influence of the king, were he even so disposed, cannot deprive the meanest subject of his property, his liberty, or his life. All the solemn legal

forms of justice must be consulted; the culprit, however accused, be heard by himself and his counsel; and in the end twelve honest, impartial men, chosen from among his fellows, shall decide on the validity of the evidence produced by the accuser. For the trial by jury, as well as for innumerable political blessings, may God make the inhabitants of Great Britain thankful!

1. WITH this chapter the history of Joseph commences, and sets before our eyes such a scene of wonders wrought by Divine Providence in such a variety of surprising instances, as cannot fail to confirm our faith in God, show the propriety of resignation to his will, and confidence in his dispensations, and prove that all things work together for good to them that love him. Joseph has often been considered as a type of Christ, and this subject in the hands of different persons has assumed a great variety of coloring. The following parallels appear the most probable; but I shall not pledge myself for the propriety of any of them: “Jesus Christ, prefigured by Joseph, the beloved of his father, and by him sent to visit his brethren, is the innocent person whom his brethren sold for a few pieces of silver, the bargain proposed by his brother Judah, (Greek Judas,) the very namesake of that disciple and brother (for so Christ vouchsafes to call him) who sold his Lord and Master; and who by this means became their Lord and Savior; nay, the Savior of strangers, and of the whole world; which had not happened but for this plot of destroying him, the act of rejecting, and exposing him to sale. In both examples we find the same fortune and the same innocence: Joseph in the prison between two criminals; Jesus on the cross between two thieves. Joseph foretells deliverance to one of his companions and death to the other, from the same omens: of the two thieves, one reviles Christ, and perishes in his crimes; the other believes, and is assured of a speedy entrance into paradise. Joseph requests the person that should be delivered to be mindful of him in his glory; the person saved by Jesus Christ entreats his deliverer to remember him when he came into his kingdom.”-See Pascal’s Thoughts. Parallels and coincidences of this kind should always be received cautiously, for where the Spirit of God has not marked a direct resemblance, and obviously referred to it as such in some other part of his word, it is bold, if not dangerous, to say “such and such things and persons are types of Christ.” We have instances sufficiently numerous,

legitimately attested, without having recourse to those which are of dubious import and precarious application. See the observation on chap. xl. {See Clarke on “Genesis 40:23.”}

2. Envy has been defined, “pain felt, and malignity conceived, at the sight of excellence or happiness in another.” Under this detestable passion did the brethren of Joseph labor; and had not God particularly interposed, it would have destroyed both its subjects and its object, Perhaps there is no vice which so directly filiates itself on Satan, as this does. In opposition to the assertion that we cannot envy that by which we profit, it may be safely replied that we may envy our neighbor’s wisdom, though he gives us good counsel; his riches, though he supplies our wants; and his greatness, though he employs it for our protection.

3. How ruinous are family distractions! A house divided against itself cannot stand. Parents should take good heed that their own conduct be not the first and most powerful cause of such dissensions, by exciting envy in some of their children through undue partiality to others; but it is in vain to speak to most parents on the subject; they will give way to foolish predilections, till, in the prevailing distractions of their families, they meet with the punishment of their imprudence, when regrets are vain, and the evil past remedy.

CHAPTER 38

Judah marries the daughter of a Canaanite, 1, 2; and begets of her Er, 3, Onan, 4, and Shelah, 5. Er marries Tamar, 6; is slain for his wickedness, 7. Onan, required to raise up seed to his brother, refuses, 8, 9. He also is slain, 10. Judah promises his son Shelah to Tamar, when he should be of age; but performs not his promise, 11. Judah's wife dies, 12. Tamar in disguise receives her father-in-law, he leaves his signet, bracelets, and staff in her hand, and she conceives by him, 13-23. Judah is informed that his daughter-in-law is with child; and, not knowing that himself was the father, condemns her to be burnt, 24. She produces the signet, bracelets, and staff, and convicts Judah, 25, 26. She is delivered of twins, who are called Pharez and Zarah, 27-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 38

Verse 1. *And it came to pass at that time*— The facts mentioned here could not have happened at the times mentioned in the preceding chapter, as those times are all unquestionably too recent, for the very earliest of the transactions here recorded must have occurred long before the selling of Joseph. Mr. Ainsworth remarks “that Judah and his sons must have married when very young, else the chronology will not agree. For Joseph was born six years before Jacob left Laban and came into Canaan; Genesis 30:25, and Genesis 31:41. Joseph was seventeen years old when he was sold into Egypt, Genesis 37:2, 25; he was thirty years old when he interpreted Pharaoh's dream, Genesis 41:46. And nine years after, when there had been seven years of plenty and two years of famine, did Jacob with his family go down into Egypt, Genesis 41:53, 54, and Genesis 45:6, 11. And at their going down thither, Pharez, the son of Judah, whose birth is set down at the end of this chapter, had two sons, Hezron and Hamul, Genesis 46:8, 12. Seeing then from the selling of Joseph unto Israel's going down into Egypt there cannot be above twenty-three years, how is it possible that Judah should take a wife, and have by her three sons successively, and Shelah the youngest of the three be marriageable when Judah begat Pharez of Tamar, Genesis 38:14, 24, and Pharez be grown up,

married, and have two sons, all within so short a space? The time therefore here spoken of seems to have been soon after Jacob's coming to Shechem, Genesis 33:18, before the history of Dinah, chap. 34., though Moses for special cause relates it in this place." I should rather suppose that this chapter originally stood after chap. 33., and that it got by accident into this place. Dr. Hales, observing that some of Jacob's son must have married remarkably young, says that "Judah was about forty-seven years old when Jacob's family settled in Egypt. He could not therefore have been above fifteen at the birth of his eldest son Er; nor Er more than fifteen at his marriage with Tamar; nor could it have been more than two years after Er's death till the birth of Judah's twin sons by his daughter-in-law Tamar; nor could Pharez, one of them, be more than fifteen at the birth of his twin sons Herron and Hamul, supposing they were twins, just born before the departure from Canaan. For the aggregate of these numbers, 15, 15, 2, 15, or 47 years, gives the age of Judah; compare chap. 38. with Genesis 46:12." See the remarks of Dr. Kennicott, at the end of chap. 31. See Clarke at "Genesis 31:55". Adullamite— An inhabitant of Adullam, a city of Canaan, afterwards given for a possession to the sons of Judah, Joshua 15:1, 35. It appears as if this Adullamite had kept a kind of lodging house, for Shuah the Canaanite and his family lodged with him; and there Judah lodged also. As the woman was a Canaanitess, Judah had the example of his fathers to prove at least the impropriety of such a connection.

Verse 5. *And he was at Chezib when she bare him.*— This town is supposed to be the same with Achzib, which fell to the tribe of Judah, Joshua 15:44. "The name," says Ainsworth, "has in Hebrew the signification of lying; and to it the prophet alludes, saying the houses of Achzib shall be (Achzab) a lie to the kings of Israel, Micah 1:14."

Verse 7. *Er was wicked in the sight of the Lord*— What this wickedness consisted in we are not told; but the phrase sight of the Lord being added, proves that it was some very great evil. It is worthy of remark that the Hebrew word used to express Er's wickedness is his own name, the letters reversed. Er ער wicked, רע ra. As if the inspired writer had said, "Er was altogether wicked, a completely abandoned character."

Verse 9. *Onan knew that the seed should not be his*— That is, that the child begotten of his brother's widow should be reckoned as the child of

his deceased brother, and his name, though the real father of it, should not appear in the genealogical tables.

Verse 10. *Wherefore he slew him also.*— The sin of Onan has generally been supposed to be self-pollution; but this is certainly a mistake; his crime was his refusal to raise up seed to his brother, and rather than do it, by the act mentioned above, he rendered himself incapable of it. We find from this history that long before the Mosaic law it was an established custom, probably founded on a Divine precept, that if a man died childless his brother was to take his wife, and the children produced by this second marriage were considered as the children of the first husband, and in consequence inherited his possessions.

Verse 12. *In process of time*— This phrase, which is in general use in the Bible, needs explanation; the original is **וַיִּרְבוּ הַיָּמִים** valyirbu haiyamim, and the days were multiplied. Though it implies an indefinite time, yet it generally embraces a pretty long period, and in this place may mean several years.

Verse 15. *Thought her to be a harlot*— See the original of this term, Genesis 34:31. The Hebrew is **זוֹנָה** zonah, and signifies generally a person who prostitutes herself to the public for hire, or one who lives by the public; and hence very likely applied to a publican, a tavern-keeper, or hostess, Joshua 2:1; translated by the Septuagint, and in the New Testament, **πορνῆ**, from **πρῶναι**, to sell, which certainly may as well apply to her goods as to her person.

It appears that in very ancient times there were public persons of this description; and they generally veiled themselves, sat in public places by the highway side, and received certain hire. Though adultery was reputed a very flagrant crime, yet this public prostitution was not; for persons whose characters were on the whole morally good had connections with them. But what could be expected from an age in which there was no written Divine revelation, and consequently the bounds of right and wrong were not sufficiently ascertained? This defect was supplied in a considerable measure by the law and the prophets, and now completely by the Gospel of Christ.

Verse 17. *Wilt thou give me a pledge till thou send it?*— The word ערבו erabon signifies an earnest of something promised, a part of the price agreed for between a buyer and seller, by giving and receiving of which the bargain was ratified; or a deposit, which was to be restored when the thing promised should be given. St. Paul uses the same word in Greek letters, **αππαβον**, 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:14. From the use of the term in this history we may at once see what the apostle means by the Holy Spirit being the EARNEST, **αππαβον**, of the promised inheritance; viz., a security given in hand for the fulfillment of all God's promises relative to grace and eternal life. We may learn from this that eternal life will be given in the great day to all who can produce this erabon or pledge. He who has the earnest of the Spirit then in his heart shall not only be saved from death, but have that eternal life of which it is the pledge and the evidence. What the pledge given by Judah was, see on Genesis 38:25.

Verse 21. *Where is the harlot that was openly by the wayside?*— Our translators often render different Hebrew words by the same term in English, and thus many important shades of meaning, which involve traits of character, are lost. In Genesis 38:15, Tamar is called a harlot, זונה zonah, which, as we have already seen, signifies a person who prostitutes herself for money. In this verse she is called a harlot in our version; but the original is not זונה but קדשה kedeshah, a holy or consecrated person, from קדש kadash, to make holy, or to consecrate to religious purposes. And the word here must necessarily signify a person consecrated by prostitution to the worship of some impure goddess.

The public prostitutes in the temple of Venus are called **ιεροδουλοι γυναικες**, holy or consecrated female servants, by Strabo; and it appears from the words zonah and kedeshah above, that impure rites and public prostitution prevailed in the worship of the Canaanites in the time of Judah. And among these people we have much reason to believe that Astarte and Asteroth occupied the same place in their theology as Venus did among the Greeks and Romans, and were worshipped with the same impure rites.

Verse 23. *Lest we be shamed*— Not of the act, for this he does not appear to have thought criminal; but lest he should fall under the raillery of his

companions and neighbors, for having been tricked out of his signet, bracelets, and staff, by a prostitute.

Verse 24. *Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.*— As he had ordered Tamar to live as a widow in her own father's house till his son Shelah should be marriageable, he considers her therefore as the wife of his son; and as Shelah was not yet given to her, and she is found with child, she is reputed by him as an adulteress, and burning, it seems, was anciently the punishment of this crime. Judah, being a patriarch or head of a family, had, according to the custom of those times, the supreme magisterial authority over all the branches of his own family; therefore he only acts here in his juridical capacity. How strange that in the very place where adultery was punished by the most violent death, prostitution for money and for religious purposes should be considered as no crime!

Verse 25. *The signet*— **חֶמֶת** chothemeth, properly a seal, or instrument with which impressions were made to ascertain property, etc. These exist in all countries.

Bracelets— **פְּתִילִים** pethilim, from **פָּתַל** pathal, to twist, wreath, twine, may signify a girdle or a collar by which precedency, etc., might be indicated; not the muslin, silk, or linen wreath of his turban, as Mr. Harmer has conjectured.

Staff.— **מַטֵּה** matteh, either what we would call a common walking stick, or the staff which was the ensign of his tribe.

Verse 26. *She hath been more righteous than I*— It is probable that Tamar was influenced by no other motive than that which was common to all the Israelitish women, the desire to have children who might be heirs of the promise made to Abraham, etc. And as Judah had obliged her to continue in her widowhood under the promise of giving her his son Shelah when he should be of age, consequently his refusing or delaying to accomplish this promise was a breach of truth, and an injury done to Tamar.

Verse 28. *The midwife-bound upon his hand a scarlet thread*— The binding of the scarlet thread about the wrist of the child whose arm appeared first in the birth, serves to show us how solicitously the

privileges of the birthright were preserved. Had not this caution been taken by the midwife, Pharez would have had the right of primogeniture to the prejudice of his elder brother Zarah. And yet Pharez is usually reckoned in the genealogical tables before Zarah; and from him, not Zarah, does the line of our Lord proceed. See Matthew 1:3. Probably the two brothers, as being twins, were conjoined in the privileges belonging to the birthright.

Verse 29. *How hast thou broken forth?*—**מה פרצת** mah paratsta, this breach be upon thee, **עליך פרץ** aleycka parets; thou shalt bear the name of the breach thou hast made, i. e., in coming first into the world. Therefore his name was called **פרץ** Parets, i. e., the person who made the breach. The breach here mentioned refers to a certain circumstance in parturition which it is unnecessary to explain.

Verse 30. *His name was called Zarah.*—**זרה** Zarach, risen or sprung up, applied to the sun, rising and diffusing his light. “He had this name,” says Ainsworth, “because he should have risen, i. e., have been born first, but for the breach which his brother made.”

THERE are several subjects in this chapter on which it may not be unprofitable to spend a few additional moments.

1. The insertion of this chapter is a farther proof of the impartiality of the sacred writer. The facts detailed, considered in themselves, can reflect no credit on the patriarchal history; but Judah, Tamar, Zarah, and Pharez, were progenitors of the Messiah, and therefore their birth must be recorded; and as the birth, so also the circumstances of that birth, which, even had they not a higher end in view, would be valuable as casting light upon some very ancient customs, which it is interesting to understand. These are not forgotten in the preceding notes.

2. On what is generally reputed to be the sin of Onan, something very pointed should be spoken. But who dares and will do it, and in such language that it may neither pollute the ear by describing the evil as it is, nor fail of its effect by a language so refined and so laboriously delicate as to cover the sin which it professes to disclose? Elaborate treatises on the subject will never be read by those who need them most, and anonymous pamphlets are not likely to be regarded.

The sin of self-pollution, which is generally considered to be that of Onan, is one of the most destructive evils ever practiced by fallen man. In many respects it is several degrees worse than common whoredom, and has in its train more awful consequences, though practiced by numbers who would shudder at the thought of criminal connections with a prostitute. It excites the powers of nature to undue action, and produces violent secretions, which necessarily and speedily exhaust the vital principle and energy; hence the muscles become flaccid and feeble, the tone and natural action of the nerves relaxed and impeded, the understanding confused, the memory oblivious, the judgment perverted, the will indeterminate and wholly without energy to resist; the eyes appear languishing and without expression, and the countenance vacant; the appetite ceases, for the stomach is incapable of performing its proper office; nutrition fails, tremors, fears, and terrors are generated; and thus the wretched victim drags out a most miserable existence, till, superannuated even before he had time to arrive at man's estate, with a mind often debilitated even to a state of idiotism, his worthless body tumbles into the grave, and his guilty soul (guilty of self-murder) is hurried into the awful presence of its Judge! Reader, this is no caricature, nor are the colourings overcharged in this shocking picture. Worse woes than my pen can relate I have witnessed in those addicted to this fascinating, unnatural, and most destructive of crimes. If thou hast entered into this snare, flee from the destruction both of body and soul that awaits thee! God alone can save thee. Advice, warnings, threatenings, increasing debility of body, mental decay, checks of conscience, expostulations of judgment and medical assistance, will all be lost on thee: God, and God alone, can save them from an evil which has in its issue the destruction of thy body, and the final perdition of thy soul! Whether this may have been the sin of Onan or not, is a matter at present of small moment; it may be thy sin; therefore take heed lest God slay thee for it. The intelligent reader will see that prudence forbids me to enter any farther into this business. See the remarks at the end of chap. xxxix. See Clarke at "Genesis 39:21".

CHAPTER 39

Joseph, being brought to Potiphar's house, prospers in all his undertakings, 1-3. Potiphar makes him his overseer, 4. Is prospered in all his concerns for Joseph's sake, in whom he puts unlimited confidence, 5, 6. The wife of Potiphar solicits him to criminal correspondence, 7. He refuses, and makes a fine apology for his conduct, 8, 9. She continues her solicitations, and he his refusals, 10. She uses violence, and he escapes from her hand, 11-13. She accuses him to the domestics, 14, 15, and afterward to Potiphar, 16-18. Potiphar is enraged, and Joseph is cast into prison, 19, 20. The Lord prospers him, and gives him great favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison, 21, who intrusts him with the care of the house and all the prisoners, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 39

Verse 1. *An officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard*— Mr. Ainsworth, supposing that his office merely consisted in having charge of the king's prisoners, calls Potiphar provost marshal! See Clarke on "Genesis 37:36", See Clarke on "Genesis 40:3".

Verse 4. *He made him overseer*— הפקיד הִיִּחְדָּהּ hiphkid, from פקד פָּקַד pakad, to visit, take care of, superintend; the same as επισκοπος, overseer or bishop, among the Greeks. This is the term by which the Septuagint often express the meaning of the original.

Verse 6. *Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored.*— מראה יפה מראה יפה הָאֵר וְיִפְהָ yepkeh thoar, vipheh mareh, beautiful in his person, and beautiful in his countenance. The same expressions are used relative to Rachel; see them explained Genesis 29:17. The beauty of Joseph is celebrated over all the East, and the Persian poets vie with each other in descriptions of his comeliness. Mohammed spends the twelfth chapter of the Koran entirely on Joseph, and represents him as a perfect beauty, and the most accomplished of mortals. From his account, the passion of Zuleekha (for so the Asiatics call Potiphar's wife) being known to the

ladles of the court, they cast the severest reflections upon her: in order to excuse herself, she invited forty of them to dine with her, put knives in their hands, and gave them oranges to cut, and caused Joseph to attend. When they saw him they were struck with admiration, and so confounded, that instead of cutting their oranges they cut and hacked their own hands, crying out, [A] *hasha lillahi ma hadha bashara in hadha illa malakon kareemon*. “O God! this is not a human being, this is none other than a glorious angel!”-Surat xii., verse 32.

Two of the finest poems in the Persian language were written by the poets Jamy and Nizamy on the subject of Joseph and his mistress; they are both entitled Yusuf we Zuleekha. These poems represent Joseph as the most beautiful and pious of men; and Zuleekha the most chaste, virtuous, and excellent of women, previous to her having seen Joseph; but they state that when she saw him she was so deeply affected by his beauty that she lost all self-government, and became a slave to her passion. Hafiz expresses this, and apologizes for her conduct in the following elegant couplet:—

[A] [A]

*Men az an husn-i roz afzoon keh
Yusuf dasht danistam Keh ishk az
pardah-i ismat beroon arad Zaleekhara.*

*“I understand, from the daily increasing beauty which
Joseph possessed, How love tore away the
veil of chastity from Zuleekha.”*

The Persian poets and eastern historians, however, contrive to carry on a sort of guiltless passion between them till the death of Potiphar, when Zuleekha, grown old, is restored to youth and beauty by the power of God, and becomes the wife of Joseph. What traditions they had beside the Mosaic text for what they say on this subject, are now unknown; but the whole story, with innumerable embellishments, is so generally current in the East that I thought it not amiss to take this notice of it. The twelfth chapter of the Koran, which celebrates the beauty, piety, and acts of this patriarch, is allowed to be one of the finest specimens of Arabic composition ever formed; and the history itself, as told by Moses, is one of the most simple, natural, affecting, and well-told narratives ever

published. It is a master-piece of composition, and never fails of producing its intended effect on the mind of a careful reader. The Arab lawgiver saw and felt the beauties and excellences of his model; and he certainly put forth all the strength of his own language, and all the energy of his mind, in order to rival it.

Verse 8. *My master wotteth not*— Knoweth not, from the old Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], witan, to know; hence [A.S.], wit, intellect, understanding, wisdom, prudence.

Verse 9. *How then*— וַאִיךָ veeik, and how? Joseph gives two most powerful reasons for his noncompliance with the wishes of his mistress: 1. Gratitude to his master, to whom he owed all that he had. 2. His fear of God, in whose sight it would be a heinous offense, and who would not fail to punish him for it. With the kindness of his master and the displeasure of God before his eyes, how could he be capable of committing an act of transgression, which would at once have distinguished him as the most ungrateful and the most worthless of men?

Verse 14. *He hath brought in a Hebrew unto us*— Potiphar's wife affects to throw great blame on her husband, whom we may reasonably suppose she did not greatly love. He hath brought in — he hath raised this person to all his dignity and eminence, to give him the greater opportunity to mock us. לַפְּחָק letsachek, here translated to mock, is the same word used in Genesis 26:8, relative to Isaac and Rebekah; and is certainly used by Potiphar's wife in Genesis 39:17, to signify some kind of familiar intercourse not allowable but between man and wife.

Verse 20. *Put him into the prison*— בֵּית סוּהַר beith sohar, literally the round house; in such a form the prison was probably built.

Verse 21. *The Lord was with Joseph*— It is but of little consequence where the lot of a servant of God may be cast; like Joseph he is ever employed for his master, and God honors him and prospers his work.

1. HE who acknowledges God in all his ways, has the promise that God shall direct all his steps. Joseph's captivity shall promote God's glory; and to this end God works in him, for him, by him. Even the irreligious can see when the Most High distinguishes his followers. Joseph's master saw

that Jehovah was with him; and from this we may learn that the knowledge of the true God was in Egypt, even before the time of Joseph, though his worship was neither established nor even tolerated there. Both Abraham and Isaac had been in Egypt, and they had left a savor of true godliness behind them.

2. Joseph's virtue in resisting the solicitations of his mistress was truly exemplary. Had he reasoned after the manner of men, he might have soon found that the proposed intrigue might be carried on with the utmost secrecy and greatly to his secular advantage. But he chose to risk all rather than injure a kind benefactor, defile his conscience, and sin against God. Such conduct is so exceedingly rare that his example has stood on the records of time as almost without a parallel, admired by all, applauded by most, and in similar circumstances, I am afraid, imitated by few. The fable of the brave and virtuous Bellerophon and Sthenobaea, wife of Proetus, king of the Argives, was probably founded on this history.

3. Joseph fled and got him out. To know when to fight and when to fly are of great importance in the Christian life. Some temptations must be manfully met, resisted, and thus overcome; from others we must fly. He who stands to contend or reason, especially in such a case as that mentioned here, is infallibly ruined. *Principiis obsta*, "resist the first overtures of sin," is a good maxim. After-remedies come too late.

4. A woman of the spirit of Potiphar's wife is capable of any species of evil. When she could not get her wicked ends answered, she began to accuse. This is precisely Satan's custom: he first tempts men to sin, and then accuses them as having committed it, even where the temptation has been faithfully and perseveringly resisted! By this means he can trouble a tender conscience, and weaken faith by bringing confusion into the mind. Thus the inexperienced especially are often distracted and cast down; hence Satan is properly called the accuser of the brethren, Revelation 12:10.

Very useful lessons may be drawn from every part of the relation in this chapter, but detailing the facts and reasoning upon them would be more likely to produce than prevent the evil. An account of this kind cannot be touched with too gentle a hand. Others have been profuse here; I chose to be parsimonious, for reasons which the intelligent reader will feel as well as

myself. Let this remark be applied to what has been said on the sin of Onan, chap. 38.

CHAPTER 40

Pharaoh's chief butler and his chief baker, having offended their lord, are put in prison, 1-3. The captain of the guard gives them into the care of Joseph, 4. Each of them has a dream, 5. Joseph, seeing them sad, questions them on the subject, 6, 7. Their answer, 8. The chief butler tells his dream, 9-11. Joseph interprets it, 12, 13. Gives a slight sketch of his history to the chief butler, and begs him to think upon him when restored to his office, 14, 15. The chief baker tells his dream, 16, 17. Joseph interprets this also, 18, 19. Both dreams are fulfilled according to the interpretation, the chief butler being restored to his office, and the chief baker hanged, 20-22. The chief butler makes no interest for Joseph, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 40

Verse 1. The butler— **משקה** mashkeh, the same as [A] saky among the Arabians and Persians, and signifying a cup-bearer.

Baker— **אפה** opheh; rather cook, confectioner, or the like.

Had offended— They had probably been accused of attempting to take away the king's life, one by poisoning his drink, the other by poisoning his bread or confectionaries.

Verse 3. Where Joseph was bound.— The place in which Joseph was now confined; this is what is implied in being bound; for, without doubt, he had his personal liberty. As the butler and the baker were state criminals they were put in the same prison with Joseph, which we learn from the preceding chapter, Genesis 39:20, was the king's prison. All the officers in the employment of the ancient kings of Egypt were, according to Diodorus Siculus, taken from the most illustrious families of the priesthood in the country; no slave or common person being ever permitted to serve in the presence of the king. As these persons, therefore, were of the most noble families, it is natural to expect they would be put, when accused, into the state prison.

Verse 4. *They continued a season*— יָמִים yamim, literally days; how long we cannot tell. But many suppose the word signifies a complete year; and as Pharaoh called them to an account on his birthday, Genesis 40:20, Calmet supposes they had offended on the preceding birthday, and thus had been one whole year in prison.

Verse 5. *Each man according to the interpretation*— Not like dreams in general, the disordered workings of the mind, the consequence of disease or repletion; these were dreams that had an interpretation, that is, that were prophetic.

Verse 6. *They were sad*.— They concluded that their dreams portended something of great importance, but they could not tell what.

Verse 8. *There is no interpreter*— They either had access to none, or those to whom they applied could give them no consistent, satisfactory meaning.

Do not interpretations belong to God?— God alone, the Supreme Being, knows what is in futurity; and if he have sent a significant dream, he alone can give the solution.

Verse 11. *And I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup*— From this we find that wine anciently was the mere expressed juice of the grape, without fermentation. The saky, or cup-bearer, took the bunch, pressed the juice into the cup, and instantly delivered it into the hands of his master. This was anciently the יַיִן yain of the Hebrews, the οἶνος oinos of the Greeks, and the mustum of the ancient Latins.

Verse 12. *The three branches are three days*— That is, The three branches signify three days; so, this Is my body, that is, this bread signifies or represents my body; this cup IS my blood, REPRESENTS my blood; a form of speech frequently used in the sacred writings, for the Hebrew has no proper word by which our terms signifies, represents, etc., are expressed; therefore it says such a thing Is, for represents, points out, etc. And because several of our ancestors would understand such words in their true, genuine, critical, and sole meaning, Queen Mary, Bishops Gardiner, Bonner, and the rest of that demoniacal crew, reduced them to ashes in Smithfield and elsewhere!

Verse 14. *Make mention of me unto Pharaoh*— One would have supposed that the very circumstance of his restoration, according to the prediction of Joseph, would have almost necessarily prevented him from forgetting so extraordinary a person. But what have mere courtiers to do either with gratitude or kindness?

Verse 15. *For indeed I was stolen*— גִּנְבוֹתִי bng gunnob gunnobti, stolen, I have been stolen — most assuredly I was stolen; and here also have I done nothing. These were simple assertions, into the proof of which he was ready to enter if called on.

Verse 19. *Lift up thy head from off thee*— Thus we find that beheading, hanging, and gibbeting, were modes of punishment among the ancient Egyptians; but the criminal was beheaded before he was hanged, and then either hanged on hooks, or by the hands. See Lamentations 5:12.

Verse 20. *Pharaoh's birthday*— The distinguishing a birthday by a feast appears from this place to have been a very ancient custom. It probably had its origin from a correct notion of the immortality of the soul, as the commencement of life must appear of great consequence to that person who believed he was to live for ever. St. Matthew (Matthew 14:6) mentions Herod's keeping his birthday; and examples of this kind are frequent to the present time in most nations.

Lifted up the head of the chief butler, etc.— By lifting up the head, probably no more is meant than bringing them to trial, tantamount to what was done by Jezebel and the nobles of Israel to Naboth: Set Naboth on high among the people; and set two men, sons of Belial, to bear witness against him, etc.; 1 Kings 21:9, etc. The issue of the trial was, the baker alone was found guilty and hanged; and the butler, being acquitted, was restored to his office.

Verse 23. *Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph*— Had he mentioned the circumstance to Pharaoh, there is no doubt that Joseph's case would have been examined into, and he would in consequence have been restored to his liberty; but, owing to the ingratitude of the chief butler, he was left two years longer in prison,

MANY commentators have seen in every circumstance in the history of Joseph a parallel between him and our blessed Lord. So, "Joseph in prison

represents Christ in the custody of the Jews; the chief butler and the chief baker represent the two thieves which were crucified with our Lord; and as one thief was pardoned, and the other left to perish, so the chief butler was restored to his office, and the chief baker hanged." I believe GOD never designed such parallels; and I am astonished to find comparatively grave and judicious men trifling in this way, and forcing the features of truth into the most distorted anamorphosis, so that even her friends blush to acknowledge her. This is not a light matter; we should beware how we attribute designs to God that he never had, and employ the Holy Spirit in forming trifling and unimportant similitudes. Of plain, direct truth we shall find as much in the sacred writings as we can receive and comprehend; let us not therefore hew out unto ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. Interpretations of this kind only tend to render the sacred writings uncertain; to expose to ridicule all the solemn types and figures which it really contains; and to furnish pretexts to infidels and irreligious people to scoff at all spirituality, and lead them to reject the word of GOD entirely, as incapable of being interpreted on any fixed or rational plan. The mischief done by this system is really incalculable. See the observations on chap. 37.

CHAPTER 41

Pharaoh's dream of the seven well-favored and seven ill-favored kine, 1-4. His dream of the seven full and seven thin ears of corn, 5-7. The magicians and wise men applied to for the interpretation of them, but could give no solution, 8. The chief butler recollects and recommends Joseph, 9-13. Pharaoh commands him to be brought out of prison, 14. Joseph appears before Pharaoh, 15, 16. Pharaoh repeats his dreams, 17-24. Joseph interprets them, 25-32, and gives Pharaoh directions how to provide against the approaching scarcity, 33-36. Pharaoh, pleased with the counsel, appoints Joseph to be superintendent of all his affairs, 37-41. Joseph receives the badges of his new office, 42, 43, and has his powers defined, 44; receives a new name, and marries Asenath, daughter of Poti-Pherah, priest of ON, 45. Joseph's age when brought before Pharaoh, 46. Great fertility of Egypt in the seven plenteous years, 47. Joseph hoards up the grain, 48, 49. Ephraim and Manasseh born, 50-52. The seven years of famine commence with great rigour, 53-55. Joseph opens the storehouses to the Egyptians, 56. People from the neighboring countries come to Egypt to buy corn, the famine being in all those lands, 57.

NOTES ON CHAP. 41

Verse 1. *Two full years*—שנתים ימים shenathayim yamim, two years of days, two complete solar revolutions, after the events mentioned in the preceding chapter.

The river.— The Nile, the cause of the fertility of Egypt.

Verse 2. *There came up out of the river seven well-favored kine*— This must certainly refer to the hippopotamus or river horse, as the circumstances of coming up out of the river and feeding in the field characterize that animal alone. The hippopotamus is the well-known inhabitant of the Nile, and frequently by night comes out of the river to feed in the fields, or in the sedge by the river side.

Verse 6. *Blasted with the east wind*— It has been very properly observed that all the mischief done to corn or fruit, by blasting, smutting, mildews, locusts, etc., is attributed to the east wind. See Exodus 10:13; 14:21; Psalm 78:26; Ezekiel 17:10; Jon 4:8. In Egypt it is peculiarly destructive, because it comes through the parched deserts of Arabia, often destroying vast numbers of men and women. The destructive nature of the simoom or smoom is mentioned by almost all travelers. Mr. Bruce speaks of it in his *Travels in Egypt*. On their way to Syene, Idris their guide, seeing one of these destroying blasts coming, cried out with a loud voice to the company, “Fall upon your faces, for here is the simoom! I saw,” says Mr. B., “from the S. E. a haze come, in color like the purple part of the rainbow, but not so compressed or thick. It did not occupy twenty yards in breadth, and was about twelve feet high from the ground. It was a kind of blush upon the air, and it moved very rapidly, for I scarce could turn to fall upon the ground, with my head northward, when I felt the heat of its current plainly upon my face. We all lay flat upon the ground, as if dead, till Idris told us it was blown over. The meteor or purple haze which I saw was indeed passed, but the light air that still blew was of a heat to threaten suffocation. for my part, I found distinctly in my breast that I had imbibed a part of it; nor was I free from an asthmatic sensation till I had been some months in Italy, at the bathe of Poretta, near two years afterwards.”—*Travels*, vol. vi., p. 462. On another occasion the whole company were made ill by one of these pestilential blasts, so that they had scarcely strength to load their camels. — *ibid.*, p. 484. The action of this destructive wind is referred to by the Prophet Hosea 13:15: Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an EAST WIND shall come, the wind of the Lord shall come up FROM THE WILDERNESS, and his spring shall BECOME DRY, and his fountain shall be DRIED up: he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels.

Verse 8. *Called for all the magicians*— **חַרְטֻמִּים** chartummim. The word here used may probably mean no more than interpreters of abstruse and difficult subjects; and especially of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, an art which is now entirely lost. It is most likely that the term is Egyptian, and consequently its etymology must remain unknown to us. If Hebrew, Mr. Parkhurst’s definition may be as good as any: “**חֶרֶט** cheret, a pen or instrument to write or draw with, and **וְעָהָתָאֵם** tam, to perfect or

accomplish; those who were perfect in drawing their sacred, astrological, and hieroglyphical figures or characters, and who, by means of them, pretended to extraordinary feats, among which was the interpretation of dreams. They seem to have been such persons as Josephus (Ant., lib. ii., c. 9, s. 2) calls **ιερογραμματεις** sacred scribes, or professors of sacred learning.”

Wise men—**חכמיה** chacameyha, the persons who, according to Porphyry, “addicted themselves to the worship of God and the study of wisdom, passing their whole life in the contemplation of Divine things. Contemplation of the stars, self-purification, arithmetic, and geometry, and singing hymns in honor of their gods, was their continual employment.”-See Dodd. It was probably among these that Pythagoras conversed, and from whom he borrowed that modest name by which he wished his countrymen to distinguish him, viz., **φιλοσοφος**, a philosopher, simply, a lover of wisdom.

Verse 9. I do remember my faults— It is not possible he could have forgotten the circumstance to which he here alludes; it was too intimately connected with all that was dear to him, to permit him ever to forget it. But it was not convenient for him to remember this before; and probably he would not have remembered it now, had he not seen, that giving this information in such a case was likely to serve his own interest. We are justified in thinking evil of this man because of his scandalous neglect of a person who foretold the rescue of his life from imminent destruction, and who, being unjustly confined, prayed to have his case fairly represented to the king that justice might be done him; but this courtier, though then in the same circumstances himself, found it convenient to forget the poor, friendless Hebrew slave!

Verse 14. They brought him hastily out of the dungeon— Pharaoh was in perplexity on account of his dreams; and when he heard of Joseph, he sent immediately to get him brought before him. He shaved himself-having let his beard grow all the time he was in prison, he now trimmed it, for it is not likely that either the Egyptians or Hebrews shaved themselves in our sense of the word: the change of raiment was, no doubt, furnished out of the king’s wardrobe; as Joseph, in his present circumstances, could not be supposed to have any changes of raiment.

Verse 16. *It is not in me, etc.*— בלעדִי biladai, without or independently of me — I am not essential to thy comfort, God himself has thee under his care. And he will send thee, or answer thee, peace; thou shalt have prosperity (שלום shelom) howsoever ominous thy dreams may appear. By this answer he not only conciliated the mind of the king, but led him to expect his help from that GOD from whom alone all comfort, protection, and prosperity, must proceed.

Verse 18. *Seven kine, fat-fleshed*— See Clarke on “Genesis 41:2”. And observe farther, that the seven fat and the seven lean kine coming out of the same river plainly show, at once, the cause both of the plenty and the dearth. It is well known that there is scarcely any rain in Egypt; and that the country depends for its fertility on the overflowing of the Nile; and that the fertility is in proportion to the duration and quantity of the overflow. We may therefore safely conclude that the seven years of plenty were owing to an extraordinary overflowing of the Nile; and that the seven years of dearth were occasioned by a very partial, or total want of this essentially necessary inundation. Thus then the two sorts of cattle, signifying years of plenty and want, might be said to come out of the same river, as the inundation was either complete, partial, or wholly restrained. See Clarke on “Genesis 41:31”.

Verse 21. *And when they had eaten them up, etc.*— Nothing can more powerfully mark the excess and severity of the famine than creatures of the beeve or of the hippopotamus kind eating each other, and yet without any effect; remaining as lean and as wretched as they were before. A sense of want increases the appetite, and stimulates the digestive powers to unusual action; hence the concoction of the food becomes very rapid, and it is hurried through the intestines before its nutritive particles can be sufficiently absorbed; and thus, though much is eaten, very little nourishment is derived from it. And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favored, as at the beginning. A most nervous and physically correct description.

Verse 25. *God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do.*— Joseph thus shows the Egyptian king that though the ordinary cause of plenty or want is the river Nile, yet its inundations are under the direction of God: the dreams are sent by him, not only to signify beforehand the plenty and

want, but to show also that all these circumstances, however fortuitous they may appear to man, are under the direction of an overruling Providence.

Verse 31. *The plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following*— As Egypt depends for its fertility on the flowing of the Nile, and this flowing is not always equal, there must be a point to which it must rise to saturate the land sufficiently, in order to produce grain sufficient for the support of its inhabitants. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. v., cap. 9, has given us a scale by which the plenty and dearth may be ascertained; and, from what I have been able to collect from modern travelers, this scale may be yet considered as perfectly correct. *Justum incrementum est cubitorum 16. Minores aquae non omnia rigant, ampliores detinent, tardius recedendo. HAE serendi tempora absumunt, solo madente, ILLAE non dant, sitiente. Utrumque reputat provincia. In 12. cubitis famem sentit. In 13. etiamnum esurit; xiv. cubita hilaritatem afferunt; 15. securitatem; 16. delicias.* “The ordinary height of the inundations is sixteen cubits. When the waters are lower than this standard they do not overflow the whole ground; when above this standard, they are too long in running off. In the first case the ground is not saturated: by the second, the waters are detained so long on the ground that seed-time is lost. The province marks both. If it rise only twelve cubits, a famine is the consequence. Even at thirteen cubits hunger prevails; fourteen cubits produces general rejoicing; fifteen, perfect security; and sixteen, all the luxuries of life.”

When the Nile rises to eighteen cubits it prevents the sowing of the land in due season, and as necessarily produces a famine as when it does not overflow its banks.

Verse 33. *A man discreet and wise*— As it is impossible that Joseph could have foreseen his own elevation, consequently he gave this advice without any reference to himself. The counsel therefore was either immediately inspired by God, or was dictated by policy, prudence, and sound sense.

Verse 34. *Let him appoint officers*— פקידים pekidim, visiters, overseers: translated by Ainsworth, bishops; see Genesis 39:1.

Take up the fifth part of the land— What is still called the meery, or that part of the produce which is claimed by the king by way of tax. It is probable that in Joseph's time it was not so much as a fifth part, most likely a tenth: but as this was an extraordinary occasion, and the earth brought forth by handfuls, Genesis 41:47, the king would be justified in requiring a fifth; and from the great abundance, the people could pay this increased tax without feeling it to be oppressive.

Verse 35. Under the hand of Pharaoh— To be completely at the disposal of the king.

Verse 37. The thing was good— Pharaoh and his courtiers saw that the counsel was prudent, and should be carefully followed.

Verse 38. In whom the Spirit of God is?—רוח אלהים ruach Elohim, the identical words used Genesis 1:2; and certainly to be understood here as in the preceding place. If the Egyptians were idolaters, they acknowledged Joseph's God; and it is not to be supposed that they only became acquainted with him on this occasion. The knowledge of the true God was in Egypt long before; but it is very likely that though they acknowledged his influence with respect to Joseph, as they saw most clearly that he acted under an influence far beyond that of their magicians, for he interpreted dreams which they could not; yet they might, notwithstanding, have their gods many and their lords many at this time, for we know that in religious matters they were exceedingly corrupt afterwards.

Verse 40. According unto thy word shall all my people be ruled— Literally, At thy mouth shall all my people kiss. In the eastern countries it is customary to kiss any thing that comes from a superior, and this is done by way of testifying respect and submission. In this sense the words in the text are to be understood: All the people shall pay the profoundest respect and obedience to all thy orders and commands.

Only in the throne will I be greater than thou.— This, in one word, is a perfect description of a prime minister. Thou shalt have the sole management, under me, of all state affairs.

Verse 42. And Pharaoh took off his ring-and put it upon Joseph's hand— In this ring was probably set the king's signet, by which the royal

instruments were sealed; and thus Joseph was constituted what we would call Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.

Vestures of fine linen— שש shesh. Whether this means linen or cotton is not known. It seems to have been a term by which both were denominated; or it may be some other substance or cloth with which we are unacquainted. If the fine linen of Egypt was such as that which invests the bodies of the mummies, and these in general were persons of the first distinction, and consequently were enveloped in cloth of the finest quality, it was only fine comparatively speaking, Egypt being the only place at that time where such cloth was manufactured. I have often examined the cloth about the bodies of the most splendidly ornamented mummies, and found it sackcloth when compared with the fine Irish linens. As this shesh appears to have been a part of the royal clothing, it was probably both scarce and costly. “By comparing,” says Parkhurst, “Exodus 25:4, 26:1, with 2 Chronicles 2:14, and Exodus 26:31, with 2 Chronicles 3:14, it appears that בויז butz, cotton, is called שש shesh; and by comparing Exodus 28:42, with Exodus 39:28, that בד bad, linen, is also called שש shesh; so that shesh seems a name expressive of either of these, from their cheerful vivid whiteness.”

Put a gold chain about his neck— This was not merely a badge of office. The chain might be intended to point out the union which should subsist between all parts of the government- the king, his ministers, and the people; as also that necessary dependence which they had reciprocally on each other, as well as the connection which must be preserved between the different members of the body politic, and the laws and institutions by which they were to be governed. Its being of gold might be intended to show the excellence, utility, and permanence of a government constituted on wise, just, and equal laws. We are justified in drawing such inferences as these, because in ancient times, in all nations, every thing was made an emblem or representation of some spiritual or moral subject it is strange that, probably without adverting to the reasons, the chain of gold worn about the neck is in different nations an emblem of civil authority.

Verse 43. He made him to ride in the second chariot— That which usually followed the king’s chariot in public ceremonies.

Bow the knee— אַבְרָחַ abrech, which we translate bow the knee, and which we might as well translate any thing else, is probably an Egyptian word, the signification of which is utterly unknown. If we could suppose it to be a Hebrew word, it might be considered as compounded of אב ab, father, and רַח rach, tender; for Joseph might be denominated a father, because of his care over the people, and the provision he was making for their preservation; and tender because of his youth. Or it may be compounded of אב ab, father, and בָּרַךְ barech, blessing, the latter ב both being easily lost in the preceding one; and Joseph might have this epithet as well as the other, on account of the care he was taking to turn aside the heavy curse of the seven years of famine, by accumulating the blessings of the seven years of plenty. Besides, father seems to have been a name of office, and probably father of the king or father of Pharaoh might signify the same as the king's minister among us; see on Genesis 45:8. But if it be an Egyptian word, it is vain to look for its signification in Hebrew.

Verse 44. I am Pharaoh— The same as if he had said, I am the king; for Pharaoh was the common title of the sovereigns of Egypt.

Verse 45. Zaphnath-paaneah— The meaning of this title is as little known as that of abrech in the preceding verse. Some translate it, The revealer of secrets; others, The treasury of glorious comfort. St. Jerome translates the whole verse in the most arbitrary manner. Vertitque nomen ejus, et vocavit eum, lingua Aegyptiaca, Salvatorem mundi. “And he changed his name, and called him in the Egyptian language, The savior of the world.” None of the Asiatic versions acknowledge this extraordinary gloss, and it is certainly worthy of no regard. The Anglo-Saxon nearly copies the Vulgate: [AS] And named him in Egyptian, The healer of the world. All the etymologies hitherto given of this word are, to say the least of them, doubtful. I believe it also to be an Egyptian epithet, designating the office to which he was now raised; and similar to our compound terms, Prime-Minister, Lord Chancellor, High-Treasurer, Chief Justice, etc.

Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah— There is no likelihood that the Poti-pherah mentioned here is the same as the Potiphar who had purchased Joseph, and, on the false accusations of his wife, cast him into prison. 1. The Scripture gives no intimation that they were one and the same person. 2. Poti-pherah had children, and Potiphar was an eunuch; See

Clarke on “Genesis 37:36”; for though eunuchs often kept women, there is no proof that they had any issue by them.

Priest of On.— For the signification of the word כֹּהֵן cohen or priest, See Clarke on “Genesis 14:18”. On is rendered Heliopolis (the city of the sun, [AS]) by the Septuagint and Anglo-Saxon; and it is very likely that this Poti-pherah was intendant of that nome or province, under Pharaoh.

Joseph went out over all the land— No doubt for the building of granaries, and appointing proper officers to receive the corn in every place, as Dr. Dodd has very properly conjectured.

Verse 46. Joseph was thirty years old— As he was seventeen years old when he was sold into Egypt, Genesis 37:2, and was now thirty, he must have been thirteen years in slavery.

Stood before Pharaoh— This phrase always means admission to the immediate presence of the sovereign, and having the honor of his most unlimited confidence. Among the Asiatic princes, the privilege of coming even to their seat, of standing before them, etc., was granted only to the highest favorites.

Verse 47. The earth brought forth by handfuls.— This probably refers principally to rice, as it grows in tufts, a great number of stalks proceeding from the same seed. In those years the Nile probably rose sixteen cubits; See Clarke on “Genesis 41:31.

Verse 50. Two sons— Whom he called by names expressive of God’s particular and bountiful providence towards him. MANASSEH, מְנַשֶּׁה menashsheh, signifies forgetfulness, from נָשַׁח nashah, to forget; and EPHRAIM, אֶפְרַיִם ephrayim, fruitfulness, from פָּרָה parah, to be fruitful; and he called his sons by these names, because God had enabled him to forget all his toil, disgrace, and affliction, and had made him fruitful in the very land in which he had suffered the greatest misfortune and indignities.

Verse 54. The seven years of dearth began to come— Owing in Egypt to the Nile not rising more than twelve or thirteen cubits; (See Clarke on “Genesis 41:31”;) but there must have been other causes which affected other countries, not immediately dependent on the Nile, though remotely connected with Egypt and Canaan.

The dearth was in all lands— All the countries dependent on the Nile. And it appears that a general drought had taken place, at least through all Egypt and Canaan; for it is said, Genesis 41:57, that the famine was sore in all lands — Egypt and Canaan, and their respective dependencies.

Verse 55. *When all the land of Egypt was famished*— As Pharaoh, by the advice of Joseph, had exacted a fifth part of all the grain during the seven years of plenty, it is very likely that no more was left than what was merely necessary to supply the ordinary demand both in the way of home consumption, and for the purpose of barter or sale to neighboring countries.

Verse 56. *Over all the face of the earth*— The original, **הָאָרֶץ כֹּל פָּנָי** col peney haarets, should be translated, all the face of that land, viz., Egypt, as it is explained at the end of the verse.

Verse 57. *All countries came into Egypt-to buy*— As there had not been a sufficiency of rains, vapours, etc., to swell the Nile, to effect a proper inundation in Egypt, the same cause would produce drought, and consequently scarcity, in all the neighboring countries; and this may be all that is intended in the text.

1. As the providence of God evidently led the butler and baker of Pharaoh, as well as the king himself, to dream the prophetic dreams mentioned in this and the preceding chapter, so his Spirit in Joseph led to the true interpretation of them. What a proof do all these things give us of a providence that is so general as to extend its influence to every part, and so particular as to notice, influence, and direct the most minute circumstances! Surely God “has way every where, and all things serve his will.”

2. Dreams have been on one hand superstitiously regarded, and on the other skeptically disregarded. That some are prophetic there can be no doubt; that others are idle none can hesitate to believe. Dreams may be divided into the six following kinds: 1. Those which are the mere nightly result of the mind’s reflections and perplexities during the business of the day. 2. Those which spring from a diseased state of the body, occasioning startings, terrors, etc. 3. Those which spring from an impure state of the heart, mental repetitions of those acts or images of illicit pleasure, riot, and

excess, which form the business of a profligate life. 4. Those which proceed from a diseased mind, occupied with schemes of pride, ambition, grandeur, etc. These, as forming the characteristic conduct of the life, are repeatedly reacted in the deep watches of the night, and strongly agitate the soul with illusive enjoyments and disappointments. 5. Those which come immediately from Satan, which instil thoughts and principles opposed to truth and righteousness, leaving strong impressions on the mind suited to its natural bent and turn, which, in the course of the day, by favoring circumstances, may be called into action. 6. Those which come from God, and which necessarily lead to him, whether prophetic of future good or evil, or impressing holy purposes and heavenly resolutions. Whatever lends away from God, truth, and righteousness, must be from the source of evil; whatever leads to obedience to God, and to acts of benevolence to man, must be from the source of goodness and truth. Reader, there is often as much superstition in disregarding as in attending to dreams; and he who fears God will escape it in both.

CHAPTER 42

Jacob sends his ten sons to Egypt to buy corn, 1-3; but refuses to permit Benjamin to go, 4. They arrive in Egypt, and bow themselves before Joseph, 5, 6. He treats them roughly and calls them spies, 7-10. They defend themselves and give an account of their family, 11-13. He appears unmoved, and puts them all in prison for three days, 14-17. On the third day he releases them on condition of their bringing Benjamin, 18-20. Being convicted by their consciences, they reproach themselves with their cruelty to their brother Joseph, and consider themselves under the displeasure of God, 21-23. Joseph is greatly affected, detains Simeon as a pledge for Benjamin, orders their sacks to be filled with corn, and the purchase money to be put in each man's sack, 24, 25. When one of them is going to give his ass provender he discovers his money in the mouth of his sack, at which they are greatly alarmed, 26-28. They come to their father in Canaan, and relate what happened to them in their journey, 29-34. On emptying their sacks, each man's money is found in his sack's mouth, which causes alarm both to them and their father, 35. Jacob deploras the loss of Joseph and Simeon, and refuses to let Benjamin go, though Reuben offers his two sons as pledges for his safety, 36-38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 42

Verse 1. *Jacob saw that there was corn*— That is, Jacob heard from the report of others that there was plenty in Egypt. The operations of one sense, in Hebrew, are often put for those of another. Before agriculture was properly known and practiced, famines were frequent; Canaan seems to have been peculiarly vexed by them. There was one in this land in the time of Abraham, Genesis 12:10; another in the days of Isaac, Genesis 26:1; and now a third in the time of Jacob. To this St. Stephen alludes, Acts 7:11: there was great affliction, and our fathers found no sustenance.

Verse 6. *Joseph was the governor*— שליט shallit, an intendant, a protector, from שלט skalat, to be over as a protector; hence שלטים

shelatim, shields, or arms for protection and defense, 2 Samuel 8:7; and שֵׁלֶטוֹן shilton, power and authority, Ecclesiastes 8:4, 8; and hence the Arabic [A] sultan, a lord, prince, or king, from [A] salata, he obtained and exercised dominion, he ruled. Was it not from this very circumstance, Joseph being shallit, that all the Mohammedan governors of Egypt, etc., took the title of sultan?

Bowed down themselves before him— Thus fulfilling the prophetic dream, Genesis 37:7, 8, which they had taken every precaution to render null and void. But there is neither might nor counsel against the Lord.

Verse 9. *Ye are spies*— מֵרַגְלִים אַתֶּם meraggelim attem, ye are footmen, trampers about, footpads, vagabonds, lying in wait for the property of others; persons who, under the pretense of wishing to buy corn, desire only to find out whether the land be so defenceless that the tribes to which ye belong (see Genesis 42:11) may attack it successfully, drive out the inhabitants, and settle in it themselves; or, having plundered it, retire to their deserts. This is a frequent custom among the Arabs to the present day. Thus Joseph spake roughly to them merely to cover that warmth of affection which he felt towards them; and that being thus brought, apparently, into straits and dangerous circumstances, their consciences might be awakened to reflect on and abhor their own wickedness.

Verse 11. *We are all one man's sons*— We do not belong to different tribes, and it is not likely that one family would make a hostile attempt upon a whole kingdom. This seems to be the very ground that Joseph took, viz., that they were persons belonging to different tribes. Against this particularly they set up their defense, asserting that they all belonged to one family; and it is on the proof of this that Joseph puts them, Genesis 42:15, in obliging them to leave one as a hostage, and insisting on their bringing their remaining brother; so that he took exactly the same precautions to detect them as if he had had no acquaintance with them, and had every reason to be suspicious.

Verse 13. *One is not.*— An elliptical sentence, One is not alive.

Verse 15. *By the life of Pharaoh*— חַי פַּרְעֹה־ chey Pharaoh, Pharaoh liveth. As if he had said, As surely as the king of Egypt lives, so surely shall ye not go hence unless your brother come hither. Here therefore is no

oath; it is just what they themselves make it in their report to their father, Genesis 43:3: the man did solemnly protest unto us; and our translators should not have put it in the form of an oath, especially as the original not only will bear another version, but is absolutely repugnant to this in our sense of the word.

Verse 18. *I fear God*— את האלהים אני ירא eth haelohim ani yare, literally translated the passage runs thus, I also fear the gods; but the emphatic ה ha is probably added by Joseph, both here and in his conversation with Pharaoh, the more particularly to point out the eminence and perfection of the Supreme Being as contradistinguished from the gods of Egypt. He seems to say to his brethren, I am a worshipper of the true God, and ye have nothing to fear.

Verse 21. *We are verily guilty*— How finely are the office and influence of conscience exemplified in these words! It was about twenty-two years since they had sold their brother, and probably their conscience had been lulled asleep to the present hour. God combines and brings about those favorable circumstances which produce attention and reflection, and give weight to the expostulations of conscience. How necessary to hear its voice in time, for here it may be the instrument of salvation; but if not heard in this world, it must be heard in the next; and there, in association with the unquenchable fire, it will be the never-dying worm. Reader, has not thy sin as yet found thee out? Pray to God to take away the veil from thy heart, and give thee that deep sense of guilt which shall oblige thee to flee for refuge to the hope which is set before thee in the Gospel of Christ.

Verse 23. *For he spake unto them by an interpreter.*— Either there was a very great difference between the two languages as then spoken, or Joseph, to prevent all suspicion, might affect to be ignorant of both. We have many evidences in this book that the Egyptians, Hebrews, Canaanites, and Syrians, could understand each other in a general way, though there are also proofs that there was a considerable difference between their dialects.

Verse 24. *Took-Simeon and bound him before their eyes.*— This was retaliation, if, as the rabbins suppose, it was Simeon who bound Joseph, and put him into the pit. A recollection of this circumstance must exceedingly deepen the sense he had of his guilt.

Verse 25. Commanded to fill their sacks— כליהם keleyhem, their vessels; probably large woollen bags, or baskets lined with leather, which, as Sir John Chardin says, are still in use through all Asia, and are called tambellet; they are covered with leather, the better to resist the wet, and to prevent dirt and sand from mixing with the grain. These vessels, of whatever sort, must have been different from those called שק sak in the twenty-seventh and following verses, which was probably only a small sack or bag, in which each had reserved a sufficiency of corn for his ass during the journey; the larger vessels or bags serving to hold the wheat or rice they had brought, and their own packages. The reader will at once see that the English word sack is plainly derived from the Hebrew.

Verse 26. They laded their asses— Amounting, no doubt, to several scores, if not hundreds, else they could not have brought a sufficiency of corn for the support of so large a family as that of Jacob.

Verse 27. One of them opened his sack— From Genesis 42:35 we learn that each of the ten brethren on emptying his sack when he returned found his money in it; can we suppose that this was not discovered by them all before? It seems not; and the reason was probably this: the money was put in the mouth of the sack of one only, in the sacks of the others it was placed at or near to the bottom; hence only one discovered it on the road, the rest found it when they came to empty their sacks at their father's house.

In the inn— במלון bammalon, from ל lan, to lodge, stay, remain, etc. The place at which they stopped to bait or rest themselves and their asses. Our word inn gives us a false idea here; there were no such places of entertainment at that time in the desert over which they had to pass, nor are there any to the present day. Travellers generally endeavor to reach a well, where they fill their girbahs, or leathern bottles, with fresh water, and having clogged their camels, asses, etc., permit them to crop any little verdure there may be in the place, keeping watch over them by turns. This is all we are to understand by the malon or inn in the text, for even caravanseries were not then in use, which are generally no more than four walls perfectly exposed, the place being open at the top.

Verse 28. *Their heart failed them*— וַיֵּצֵא לִבָּם valyetse libbam, their heart went out. This refers to that spasmodic affection which is felt in the breast at any sudden alarm or fright. Among the common people in our own country we find an expression exactly similar, “My heart was ready to leap out at my mouth,” used on similar occasions.

What is this that God hath done unto us?— Their guilty consciences, now thoroughly awakened, were in continual alarms; they felt that they deserved God’s curse, and every occurrence served to confirm and increase their suspicions.

Verse 35. *As they emptied their sacks*— See Clarke on “Genesis 42:27”.

Verse 36. *All these things are against me.*— עָלַי הָיוּ כָלֵנָה alai hayu cullanah; literally, All these things are upon me. Not badly translated by the Vulgate, In me haec omnia mala reciderunt, “All these evils fall back upon me.” They lie upon me as heavy loads, hastening my death; they are more than I can bear.

Verse 37. *Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee*— What a strange proposal made by a son to his father, concerning his grandchildren! But they show the honesty and affection of Reuben’s heart; he felt deeply for his father’s distress, and was determined to risk and hazard every thing in order to relieve and comfort him. There is scarcely a transaction in which Reuben is concerned that does not serve to set his character in an amiable point of view, except the single instance mentioned Genesis 35:22, and which for the sake of decency and piety we should wish to understand as the Targumists have explained it. See the notes.

Verse 38. *He is left alone*— That is, Benjamin is the only remaining son of Rachel; for he supposed Joseph, who was the other son, to be dead.

Shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow— Here he keeps up the idea of the oppressive burden mentioned Genesis 42:36, to which every occurrence was adding an additional weight, so that he felt it impossible to support it any longer.

The following observations of Dr. Dodd on this verse are very appropriate and judicious: “Nothing can be more tender and picturesque than the words of the venerable patriarch. Full of affection for his beloved Rachel,

he cannot think of parting with Benjamin, the only remaining pledge of that love, now Joseph, as he supposes, is no more. We seem to behold the gray-headed, venerable father pleading with his sons, the beloved Benjamin standing by his side, impatient sorrow in their countenances, and in his all the bleeding anxiety of paternal love. It will be difficult to find in any author, ancient or modern, a more exquisite picture.”

1. THERE is one doctrine relative to the economy of Divine Providence little heeded among men; I mean the doctrine of restitution. When a man has done wrong to his neighbor, though, on his repentance, and faith in our Lord Jesus, God forgives him his sin, yet he requires him to make restitution to the person injured, if it lie in the compass of his power. If he do not, God will take care to exact it in the course of his providence. Such respect has he for the dictates of infinite justice that nothing of this kind shall pass unnoticed. Several instances of this have already occurred in this history, and we shall see several more. No man should expect mercy at the hand of God who, having wronged his neighbor, refuses, when he has it in his power, to make restitution. Were he to weep tears of blood, both the justice and mercy of God would shut out his prayer, if he made not his neighbor amends for the injury he may have done him. The mercy of God, through the blood of the cross, can alone pardon his guilt; but no dishonest man can expect this; and he is a dishonest man who illegally holds the property of another in his hand. The unnatural brethren who sold their brother are now about to be captivated themselves; and the binder himself is bound in his turn: and though a kind Providence permits not the evil to fall upon them, yet, while apprehending it, they feel all its reality, conscience supplying the lack of prison, jailer, and bonds.

2. The ways of Providence are often to us dark and perplexed, so that we are ready to imagine that good can never result from what appears to us to be directly contrary to our interest; and we are often tempted to think that those very providential dealings of God, which have for their object our present and eternal welfare, are rather proofs of his displeasure, or evidences of his vindictive judgment. All these things are against me, said poor desponding Jacob; whereas, instead of being against him, all these things were for him; and by all these means was the merciful God working for the preservation of himself and his family, and the fulfillment of his ancient promise, that the posterity of Abraham should be as the stars of

heaven for multitude. How strange is it that our faith, after so many evidences of his goodness, should still be so weak; and that our opinion of him should be so imperfect, that we can never trust in him but while he is under our own eye! If we see him producing good, we can believe that he is doing so, and this is all. If we believe not, he abides faithful; but our unbelief must make our own way extremely perplexing and difficult.

CHAPTER 43

The famine continuing, Jacob desires his sons to go again to Egypt and buy some food, 1, 2. Judah shows the necessity of Benjamin's accompanying them, without whom it would be useless to return to Egypt, 3-5. Jacob expostulates with him, 6. Judah replies, and offers to become surety for Benjamin, 7-10. Jacob at last consenting and desires them to take a present with them for the governor of Egypt; and double money, that which they had brought back in their sacks' mouth, and the price of the load they were now to bring; and, having prayed for them, sends them away, 11-15. They arrive in Egypt, and are brought to Joseph's house to dine with him, at which they are greatly alarmed, 16-18. They speak to the steward of Joseph's house concerning the money returned in their sacks, 19-22. He gives them encouragement, 23, 24. Having made ready the present, they bring it to Joseph when he came home to dine, 25, 26. He speaks kindly to them, and inquires concerning their health, and that of their father, 27, 28. Joseph is greatly affected at seeing his brother Benjamin, 29-31. They dine with him, and are distinguished according to their seniority; but Benjamin receives marks of peculiar favor, 32-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 43

Verse 8. *Send the lad with me*— As the original is not יָלֵד *yeled*, from which we have derived our word *lad*, but נֶעָר *naar*, it would have been better had our translators rendered it by some other term, such as the youth, or the young man, and thus the distinction in the Hebrew would have been better kept up. Benjamin was at this time at least twenty-four years of age, some think thirty, and had a family of his own. See Genesis 46:21.

That we may live, and not die— An argument drawn from self-preservation, what some have termed the first law of nature. By your keeping Benjamin we are prevented from going to Egypt; if we go not to

Egypt we shall get no corn; if we get no corn we shall all perish by famine; and Benjamin himself, who otherwise might live, must, with thee and the whole family, infallibly die.

Verse 9. *Let me bear the blame for ever*—וְחַטָּאתִי לְךָ כָּל הַיָּמִים vechatathi lecha col haiyamim, then shall I sin against thee all my days, and consequently be liable to punishment for violating my faith.

Verse 11. *Carry down the man a present*— From the very earliest times presents were used as means of introduction to great men. This is particularly noticed by Solomon: A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men, Proverbs 18:16. But what was the present brought to Joseph on this occasion? After all the labor of commentators, we are obliged to be contented with probabilities and conjecture. According to our translation, the gifts were balm, honey, spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds.

Balm—צָרִי tsoṛi is supposed to signify resin in general, or some kind of gum issuing from trees.

Honey—דֶּבֶשׁ debash has been supposed to be the same as the rob of grapes, called in Egypt dibs. Others think that honey, in the common sense of the term, is to be understood here: we know that honey was plentiful in Palestine.

Spices—נִכְאוֹת nechoth is supposed to mean gum storax, which might be very valuable on account of its qualities as a perfume.

Myrrh—לוֹט lot, supposed by some to mean stacte; by others to signify an ointment made of myrrh.

Nuts—בִּטְנִים botnim, by some rendered pistachio nuts, those produced in Syria being the finest in the world; by others, dates; others, walnuts; others, pine apples; others, the nuts of the terebinth tree.

Almonds—שִׁקְדִים shekedim, correctly enough translated, and perhaps the only article in the collection of which we know any thing with certainty. It is generally allowed that the land of Canaan produces the best almonds in the east; and on this account they might be deemed a very

acceptable present to the governor of Egypt. Those who wish to see this subject exhausted must have recourse to the *Physica Sacra* of Scheuehzer.

Verse 12. *Double money*— What was returned in their sacks, and what was farther necessary to buy another load.

Verse 14. This verse may be literally translated thus: “And God, the all-sufficient, shall give you tender mercies before the man, and send to you your other brother, and Benjamin; and I, as I shall be childless, so I shall be childless.” That is, I will submit to this privation, till God shall restore my children. It appears that this verse is spoken prophetically; and that God at this time gave Jacob a supernatural evidence that his children should be restored.

Verse 16. *Slay, and make ready*— **טבח טבח** teboach tebach, slay a slaying, or make a great slaughter — let preparations be made for a great feast or entertainment. See a similar form of speech, Proverbs 9:2; 1 Samuel 25:11; and Genesis 31:54.

Verse 18. *And the men were afraid*— A guilty conscience needs no accuser. Every thing alarms them; they now feel that God is exacting retribution, and they know not what the degrees shall be, nor where it shall stop.

Fall upon us— **התגלל עלינו** hithgolel alainu, roll himself upon us. A metaphor taken from wrestlers; when a man has overthrown his antagonist, he rolls himself upon him, in order to keep him down.

And our asses.— Which they probably had in great number with them; and which, if captured, would have been a great loss to the family of Jacob, as such cattle must have constituted a principal part of its riches.

Verse 20. *O sir, we came indeed-to buy food*— There is a frankness now in the conduct of Joseph’s brethren that did not exist before; they simply and honestly relate the whole circumstance of the money being found in their sacks on their return from their last journey. Afflictions from the hand of God, and under his direction, have a wonderful tendency to humble the soul. Did men know how gracious his designs are in sending such, no murmur would ever be heard against the dispensations of Divine Providence.

Verse 23. *And he said*— The address of the steward in this verse plainly proves that the knowledge of the true God was in Egypt. It is probable that the steward himself was a Hebrew, and that Joseph had given him intimation of the whole affair; and though he was not at liberty to reveal it, yet he gives them assurances that the whole business would issue happily.

I had your money.— כספכם בא אלִי caspechem ba elai, your money comes to me. As I am the steward, the cash for the corn belongs to me. Ye have no reason to be apprehensive of any evil; the whole transaction is between myself and you; receive therefore the money as a present from the God of your father, no matter whose hands he makes use of to convey it. The conduct of the steward, as well as his words, had a great tendency to relieve their burdened minds.

Verse 24. *Brought the men into Joseph's house, etc.*— This is exactly the way in which a Hindoo receives a guest. As soon as he enters, one of the civilities is the presenting of water to wash his feet. So indispensable is this, that water to wash the feet makes a part of the offering to an image.

Verse 27. *And he asked them of their welfare*— This verse may be thus translated: “And he asked them concerning their prosperity; and he said, is your father prosperous, the old man who ye told me was alive? And they said, Thy servant our father prospers; he is yet alive.”

Verse 29. *He lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin*— They were probably introduced to him successively; and as Benjamin was the youngest, he would of course be introduced last.

God be gracious unto thee, my son!— A usual salutation in the east from the aged and superiors to the younger and inferiors, which, though very emphatic and expressive in ancient times, in the present day means no more than “I am your humble servant,” or “I am exceedingly glad to see you;” words which among us mean—just nothing. Even in David's time they seem to have been, not only devoid of meaning, but to be used as a cloak for the basest and most treacherous designs: They bless with their mouths, but they curse inwardly. Hence Joab salutes Amasa, kisses him with apparent affection, and stabs him in the same moment! The case of Judas, betraying the Son of man with a kiss, will not be forgotten.

Verse 32. *They set on for him by himself, etc.*— From the text it appears evident that there were three tables, one for Joseph, one for the Egyptians, and one for the eleven brethren.

The Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews— There might have been some political reason for this, with which we are unacquainted; but independently of this, two may be assigned. 1. The Hebrews were shepherds; and Egypt had been almost ruined by hordes of lawless wandering banditti, under the name of Hycsos, or King-shepherds, who had but a short time before this been expelled from the land by Amasis, after they had held it in subjection for 259 years, according to Manetho, committing the most wanton cruelties. 2. The Hebrews sacrificed those animals which the Egyptians held sacred, and fed on their flesh. The Egyptians were in general very superstitious, and would have no social intercourse with people of any other nation; hence we are informed that they would not even use the knife of a Greek, because they might have reason to suspect it had cut the flesh of some of those animals which they held sacred. Among the Hindoos different castes will not eat food cooked in the same vessel. If a person of another caste touch a cooking vessel, it is thrown away. Some are of opinion that the Egyptian idolatry, especially their worship of Apis under the figure of an ox, was posterior to the time of Joseph; ancient monuments are rather against this opinion, but it is impossible to decide either way. The clause in the Alexandrian Septuagint stands thus, **βδελυγμα εστιν τοις αιγυπτιοις [πασ ποιμην προβατων]**, “For [every shepherd] is an abomination to the Egyptians;” but this clause is probably borrowed from Genesis 46:34, where it stands in the Hebrew as well as in the Greek. See Clarke on “Genesis 46:34”.

Verse 33. *The first-born according to his birthright*— This must greatly astonish these brethren, to find themselves treated with so much ceremony, and at the same time with so much discernment of their respective ages.

Verse 34. *Benjamin’s mess was five times so much as any of theirs.*— Sir John Chardin observes that “in Persia, Arabia, and the Indies, there are several houses where they place several plates in large salvers, and set one of these before each person, or before two or three, according to the magnificence of each house. This is the method among the Hindoos; the

dishes are not placed on the table, but messes are sent to each individual by the master of the feast or by his substitute. The great men of the state are always served by themselves, in the feasts that are made for them; and with greater profusion, their part of each kind of provision being always DOUBLE, TREBLE, or a LARGER proportion of each kind of meat." The circumstance of Benjamin's having a mess FIVE times as large as any of his brethren, shows the peculiar honor which Joseph designed to confer upon him. See several useful observations on this subject in Harmer's Observ., vol. ii., p. 101, etc., Edit. 1808.

1. THE scarcity in Canaan was not absolute; though they had no corn, they had honey, nuts, almonds, etc. In the midst of judgment, God remembers mercy. If there was scarcity in Canaan, there was plenty in Egypt; and though his providence had denied one country corn, and accumulated it in the other, his bounty had placed in the former money enough to procure it from the latter. How true is the saying, "It is never ill with any but it might be worse!" Let us be deeply thankful to God that we have any thing, seeing we deserve no good at his hands.

2. If we examine our circumstances closely, and call to remembrance the dealings of God's providence towards us, we shall find that we can sing much both of mercy and of judgment. For one day of absolute unavoidable want, we shall find we had three hundred and sixty-four, if not of fullness, yet of a competency. Famines, though rarely happening, are everywhere recorded; innumerable years of abundance are scarcely ever registered! Such is the perverseness and ingratitude of man!

CHAPTER 44

Joseph commands his steward to put his cup secretly into Benjamin's sack, 1, 2. The sons of Jacob depart with the corn they had purchased, 3. Joseph commands his steward to pursue them, and charge them with having stolen his cup, 4-6. The brethren excuse themselves, protest their innocence, and offer to submit to be slaves should the cup be found with any of them, 7-9. Search is made, and the cup is found in Benjamin's sack, 10-12. They are brought back and submit themselves to Joseph, 13-16. He determines that Benjamin alone, with whom the cup is found, shall remain in captivity, 17. Judah, in a most affecting speech, pleads for Benjamin's enlargement, and offers himself to be a bondman in his stead, 18-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 44

Verse 2. Put my cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest— The stratagem of the cup seems to have been designed to bring Joseph's brethren into the highest state of perplexity and distress, that their deliverance by the discovery that Joseph was their brother might have its highest effect.

Verse 5. Whereby-he divineth?— Divination by cups has been from time immemorial prevalent among the Asiatics; and for want of knowing this, commentators have spent a profusion of learned labor upon these words, in order to reduce them to that kind of meaning which would at once be consistent with the scope and design of the history, and save Joseph from the impeachment of sorcery and divination. I take the word נחש nachash here in its general acceptation of to view attentively, to inquire. Now there has been in the east a tradition, the commencement of which is lost in immemorial time, that there was a CUP, which had passed successively into the hands of different potentates, which possessed the strange property of representing in it the whole world, and all the things which were then doing in it. The cup is called [P] jami Jemsheed, the cup of Jemsheed, a very ancient king of Persia, whom late historians and poets

have confounded with Bacchus, Solomon, Alexander the Great, etc. This CUP, filled with the elixir of immortality, they say was discovered when digging to lay the foundations of Persepolis. The Persian poets are full of allusions to this cup, which, from its property of representing the whole world and its transactions, is styled by them [P] jam jehan nima, “the cup showing the universe;” and to the intelligence received by means of it they attribute the great prosperity of their ancient monarchs, as by it they understood all events, past, present, and to come. Many of the Mohammedan princes and governors affect still to have information of futurity by means of a cup. When Mr. Norden was at Derri in the farthest part of Egypt, in a very dangerous situation, an ill-natured and powerful Arab, in a threatening way, told one of their people whom they sent to him that “he knew what sort of people they were, for he had consulted his cup, and found by it that they were those of whom one of their prophets had said, that Franks (Europeans) would come in disguise; and, passing everywhere, examine the state of the country; and afterwards bring over a great number of other Franks, conquer the country, and exterminate all.” By this we see that the tradition of the divining cup still exists, and in the very same country too in which Joseph formerly ruled. Now though it is not at all likely that Joseph practiced any kind of divination, yet probably, according to the superstition of those times, (for I suppose the tradition to be even older than the time of Joseph,) supernatural influence might be attributed to his cup; and as the whole transaction related here was merely intended to deceive his brethren for a short time, he might as well affect divination by his cup, as he affected to believe they had stolen it. The steward therefore uses the word נחש nachash in its proper meaning: Is not this it out of which my lord drinketh, and in which he inspecteth accurately? Genesis 44:5. And hence Joseph says, Genesis 44:15: Wot ye not — did ye not know, that such a person as I (having such a cup) would accurately and attentively look into it? As I consider this to be the true meaning, I shall not trouble the reader with other modes of interpretation.

Verse 16. *What shall we say, etc.*— No words can more strongly mark confusion and perturbation of mind. They, no doubt, all thought that Benjamin had actually stolen the cup; and the probability of this guilt might be heightened by the circumstance of his having that very cup to

drink out of at dinner; for as he had the most honorable mess, so it is likely he had the most honorable cup to drink out of at the entertainment.

Verse 18. *Thou art even as Pharaoh.*— As wise, as powerful, and as much to be dreaded as he. In the Asiatic countries, the reigning monarch is always considered to be the pattern of all perfection; and the highest honor that can be conferred on any person, is to resemble him to the monarch; as the monarch himself is likened, in the same complimentary way, to an angel of God. See 2 Samuel 14:17, 18. Judah is the chief speaker here, because it was in consequence of his becoming surety for Benjamin that Jacob permitted him to accompany them to Egypt. See Genesis 43:9.

“EVERY man who reads,” says Dr. Dodd, “to the close of this chapter, must confess that Judah acts here the part both of the affectionate brother and of the dutiful son, who, rather than behold his father’s misery in ease of Benjamin’s being left behind, submits to become a bondman in his stead: and indeed there is such an air of candor and generosity running through the whole strain of this speech, the sentiments are so tender and affecting, the expressions so passionate, and flow so much from artless nature, that it is no wonder if they came home to Joseph’s heart, and forced him to throw off the mask.” “When one sees,” says Dr. Jackson, “such passages related by men who affect no art, and who lived long after the parties who first uttered them, we cannot conceive how all particulars could be so naturally and fully recorded, unless they had been suggested by His Spirit who gives mouths and speech unto men; who, being alike present to all successions, is able to communicate the secret thoughts or forefathers to their children, and put the very words of the deceased, never registered before, into the mouths or pens of their successors born many ages after; and that as exactly and distinctly as if they had been caught, in characters of steel or brass, as they issued out of their mouths. For it is plain that every circumstance is here related with such natural specifications, as if Moses had heard them talk; and therefore could not have been thus represented to us, unless they had been written by His direction who knows all things, fore-past, present, or to come.”

To two such able and accurate testimonies I may be permitted to add my own. No paraphrase can heighten the effect of Judah’s address to Joseph. To add would be to diminish its excellence; to attempt to explain would be

to obscure its beauties; to clothe the ideas in other language than that of Judah, and his translators in our Bible, would ruin its energy, and destroy its influence. It is perhaps one of the most tender, affecting pieces of natural oratory ever spoken or penned; and we need not wonder to find that when Joseph heard it he could not refrain himself, but wept aloud. His soul must have been insensible beyond what is common to human nature, had he not immediately yielded to a speech so delicately tender, and so powerfully impressive. We cannot but deplore the unnatural and unscientific division of the narrative in our common Bibles, which obliges us to have recourse to another chapter in order to witness the effects which this speech produced on the heart of Joseph.

CHAPTER 45

Joseph, deeply affected with the speech of Judah, could no longer conceal himself, but discovers himself to his brethren, 1-4. Excuses their conduct towards him, and attributes the whole to the providence of God, 5-8. Orders them to hasten to Canaan, and bring up their father and their own families, cattle, etc., because there were five years of the famine yet to come, 9-13. He embraces and converses with all his brethren, 14, 15. Pharaoh, hearing that Joseph's brethren were come to Egypt, and that Joseph had desired them to return to Canaan and bring back their families, not only confirms the order, but promises them the best part of the land of Egypt to dwell in; and provides them carriages to transport themselves and their households, 16-20. Joseph provides them with wagons according to the commandment of Pharaoh; and having given them various presents, sends them away with suitable advice, 21-24. They depart, arrive in Canaan, and announce the glad tidings to their father, who for a time believes not, but being assured of the truth of their relation, is greatly comforted, and resolves to visit Egypt, 25-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 45

Verse 1. Joseph could not refrain himself— The word **התאפק** hithappek is very emphatic; it signifies to force one's self, to do something against nature, to do violence to one's self. Joseph could no longer constrain himself to act a feigned part—all the brother and the son rose up in him at once, and overpowered all his resolutions; he felt for his father, he realized his disappointment and agony; and he felt for his brethren, "now at his feet submissive in distress;" and, that he might give free and full scope to his feelings, and the most ample play of the workings of his affectionate heart, he ordered all his attendants to go out, while he made himself known to his brethren. "The beauties of this chapter," says Dr. Dodd, "are so striking, that it would be an indignity to the reader's judgment to point them out; all who can read and feel must be sensible of

them, as there is perhaps nothing in sacred or profane history more highly wrought up, more interesting or affecting.”

Verse 2. *The Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.*— It seems strange that Joseph should have wept so loud that his cries should be heard at some considerable distance, as we may suppose his dwelling was not very nigh to the palace! “But this,” says Sir John Chardin, “is exactly the genius of the people of Asia—their sentiments of joy or grief are properly transports, and their transports are ungoverned, excessive, and truly outrageous. When any one returns from a long journey, or dies, his family burst into cries that may be heard twenty doors off; and this is renewed at different times, and continues many days, according to the vigor of the passion. Sometimes they cease all at once, and then begin as suddenly with a greater shrillness and loudness than one could easily imagine.” This circumstance Sir John brings to illustrate the verse in question. See Harmer, vol. iii. p. 17. But the house of Pharaoh may certainly signify Pharaoh’s servants, or any of the members of his household, such as those whom Joseph had desired to withdraw, and who might still be within hearing of his voice. After all, the words may only mean that the report was brought to Pharaoh’s house. See Genesis 45:16.

Verse 3. *I am Joseph*— Mr. Pope supposed that the discovery of Ulysses to his son Telemachus bears some resemblance to Joseph’s discovery of himself to his brethren. The passage may be seen in Homer, *Odys.* l. xvi., ver. 186-218.

A few lines from Cowper’s translation will show much of the spirit of the original, and also a considerable analogy between the two scenes: —

*“I am thy father, for whose sake thou lead’st
A life of wo by violence oppress’d.
So saying, he kiss’d his son; while from his cheeks
Tears trickled, tears till then perforce restrain’d.
Then threw Telemachus
His arms around his father’s neck, and wept.
Pangs of soft sorrow, not to be suppress’d,
Seized both. So they, their cheeks with big round drops of wo
Bedewing, stood.”*

Verse 5. *Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves*— This discovers a truly noble mind: he not only forgives and forgets, but he wishes even

those who had wronged him to forget the injury they had done, that they might not suffer distress on the account; and with deep piety he attributes the whole to the providence of God; for, says he, God did send me before you to preserve life. On every word here a strong emphasis may be laid. It is not you, but God; it is not you that sold me, but God who sent me; Egypt and Canaan must both have perished, had not a merciful provision been made; you were to come down hither, and God sent me before you; death must have been the consequence of this famine, had not God sent me here to preserve life.

Verse 6. *There shall neither be earing nor harvest.*— EARING has been supposed to mean collecting the ears of corn, which would confound it with harvest: the word, however, means ploughing or seed-time, from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.] *erian*, probably borrowed from the Latin *aro*, to plough, and plainly means that there should be no seed-time, and consequently no harvest; and why? Because there should be a total want of rain in other countries, and the Nile should not rise above twelve cubits in Egypt; See Clarke on “Genesis 41:31”. But the expressions here must be qualified a little, as we find from Genesis 47:19, that the Egyptians came to Joseph to buy seed; and it is probable that even during this famine they sowed some of the ground, particularly on the borders of the river, from which a crop, though not an abundant one, might be produced. The passage, however, in the above chapter may refer to the last year of the famine, when they came to procure seed for the ensuing year.

Verse 8. *He hath made me a father to Pharaoh*— It has already been conjectured that father was a name of office in Egypt, and that father of Pharaoh might among them signify the same as prime minister or the king’s minister does among us. Calmet has remarked that among the Phoenicians, Persians, Arabians, and Romans, the title of father was given to certain officers of state. The Roman emperors gave the name of father to the prefects of the Praetorium, as appears by the letters of Constantine to Ablavius. The caliphs gave the same name to their prime ministers. In Judges 17:10, Micah says to the young Levite, Dwell with me, and be unto me a FATHER and a priest. And Diodorus Siculus remarks that the teachers and counsellors of the kings of Egypt were chosen out of the priesthood.

Verse 10. *Thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen*— Probably this district had been allotted to Joseph by the king of Egypt, else we can scarcely think he could have promised it so positively, without first obtaining Pharaoh's consent. Goshen was the most easterly province of Lower Egypt, not far from the Arabian Gulf, lying next to Canaan, (for Jacob went directly thither when he came into Egypt,) from whence it is supposed to have been about fourscore miles distant, though Hebron was distant from the Egyptian capital about three hundred miles. At Goshen Jacob stayed till Joseph visited him, Genesis 46:28. It is also called the land of Rameses, Genesis 47:11, from a city of that name, which was the metropolis of the country. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 1. ii., c. 4, makes Heliopolis, the city of Joseph's father-in-law, the place of the Israelites' residence. As גֶּשֶׁם geshem signifies rain in Hebrew, St. Jerome and some others have supposed that גֹּשֶׁן Goshen comes from the same root, and that the land in question was called thus because it had rain, which was not the case with Egypt in general; and as it was on the confines of the Arabian Gulf, it is very probable that it was watered from heaven, and it might be owing to this circumstance that it was peculiarly fertile, for it is stated to be the best of the land of Egypt. See Genesis 47:6, 11. See also Calmet and Dodd.

Verse 12. *That it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.*— The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel renders the place thus:—"Your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my own mouth that speaketh with you, in the language of the house of the sanctuary." Undoubtedly Joseph laid considerable stress on his speaking with them in the Hebrew tongue, without the assistance of an interpreter, as in the case mentioned Genesis 42:23.

Verse 14. *He fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck*— Among the Asiatics kissing the beard, the neck, and the shoulders, is in use to the present day; and probably falling on the neck signifies no more than kissing the neck or shoulders, with the arms around.

Verse 20. *Regard not your stuff*— Literally, Let not your eye spare your instruments or vessels. כְּלֵיכֶם keleychem, a general term, in which may be included household furniture, agricultural utensils, or implements of any description. They were not to delay nor encumber themselves with articles

which could be readily found in Egypt, and were not worth so long a carriage.

Verse 21. *Joseph gave them wagons*— עגלות agaloth, from עגל agal, which, though not used as a verb in the Hebrew Bible, evidently means to turn round, roll round, be circular, etc., and hence very properly applied to wheel carriages. It appears from this that such vehicles were very early in use, and that the road from Egypt to Canaan must have been very open and much frequented, else such carriages could not have passed by it.

Verse 22. *Changes of raiment*— It is a common custom with all the Asiatic sovereigns to give both garments and money to ambassadors and persons of distinction, whom they particularly wish to honor. Hence they keep in their wardrobes several hundred changes of raiment, ready made up for presents of this kind. That such were given by way of reward and honor, see Judges 14:12, 19; Revelation 6:11. At the close of a feast the Hindoos, among other presents to the guests, commonly give new garments. A Hindoo garment is merely a piece of cloth, requiring no work of the tailor. — Ward.

Verse 23. *Meat for his father by the way*.— מזון mazon, from זן zan, to prepare, provide, etc. Hence prepared meat, some made-up dish, delicacies, confectionaries, etc. As the word is used, 2 Chronicles 16:14, for aromatic preparations, it may be restrained in its meaning to something of that kind here. In Asiatic countries they have several curious methods of preserving flesh by potting, by which it may be kept for any reasonable length of time sweet and wholesome. Some delicacy, similar to the savoury food which Isaac loved, may be here intended; and this was sent to Jacob in consideration of his age, and to testify the respect of his son. Of other kinds of meat he could need none, as he had large herds, and could kill a lamb, kid, sheep, or goat, whenever he pleased.

Verse 24. *See that ye fall not out by the way*.— This prudent caution was given by Joseph, to prevent his brethren from accusing each other for having sold him; and to prevent them from envying Benjamin, for the superior favor shown him by his brother. It is strange, but so it is, that children of the same parents are apt to envy each other, fall out, and contend; and therefore the exhortation in this verse must be always

seasonable in a large family. But a rational, religious education will, under God, prevent every thing of this sort.

Verse 26. *Jacob's heart fainted*— Probably the good news so overpowered him as to cast him into a swoon. He believed them not — he thought it was too good news to be true; and though it occasioned his swooning, yet on his recovery he could not fully credit it. See a similar case, Luke 24:41.

Verse 27. *When he saw the wagons—the spirit of Jacob—revived*— The wagons were additional evidences of the truth of what he had heard from his sons; and the consequence was, that he was restored to fresh vigor, he seemed as if he had gained new life, **וַחַי** *vattechi*, and he lived; revixit, says the Vulgate, he lived afresh. The Septuagint translate the original word by **ανεζωπυρησε**, which signifies the blowing and stirring up of almost extinguished embers that had been buried under the ashes, which word St. Paul uses, 2 Timothy 1:6, for stirring up the gift of God. The passage at once shows the debilitated state of the venerable patriarch, and the wonderful effect the news of Joseph's preservation and glory had upon his mind.

Verse 28. *It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive*— It was not the state of dignity to which Joseph had arisen that particularly affected Jacob, it was the consideration that he was still alive. It was this that caused him to exclaim **רב** *rab*; “much! multiplied! my son is yet alive! I will go and see him before I die.” None can realize this scene; the words, the circumstances, all refer to indescribable feelings.

1. IN Joseph's conduct to his brethren there are several things for which it is difficult to account. It is strange, knowing how much his father loved him, that he never took an opportunity, many of which must have offered, to acquaint him that he was alive; and that self-interest did not dictate the propriety of this to him is at first view surprising, as his father would undoubtedly have paid his ransom, and restored him to liberty: but a little reflection will show that prudence dictated secrecy. His brethren, jealous and envious in the extreme, would soon have found out other methods of destroying his life, had they again got him into their power. Therefore for his personal safety, he chose rather to be a bond-slave in Egypt than to

risk his life by returning home. On this ground it is evident that he could not with any safety have discovered the place of his residence.

2. His carriage to his brethren, previously to his making himself known, appears inexcusably harsh, if not vindictive; but when the men are considered, it will appear sufficiently evident that no other means would have been adequate to awaken their torpid consciences, and bring them to a due sense of their guilt. A desperate disease requires a desperate remedy. The event justified all that he did, and God appears to have been the director of the whole.

3. His conduct in requiring Benjamin to be as it were torn away from the bleeding heart of an aged, desolate father, in whose affection he himself had long lived, is the most difficult to be satisfactorily accounted for. Unless the Spirit of prophecy had assured him that this experiment would terminate in the most favorable manner, his conduct in making it cannot well be vindicated. To such prophetic intimation this conduct has been attributed by learned men; and we may say that this consideration, if it does not untie the knot, at least cuts it. Perhaps it is best to say that in all these things Joseph acted as he was directed by a providence, under the influence of which he might have been led to do many things which he had not previously designed. The issue proves that the hand of God's wisdom and goodness directed, regulated, and governed every circumstance, and the result was glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and good will among men.

4. This chapter, which contains the unravelling of the plot, and wonderfully illustrates the mysteries of these particular providences, is one of the most interesting in the whole account: the speech of Joseph to his brethren, Genesis 45:1-13, is inferior only to that of Judah in the preceding chapter. He saw that his brethren were confounded at his presence, that they were struck with his present power, and that they keenly remembered and deeply deplored their own guilt. It was necessary to comfort them, lest their hearts should have been overwhelmed with overmuch sorrow. How delicate and finely wrought is the apology he makes for them! The whole heart of the affectionate brother is at once seen in it-art is confounded and swallowed up by nature-"Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves-it was not you that sent me hither, but God." What

he says also concerning his father shows the warmest feelings of a benevolent and filial heart. Indeed, the whole chapter is a master-piece of composition; and it is the more impressive because it is evidently a simple relation of facts just as they occurred; for no attempt is made to heighten the effect by rhetorical coloring or philosophical reflections; it is all simple, sheer nature, from beginning to end. It is a history that has no fellow, crowded with incidents as probable as they are true; where every passion is called into action, where every one acts up to his own character, and where nothing is out of time, or extravagant in degree. Had not the history of Joseph formed a part of the sacred Scriptures, it would have been published in all the living languages of man, and read throughout the universe! But it contains the things of God, and to all such the carnal mind is enmity.

CHAPTER 46

Jacob begins his journey to Egypt, comes to Beer-sheba, and offers sacrifices to God, 1. God appears to him in a vision, gives him gracious promises, and assures him of his protection, 2-4. He proceeds, with his family and their cattle, on his journey towards Egypt, 5-7. A genealogical enumeration of the seventy persons who went down to Egypt, 8, etc. The posterity of Jacob by LEAH. Reuben and his sons, 9. Simeon and his sons, 10. Levi and his sons, 11. Judah and his sons, 12. Issachar and his sons, 13. And Zebulun and his sons, 14. All the posterity of Jacob by LEAH, thirty and three, 15. The posterity of Jacob by ZILPAH. Gad and his sons, 16. Asher and his sons, 17. All the posterity of Jacob by ZILPAH, sixteen, 18. The posterity of Jacob by RACHEL. Joseph and his sons, 19, 20. Benjamin and his sons, 21. All the posterity of Jacob by RACHEL, fourteen, 22. The posterity of Jacob by BILHAH. Dan and his sons, 23. Naphtali and his sons, 24. All the posterity of Jacob by BILHAH, seven, 25. All the immediate descendants of Jacob by his four wives, threescore and six, 26; and all the descendants of the house of Jacob, seventy souls, 27. Judah is sent before to inform Joseph of his father's coming, 28. Joseph goes to Goshen to meet Jacob, 29. Their affecting interview, 30. Joseph proposes to return to Pharaoh, and inform him of the arrival of his family, 31, and of their occupation, as keepers of cattle, 32. Instructs them what to say when called before Pharaoh, and questioned by him, that they might be permitted to dwell unmolested in the land of Goshen, 33, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 46

Verse 1. *And came to Beer-sheba*— This place appears to be mentioned, not only because it was the way from Hebron, where Jacob resided, to Egypt, whither he was going, but because it was a consecrated place, a place where God had appeared to Abraham, Genesis 21:33, and to Isaac, Genesis 26:23, and where Jacob is encouraged to expect a manifestation of the same goodness: he chooses therefore to begin his journey with a visit to God's house; and as he was going into a strange land, he feels it right to

renew his covenant with God by sacrifice. There is an old proverb which applies strongly to this case: “Prayers and provender never hinder any man’s journey. He who would travel safely must take God with him.

Verse 3. *Fear not to go down into Egypt*— It appears that there had been some doubts in the patriarch’s mind relative to the propriety of this journey; he found, from the confession of his own sons, how little they were to be trusted. But every doubt is dispelled by this Divine manifestation. 1. He may go down confidently, no evil shall befall him. 2. Even in Egypt the covenant shall be fulfilled, God will make of him there a great nation. 3. God himself will accompany him on his journey, be with him in the strange land, and even bring back his bones to rest with those of his fathers. 4. He shall see Joseph, and this same beloved son shall be with him in his last hours, and do the last kind office for him. Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes. It is not likely that Jacob would have at all attempted to go down to Egypt, had he not received these assurances from God; and it is very likely that he offered his sacrifice merely to obtain this information. It was now a time of famine in Egypt, and God had forbidden his father Isaac to go down to Egypt when there was a famine there, Genesis 26:1-3; besides, he may have had some general intimation of the prophecy delivered to his grandfather Abraham, that his seed should be afflicted in Egypt, Genesis 15:13, 14; and he also knew that Canaan, not Egypt, was to be the inheritance of his family, chap. xii., etc. On all these accounts it was necessary to have the most explicit directions from God, before he should take such a journey.

Verse 7. *All his seed brought he with him into Egypt*.— When Jacob went down into Egypt he was in the one hundred and thirtieth year of his age, two hundred and fifteen years after the promise was made to Abraham, Genesis 12:1-4, in the year of the world 2298, and before Christ 1706.

Verse 8. *These are the names of the children of Israel*— It may be necessary to observe here, First, that several of these names are expressed differently elsewhere, Jemuel for Nemuel, Jachin for Jarib, Gershon for Gershom, etc.; compare Numbers 26:12; 1 Chronicles 4:24. But it is no uncommon case for the same person to have different names, or the same name to be differently pronounced; See Clarke on “Genesis 25:18”.

Secondly, that it is probable that some names in this list are brought in by prolepsis or anticipation, as the persons were born (probably) during the seventeen years which Jacob sojourned in Egypt, see Genesis 46:12.

Thirdly, that the families of some are entered more at large than others because of their peculiar respectability, as in the case of Judah, Joseph, and Benjamin; but see the tables under verse 20. See Clarke at “Genesis 46:20”.

Verse 12. *The sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.*— It is not likely that Pharez was more than ten years of age when he came into Egypt, and if so he could not have had children; therefore it is necessary to consider Hezron and Hamul as being born during the seventeen years that Jacob sojourned in Egypt, See Clarke on “Genesis 46:8”: and it appears necessary, for several reasons, to take these seventeen years into the account, as it is very probable that what is called the going down into Egypt includes the seventeen years which Jacob spent there.

Verse 20. *Unto Joseph-were born Manasseh and Ephraim*— There is a remarkable addition here in the Septuagint, which must be noticed: εγενοντο δε υιοι μανασση, ους ετεκεν αυτω η παλλακη η συρα, τον μαχιρ μαχιρ δε εγεννησε τον γαλααδ. υιοι δε εφραιμ αδελφον μανασση, σουταλααμ και τααμ. υιοι δε σουταλααμ, εδεμ These were the sons of Manasseh whom his Syrian concubine bore unto him: Machir; and Machir begat Galaad. The sons of Ephraim, Manasseh’s brother, were Sutalaam and Taam; and the sons of Sutalaam, Edem. These add five persons to the list, and make out the number given by Stephen, Acts 7:14, which it seems he had taken from the text of the Septuagint, unless we could suppose that the text of Stephen had been altered to make it correspond to the Septuagint, of which there is not the slightest evidence from ancient MSS. or versions. The addition in the Septuagint is not found in either the Hebrew or the Samaritan at present; and some suppose that it was taken either from Numbers 26:29, 35, or 1 Chronicles 7:14-20, but in none of these places does the addition appear as it stands in the Septuagint, though some of the names are found interspersed. Various means have been proposed to find the seventy persons in the text, and to reconcile the Hebrew with the Septuagint and the New Testament.

A table given by Scheuchzer, extracted from the Memoires de Trevoux, gives the following general view: The twelve sons of JACOB with their children and grandchildren.

Reuben and his four sons	5
Simeon and his six sons	7
Levi and his three sons	4
Judah and his seven sons and grand- sons	8
Issachar and his four sons	5
Zebulun and his three sons	4
Total sons of JACOB and LEAH	33
Gad and his seven sons	8
Asher and his seven sons and grand- sons	8
Total sons of JACOB and ZILPAH	16
Joseph and his two sons	3
Benjamin and his ten sons	11
Total sons of JACOB and RACHEL	14
Dan and his son	2
Naphtali and his four sons	5
Total sons of JACOB and BILHAH	7
Total sons of Jacob and his four wives	70

“To harmonize this with the Septuagint and St. Stephen, Acts 7:14, to the number sixty-six (all the souls that came out of Jacob’s loins, Genesis 46:26) add nine of the patriarchs’ wives, Judah’s wife being already dead in Canaan, (Genesis 38:12,) Benjamin being supposed to be as yet unmarried, and the wife of Joseph being already in Egypt, and therefore out of the case: the number will amount to seventy-five, which is that found in the Acts.”-Universal History.

Dr. Hales’ method is more simple, and I think more satisfactory: “Moses states that all the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt which issued from his loins, (except his sons wives,) were sixty-six souls, Genesis 46:26; and this number is thus collected:

JACOB’S children, eleven sons and one daughter	12
Reuben’s sons	

Simeon's sons	6
Levi's sons	3
Judah's three sons and two grandsons	5
Issachar's sons	4
Zebulun's sons	3
Gad's sons	7
Asher's four sons, one daughter, and two grandsons	7
Dan's son	1
Naphtali's sons	4
Benjamin's sons	10
	66

“If to these sixty-six children, and grandchildren, and great grandchildren, we add Jacob himself, Joseph and his two sons, the amount is seventy, the whole amount of Jacob's family which settled in Egypt.

“In this statement the wives of Jacob's sons, who formed part of the household, are omitted; but they amounted to nine, for of the twelve wives of the twelve sons of Jacob, Judah's wife was dead, Genesis 38:12, and Simeon's also, as we may collect from his youngest son Shaul by a Canannitess, Genesis 46:10, and Joseph's wife was already in Egypt. These nine wives, therefore, added to the sixty-six, give seventy-five souls the whole amount of Jacob's household that went down with him to Egypt; critically corresponding with the statement in the New Testament, that ‘Joseph sent for his father Jacob and all his kindred, amounting to seventy-five souls.’ The expression all his kindred, including the wives which were Joseph's kindred, not only by affinity, but also by consanguinity, being probably of the families of Esau, Ishmael, or Keturah. Thus does the New Testament furnish an admirable comment on the Old.”-Analysis, vol. ii., p. 159.

It is necessary to observe that this statement, which appears on the whole the most consistent, supposes that Judah was married when about fourteen years of age, his son Er at the same age, Pharez at the same, Asher and his fourth son Beriah under twenty, Benjamin about fifteen, and Joseph's sons and grandsons about twenty. But this is not improbable, as the children of Israel must all have married at a very early age, to have

produced in about two hundred and fifteen years no less than six hundred thousand persons above twenty years old, besides women and children.

Verse 28. *He sent Judah before him unto Joseph*— Judah was certainly a man of sense, and also an eloquent man; and of him Joseph must have had a very favorable opinion from the speech he delivered before him, Genesis 44:18, etc.; he was therefore chosen as the most proper person to go before and announce Jacob's arrival to his son Joseph.

To direct his face unto Goshen— The land of Goshen is the same, according to the Septuagint, as the land of Rameses, and Goshen itself the same as Heroopolis, ἡρωων πολις Heroopolis, the city of heroes, a name by which it went in the days of the Septuagint, and which it still retained in the time of Josephus, for he makes use of the same term in speaking of this place. See Clarke on "Genesis 46:34".

Verse 29. *And Joseph made ready his chariot*— מרכבתו mercabto. In Genesis 41:43, we have the first mention of a chariot, and if the translation be correct, it is a proof that the arts were not in a rude state in Egypt even at this early time. When we find wagons used to transport goods from place to place, we need not wonder that these suggested the idea of forming chariots for carrying persons, and especially those of high rank and authority. Necessity produces arts, and arts and science produce not only an increase of the conveniences but also of the refinements and luxuries of life. It has been supposed that a chariot is not intended here; for as the word מרכבה mercabah, which we and most of the ancient versions translate chariot, comes from רכב rachab, he rode, saddling his horse may be all that is intended. But it is more likely to signify a chariot, as the verb אסר asar, which signifies to bind, tie, or yoke, is used; and not חבש chabash, which signifies to saddle.

Fell on his neck— See Genesis 45:14.

Verse 30. *Now let me die, since I have seen thy face*— Perhaps old Simeon had this place in view when, seeing the salvation of Israel, he said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, etc., Luke 2:29.

Verse 34. *Thy servants trade hath been about cattle*— "The land of Goshen, called also the land of Rameses, lay east of the Nile, by which it

was never overflowed, and was bounded by the mountains of the Thebaid on the south, by the Nile and Mediterranean on the west and north, and by the Red Sea and desert of Arabia on the east. It was the Heliopolitan nome or district, and its capital was called ON. Its proper name was Geshen, the country of grass or pasturage, or of the shepherds, in opposition to the rest of the land which was sown after having been overflowed by the Nile.” -Bruce. As this land was both fruitful and pleasant, Joseph wished to fix his family in that part of Egypt; hence he advises them to tell Pharaoh that their trade had been in cattle from their youth: and because every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians, hence he concluded that there would be less difficulty to get them quiet settlement in Goshen, as they would then be separated from the Egyptians, and consequently have the free use of all their religious customs. This scheme succeeded, and the consequence was the preservation both of their religion and their lives, though some of their posterity did afterwards corrupt themselves; see Ezekiel 20:8; Amos 5:26. As it is well known that the Egyptians had cattle and flocks themselves, and that Pharaoh even requested that some of Joseph’s brethren should be made rulers over his cattle, how could it be said, as in Genesis 46:34, Every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians? Three reasons may be assigned for this: 1. Shepherds and feeders of cattle were usually a sort of lawless, free-booting banditti, frequently making inroads on villages, etc., carrying off cattle, and whatever spoils they could find. This might probably have been the case formerly, for it is well known it has often been the case since. On this account such persons must have been universally detested. 2. They must have abhorred shepherds if Manetho’s account of the hycsos or king-shepherds can be credited. Hordes of marauders under this name, from Arabia, Syria, and Ethiopia, (whose chief occupation, like the Bedouin Arabs of the present day, was to keep flocks,) made a powerful irruption into Egypt, which they subdued and ruled with great tyranny for 259 years. Now, though they had been expelled from that land some considerable time before this, yet their name, and all persons of a similar occupation, were execrated by the Egyptians, on account of the depredations and long-continued ravages they had committed in the country. 3. The last and probably the best reason why the Egyptians abhorred such shepherds as the Israelites were, was, they sacrificed those very animals, the ox particularly, and the SHEEP, which the Egyptians held

sacred. Hence the Roman historian Tacitus, speaking of the Jews, says: “Caeso ARIETE velut in contumelia AMMONIS; Bos quoque immolatur, quem Aegyptii APIM colunt.” “They sacrifice the ram in order to insult Jupiter Ammon, and they sacrifice the ox, which the Egyptians worship under the name of Apis.” Though some contend that this idolatry was not as yet established in Egypt, and that the king-shepherds were either after the time of Joseph, or that Manetho by them intends the Israelites themselves; yet, as the arguments by which these conjectures are supported are not sufficient to overthrow those which are brought for the support of the contrary opinions, and as there was evidently an established religion and priesthood in Egypt before Joseph’s time, (for we find the priests had a certain portion of the land of Egypt which was held so sacred that Joseph did not attempt to buy it in the time of the famine, when he bought all the land which belonged to the people, Genesis 47:20-22,) and as that established priesthood was in all likelihood idolatrous, and as the worship of Apis under the form of an ox was one of the most ancient forms of worship in Egypt, we may rest tolerably certain that it was chiefly on this account that the shepherds, or those who fed on and sacrificed these objects of their worship, were an abomination to the Egyptians. Calmet has entered into this subject at large, and to his notes I must refer those readers who wish for farther information. See Clarke on “Genesis 43:32”.

ON the principal subject of this chapter, the going down of Jacob and his family into Egypt, Bishop Warburton, in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, makes the following judicious reflections: “The promise God made to Abraham, to give his posterity the land of Canaan, could not be performed till that family was grown strong enough to take and keep possession of it. In the meantime, therefore, they were necessitated to reside among idolaters, and to reside unmixed; but whoever examines their history will see that the Israelites had ever a violent propensity to join themselves to Gentile nations, and practice their manners. God therefore, in his infinite wisdom, brought them into Egypt, and kept them there during this period, the only place where they could remain for so long a time safe and unconfounded with the natives, the ancient Egyptians being by numerous institutions forbidden all fellowship with strangers, and bearing besides a particular aversion to the profession of the Israelites, who were shepherds.

Thus the natural dispositions of the Israelites, which in Egypt occasioned their superstitions, and in consequence the necessity of a burdensome ritual, would in any other country have absorbed them into Gentilism, and confounded them with idolaters. From the Israelites going into Egypt arises a new occasion to adore the footsteps of Eternal Wisdom in his dispensations to his chosen people.”

CHAPTER 47

Joseph informs Pharaoh that his father and brethren are arrived in Goshen, 1. He presents five of his brethren before the king, 2, who questions them concerning their occupation; they inform him that they are shepherds, and request permission to dwell in the land of Goshen, 3, 4. Pharaoh consents, and desires that some of the most active of them should be made rulers over his cattle, 5, 6. Joseph presents his father to Pharaoh, 7, who questions him concerning his age, 8, to which Jacob returns an affecting answer, and blesses Pharaoh, 9, 10. Joseph places his father and family in the land of Rameses, (Goshen), and furnishes them with provisions, 11, 12. The famine prevailing in the land, the Egyptians deliver up all their money to Joseph to get food, 13-15. The next year they bring their cattle, 16, 17. The third, their lands and their persons, 18-21. The land of the priests Joseph does not buy, as it was a royal grant to them from Pharaoh, 22. The people receive seed to sow the land on condition that they shall give a fifth part of the produce to the king, 23, 24. The people agree, and Joseph makes it a law all over Egypt, 25, 26. The Israelites multiply exceedingly, 27. Jacob, having lived seventeen years in Goshen, and being one hundred and forty-seven years old, 28, makes Joseph promise not to bury him in Egypt, but in Canaan, 29, 30. Joseph promises and confirms it with an oath, ;31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 47

Verse 2. He took some of his brethren— There is something very strange in the original; literally translated it signifies “from the end or extremity (מִקְצֵה miktseh) of his brethren he took five men.” This has been understood six different ways. 1. Joseph took five of his brethren that came first to hand — at random, without design or choice. 2. Joseph took five of the meanest-looking of his brethren to present before Pharaoh, fearing if he had taken the sightliest that Pharaoh would detain them for his service, whereby their religion and morals might be corrupted. 3. Joseph took five of the best made and finest-looking of his brethren, and presented

them before Pharaoh, wishing to impress his mind with a favorable opinion of the family which he had just now brought into Egypt, and to do himself honor. 4. Joseph took five of the youngest of his brethren. 5. He took five of the eldest of his brethren. 6. He took five from the extremity or end of his brethren, i. e., some of the eldest and some of the youngest, viz., Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, and Benjamin. — Rab. Solomon. It is certain that in Judges 18:2, the word may be understood as implying dignity, valor, excellence, and pre-eminence: And the children of Dan sent of their family FIVE men מִקְצוֹתָם miktsotham, not from their coasts, but of the most eminent or excellent they had; and it is probable they might have had their eye on what Joseph did here when they made their choice, choosing the same number, five, and of their principal men, as did Joseph, because the mission was important, to go and search out the land. But the word may be understood simply as signifying some; out of the whole of his brethren he took only five men, etc.

Verse 6. *In the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell*— So it appears that the land of Goshen was the best of the land of Egypt.

Men of activity— אַנְשֵׁי חַיִל anshey chayil, stout or robust men — such as were capable of bearing fatigue, and of rendering their authority respectable.

Rulers over my cattle.— מִקְנֵה mikneh signifies not only cattle, but possessions or property of any kind; though most usually cattle are intended, because in ancient times they constituted the principal part of a man's property. The word may be taken here in a more extensive sense, and the circumstances of the case seem obviously to require it. If every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians, however we may understand or qualify the expression, is it to be supposed that Pharaoh should desire that the brethren of his prime minister, of his chief favorite, should be employed in some of the very meanest offices in the land? We may therefore safely understand Pharaoh as expressing his will, that the brethren of Joseph should be appointed as overseers or superintendents of his domestic concerns, while Joseph superintended those of the state.

Verse 7. *Jacob blessed Pharaoh.*— Saluted him on his entrance with Peace be unto thee, or some such expression of respect and good will. For the meaning of the term to bless, as applied to God and man, See Clarke on “Genesis 2:3”.

Verse 9. *The days of the years of my pilgrimage*— מְגֻרַי megurai, of my sojourning or wandering. Jacob had always lived a migratory or wandering life, in different parts of Canaan, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, scarcely ever at rest; and in the places where he lived longest, always exposed to the fatigues of the field and the desert. Our word pilgrim comes from the French pelerin and pelegrin, which are corrupted from the Latin peregrinus, an alien, stranger, or foreigner, from the adverb peregre, abroad, not at home. The pilgrim was a person who took a journey, long or short, on some religious account, submitting during the time to many hardships and privations. A more appropriate term could not be conceived to express the life of Jacob, and the motive which induced him to live such a life. His journey to Padan-aram or Mesopotamia excepted, the principal part of his journeys were properly pilgrimages, undertaken in the course of God’s providence on a religious account.

Have not attained unto the-life of my fathers— Jacob lived in the whole one hundred and forty-seven years; Isaac his father lived one hundred and eighty; and Abraham his grandfather, one hundred and seventy-five. These were days of years in comparison of the lives of the preceding patriarchs, some of whom lived nearly ten centuries!

Verse 14. *Gathered up all the money*— i. e., by selling corn out of the public stores to the people; and this he did till the money failed, Genesis 47:15, till all the money was exchanged for corn, and brought into Pharaoh’s treasury. Besides the fifth part of the produce of the seven plentiful years, Joseph had bought additional corn with Pharaoh’s money to lay up against the famine that was to prevail in the seven years of dearth; and it is very likely that this was sold out at the price for which it was bought, and the fifth part, which belonged to Pharaoh, sold out at the same price. And as money at that time could not be plentiful, the cash of the whole nation was thus exhausted as far as that had circulated among the common people.

Verse 16. *Give your cattle*— This was the wisest measure that could be adopted, both for the preservation of the people and of the cattle also. As the people had not grain for their own sustenance, consequently they could have none for their cattle; hence the cattle were in the most imminent danger of starving; and the people also were in equal danger, as they must have divided a portion of that bought for themselves with the cattle, which for the sake of tillage, etc., they wished of course to preserve till the seven years of famine should end. The cattle being bought by Joseph were supported at the royal expense, and very likely returned to the people at the end of the famine; for how else could they cultivate their ground, transport their merchandise, etc., etc.? For this part of Joseph's conduct he certainly deserves high praise and no censure.

Verse 18. *When that year was ended*— The sixth year of the famine, they came unto him the second year, which was the last or seventh year of the famine, in which it was necessary to sow the land that there might be a crop the succeeding year; for Joseph, on whose prediction they relied, had foretold that the famine should continue only seven years, and consequently they expected the eighth year to be a fruitful year provided the land was sowed, without which, though the inundation of the land by the Nile might amount to the sixteen requisite cubits, there could be no crop.

Verse 19. *Buy us and our land for bread*— In times of famine in Hindostan, thousands of children have been sold to prevent their perishing. In the Burman empire the sale of whole families to discharge debts is very common. — Ward's Customs.

Verse 21. *And as for the people, he removed them to cities*— It is very likely that Joseph was influenced by no political motive in removing the people to the cities, but merely by a motive of humanity and prudence. As the corn was laid up in the cities he found it more convenient to bring them to the place where they might be conveniently fed; each being within the reach of an easy distribution. Thus then the country which could afford no sustenance was abandoned for the time being, that the people might be fed in those places where the provision was deposited.

Verse 22. *The land of the priests bought he not*— From this verse it is natural to infer that whatever the religion of Egypt was, it was established

by law and supported by the state. Hence when Joseph bought all the lands of the Egyptians for Pharaoh, he bought not the land of the priests, for that was a portion assigned them by Pharaoh; and they did eat — did live on, that portion. This is the earliest account we have of an established religion supported by the state.

Verse 23. *I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh*— It fully appears that the kingdom of Egypt was previously to the time of Joseph a very limited monarchy. The king had his estates; the priests had their lands; and the common people their patrimony independently of both. The land of Rameses or Goshen appears to have been the king's land, Genesis 47:11. The priests had their lands, which they did not sell to Joseph, Genesis 47:22, 26; and that the people had lands independent of the crown, is evident from the purchases Joseph made, Genesis 47:19, 20; and we may conclude from those purchases that Pharaoh had no power to levy taxes upon his subjects to increase his own revenue until he had bought the original right which each individual had in his possessions. And when Joseph bought this for the king he raised the crown an ample revenue, though he restored the lands, by obliging each to pay one fifth of the product to the king, Genesis 47:24. And it is worthy of remark that the people of Egypt well understood the distinction between subjects and servants; for when they came to sell their land, they offered to sell themselves also, and said: Buy us and our land, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh, Genesis 47:19.

Diodorus Siculus, lib. i., gives the same account of the ancient constitution of Egypt. "The land," says he, "was divided into three parts: 1. One belonged to the PRIESTS, with which they provided all sacrifices, and maintained all the ministers of religion. 2. A second part was the KING'S, to support his court and family, and to supply expenses for wars if they should happen. Hence there were no taxes, the king having so ample an estate. 3. The remainder of the land belonged to the SUBJECTS, who appear (from the account of Diodorus) to have been all soldiers, a kind of standing militia, liable, at the king's expense, to serve in all wars for the preservation of the state." This was a constitution something like the British; the government appears to have been mixed, and the monarchy properly limited, till Joseph, by buying the land of the people, made the king in some sort despotic. But it does not appear that any improper use

was made of this, as in much later times we find it still a comparatively limited monarchy.

Verse 24. *Ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh*— This is precisely the case in Hindostan; the king has the fifth part of all the crops.

Verse 26. *And Joseph made it a law*— That the people should hold their land from the king, and give him the fifth part of the produce as a yearly tax. Beyond this it appears the king had no farther demands. The whole of this conduct of Joseph has been as strongly censured by some as applauded by others. It is natural for men to run into extremes in attacking or defending any position. Sober and judicious men will consider what Joseph did by Divine appointment as a prophet of God, and what he did merely as a statesman from the circumstances of the case, the complexion of the times, and the character of the people over whom he presided. When this is dispassionately done, we shall see much reason to adore God, applaud the man, and perhaps in some cases censure the minister. Joseph is never held up to our view as an unerring prophet of God. He was an honored instrument in the hands of God of saving two nations from utter ruin, and especially of preserving that family from which the Messiah was to spring, and of perpetuating the true religion among them. In this character he is represented in the sacred pages. His conduct as the prime minister of Pharaoh was powerfully indicative of a deep and consummate politician, who had high notions of prerogative, which led him to use every prudent means to aggrandize his master, and at the same time to do what he judged best on the whole for the people he governed. See the conclusion of the 50th chapter. See Clarke on “Genesis 50:26”.

Verse 29. *Put thy hand under my thigh*— See Clarke on “Genesis 24:2”.

Verse 30. *I will lie with my fathers*— As God had promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his posterity, Jacob considered it as a consecrated place, under the particular superintendence and blessing of God: and as Sarah, Abraham, and Isaac were interred near to Hebron, he in all probability wished to lie, not only in the same place, but in the same grave; and it is not likely that he would have been solicitous about this, had he not considered that promised land as being a type of the rest that remains for the people of God, and a pledge of the inheritance among the saints in light.

Verse 31. *And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.*— Jacob was now both old and feeble, and we may suppose him reclined on his couch when Joseph came; that he afterwards sat up erect (see Genesis 48:2) while conversing with his son, and receiving his oath and promise; and that when this was finished he bowed himself upon the bed's head — exhausted with the conversation, he again reclined himself on his bed as before. This seems to be the simple meaning, which the text unconnected with any religious system or prejudice, naturally proposes. But because שָׁחָה shachah, signifies not only to bow but to worship, because acts of religious worship were performed by bowing or prostration, and because מִטָּה mittah, a bed, by the change of the points, only becomes matteh, a staff, in which sense the Septuagint took it, translating the original words thus: *καὶ προσεκύνησεν ἰσραὴλ ἐπὶ τὸ ἀκρὸν τῆς ραβδου αὐτου*, and Israel worshipped upon the top of his staff, which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Hebrews 11:21, quotes literatim; therefore some have supposed that Jacob certainly had a carved image on the head or top of his staff, to which he paid a species of adoration; or that he bowed himself to the staff or scepter of Joseph, thus fulfilling the prophetic import of his son's dreams! The sense of the Hebrew text is given above. If the reader prefers the sense of the Septuagint and the Epistle to the Hebrews, the meaning is, that Jacob, through feebleness, supported himself with a staff, and that, when he got the requisite assurance from Joseph that his dead body should be carried to Canaan, leaning on his staff he bowed his head in adoration to God, who had supported him all his life long, and hitherto fulfilled all his promises.

CHAPTER 48

Joseph, hearing that his father was near death, took his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and went to Goshen, to visit him, 1. Jacob strengthens himself to receive them, 2. Gives Joseph an account of God's appearing to him at Luz, and repeating the promise, 3, 4. Adopts Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons, 5, 6. Mentions the death of Rachel at Ephrath, 7. He blesses Ephraim and Manasseh, preferring the former, who was the younger, to his elder brother, 8-17. Joseph, supposing his father had mistaken in giving the right of primogeniture to the youngest, endeavors to correct him, 18. Jacob shows that he did it designedly, prophecies much good concerning both; but sets Ephraim the youngest before Manasseh, 19, 20. Jacob speaks of his death, and predicts the return of his posterity from Egypt, 21. And gives Joseph a portion above his brethren, which he had taken from the Amorites, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 48

Verse 1. *One told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick*— He was ill before, and Joseph knew it; but it appears that a messenger had been now despatched to inform Joseph that his father was apparently at the point of death.

Verse 2. *Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.*— He had been confined to his bed before, (see Genesis 47:31,) and now, hearing that Joseph was come to see him, he made what efforts his little remaining strength would admit, to sit up in bed to receive his son. This verse proves that a bed, not a staff, is intended in the preceding chapter, Genesis 47:31.

Verse 3. *God Almighty*— אֵל שַׁדַּי El Shaddai, the all-sufficient God, the Outpourer and Dispenser of mercies, (see Genesis 17:1,) appeared to me at Luz, afterwards called Beth-El; see Genesis 28:13; 35:6, 9.

Verse 5. *And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh — are mine*— I now adopt them into my own family, and they shall have their place

among my twelve sons, and be treated in every respect as those, and have an equal interest in all the spiritual and temporal blessings of the covenant.

Verse 7. *Rachel died by me, etc.*— Rachel was the wife of Jacob's choice, and the object of his unvarying affection; he loved her in life—he loves her in death: many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. A match of a man's own making when guided by reason and religion, will necessarily be a happy one. When fathers and mothers make matches for their children, which are dictated by motives, not of affection, but merely of convenience, worldly gain, etc., etc., such matches are generally wretched; it is Leah in the place of Rachel to the end of life's pilgrimage.

Verse 8. *Who are these?*— At Genesis 48:10 it is said, that Jacob's eyes were dim for age, that he could not see — could not discern any object unless it were near him; therefore, though he saw Ephraim and Manasseh, yet he could not distinguish them till they were brought nigh unto him.

Verse 11. *I had not thought to see thy face*— There is much delicacy and much tenderness in these expressions. He feels himself now amply recompensed for his long grief and trouble on account of the supposed death of Joseph, in seeing not only himself but his two sons, whom God, by an especial act of favor, is about to add to the number of his own. Thus we find that as Reuben and Simeon were heads of two distinct tribes in Israel, so were Ephraim and Manasseh; because Jacob, in a sort of sacramental way, had adopted them with equal privileges to those of his own sons.

Verse 12. *Joseph-bowed himself with his face to the earth.*— This act of Joseph has been extravagantly extolled by Dr. Delaney and others. "When I consider him on his knees to God," says Dr. Delaney, "I regard him as a poor mortal in the discharge of his duty to his CREATOR. When I behold him bowing before Pharaoh, I consider him in the dutiful posture of a subject to his prince. But when I see him bending to the earth before a poor, old, blind, decrepit father, I behold him with admiration and delight. How doth that humiliation exalt him!" This is insufferable! For it in effect says that it is a wondrous condescension in a young man, who, in the course of God's providence, with scarcely any efforts of his own, was raised to affluence and worldly grandeur, to show respect to his father! And that respect was the more gratuitous and condescending, because that

father was poor, old, blind, and decrepit! The maxim of this most exceptionable flight of admiration is, that “children who have risen to affluence are not obliged to reverence their parents when reduced in their circumstances, and brought down by the weight of years and infirmities to the sides of the grave; and should they acknowledge and reverence them, it would be a mark of singular goodness, and be highly meritorious.” Should positions of this kind pass without reprehension? I trow not. By the law of God and nature Joseph was as much bound to pay his dying father this filial respect, as he was to reverence his king, or to worship his God. As to myself, I must freely confess that I see nothing peculiarly amiable in this part of Joseph’s conduct; he simply acquitted himself of a duty which God, nature, decency, and common sense, imperiously demanded of him, and all such in his circumstances, to discharge. To the present day children in the east, next to God, pay the deepest reverence to their parents. Besides, before whom was Joseph bowing? Not merely his father, but a most eminent PATRIARCH; one highly distinguished by the Lord, and one of the three of whom the Supreme Being speaks in the most favorable and affectionate manner; the three who received and transmitted the true faith, and kept unbroken the Divine covenant; I AM the GOD of ABRAHAM, the GOD of ISAAC, and the GOD of JACOB. He has never said, I am the GOD of JOSEPH. And if we compare the father and the son as men, we shall find that the latter was exceeded by the former in almost endless degrees. Joseph owed his advancement and his eminence to what some would call good fortune, and what we know to have been the especial providence of God working in his behalf, wholly independent of his own industry, etc., every event of that providence issuing in his favor. Jacob owed his own support and preservation, and the support and preservation of his numerous family, under God, to the continual exercise of the vast powers of a strong and vigorous mind, to which the providence of God seemed ever in opposition; because God chose to try to the uttermost the great gifts which he had bestowed. If therefore the most humble and abject inferior should reverence dignity and eminence raised to no common height, so should Joseph bow down his face to the earth before JACOB.

Besides, Joseph, in thus reverencing his father, only followed the customs of the Egyptians among whom he lived, who, according to Herodotus, (Euterpe, c. 80,) were particularly remarkable for the reverence they paid

to old age. “For if a young person meet his senior, he instantly turns aside to make way for him; if an aged person enter an apartment, the youth always rise from their seats;” and Mr. Savary observes that the reverence mentioned by Herodotus is yet paid to old age on every occasion in Egypt. In Mohammedan countries the children sit as if dumb in the presence of their parents, never attempting to speak unless spoken to. Among the ancient Romans it was considered a crime worthy of death not to rise up in the presence of an aged person, and acting a contrary part was deemed an awful mark of the deep degeneracy of the times. Thus the satirist:—

*Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si Juvenis VETULO non assurrexerat; et si
Barbato cuicumque puer.*

Juv. Sat. xiii., v. 54.

*And had not men the hoary heads revered,
Or boys paid reverence when a man appear'd.
Both must have died.*

DRYDEN.

Indeed, though Dr. Delaney is much struck with what he thinks to be great and meritorious condescension and humility on the part of Joseph; yet we find the thing itself, the deepest reverence to parents and old age, practiced by all the civilized nations in the world, not as a matter of meritorious courtesy, but as a point of rational and absolute duty.

Verse 14. *Israel stretched out his right hand, etc.*—Laying hands on the head was always used among the Jews in giving blessings, designating men to any office, and in the consecration of solemn sacrifices. This is the first time we find it mentioned; but we often read of it afterwards. See Numbers 27:18, 23; Deuteronomy 34:9; Matthew 19:13, 15; Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 4:14. Jacob laid his right hand on the head of the younger, which we are told he did wittingly — well knowing what he was about, for (or although) Manasseh was the first-born, knowing by the Spirit of prophecy that Ephraim’s posterity would be more powerful than that of Manasseh. It is observable how God from the beginning has preferred the younger to the elder, as Abel before Cain; Shem before Japheth; Isaac before Ishmael; Jacob before Esau; Judah and Joseph before Reuben; Ephraim before Manasseh; Moses before Aaron; and David before his brethren. “This is to be resolved entirely into the wise and secret counsel of God, so far as it

regards temporal blessings and national privileges, as the apostle tells us, Romans 9:11; See Clarke on “Genesis 25:23”. But this preference has no concern with God’s conferring a greater measure of his love and approbation on one person more than another; compare Genesis 4:7, with Hebrews 11:4, and you will see that a difference in moral character was the sole cause why God preferred Abel to Cain.”-Dodd. The grace that converts the soul certainly comes from the mere mercy of God, without any merit on man’s part; and a sufficiency of this is offered to every man, Titus 2:11, 12. But it is not less certain that God loves those best who are most faithful to this grace.

Verse 15. *He blessed Joseph*— The father first, and then the sons afterwards. And this is an additional proof to what has been adduced under Genesis 48:12, of Jacob’s superiority; for the less is always blessed of the greater.

The God which fed me all my life long— Jacob is now standing on the verge of eternity, with his faith strong in God. He sees his life to be a series of mercies; and as he had been affectionately attentive, provident, and kind to his most helpless child, so has God been unto him; he has fed him all his life long; he plainly perceives that he owes every morsel of food which he has received to the mere mercy and kindness of God.

Verse 16. *The Angel which redeemed me from all evil*— המלאך הגואל hammalac haggael. The Messenger, the Redeemer or Kinsman; for so גואל goel signifies; for this term, in the law of Moses, is applied to that person whose right it is, from his being nearest akin, to redeem or purchase back a forfeited inheritance. But of whom does Jacob speak? We have often seen, in the preceding chapters, an angel of God appearing to the patriarchs; (see particularly Genesis 16:7, and the note there; See Clarke at “Genesis 16:7”) and we have full proof that this was no created angel, but the Messenger of the Divine Council, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who then was the angel that redeemed Jacob, and whom he invoked to bless Ephraim and Manasseh? Is it not JESUS? He alone can be called Goel, the redeeming Kinsman; for he alone took part of our flesh and blood that the right of redemption might be his; and that the forfeited possession of the favor and image of God might be redeemed, brought back, and restored to all those who believe in his name. To have invoked any other angel or messenger in

such a business would have been impiety. Angels bless not; to GOD alone this prerogative belongs. With what confidence may a truly religious father use these words in behalf of his children: “JESUS, the CHRIST, who hath redeemed me, bless the lads, redeem them also, and save them unto eternal life!”

Let my name be named on them— “Let them be ever accounted as a part of my own family; let them be true Israelites — persons who shall prevail with God as I have done; and the name of Abraham — being partakers of his faith; and the name of Isaac — let them be as remarkable for submissive obedience as he was. Let the virtues of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob be accumulated in them, and invariably displayed by them!” These are the very words of adoption; and by the imposition of hands, the invocation of the Redeemer, and the solemn blessing pronounced, the adoption was completed. From this moment Ephraim and Manasseh had the same rights and privileges as Jacob’s sons, which as the sons of Joseph they could never have possessed.

And let them grow into a multitude— **וידגו לרב** veyidgu larob; Let them increase like fishes into a multitude. FISH are the most prolific of all animals; see the instances produced on See Clarke on “Genesis 1:20”. This prophetic blessing was verified in a most remarkable manner; see Numbers 26:34, 37; Deuteronomy 33:17; Joshua 17:17. At one time the tribe of Ephraim amounted to 40, 500 effective men, and that of Manasseh to 52, 700, amounting in the whole to 93, 200.

Verse 18. Joseph said-Not so, my father— Joseph supposed that his father had made a mistake in laying his right hand on the head of the youngest, because the right hand was considered as the most noble, and the instrument of conveying the highest dignities, and thus it has ever been considered among all nations, though the reason of it is not particularly obvious. Even in the heavens the right hand of God is the place of the most exalted dignity. It has been observed that Joseph spoke here as he was moved by natural affection, and that Jacob acted as he was influenced by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 20. In thee shall Israel bless— That is, in future generations the Israelites shall take their form of wishing prosperity to any nation or family from the circumstance of the good which it shall be known that God

has done to Ephraim and Manasseh: May God make thee as fruitful as Ephraim, and multiply thee as Manasseh! So, to their daughters when married, the Jewish women are accustomed to say, God make thee as Sarah and Rebekah! The forms are still in use.

Verse 21. Behold, I die— With what composure is this most awful word expressed! Surely of Jacob it might be now said, “He turns his sight undaunted on the tomb;” for though it is not said that he was full of days, as were Abraham and Isaac, yet he is perfectly willing to bid adieu to earthly things, and lay his body in the grave. Could any person act as the patriarchs did in their last moments, who had no hopes of eternal life, no belief in the immortality of the soul? Impossible! With such a conviction of the being of God, with such proofs of his tenderness and regard, with such experience of his providential and miraculous interference in their behalf, could they suppose that they were only creatures of a day, and that God had wasted so much care, attention, providence, grace, and goodness, on creatures who were to be ultimately like the beasts that perish? The supposition that they could have no correct notion of the immortality of the soul is as dishonorable to God as to themselves. But what shall we think of Christians who have formed this hypothesis into a system to prove what? Why, that the patriarchs lived and died in the dark! That either the soul has no immortality, or that God has not thought proper to reveal it. Away with such an opinion! It cannot be said to merit serious refutation.

Verse 22. Moreover I have given to thee one portion— שׁכֶם אֶחָד shechem achad, one shechem or one shoulder. We have already seen the transactions between Jacob and his family on one part, and Shechem and the sons of Hamor on the other. See Genesis 33:18, 19, and chap. 24. As he uses the word shechem here, I think it likely that he alludes to the purchase of the field or parcel of ground mentioned Genesis 33:18, 19. It has been supposed that this parcel of ground, which Jacob bought from Shechem, had been taken from him by the Amorites, and that he afterwards had recovered it by his sword and by his bow, i. e., by force of arms. Shechem appears to have fallen to the lot of Joseph’s sons; (see Joshua 17:1, and Joshua 20:7;) and in our Lord’s time there was a parcel of ground near to Sychar or Shechem which was still considered as that portion which Jacob gave to his son Joseph, John 4:5; and on the whole it

was probably the same that Jacob bought for a hundred pieces of money, Genesis 33:18, 19. But how it could be said that he took this out of the hand of the Amorite with his sword and his bow, we cannot tell. Many attempts have been made to explain this abstruse verse, but they have all hitherto been fruitless. Jacob's words were no doubt perfectly well understood by Joseph, and probably alluded to some transaction that is not now on record; and it is much safer for us to confess our ignorance, than to hazard conjecture after conjecture on a subject of which we can know nothing certainly.

1. ON filial respect to aged and destitute parents we have already had occasion to speak; see Genesis 48:11. The duty of children to their parents only ceases when the parents are laid in their graves, and this duty is the next in order and importance to the duty we owe to God. No circumstances can alter its nature or lessen its importance; Honor thy father and thy mother is the sovereign, everlasting command of God. While the relations of parent and child exist, this commandment will be in full force.

2. The Redeeming Angel, the Messenger of the covenant, in his preserving and saving influence, is invoked by dying Jacob to be the protector and Savior of Ephraim and Manasseh, Genesis 48:16. With what advantage and effect can a dying parent recommend the Lord Jesus to his children, who can testify with his last breath that this Jesus has redeemed him from all evil! Reader, canst thou call Christ thy Redeemer? Hast thou, through him, recovered the forfeited inheritance? Or dost thou expect redemption from all evil by any other means? Through him, and him alone, God will redeem thee from all thy sins; and as thou knowest not what a moment may bring forth, thou hast not a moment to lose. Thou hast sinned, and there is no name given under heaven among men whereby thou canst be saved but Jesus Christ. Acquaint thyself now with him, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee.

3. We find that the patriarchs ever held the promised land in the most sacred point of view. It was God's gift to them; it was confirmed by a covenant that spoke of and referred to better things. We believe that this land typified the rest which remains for the people of God, and can we be indifferent to the excellence of this rest! A patriarch could not die in peace,

however distant from this land, without an assurance that his bones should be laid in it. How can we live, how can we die comfortably, without the assurance that our lives are hid with Christ in God, and that we shall dwell in his presence for ever? There remains a rest for the people of God, and only for the people of God; for those alone who love, serve, reverence, and obey him, in his Son Jesus Christ, shall ever enjoy it.

CHAPTER 49

Jacob, about to die, calls his sons together that he may bless them, or give prophetic declarations concerning their posterity, 1, 2. Prophetic declaration concerning Reuben, 3, 4. Concerning Simeon and Levi, 57; concerning Judah, 8-12; concerning Zebulun, 13; concerning Issachar, 14, 15; concerning Dan, 16-18; concerning Gad, 19; concerning Asher, 20; concerning Naphtali, 21; concerning Joseph, 22-26; concerning Benjamin, 27. Summary concerning the twelve tribes, 28. Jacob gives directions concerning his being buried in the cave of Machpelah, 29-32. Jacob dies, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 49

Verse 1. *That which shall befall you in the last days.*— It is evident from this, and indeed from the whole complexion of these important prophecies, that the twelve sons of Jacob had very little concern in them, personally considered, as they were to be fulfilled in the last days, i. e., in times remote from that period, and consequently to their posterity, and not to themselves, or to their immediate families. The whole of these prophetic declarations, from Genesis 49:2-27 inclusive, is delivered in strongly figurative language, and in the poetic form, which, in every translation, should be preserved as nearly as possible, rendering the version line for line with the original. This order I shall pursue in the succeeding notes, always proposing the verse first, in as literal a translation as possible, line for line with the Hebrew after the hemistich form, from which the sense will more readily appear; but to the Hebrew text and the common version the reader is ultimately referred.

2. Come together and hear, O sons of Jacob! And hearken unto Israel your father.

Bishop Newton has justly observed that Jacob had received a double blessing, spiritual and temporal; the promise of being progenitor of the Messiah, and the promise of the land of Canaan. The promised land he might divide among his children as he pleased, but the other must be

confined to one of his sons; he therefore assigns to each son a portion in the land of Canaan, but limits the descent of the blessed seed to the tribe of Judah. Some have put themselves to a great deal of trouble and learned labor to show that it was a general opinion of the ancients that the soul, a short time previous to its departure from the body, becomes endued with a certain measure of the prophetic gift or foresight; and that this was probably the case with Jacob. But it would be derogatory to the dignity of the prophecies delivered in this chapter, to suppose that they came by any other means than direct inspiration, as to their main matter, though certain circumstances appear to be left to the patriarch himself, in which he might express his own feelings both as a father and as a judge. This is strikingly evident, 1. In the case of Reuben, from whom he had received the grossest insult, however the passage relative to him may be understood; and, 2. In the case of Joseph, the tenderly beloved son of his most beloved wife Rachel, in the prophecy concerning whom he gives full vent to all those tender and affectionate emotions which, as a father and a husband, do him endless credit.

3. Reuben, my first-born art thou! My might, and the prime of my strength, Excelling in eminence, and excelling in power: 4. Pouring out like the waters:-thou shalt not excel, For thou wentest up to the bed of thy father,- Then thou didst defile: to my couch he went up!

Verse 3. Reuben as the first-born had a right to a double portion of all that the father had; see Deuteronomy 21:17.

The eminence or dignity mentioned here may refer to the priesthood; the power, to the regal government or kingdom. In this sense it has been understood by all the ancient Targumists. The Targum of Onkelos paraphrases it thus: “Thou shouldst have received three portions, the birthright, the priesthood, and the kingdom:” and to this the Targums of Jonathan ben Uzziel and Jerusalem add: “But because thou hast sinned, the birthright is given to Joseph, the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi.” That the birthright was given to the sons of Joseph we have the fullest proof from 1 Chronicles 5:1.

Verse 4. *Pouring out like the waters*— This is an obscure sentence because unfinished. It evidently relates to the defilement of his father’s couch; and the word פָּחַז pachaz, here translated pouring out, and in our

Version unstable, has a bad meaning in other places of the Scripture, being applied to dissolute, debauched, and licentious conduct. See Judges 9:4; Zephaniah 3:4; Jeremiah 23:14, 32; 29:23.

Thou shalt not excel— This tribe never rose to any eminence in Israel; was not so numerous by one third as either Judah, Joseph, or Dan, when Moses took the sum of them in the wilderness, Numbers 1:21; and was among the first that were carried into captivity, 1 Chronicles 5:26.

Then thou didst defile— Another unfinished sentence, similar to the former, and upon the same subject, passing over a transaction covertly, which delicacy forbade Jacob to enlarge on. For the crime of Reuben, See Clarke on “Genesis 35:22”.

5. Simeon and Levi, brethren: They have accomplished their fraudulent purposes. 6. Into their secret council my soul did not come; In their confederacy my honor was not united: For in their anger they slew a man, (שׂוֹן ish, a noble,) And in their pleasure they murdered a prince. 7. Cursed was their anger, for it was fierce! And their excessive wrath, for it was inflexible! I will divide them out in Jacob, And I will disperse them in Israel.

Verse 5. *Simeon and Levi are brethren*— Not only springing from the same parents, but they have the same kind or disposition, head-strong, deceitful, vindictive, and cruel.

They have accomplished, etc.— Our margin has it, Their swords are weapons of violence, i. e., Their swords, which they should have used in defense of their persons or the honorable protection of their families, they have employed in the base and dastardly murder of an innocent people.

The Septuagint gives a different turn to this line from our translation, and confirms the translation given above: **συνετελεσαν αδικια εξαίρεσεως αυτων**. They have accomplished the iniquity of their purpose; with which the Samaritan Version agrees. In the Samaritan text we read [Samaritan] calu, they have accomplished, instead of the Hebrew כלי keley, weapons or instruments, which reading most critics prefer: and as to מְכַרְתֵּיהֶם mecherotheyhem, translated above their fraudulent purposes, and which our translation on almost no authority renders their habitations, it must

either come from the Aethiopic מִכַּר macar, he counselled, devised stratagems, etc., (see Castel,) or from the Arabic [A] macara, he deceived, practiced deceit, plotted, etc., which is nearly of the same import. This gives not only a consistent but evidently the true sense.

Verse 6. Into their secret council, etc.— Jacob here exculpates himself from all participation in the guilt of Simeon and Levi in the murder of the Shechemites. He most solemnly declares that he knew nothing of the confederacy by which it was executed, nor of the secret council in which it was plotted.

If it should be said that the words תָּבֹא tabo and תַּחַד techad should be translated in the future tense or in the imperative, as in our translation, I shall not contend; though it is well known that the preterite is often used for the future in Hebrew, and vice versa. Taken thus, the words mark the strong detestation which this holy man's soul felt for the villany of his sons: "My soul shall not come into their secret council. My honor shall not be united to their confederacy.

For in their anger they slew a man— אִישׁ ish, a noble, an honorable man, viz., Shechem.

And in their pleasure— This marks the highest degree of wickedness and settled malice, they were delighted with their deed. A similar spirit Saul of Tarsus possessed previously to his conversion; speaking of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, St. Luke says, Acts 8:1: σαυλος δε ην συνευδοκων τη αναηρεσει αυτου. And Saul was gladly consenting to his death. He was with the others highly delighted with it; and thus the prediction of our Lord was fulfilled, John 16:2: Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And it is represented as the highest pitch of profligacy and wickedness, not only to sin, but to delight in it; see Romans 1:32. As the original word רַעֲוֹן ratson signifies, in general, pleasure, benevolence, delight, etc., it should neither be translated self-will nor willfulness, as some have done, but simply as above; and the reasons appear sufficiently obvious. They murdered a prince-Hamor, the father of Shechem. Instead of שׁוֹר shor, which we have translated a wall, and others an ox, I read שָׂר sar, a prince, which makes a consistent sense; (see Kennicott's first Dissertation, p. 56, etc. ;) as there is

no evidence whatever that Simeon and Levi either dug down a wall or houghed the oxen, as some have translated the passage; (see the margin;) on the contrary, the text, Genesis 34:28, 29, proves that they had taken for their own use the sheep, oxen, asses, all their wealth, their wives, and their little ones.

Verse 7. *Cursed was their anger*— The first motions of their violence were savage; and their excessive or overflowing wrath, עברה ebrah, for it was inflexible — neither the supplications of the males, nor the entreaties, tears, cries, and shrieks of the helpless females, could deter them from their murderous purpose; for this, Genesis 49:5, they are said to have accomplished.

I will divide them out, אחלקם achallekem, I will make them into lots, giving a portion of them to one tribe, and a portion to another; but they shall never attain to any political consequence. This appears to have been literally fulfilled. Levi had no inheritance except forty-eight cities, scattered through different parts of the land of Canaan: and as to the tribe of Simeon, it is generally believed among the Jews that they became schoolmasters to the other tribes; and when they entered Canaan they had only a small portion, a few towns and villages in the worst part of Judah's lot, Joshua 19:1, which afterwards finding too little, they formed different colonies in districts which they conquered from the Idumeans and Amalekites, 1 Chronicles 4:39, etc. Thus these two tribes were not only separated from each other, but even divided from themselves, according to this prediction of Jacob.

8. Judah! thou! Thy brethren shall praise thee. Thy hand, in the neck of thine enemies: The sons of thy father shall bow themselves to thee. 9. A lion's whelp is Judah: From the prey, my son, thou hast ascended, He couched, lying down like a strong lion And like a lioness; who shall arouse him? 10. From Judah the scepter shall not depart, Nor a teacher from his offspring, Until that SHILOH shall come, And to him shall be assembled the peoples. 11. Binding his colt to the vine, And to the choice vine the foals of his ass, He washed his garments in wine, His clothes in the blood of the grape. 12. With wine shall his eyes be red, And his teeth shall be white with milk.

Verse 8. *Thy brethren shall praise thee.*— As the name Judah signifies praise, Jacob takes occasion from its meaning to show that this tribe should be so eminent and glorious, that the rest of the tribes should praise it; that is, they should acknowledge its superior dignity, as in its privileges it should be distinguished beyond all the others. On the prophecy relative to Judah, Dr. Hales has several judicious remarks, and has left very little to be farther desired on the subject. Every reader will be glad to meet with them here.

“The prophecy begins with his name JUDAH, signifying the praise of the Lord, which was given to him at his birth by his mother Leah, Genesis 29:35. It then describes the warlike character of this tribe, to which, by the Divine appointment, was assigned the first lot of the promised land, which was conquered accordingly by the pious and heroic Caleb; the first who laid hands on the necks of his enemies, and routed and subdued them, Joshua 14:11; 15:1; Judges 1:1, 2; and led the way for their total subjugation under David; who, in allusion to this prediction, praises God, and says: Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me, Psalm 18:40. In the different stages of its strength, this tribe is compared to a lion’s whelp, to a full grown lion, and to a nursing lioness, the fiercest of all. Hence a lion was the standard of Judah; compare Numbers 2:3, Ezekiel 1:10. The city of David, where he reposed himself after his conquests, secure in the terror of his name, 1 Chronicles 14:17, was called Ariel, the lion of God, Isaiah 29:1; and our Lord himself, his most illustrious descendant, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Revelation 5:5.

“The duration of the power of this famous tribe is next determined: ‘the scepter of dominion,’ as it is understood Esther 8:4; Isaiah 14:5, etc., or its civil government, was not to cease or depart from Judah until the birth or coming of SHILOH, signifying the Apostle, as Christ is styled, Hebrews 3:1; nor was the native lawgiver, or expounder of the law, teacher, or scribe, intimating their ecclesiastical polity, to cease, until Shiloh should have a congregation of peoples, or religious followers, attached to him. And how accurately was this fulfilled in both these respects!

“1. Shortly before the birth of Christ a decree was issued by Augustus Caesar that all the land of Judea and Galilee should be enrolled, or a

registry of persons taken, in which Christ was included, Luke 2:1-7; whence Julian the apostate unwittingly objected to his title of CHRIST or KING, that he was born a subject of Caesar!’ About eleven years after Judea was made a Roman province, attached to Syria on the deposal and banishment of Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great, for maladministration; and an assessment of properties or taxing was carried into effect by Cyrenius, then governor of Syria, the same who before, as the emperor’s procurator, had made the enrolment, Luke 2:2; Acts 5:37; and thenceforth Judea was governed by a Roman deputy, and the judicial power of life and death taken away from the Jews, John 18:31.

“2. Their ecclesiastical polity ceased with the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans, A. D. 70; at which time the Gospel had been preached through the known world by the apostles, ‘his witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth;’ Acts 2:8; Romans 10:18.

“Our Lord’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, before his crucifixion, ‘riding on an ass, even a colt the foal of an ass,’ which by his direction his disciples brought to him for this purpose, ‘Go into the village over against you, and presently ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them, and bring them to me,’ Matthew 21:2-5, remarkably fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah, (Zechariah 9:9) is no less a fulfillment of this prophecy of Shiloh, ‘binding or tying his foal to the vine, even his ass’s colt to the choice vine.’ In ancient times to ride upon white asses or ass-colts was the privilege of persons of high rank, princes, judges, and prophets, Judges 5:10; 10:4; Numbers 22:22. And as the children of Israel were symbolized by the vine, Psalm 80:8; Hosea 10:1, and the men of Judah by ‘a (choice) vine of Sorek,’ in the original, both here and in the beautiful allegory of Isaiah, Isaiah 5:1-7, adopted by Jeremiah, Jeremiah 2:21, and by our Lord, Matthew 21:33, who styled himself the true vine, John 15:1; so the union of both these images signified our Lord’s assumption, as the promised Shiloh, of the dignity of the king of the Jews, not in a temporal but in a spiritual sense, as he declared to Pilate, John 18:36, as a prelude to his second coming in glory ‘to restore again the kingdom to Israel.’

“The vengeance to be then inflicted on all the enemies of his Church, or congregation of faithful Christians, is expressed by the symbolical imagery of ‘washing his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes;’ which to understand literally, would be incongruous and unusual any where, while it aptly represents his garments crimsoned in the blood of his foes, and their immense slaughter; and imagery frequently adopted in the prophetic scriptures.

“The strength and wholesomeness of Shiloh’s doctrine are next represented by having ‘his eyes red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.’ And thus the evangelical prophet, in similar strains, invites the world to embrace the Gospel:—

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters, And he that hath no money; come, buy and eat: Yea, come, buy wine and milk, Without money and without price. Isaiah 55:1.

“On the last day of the feast of tabernacles it was customary among the Jews for the people to bring water from the fountain of Siloah or Siloam, which they poured on the altar, singing the words of Isaiah, Isaiah 12:3: With joy shall ye draw water from the fountain of salvation; which the Targum interprets, ‘With joy shall ye receive a new doctrine from the ELECT of the JUST ONE;’ and the feast itself was also called Hosannah, Save, we beseech thee. And Isaiah has also described the apostasy of the Jews from their tutelar God IMMANUEL, under the corresponding imagery of their ‘rejecting the gently-flowing waters of Siloah,’ Isaiah 8:6-8.

“Hence our Lord, on the last day of the feast, significantly invited the Jews to come unto him as the true and living Fountain of waters, Jeremiah 2:13. ‘If any man thirst, let him come to ME and drink;’ John 7:37. He also compared his doctrine to new wine, which required to be put into new bottles, made of skins strong enough to contain it, Matthew 9:17; while the Gospel is repeatedly represented as affording milk for babes, or the first principles of the oracles of God for novices in the faith, as well as strong meat [and strong wine] for masters in Christ or adepts, Matthew 13:11; Hebrews 5:12-14.

“And our Lord’s most significant miracle was wrought at this fountain, when he gave sight to a man forty years old, who had been blind from his

birth, by sending him, after he had anointed his eyes with moistened clay, to wash in the pool of Siloam, which is the Greek pronunciation of the Hebrew שִׁלּוֹחַ Siloah or Siloh, Isaiah 8:6, where the Septuagint version reads σιλωαμ, signifying, according to the evangelist, ἀπεσταλμενος, sent forth, and consequently derived from שָׁלַח shalach, to send, John 9:7. Our Lord thus assuming to himself his two leading titles of MESSIAH, signifying anointed, and SHILOH, sent forth or delegated from God; as he had done before at the opening of his mission: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me forth (ἀπεσταλκε) to heal the broken-hearted,’ etc.; Luke 4:18.

“And in the course of it he declared, I was not sent forth (ἀπεσταλην) but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Matthew 15:24, by a two-fold reference to his character in Jacob’s prophecy of SHILOH and SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL, Genesis 49:10-24. ‘This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou sentest forth,’ (ἀπεστειλας,) to instruct and save mankind, John 17:3; and he thus distinguishes his own superior mission from his commission to his apostles: ‘As THE FATHER hath sent ME, (ἀπεσταλκε με,) so I send you,’ πεμπω υμας, John 20:21. Whence St. Paul expressly styles Jesus Christ ‘the Apostle (ὁ αποστολος) and High Priest of our profession,’ Hebrews 3:1; and by an elaborate argument shows the superiority of his mission above that of Moses, and of his priesthood above that of Aaron, in the sequel of the epistle. His priesthood was foretold by David to be a royal priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek, Psalm 110:4. But where shall we find his mission or apostleship foretold, except in Jacob’s prophecy of Shiloh? which was evidently so understood by Moses when God offered to send him as his ambassador to Pharaoh, and he declined at first the arduous mission: ‘O my Lord, send I pray thee by the hand of Him whom thou wilt send,’ or by the promised Shiloh, Exodus 3:10; 4:13; by whom in his last blessing to the Israelites, parallel to that of Jacob, he prayed that ‘God would bring back Judah to his people,’ from captivity, Deuteronomy 33:7.

“Here then we find the true meaning and derivation of the much disputed term Shiloh in this prophecy of Jacob, which is fortunately preserved by the Vulgate, rendering qui mittendus est, he that is to be sent, and also by a

rabbinical comment on Deuteronomy 22:7: ‘If you keep this precept, you hasten the coming of the Messiah, who is called SENT.’

“This important prophecy concerning Judah intimates, 1. The warlike character and conquests of this tribe; 2. The cessation of their civil and religious polity at the first coming of Shiloh; 3. His meek and lowly inauguration at that time, as spiritual King of the Jews, riding on an ass like the ancient judges and prophets; 4. His second coming as a warrior to trample on all his foes; and, 5. To save and instruct his faithful people.”-Hales’ Anal., vol. ii., p. 167, etc.

Verse 10. From Judah the scepter shall not depart— The Jews have a quibble on the word שבט shebet, which we translate scepter; they say it signifies a staff or rod, and that the meaning of it is, that “afflictions shall not depart from the Jews till the Messiah comes;” that they are still under affliction and therefore the Messiah is not come. This is a miserable shift to save a lost cause. Their chief Targumist, Onkelos, understood and translated the word nearly as we do; and the same meaning is adopted by the Jerusalem Targum, and by all the ancient versions, the Arabic excepted, which has [A] kazeeb, a rod; but in a very ancient MS. of the Pentateuch in my own possession the word [A] sebet is used, which signifies a tribe. Judah shall continue a distinct tribe till the Messiah shall come; and it did so; and after his coming it was confounded with the others, so that all distinction has been ever since lost.

Nor a teacher from his offspring— I am sufficiently aware that the literal meaning of the original מבי רגליו mibbeyn raglaiv is from between his feet, and I am as fully satisfied that it should never be so translated; from between the feet and out of the thigh simply mean progeny, natural offspring, for reasons which surely need not be mentioned. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, and the Jerusalem Targum, apply the whole of this prophecy, in a variety of very minute particulars, to the Messiah, and give no kind of countenance to the fictions of the modern Jews.

13. At the haven of the seas shall Zebulun dwell, And he shall be a haven for ships. And his border shall extend unto Sidon.

Verse 13. Zebulun’s lot or portion in the division of the Promised Land extended from the Mediterranean Sea on the west, to the lake of

Gennesareth on the east; see his division, Joshua 19:10, etc. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the passage thus: “Zebulun shall be on the coasts of the sea, and he shall rule over the havens; he shall subdue the provinces of the sea with his, ships, and his border shall extend unto Sidon.

14. Issachar is a strong ass Couching between two burdens. 15. And he saw the resting place that it was good, And the land that it was pleasant; And he inclined his shoulder to the load, And he became a servant unto tribute.

Verse 14. *Issachar is a strong ass*— **חַמֹּר גָרַם** chamor garem is properly a strong-limbed ass; couching between two burdens — bearing patiently, as most understand it, the fatigues of agriculture, and submitting to exorbitant taxes rather than exert themselves to drive out the old inhabitants.

The two burdens literally mean the two sacks or panniers, one on each side of the animal’s body; and couching down between these refers to the well-known propensity of the ass, whenever wearied or overloaded, to lie down even with its burden on its back.

Verse 15. *He saw that rest*— The inland portion that was assigned to him between the other tribes. He inclined his shoulder to the load; the Chaldee paraphrast gives this a widely different turn to that given it by most commentators: “He saw his portion that it was good, and the land that it was fruitful; and he shall subdue the provinces of the people, and drive out their inhabitants, and those who are left shall be his servants, and his tributaries.” Grotius understands it nearly in the same way. The pusillanimity which is generally attributed to this tribe certainly does not agree with the view in which they are exhibited in Scripture. In the song of Deborah this tribe is praised for the powerful assistance which it then afforded, Judges 5:15. And in 1 Chronicles 7:1-5, they are expressly said to have been valiant men of might in all their families, and in all their generations; i. e., through every period of their history. It appears they were a laborious, hardy, valiant tribe, patient in labor and invincible in war; bearing both these burdens with great constancy whenever it was necessary. When Tola of this tribe judged Israel, the land had rest twenty-three years, Judges 10:1.

16. Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel. 17. Dan shall be a serpent on the way, A cerastes upon the track, Biting the heels of the horse, And his rider shall fall backwards.

Verse 16. *Dan shall judge*— Dan, whose name signifies judgment, was the eldest of Jacob's sons by Bilhah, Rachel's maid, and he is here promised an equal rule with those tribes that sprang from either Leah or Rachel, the legal wives of Jacob. Some Jewish and some Christian writers understand this prophecy of Samson, who sprang from this tribe, and judged, or as the word might be translated avenged, the people of Israel twenty years. See Judges 13:2; 15:20.

Verse 17. *Dan shall be a serpent*— The original word is נחש nachash, and we have seen on chap. iii. that this has a great variety of significations. It is probable that a serpent is here intended, but of what kind we know not; yet as the principal reference in the text is to guile, cunning, etc., the same creature may be intended as in chap. iii.

A cerastes upon the track— The word שפִּיפּוֹ shephiphon, which is nowhere else to be found in the Bible, is thus translated by the Vulgate, and Bochart approves of the translation. The cerastes has its name from two little horns upon its head, and is remarkable for the property here ascribed to the shephiphon. The word אֲרָח orach, which we translate path, signifies the track or rut made in the ground by the wheel of a cart, wagon, etc. And the description that Nicander gives of this serpent in his Theriaca perfectly agrees with what is here said of the shephiphon.

εν δ' αμαθοισιν η και αματροξισησι παρα στιβον ενδυκες ανει. v. 262.

It lies under the sand, or in some cart rut by the way.

It is intimated that this tribe should gain the principal part of its conquests more by cunning and stratagem, than by valor; and this is seen particularly in their conquest of Laish, Judges 18., and even in some of the transactions of Samson, such as burning the corn of the Philistines, and at last pulling down their temple, and destroying three thousand at one time, see Judges 16:26-30.

18. For thy salvation have I waited, O Lord!

This is a remarkable ejaculation, and seems to stand perfectly unconnected with all that went before and all that follows; though it is probable that certain prophetic views which Jacob now had, and which he does not explain, gave rise to it; and by this he at once expressed both his faith and hope in God. Both Jewish and Christian commentators have endeavored to find out the connection in which these words existed in the mind of the patriarch. The Targum of Jonathan expresses the whole thus: “When Jacob saw Gideon the son of Joash, and Samson the son of Manoah, which were to be saviors in a future age, he said: I do not wait for the salvation of Gideon, I do not expect the salvation of Samson, because their salvation is a temporal salvation; but I wait for and expect thy salvation, O Lord, because thy salvation is eternal.” And the Jerusalem Targum much to the same purpose: “Our father Jacob said: Wait not, my soul, for the redemption of Gideon the son of Joash which is temporal, nor the redemption of Samson which is a created salvation; but for the salvation which thou hast said by THY WORD should come to thy people the children of Israel: my soul waits for this thy salvation.” Indeed these Targums understand almost the whole of these prophecies of the Messiah, and especially what is said about Judah, every word of which they refer to him. Thus the ancient Jews convict the moderns of both false interpretations and vain expectations. As the tribe of Dan was the first that appears to have been seduced from the true worship of God, (see Judges 18:30,) some have thought that Jacob refers particularly to this, and sees the end of the general apostasy only in the redemption by Jesus Christ, considering the nachash above as the seducer, and the Messiah the promised seed.

19. Gad, an army shall attack him, And he shall attack in return.

This is one of the most obscure prophecies in the whole chapter; and no two interpreters agree in the translation of the original words, which exhibit a most singular alliteration:—

וְהוּא יַגְדֵּד אֶבֶב וְגַד גְּדוּד יִגְדֵּנּוּ gad gedud yegudennu; והוא יגד עקב vehu yagud akeb.

The prophecy seems to refer generally to the frequent disturbances to which this tribe should be exposed, and their hostile, warlike disposition, that would always lead them to repel every aggression. It is likely that the prophecy had an especial fulfillment when this tribe, in conjunction with

that of Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh, got a great victory over the Hagarites, taking captive one hundred thousand men, two thousand asses, fifty thousand camels, and two hundred and fifty thousand sheep; see 1 Chronicles 5:18-22. Dr. Durell and others translate the last word עִקֵב akeb, rear — “He shall invade their rear;” which contains almost no meaning, as it only seems to state that though the army that invaded Gad should be successful, yet the Gadites would harass their rear as they returned: but this could never be a subject sufficient consequence for a prophecy. The word עִיב ekeb is frequently used as a particle, signifying in consequence, because of, on account of. After the Gadites had obtained the victory above mentioned, they continued to possess the land of their enemies till they were carried away captive. The Chaldee paraphrasts apply this to the Gadites going armed over Jordan before their brethren, discomfiting their enemies, and returning back with much spoil. See Joshua 4:12, 13, and Joshua 22:1-2, 8.

20. From Asher his bread shall be fat, And he shall produce royal dainties.

This refers to the great fertility of the lot that fell to Asher, and which appears to have corresponded with the name, which signifies happy or blessed. His great prosperity is described by Moses in this figurative way: “Let Asher be blessed with children, let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil;” Deuteronomy 33:24.

21. Naphtali is a spreading oak, Producing beautiful branches.

This is Bochart’s translation; and perhaps no man who understands the genius of the Hebrew language will attempt to dispute its propriety; it is as literal as it is correct. Our own translation scarcely gives any sense. The fruitfulness of this tribe in children may be here intended. From his four sons Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem, which he took down into Egypt, Genesis 46:24, in the course of two hundred and fifteen years there sprang of effective men 53, 400: but as great increase in this way was not an uncommon case in the descendants of Jacob, this may refer particularly to the fruitfulness of their soil, and the especial providential care and blessing of the Almighty; to which indeed Moses seems particularly to refer, Deuteronomy 33:23: O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full with the blessing of the Lord. So that he may be represented under the notion of a

tree planted in a rich soil, growing to a prodigious size, extending its branches in all directions, and becoming a shade for men and cattle, and a harbour for the fowls of heaven.

22. The son of a fruitful (vine) is Joseph; The son of a fruitful (vine) by the fountain: The daughters (branches) shoot over the wall. 23. They sorely afflicted him and contended with him; The chief archers had him in hatred. 24. But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob: By the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel. 25. By the God of thy father, for he helped thee; And God All-sufficient, he blessed thee, The blessing of the heavens from above, And the blessings lying in the deep beneath, The blessings of the breasts and of the womb 26. The blessings of thy father have prevailed Over the blessings of the eternal mountains, And the desirable things of the everlasting hills. These shall be on the head of Joseph, And on his crown who was separated from his brethren.

Verse 22. *The sum of a fruitful vine*— This appears to me to refer to Jacob himself, who was blessed with such a numerous posterity that in two hundred and fifteen years after this his own descendants amounted to upwards of 600, 000 effective men; and the figures here are intended to point out the continual growth and increase of his posterity. Jacob was a fruitful tree planted by a fountain, which because it was good would yield good fruit; and because it was planted near a fountain, from being continually watered, would be perpetually fruitful. The same is used and applied to Jacob, Deuteronomy 33:28: The FOUNTAIN OF JACOB shall be upon a land of corn, and wine, etc.

***The daughters*, בנות *banoth*, put here for branches, shoot over or run upon the wall.**— Alluding probably to the case of the vine, which requires to be supported by a wall, trees, etc. Some commentators have understood this literally, and have applied it to the Egyptian women, who were so struck with the beauty of Joseph as to get upon walls, the tops of houses, etc., to see him as he passed by. This is agreeable to the view taken of the subject by the Koran. See Clarke on “Genesis 39:6”.

Verse 23. *The chief archers*— בעלי חצים *baaley chitstsim*, the masters of arrows — Joseph’s brethren, who either used such weapons, while

feeding their flocks in the deserts, for the protection of themselves and cattle, or for the purpose of hunting; and who probably excelled in archery. It may however refer to the bitter speeches and harsh words that they spoke to and of him, for they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him, Genesis 37:4. Thus they sorely afflicted him, and were incessantly scolding or finding fault.

Verse 24. *But his bow remained in strength*— The more he was persecuted, either by his brethren or in Egypt, the more resplendent his uprightness and virtues shone: and the arms his extended power and influence, of his hands plans, designs, and particular operations of his prudence, judgment, discretion, etc., were all rendered successful by the hand — the powerful succor and protection, of the Mighty One of Jacob that God who blessed and protected all the counsels and plans of Jacob, and protected and increased him also when he was in a strange land, and often under the power of those who sought opportunities to oppress and defraud him.

By the name of the Shepherd; the Rock of Israel— Jehovah, and El-Elohey Israel; see Genesis 33:20. This appears to me to refer to the subject of the thirty-second chapter, where Jacob wrestled with God, had God's name revealed to him, and his own name changed from Jacob to Israel, in consequence of which he built an altar, and dedicated it to God, who had appeared to him under the name of Elohey-Israel, the strong God of Israel; which circumstance led him to use the term Rock, which, as an emblem of power, is frequently given to God in the sacred writings, and may here refer to the stone which Jacob set up. It is very probable that the word shepherd is intended to apply to our blessed Lord, who is the Shepherd of Israel, the good Shepherd, John 10:11-17; and who, beyond all controversy, was the person with whom Jacob wrestled. See Clarke on "Genesis 16:7" and See Clarke on "Genesis 32:24".

Verse 25. *The God of thy father*— How frequently God is called the God of Jacob none needs be told who reads the Bible.

God All-sufficient— Instead of אֵל שַׁדַּי ETH Shaddai, THE Almighty or All-sufficient; I read אֵל שַׁלִּי EL Shaddai, GOD All-sufficient; which is the reading of the Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, and Coptic, and of three

reputable MSS. In the collections of Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi. The copies used by those ancient versions had evidently אֱלֹהִים EL, God, and not אֱתֵת eth, THE, a mistake produced in later times. On the word אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי El Shaddai, See Clarke on “Genesis 17:1”.

The blessing of the heavens from above— A generally pure, clear, serene sky, frequently dropping down fertilizing showers and dews, so as to make a very fruitful soil and salubrious atmosphere.

Blessings lying in the deep beneath— Whatever riches could be gained from the sea or rivers, from mines and minerals in the bowels of the earth, and from abundant springs in different parts of his inheritance. Our translation of this line is excessively obscure: Blessings of the deep that lieth under. What is it that lies under the deep: By connecting בְּרִכָּה bircoth, blessings, with רִבְצֵת robetseth, lying, all ambiguity is avoided, and the text speaks a plain and consistent sense.

The blessings of the breasts and of the womb.— A numerous offspring, and an abundance of cattle. The progeny of Joseph, by Ephraim and Manasseh, amounted at the first census or enumeration (Numbers 1.) to 75, 900 men, which exceeded the sum of any one tribe; Judah, the greatest of the others, amounting to no more than 74, 600. Indeed, Ephraim and Manasseh had multiplied so greatly in the days of Joshua, that a common lot was not sufficient for them. See their complaint, Joshua 17:14.

Verse 26. *The blessing of thy father, etc.*— The blessings which thy father now prays for and pronounces are neither temporal nor transitory; they shall exceed in their duration the eternal mountains, and in their value and spiritual nature all the conveniences, comforts, and delicacies which the everlasting hills can produce. They shall last when the heavens and the earth are no more, and shall extend throughout eternity. They are the blessings which shall be communicated to the world by means of the Messiah.

The Jerusalem Targum paraphrases the place thus: “The blessing of this father shall be added unto the blessings wherewith thy fathers Abraham and Isaac, who are likened to mountains, have blessed thee; and they shall exceed the blessings of the four mothers, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, who are likened to the hills: all these blessings shall be a crown of

magnificence on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was a prince and governor in the land of Egypt.”

27. Benjamin is a ravenous wolf: In the morning he shall devour the prey,
And in the evening he shall divide the spoil.

This tribe is very fitly compared to a ravenous wolf, because of the rude courage and ferocity which they have invariably displayed, particularly in their war with the other tribes, in which they killed more men than the whole of their own numbers amounted to.

“This last tribe,” says Dr. Hales, “is compared to a wolf for its ferocious and martial disposition, such as was evinced by their contests with the other tribes, in which, after two victories, they were almost exterminated, Judges 19, 20.” Its union with the tribe of Judah seems to be intimated in their joint conquests, expressed nearly in the same terms: “Judah went up from the prey;” “Benjamin devoured the prey.” Moses in his parallel prophecy, Deuteronomy 33:12, confirms this by signifying that the sanctuary should be fixed in his lot, and that he should continue as long as the existence of the temple itself:—

*THE BELOVED OF THE LORD shall dwell with him in safety,
And shall cover him all the day long,
And shall dwell between his shoulders.*

Deuteronomy 33:12.

In the morning, etc.— These expressions have been variously understood. The sense given above is that in which the principal interpreters agree; but Houbigant protests against the prophecy signifying the continuance of this tribe, as the words, “in the morning devouring the prey,” and “in the evening dividing the spoil,” are supposed to imply; “because,” he observes, “after the return from the Babylonish captivity, this tribe is no more mentioned.” But this may be accounted for from the circumstance of its being associated with that of Judah, (see 1 Kings 12:21-24,) after which it is scarcely ever mentioned but in that union. Being thus absorbed in the tribe of Judah, it continued from the morning till the evening of the Jewish dispensation, and consequently till the Lion of the tribe of Judah was seen in the wilderness of Israel.

In the morning, according to Mr. Ainsworth, “signifies the first times; for Ehud of Benjamin was the second judge that saved the Israelites from the hands of the Moabites, Judges 3:15, etc. Saul of Benjamin was the first king of Israel; he and his son were great warriors, making a prey of many enemies, 1 Samuel 11:6, 7, 11; 14:13, 15, 47, 48. And the evening, the latter times; for Mordecai and Esther of Benjamin delivered the Jews from a great destruction, and slew their enemies, Esther 8:7, 9, 11; 9:5, 6, 15, 16.”

Verse 28. *Every one according to his blessing*— That is, guided by the unerring Spirit of prophecy, Jacob now foretold to each of his sons all the important events which should take place during their successive generations, and the predominant characteristic of each tribe; and, at the same time, made some comparatively obscure references to the advent of the Messiah, and the redemption of the world by him.

Verse 29. *Bury me with my fathers, etc.*— From this it appears that the cave at Machpelah was a common burying-place for Hebrews of distinction; and indeed the first public burying-place mentioned in history. From Genesis 49:31 we find that Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah, had been already deposited there, and among them Jacob wished to have his bones laid; and he left his dying charge with his children to bury him in this place, and this they conscientiously performed. See Genesis 50:13.

Verse 33. *He gathered up his feet into the bed*— It is very probable that while delivering these prophetic blessings Jacob sat upon the side of his bed, leaning upon his staff; and having finished, he lifted up his feet into the bed, stretched himself upon it, and expired!

And was gathered unto his people.— The testimony that this place bears to the immortality of the soul, and to its existence separate from the body, should not be lightly regarded. In the same moment in which Jacob is said to have gathered up his feet into the bed, and to have expired, it is added, and was gathered unto his people. It is certain that his body was not then gathered to his people, nor till seven weeks after; and it is not likely that a circumstance, so distant in point both of time and place, would have been thus anticipated, and associated with facts that took place in that moment. I cannot help therefore considering this an additional evidence for the

immateriality of the soul, and that it was intended by the Holy Spirit to convey this grand and consolatory sentiment, that when a holy man ceases to live among his fellows, his soul becomes an inhabitant of another world, and is joined to the spirits of just men made perfect.

1. It has been conjectured (See Clarke “Genesis 37:9”) that the eleven stars that bowed down to Joseph might probably refer to the signs of the Zodiac, which were very anciently known in Egypt, and are supposed to have had their origin in Chaldea. On this supposition Joseph’s eleven brethren answered to eleven of these signs, and himself to the twelfth. General Vallancy has endeavored, in his *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, vol. vi., part. ii., p. 343, to trace out the analogy between the twelve sons of Jacob and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, which Dr. Hales (*Analysis*, vol. ii., p. 165) has altered a little, and placed in a form in which it becomes more generally applicable. As this scheme is curious, many readers who may not have the opportunity of consulting the above works will be pleased to find it here. That there is an allusion to the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and probably to their ancient asterisms, may be readily credited; but how far the peculiar characteristics of the sons of Jacob were expressed by the animals in the Zodiac, is a widely different question.

1. RUABEN-“Unstable (rather pouring out) as waters”-the sign AQUARIUS, represented as a man pouring out waters from an urn. 2. SIMEON and LEVI-“The united brethren” the sign GEMINI or the Twins. 3. JUDAH-“The strong lion”-the sign LEO. 4. ASHER-“His bread shall be fat”-the sign VIRGO or the Virgin, generally represented as holding a full ear of corn. 5. ISSACHAR-“A strong ass” or ox, both used in husbandry-the sign TAURUS or the Bull. 6. and 7. DAN-“A serpent biting the horse’s heels”-Scorpio, the Scorpion. On the celestial sphere the Scorpion is actually represented as biting the heel of the horse of the archer Sagittarius; and Chelae, “his claws,” originally occupied the space of Libra. 8. JOSEPH-“His bow remained in strength” -the sign SAGITTARIUS, the archer or bowman; commonly represented, even on the Asiatic Zodiacs, with his bow bent, and the arrow drawn up to the head — the bow in full strength. 9. NAPHTALI-by a play on his name, מלה taleh, the ram — the sign ARIES, according to the rabbins. 10. ZEBULUN-“A haven for ships”-denoted by CANCER, the crab. 11. GAD-“A troop or army”-reversed, dag, a fish — the

sign PISCES. 12. BENJAMIN—"A ravening wolf"-CAPRICORN, which on the Egyptian sphere was represented by a goat led by Pan, with a wolf's head.

What likelihood the reader may see in all this, I cannot pretend to say; but that the twelve signs were at that time known in Egypt and Chaldea, there can be little doubt.

2. We have now seen the life of Jacob brought to a close; and have carefully traced it through all its various fortunes, as the facts presented themselves in the preceding chapters. Isaac his father was what might properly be called a good man; but in strength of mind he appears to have fallen far short of his father Abraham, and his son Jacob. Having left the management of his domestic concerns to Rebekah his wife, who was an artful and comparatively irreligious woman, the education of his sons was either neglected or perverted. The unhappy influence which the precepts and example of his mother had on the mind of her son we have seen and deplored. Through the mercy of God Jacob outlived the shady part of his own character, and his last days were his brightest and his best. He had many troubles and difficulties in life, under which an inferior mind must have necessarily sunk; but being a worker together with the providence of God, his difficulties only served in general to whet his invention, and draw out the immense resources of his own mind. He had to do with an avaricious, procrastinating relative, as destitute of humanity as he was of justice. Let this plead something in his excuse. He certainly did outwit his father-in-law; and yet, probably, had no more than the just recompense of his faithful services in the successful issue of all his devices. From the time in which God favored him with that wonderful manifestation of grace at Peniel, chap. 32., he became a new man. He had frequent discoveries of God before, to encourage him in journeys, secular affairs, etc.; but none in which the heart-changing power of Divine grace was so abundantly revealed. Happy he whose last days are his best! We can scarcely conceive a scene more noble or dignified than that exhibited at the deathbed of Jacob. This great man was now one hundred and forty-seven years of age; though his body, by the waste of time, was greatly enfeebled, yet with a mind in perfect vigor, and a hope full of immortality, he calls his numerous family together, all of them in their utmost state of prosperity, and gives them his last counsels, and his dying blessing. His declarations show that the secret of the Lord was with him, and that his candle shone bright upon

his tabernacle. Having finished his work, with perfect possession of all his faculties, and being determined that while he was able to help himself none should be called in to assist, (which was one of the grand characteristics of his life,) he, with that dignity which became a great man and a man of God stretched himself upon his bed, and rather appears to have conquered death than to have suffered it. Who, seeing the end of this illustrious patriarch, can help exclaiming, There is none like the God of Jeshurun! Let Jacob's God be my God! Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! Reader, God is still the same: and though he may not make thee as great as was Jacob, yet he is ready to make thee as good; and, whatever thy past life may have been, to crown thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies, that thy end also may be peace.

CHAPTER 50

Joseph bewails the death of his father, and commands the physicians to embalm him, 1, 2. The Egyptians mourn for him seventy days, 3. Joseph begs permission from Pharaoh to accompany his father's corpse to Canaan, 4, 5. Pharaoh consents, 6. Pharaoh's domestics and elders, the elders of Egypt, Joseph and his brethren, with chariots, horsemen, etc., form the funeral procession, 7-9. They come to the threshing-floor of Atad, and mourn there seven days, 10. The Canaanites call the place Abel-Mizraim, 11. They bury Jacob in the cove of Machpelah, 12, 13. Joseph returns to Egypt, 14. His brethren, fearing his displeasure, send messengers to him to entreat his forgiveness of past wrongs, 15-17. They follow, and prostrate themselves before him, and offer to be his servants, 18. Joseph receives them affectionately, and assures them and theirs of his care and protection, 19-21. Joseph and his brethren dwell in Egypt, and he sees the third generation of his children, 22, 23. Being about to die, he prophecies the return of the children of Israel from Egypt, 24, and causes them to swear that they will carry his bones to Canaan, 25. Joseph dies, aged one hundred and ten years; is embalmed, and put in a coffin in Egypt, 26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 50

Verse 1. Joseph fell upon his father's face— Though this act appears to be suspended by the unnatural division of this verse from the preceding chapter, yet we may rest assured it was the immediate consequence of Jacob's death.

Verse 2. The physicians— רפאים *ropheim*, the healers, those whose business it was to heal or restore the body from sickness by the administration of proper medicines; and when death took place, to heal or preserve it from dissolution by embalming, and thus give it a sort of immortality or everlasting duration. The original word חננת *chanat*, which we translate to embalm, has undoubtedly the same meaning with the Arabic [A] *hanata*, which also signifies to embalm, or to preserve from

putrefaction by the application of spices, etc., and hence [A] hantat, an embalmer. The word is used to express the reddening of leather; and probably the ideal meaning may be something analogous to our tanning, which consists in removing the moisture, and closing up the pores so as to render them impervious to wet. This probably is the grand principle in embalming; and whatever effects this, will preserve flesh as perfectly as skin. Who can doubt that a human muscle, undergoing the same process of tanning as the hide of an ox, would not become equally incorruptible? I have seen a part of the muscle of a human thigh, that, having come into contact with some tanning matter, either in the coffin or in the grave, was in a state of perfect soundness, when the rest of the body had been long reduced to earth; and it exhibited the appearance of a thick piece of well tanned leather.

In the art of embalming, the Egyptians excelled all nations in the world; with them it was a common practice. Instances of the perfection to which they carried this art may be seen in the numerous mummies, as they are called, which are found in different European cabinets, and which have been all brought from Egypt. This people not only embalmed men and women, and thus kept the bodies of their beloved relatives from the empire of corruption, but they embalmed useful animals also. I have seen the body of the Ibris thus preserved; and though the work had been done for some thousands of years, the very feathers were in complete preservation, and the color of the plumage discernible. The account of this curious process, the articles used, and the manner of applying them, I subjoin from Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, as also the manner of their mournings and funeral solemnities, which are highly illustrative of the subjects in this chapter.

“When any man of quality dies,” says Herodotus, “all the women of that family besmear their heads and faces with dirt; then, leaving the body at home, they go lamenting up and down the city with all their relations; their apparel being girt about them, and their breasts left naked. On the other hand the men, having likewise their clothes girt about them, beat themselves. These things being done, they carry the dead body to be embalmed; for which there are certain persons appointed who profess this art. These, when the body is brought to them, show to those that bring it certain models of dead persons in wood, according to any of which the

deceased may be painted. One of these they say is accurately made like to one whom, in such a matter, I do not think lawful to name; **του ουκ οσιον ποιουμαι το συννομα επι τοιουτω πρηγματι ονομαζειν;** (probably Osiris, one of the principal gods of Egypt, is here intended;) then they show a second inferior to it, and of an easier price; and next a third, cheaper than the former, and of a very small value; which being seen, they ask them after which model the deceased shall be represented. When they have agreed upon the price they depart; and those with whom the dead corpse is left proceed to embalm it after the following manner: First of all, they with a crooked iron draw the brain out of the head through the nostrils; next, with a sharp AEthiopic stone they cut up that part of the abdomen called the ilia, and that way draw out all the bowels, which, having cleansed and washed with palm wine, they again rinse and wash with wine perfumed with pounded odors: then filling up the belly with pure myrrh and cassia grossly powdered, and all other odors except frankincense, they sew it up again. Having so done, they salt it up close with nitre seventy days, for longer they may not salt it. After this number of days are over they wash the corpse again, and then roll it up with fine linen, all besmeared with a sort of gum, commonly used by the Egyptians instead of glue. Then is the body restored to its relations, who prepare a wooden coffin for it in the shape and likeness of a man, and then put the embalmed body into it, and thus enclosed, place it in a repository in the house, setting it upright against the wall. After this manner they, with great expense, preserve their dead; whereas those who to avoid too great a charge desire a mediocrity, thus embalm them: they neither cut the belly nor pluck out the entrails, but fill it with clysters of oil of cedar injected up the anus, and then salt it the aforesaid number of days. On the last of these they press out the cedar clyster by the same way they had injected it, which has such virtue and efficacy that it brings out along with it the bowels wasted, and the nitre consumes the flesh, leaving only the skin and bones: having thus done, they restore the dead body to the relations, doing nothing more. The third way of embalming is for those of yet meaner circumstances; they with lotions wash the belly, then dry it up with salt for seventy days, and afterwards deliver it to be carried away. Nevertheless, beautiful women and ladies of quality were not delivered to be embalmed till three or four days after they had been dead;” for which Herodotus assigns a sufficient reason, however degrading to human nature:

τουτο δε ποιεουσι ουτω τουδε εινεκα, ινα μη σφι οι ταριχευται
 μισγωνται τησι γυναιξι λαμφθηναι γαρ τινα φασι μισγομενον
 νεκρω προσφατω γυναικος κατειπαι δε τον ομοτεχνον. [The
 original should not be put into a plainer language; the abomination to which
 it refers being too gross.] “But if any stranger or Egyptian was either killed
 by a crocodile or drowned in the river, the city where he was cast up was
 to embalm and bury him honorably in the sacred monuments, whom no
 one, no, not a relation or friend, but the priests of the Nile only, might
 touch; because they buried one who was something more than a dead
 man.” -HEROD. Euterpe, p. 120, ed. Gale.

Diodorus Siculus relates the funeral ceremonies of the Egyptians more distinctly and clearly, and with some very remarkable additional circumstances. “When any one among the Egyptians dies,” says he, “all his relations and friends, putting dirt upon their heads, go lamenting about the city, till such time as the body shall be buried: in the meantime, they abstain from baths and wine, and all kinds of delicate meats; neither do they, during that time, wear any costly apparel. The manner of their burials is threefold: one very costly, a second sort less chargeable, and a third very mean. In the first, they say, there is spent a talent of silver; in the second, twenty minae; but in the last there is very little expense. ‘Those who have the care of ordering the body are such as have been taught that art by their ancestors. These, showing each kind of burial, ask them after what manner they will have the body prepared. When they have agreed upon the manner, they deliver the body to such as are usually appointed for this office. First, he who has the name of scribe, laying it upon the ground, marks about the flank on the left side how much is to be cut away; then he who is called παρασχιστης, paraschistes, the cutter or dissector, with an AETHiopic stone, cuts away as much of the flesh as the law commands, and presently runs away as fast as he can; those who are present, pursuing him, cast stones at him, and curse him, hereby turning all the execrations which they imagine due to his office upon him. For whosoever offers violence, wounds, or does any kind of injury to a body of the same nature with himself, they think him worthy of hatred: but those who are ταριχευται, taricheutae, the embalmers, they esteem worthy of honor and respect; for they are familiar with their priests, and go into the temples as holy men, without any prohibition. As soon as they come to embalm the dissected body, one of them thrusts his hand through

the wound into the abdomen, and draws forth all the bowels but the heart and kidneys, which another washes and cleanses with wine made of palms and aromatic odors. Lastly, having washed the body, they anoint it with oil of cedar and other things for about thirty days, and afterwards with myrrh, cinnamon, and other such like matters, which have not only a power to preserve it a long time, but also give it a sweet smell; after which they deliver it to the kindred in such manner that every member remains whole and entire, and no part of it changed, but the beauty and shape of the face seem just as they were before; and the person may be known, even the eyebrows and eyelids remaining as they were at first. By this means many of the Egyptians, keeping the dead bodies of their ancestors in magnificent houses, so perfectly see the true visage and countenance of those that died many ages before they themselves were born, that in viewing the proportions of every one of them, and the lineaments of their faces, they take as much delight as if they were still living among them. Moreover, the friends and nearest relations of the deceased, for the greater pomp of the solemnity, acquaint the judges and the rest of their friends with the time prefixed for the funeral or day of sepulture, declaring that such a one (calling the dead by his name) is such a day to pass the lake; at which time above forty judges appear, and sit together in a semicircle, in a place prepared on the hither side of the lake, where a ship, provided beforehand by such as have the care of the business, is haled up to the shore, and steered by a pilot whom the Egyptians in their language called Charon. Hence they say Orpheus, upon seeing this ceremony while he was in Egypt, invented the fable of hell, partly imitating therein the people of Egypt, and partly adding somewhat of his own. The ship being thus brought to the lake side, before the coffin is put on board every one is at liberty by the law to accuse the dead of what he thinks him guilty. If any one proves he was a bad man, the judges give sentence that the body shall be deprived of sepulture; but in case the informer be convicted of false accusation, then he is severely punished. If no accuser appear, or the information prove false, then all the kindred of the deceased leave off mourning, and begin to set forth his praises, yet say nothing of his birth, (as the custom is among the Greeks,) because the Egyptians all think themselves equally noble; but they recount how the deceased was educated from his youth and brought up to man's estate, exalting his piety towards the gods, and justice towards men, his chastity, and other virtues wherein

he excelled; and lastly pray and call upon the infernal deities (τους κάτω θεους, the gods below) to receive him into the societies of the just. The common people take this from the others, and consequently all is said in his praise by a loud shout, setting forth likewise his virtues in the highest strains of commendation, as one that is to live for ever with the infernal gods. Then those that have tombs of their own inter the corpse in places appointed for that purpose; and they that have none rear up the body in its coffin against some strong wall of their house. But such as are denied sepulture on account of some crime or debt, are laid up at home without coffins; yet when it shall afterwards happen that any of their posterity grows rich, he commonly pays off the deceased person's debts, and gets his crimes absolved, and so buries him honorably; for the Egyptians are wont to boast of their parents and ancestors that were honorably buried. It is a custom likewise among them to pawn the dead bodies of their parents to their creditors; but then those that do not redeem them fall under the greatest disgrace imaginable, and are denied burial themselves at their deaths."—Diod. Sic. Biblioth., lib. i., cap. 91-93., edit. Bipont. See also the *Necrokedia, or Art of Embalming*, by Greenhill, 4to., p. 241, who endeavored in vain to recommend and restore the art But he could not give his countrymen Egyptian manners; for a dead carcass is to the British an object of horror, and scarcely any, except a surgeon or an undertaker, cares to touch it.

Verse 3. *Forty days*— The body it appears required this number of days to complete the process of embalming; afterwards it lay in natron thirty days more, making in the whole seventy days, according to the preceding accounts, during which the mourning was continued.

Verse 4. *Speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh.*— But why did not Joseph apply himself? Because he was now in his mourning habits, and in such none must appear in the presence of the eastern monarchs. See Esther 4:2.

Verse 7. *The elders of his house*— Persons who, by reason of their age, had acquired much experience; and who on this account were deemed the best qualified to conduct the affairs of the king's household. Similar to these were the [AS] Eldermen, or Aldermen, among our Saxon ancestors, who were senators and peers of the realm.

The funeral procession of Jacob must have been truly grand. Joseph, his brethren and their descendants, the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders — all the principal men, of the land of Egypt, with chariots and horsemen, must have appeared a very great company indeed. We have seen LORDS, for their greater honor, buried at the public expense; and all the male branches of the royal family, as well as the most eminent men of the nation, join in the funeral procession, as in the case of the late Lord Nelson; but what was all this in comparison of the funeral solemnity now before us? Here was no conqueror, no mighty man of valor, no person of proud descent; here was only a plain man, who had dwelt almost all his life long in tents, without any other subjects than his cattle, and whose kingdom was not of this world. Behold this man honored by a national mourning, and by a national funeral! It may be said indeed that “all this was done out of respect to Joseph.” Be it so; why was Joseph thus respected? Was it because he had conquered nations, had made his sword drunk with blood, had triumphed over the enemies of Egypt? NO! But because he had saved men alive; because he was the king’s faithful servant, the rich man’s counsellor, and the poor man’s friend. He was a national blessing; and the nation mourns in his affliction, and unites to do him honor.

Verse 10. *The threshing-floor of Atad*— As **אֲתָד** atad signifies a bramble or thorn, it has been understood by the Arabic, not as a man’s name, but as the name of a place; but all the other versions and the Targums consider it as the name of a man. Threshing-floors were always in a field, in the open air; and Atad was probably what we would call a great farmer or chief of some clan or tribe in that place. Jerome supposed the place to have been about two leagues from Jericho; but we have no certain information on this point. The funeral procession stopped here, probably as affording pasturage to their cattle while they observed the seven days’ mourning which terminated the funeral solemnities, after which nothing remained but the interment of the corpse. The mourning of the ancient Hebrews was usually of seven days’ continuance, Numbers 19:19; 1 Samuel 31:13; though on certain occasions it was extended to thirty days, Numbers 20:29; Deuteronomy 21:13; 34:8, but never longer. The seventy days’ mourning mentioned above was that of the Egyptians, and was rendered necessary by the long process of embalming, which obliged them to keep

the body out of the grave for seventy days, as we learn both from Herodotus and Diodorus. Seven days by the order of God a man was to mourn for his dead, because during that time he was considered as unclean; but when those were finished he was to purify himself, and consider the mourning as ended; Numbers 19:11, 19. Thus God gave seven days, in some cases thirty, to mourn in: man, ever in his own estimation wiser than the word of God, has added eleven whole months to the term, which nature itself pronounces to be absurd, because it is incapable of supporting grief for such a time; and thus mourning is now, except in the first seven or thirty days, a mere solemn ill-conducted FARCE, a grave mimicry, a vain show, that convicts itself of its own hypocrisy. Who will rise up on the side of God and common sense, and restore becoming sorrow on the death of a relative to decency of garb and moderation in its continuance? Suppose the near relatives of the deceased were to be allowed seven days of seclusion from society, for the purpose of meditating on death and eternity, and after this to appear in a mourning habit for thirty days; every important end would be accomplished, and hypocrisy, the too common attendant of man, be banished, especially from that part of his life in which deep sincerity is not less becoming than in the most solemn act of his religious intercourse with God.

In a kind of politico-religious institution formed by his late majesty Ferdinand IV., king of Naples and the Sicilies, I find the following rational institute relative to this point: “There shall be no mourning among you but only on the death of a father, mother, husband, or wife. To render to these the last duties of affection, children, wives, and husbands only shall be permitted to wear a sign or emblem of grief: a man may wear a crape tied round his right arm; a woman, a black handkerchief around her neck; and this in both cases for only two months at the most.” Is there a purpose which religion, reason, or decency can demand that would not be answered by such external mourning as this? Only such relatives as the above, brothers and sisters being included, can mourn; all others make only a part of the dumb hypocritical show.

Verse 12. *And his sons did unto him*— This and the thirteenth verse have been supposed by Mr. Locke and others to belong to the conclusion of the preceding chapter, in which connection they certainly read more consistently than they do here.

Verse 15. *Saw that their father was dead*— This at once argues both a sense of guilt in their own consciences, and a want of confidence in their brother. They might have supposed that hitherto he had forborne to punish them merely on their father's account; but now that he was dead, and Joseph having them completely in his power, they imagined that he would take vengeance on them for their former conduct towards him.

Thus conscience records criminality; and, by giving birth to continual fears and doubtfulness, destroys all peace of mind, security, and confidence. On this subject an elegant poet has spoken with his usual point and discernment:—

*Exemplo quodcumque malo committitur, ipsi
Displicet auctori. Prima est haec ultio, quod se
Judice nemo nocens absolvitur, improba quamvis
Gratia fallaci Praetoris vicerit urna. JUV. Sat. xiii. 1, etc.*

Happily metaphrased by Mr. Dryden:—

He that commits a fault shall quickly find The pressing guilt lie heavy on his mind. Though bribes, or favor shall assert his cause, Pronounce him guiltless, and elude the laws, None quits himself; his own impartial thought Will damn, and conscience will record the fault. This, first, the wicked feels.

We have seen this in the preceding history often exemplified in the case of Joseph's brethren.

Verse 16. *Thy father did command*— Whether he did or not we cannot tell. Some think they had feigned this story, but that is not so likely. Jacob might have had suspicions too, and might have thought that the best way to prevent evil was to humble themselves before their brother, and get a fresh assurance of his forgiveness.

Verse 17. *The servants of the God of thy father.*— These words were wonderfully well chosen, and spoken in the most forcible manner to Joseph's piety and filial affection. No wonder then that he wept when they spake to him.

Verse 19. *Amos I in the place of God?*— These words may be understood either as a question, or an affirmative proposition. How should

I take any farther notice of your transgression? I have passed it by, the matter lies now between God and you. Or, in the order of Divine providence I am now in God's place; he has furnished me with means, and made me a distributor of his bounty; I will therefore not only nourish you, but also your little ones, Genesis 50:21: and therefore he spake comfortably unto them, as in Genesis 45:8, telling them that he attributed the whole business to the particular providence of God rather than to any ill will or malice in them, and that, in permitting him to be brought into Egypt, God had graciously saved their lives, the life of their father, the lives of the people of Canaan, and of the Egyptians: as therefore God had honored him by making him vicegerent in the dispensations of his especial bounty towards so many people, it was impossible he should be displeased with the means by which this was brought about.

Verse 22. *Joseph dwelt in Egypt*— Continued in Egypt after his return from Canaan till his death; he, and his father's house — all the descendants of Israel, till the exodus or departure under the direction of Moses and Aaron, which was one hundred and forty-four years after.

Verse 23. *Were brought up upon Joseph's knees.*— They were educated by him, or under his direction; his sons and their children continuing to acknowledge him as patriarch, or head of the family, as long as he lived.

Verse 24. *Joseph said-I die*— That is, I am dying; and God will surely visit you — he will yet again give you, in the time when it shall be essentially necessary, the most signal proof of his unbounded love towards the seed of Jacob.

And bring you out of this land— Though ye have here every thing that can render life comfortable, yet this is not the typical land, the land given by covenant, the land which represents the rest that remains for the people of God.

Verse 25. *Ye shall carry up my bones*— That I may finally rest with my ancestors in the land which God gave to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and which is a pledge as it is a type of the kingdom of Heaven. Thus says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Hebrews 11:22: "By FAITH Joseph, when he died, (τελευτων, when dying,) made mention of the departure (εξοδου, of the EXODUS) of the children of Israel; and gave

commandment concerning his bones. From this it is evident that Joseph considered all these things as typical, and by this very commandment expressed his faith in the immortality of the soul, and the general resurrection of the dead. This oath, by which Joseph then bound his brethren, their posterity considered as binding on themselves; and Moses took care, when he departed from Egypt, to carry up Joseph's body with him, Exodus 13:19; which was afterwards buried in Shechem, Joshua 24:32, the very portion which Jacob had purchased from the Amorites, and which he gave to his son Joseph, Genesis 48:22; Acts 7:16. See the reason for this command as given by Chrysostom, vol. ii., p. 695, sec. D.E.

Verse 26. Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old— שנים ב

מאה ועשר ben meah vaeser shanim; literally, the son of a hundred and ten years. Here the period of time he lived is personified, all the years of which it was composed being represented as a nurse or father, feeding, nourishing, and supporting him to the end. This figure, which is termed by rhetoricians prosopopæia, is very frequent in Scripture; and by this virtues, vices, forms, attributes, and qualities, with every part of inanimate nature, are represented as endued with reason and speech, and performing all the actions of intelligent beings.

They embalmed him— See Clarke on “Genesis 50:2”. The same precautions were taken to preserve his body as to preserve that of his father Jacob; and this was particularly necessary in his case, ‘because his body was to be carried to Canaan a hundred and forty-four years after; which was the duration of the Israelites’ bondage after the death of Joseph.

And he was put in a coffin in Egypt.— On this subject I shall subjoin some useful remarks from Harmer's Observations, which several have borrowed without acknowledgment. I quoted my own edition of this Work, vol. iii., p. 69, etc. Lond. 1808.

“There were some methods of honoring the dead which demand our attention; the being put into a coffin has been in particular considered as a mark of distinction.

“With us the poorest people have their coffins; if the relations cannot afford them, the parish is at the expense. In the east, on the contrary, they are not always used, even in our times. The ancient Jews probably buried

their dead in the same manner: neither was the body of our Lord put in a coffin, nor that of Elisha, whose bones were touched by the corpse that was let down a little after into his sepulcher, 2 Kings 13:21. That coffins were anciently used in Egypt, all agree; and antique coffins of stone and of sycamore wood are still to be seen in that country, not to mention those said to be made of a sort of pasteboard, formed by folding and gluing cloth together a great number of times, curiously plastered, and then painted with hieroglyphics.

“As it was an ancient Egyptian custom, and was not used in the neighboring countries, on these accounts the sacred historian was doubtless led to observe of Joseph that he was not only embalmed, but was also put in a coffin, both being practices almost peculiar to the Egyptians.

“Mr. Maillet conjectures that all were not inclosed in coffins which were laid in the Egyptian repositories of the dead, but that it was an honor appropriated to persons of distinction; for after having given an account of several niches which are found in those chambers of death, he adds: ‘But it must not be imagined that the bodies deposited in these gloomy apartments were all inclosed in chests, and placed in niches. The greater part were simply embalmed and swathed, after which they laid them one by the side of the other, without any ceremony. Some were even put into these tombs without any embalming at all, or with such a slight one that there remains nothing of them in the linen in which they were wrapped but the bones, and these half rotten. It is probable that each considerable family had one of these burial-places to themselves; that the niches were designed for the bodies of the heads of the family; and that those of their domestics and slaves had no other care taken of them than merely laying them in the ground after being slightly embalmed, and sometimes even without that; which was probably all that was done to heads of families of less distinction.’-Lett. 7, p. 281. The same author gives an account of a mode of burial anciently practiced in that country, which has been but recently discovered: it consisted in placing the bodies, after they were swathed up, on a layer of charcoal, and covering them with a mat, under a bed of sand seven or eight feet deep.

“Hence it seems evident that coffins were not universally used in Egypt, and were only used for persons of eminence and distinction. It is also

reasonable to believe that in times so remote as those of Joseph they might have been much less common than afterwards, and that consequently Joseph's being put in a coffin in Egypt might be mentioned with a design to express the great honors the Egyptians did him in death, as well as in life; being treated after the most sumptuous manner, embalmed, and put into a coffin."

It is no objection to this account that the widow of Nain's son is represented as carried forth to be buried in a *σοπος* or bier; for the present inhabitants of the Levant, who are well known to lay their dead in the earth unclosed, carry them frequently out to burial in a kind of coffin, which is not deposited in the grave, the body being taken out of it, and placed in the grave in a reclining posture. It is probable that the coffins used at Nain were of the same kind, being intended for no other purpose but to carry the body to the place of interment, the body itself being buried without them.

It is very probable that the chief difference was not in being with or without a coffin, but in the expensiveness of the coffin itself; some of the Egyptian coffins being made of granite, and covered all over with hieroglyphics, the cutting of which must have been done at a prodigious expense, both of time and money; the stone being so hard that we have no tools by which we can make any impression on it. Two of these are now in the British Museum, that appear to have belonged to some of the nobles of Egypt. They are dug out of the solid stone, and adorned with almost innumerable hieroglyphics. One of these, vulgarly called Alexander's tomb, is ten feet three inches and a quarter long, ten inches thick in the sides, in breadth at top five feet three inches and a half, in breadth at bottom four feet two inches and a half, and three feet ten in depth, and weighs about ten tons. In such a coffin I suppose the body of Joseph was deposited; and such a one could not have been made and transported to Canaan at an expense that any private individual could bear. It was with incredible labor and at an extraordinary expense that the coffin in question was removed the distance of but a few miles, from the ship that brought it from Egypt, to its present residence in the British Museum. Judge, then, at what an expense such a coffin must have been digged, engraved, and transported over the desert from Egypt to Canaan, a distance of three hundred miles! We need not be surprised to hear of carriages and horsemen, a very great

company, when such a coffin was to be carried so far, with a suitable company to attend it.

Joseph's life was the shortest of all the patriarchs, for which Bishop Patrick gives a sound physical reason—he was the son of his father's old age. It appears from Archbishop Usher's Chronology that Joseph governed Egypt under four kings, Mephramuthosis, Thmosis, Amenophis, and Orus. His government, we know, lasted eighty years; for when he stood before Pharaoh he was thirty years of age, Genesis 41:46, and he died when he was one hundred and ten.

On the character and conduct of Joseph many remarks have already been made in the preceding notes. On the subject of his piety there can be but one opinion. It was truly exemplary, and certainly was tried in cases in which few instances occur of persevering fidelity. His high sense of the holiness of God, the strong claims of justice, and the rights of hospitality and gratitude, led him, in the instance of the solicitations of his master's wife, to act a part which, though absolutely just and proper, can never be sufficiently praised. Heathen authors boast of some persons of such singular constancy; but the intelligent reader will recollect that these relations stand in general in their fabulous histories, and are destitute of those characteristics which truth essentially requires; such, I mean, as the story of Hippolytus and Phaedra, Bellerophon and Antea or Sthenobaea, Peleus and Astydamia, and others of this complexion, which appear to be marred pictures, taken from this highly finished original which the inspired writer has fairly drawn from life.

His fidelity to his master is not less evident, and God's approbation of his conduct is strongly marked; for he caused whatsoever he did to prosper, whether a slave in the house of his master, a prisoner in the dungeon, or a prime minister by the throne, which is a full proof that his ways pleased him; and this is more clearly seen in the providential deliverances by which he was favored.

On the political conduct of Joseph there are conflicting opinions. On the one hand it is asserted that "he found the Egyptians a free people, and that he availed himself of a most afflicting providence of God to reduce them all to a state of slavery, destroyed their political consequence, and made their king despotic." In all these respects his political measures have been

strongly vindicated, not only as being directed by God, but as being obviously the best, every thing considered, for the safety, honor, and welfare of his sovereign and the kingdom. It is true he bought the lands of the people for the king, but he farmed them to the original occupiers again, at the moderate and fixed crown rent of one-fifth part of the produce. “Thus did he provide for the liberty and independence of the people, while he strengthened the authority of the king by making him sole proprietor of the lands. And to secure the people from farther exaction, Joseph made it a law over all the land of Egypt, that Pharaoh (i. e. the king) should have only the fifth part; which law subsisted to the time of Moses, Genesis 47:21-26. By this wise regulation,” continues Dr. Hales, “the people had four-fifths of the produce of the lands for their own use, and were exempted from any farther taxes, the king being bound to support his civil and military establishment out of the crown rents.” By the original constitution of Egypt established by Menes, and Thoth or Hermes his prime minister, the lands were divided into three portions, between the king, the priests, and the military, each party being bound to support its respective establishment by the produce. See the quotations from Diodorus Siculus, in the note on Genesis 47:23. See Clarke “Genesis 47:23”. It is certain, therefore, that the constitution of Egypt was considerably altered by Joseph, and there can be no doubt that much additional power was, by this alteration, vested in the hands of the king; but as we do not find that any improper use was made of this power, we may rest assured that it was so qualified and restricted by wholesome regulations, though they are not here particularized, as completely to prevent all abuse of the regal power, and all tyrannical usurpation of popular rights. That the people were nothing but slaves to the king, the military, and the priests before, appears from the account given by Diodorus; each of the three estates probably allowing them a certain portion of land for their own use, while cultivating the rest for the use and emolument of their masters. Matters, however, became more regular under the administration of Joseph; and it is perhaps not too much to say, that, previously to this, Egypt was without a fixed regular constitution, and that it was not the least of the blessings that it owed to the wisdom and prudence of Joseph, that he reduced it to a regular form of government, giving the people such an interest in the safety of the state as was well

calculated to insure their exertions to defend the nation, and render the constitution fixed and permanent.

It is well known that Justin, one of the Roman historians, has made particular and indeed honorable mention of Joseph's administration in Egypt, in the account he gives of Jewish affairs, lib. 36. cap. 2. How the relation may have stood in Trogus Pompeius, from whose voluminous works in forty-four books or volumes Justin abridged his history, we cannot tell, as the work of Trogus is irrecoverably lost; but it is evident that the account was taken in the main from the Mosaic history, and it is written with as much candor as can be expected from a prejudiced and unprincipled heathen.

Minimus aetate inter fratres Joseph fruit, etc. "Joseph was the youngest of his brethren, who, being envious of his excellent endowments, stole him and privately sold him to a company of foreign merchants, by whom he was carried into Egypt; where, having diligently cultivated magic arts, he became, in a short time, a prime favorite with the king himself. For he was the most sagacious of men in explaining prodigies; and he was the first who constructed the science of interpreting dreams. Nor was there any thing relative to laws human or Divine with which he seemed unacquainted; for he predicted a failure of the crops many years before it took place; and the inhabitants of Egypt must have been famished had not the king, through his counsel, made an edict to preserve the fruits for several years. And his experiments were so powerful, that the responses appear to have been given, not by man, but by God." *Tantaque experimenta ejus fuerunt, ut non ab homine, sed a Deo, responsa dari viderentur.* I believe Justin refers here in the word *experimenta*, to his figment of magical incantations eliciting oracular answers. Others have translated the words: "So excellent were his regulations that they seemed rather to be oracular responses, not given by man, but by God."

I have already compared Joseph with his father Jacob, See Clarke on "Genesis 48:12", and shall make no apology for having given the latter a most decided superiority. Joseph was great; but his greatness came through the interposition of especial providences. Jacob was great, mentally and practically great, under the ordinary workings of Providence;

and, towards the close of his life, not less distinguished for piety towards God than his son Joseph was in the holiest period of his life.

THUS terminates the Book of GENESIS, the most ancient record in the world; including the history of two grand subjects, CREATION and PROVIDENCE, of each of which it gives a summary, but astonishingly minute, and detailed account. From this book almost all the ancient philosophers, astronomers, chronologists, and historians have taken their respective data; and all the modern improvements and accurate discoveries in different arts and sciences have only served to confirm the facts detailed by Moses; and to show that all the ancient writers on these subjects have approached to or receded from TRUTH and the phenomena of nature, in proportion as they have followed the Mosaic history.

In this book the CREATIVE POWER and ENERGY of GOD are first introduced to the reader's notice, and the mind is overwhelmed with those grand creative acts by which the universe was brought into being. When this account is completed, and the introduction of SIN, and its awful consequences in the destruction of the earth by a flood, noticed, then the Almighty Creator is next introduced as the RESTORER and PRESERVER of the world; and thus the history of Providence commences: a history in which the mind of man is alternately delighted and confounded with the infinitely varied plans of wisdom and mercy in preserving the human species, counteracting the evil propensities of men and devils by means of gracious influences conveyed through religious institutions, planting and watering the seeds of righteousness which himself had sowed in the hearts of men, and leading forward and maturing the grand purposes of his grace in the final salvation of the human race.

After giving a minutely detailed account of the peopling of the earth, ascertaining and settling the bounds of the different nations of mankind, the sacred writer proceeds with the history of one family only; but he chooses that one through which, as from an ever-during fountain, the streams of justice, grace, goodness, wisdom, and truth, should emanate. Here we see a pure well of living water, springing up into eternal life, restrained in its particular influence to one people till, in the fullness of time, the fountain should be opened in the house of David for sin and for uncleanness in general, and the earth filled with the knowledge and

salvation of God; thus by means of one family, as extensive a view of the economy of providence and grace is afforded as it is possible for the human mind to comprehend.

In this epitome how wonderful do the workings of Providence appear! An astonishing concatenated train of stupendous and minute events is laid before us; and every transaction is so distinctly marked as everywhere to exhibit the finger, the hand, or the arm of God! But did God lavish his providential cares and attention on this one family, exclusive of the rest of his intelligent offspring? No: for the same superintendence, providential direction, and influence, would be equally seen in all the concerns of human life, in the preservation of individuals, the rise and fall of kingdoms and states, and in all the mighty REVOLUTIONS, natural, moral, and political, in the universe, were God, as in the preceding instances, to give us the detailed history; but what was done in the family of Abraham, was done in behalf of the whole human race. This specimen is intended to show us that God does work, and that against him and the operations of his hand, no might, no counsel, no cunning of men or devils, can prevail; that he who walks uprightly walks securely; and that all things work together for good to them who love God; that none is so ignorant, low, or lost, that God cannot instruct, raise up, and save. In a word, he shows himself by this history to be the invariable friend of mankind, embracing every opportunity to do them good, and, to speak after the manner of men, rejoicing in the frequent recurrence of such opportunities; that every man, considering the subject, may be led to exclaim in behalf of all his fellows, **BEHOLD HOW HE LOVETH THEM!**

On the character of Moses as a HISTORIAN and PHILOSOPHER (for in his legislative character he does not yet appear) much might be said, did the nature of this work admit. But as brevity has been everywhere studied, and minute details rarely admitted, and only where absolutely necessary, the candid reader will excuse any deficiencies of this kind which he may have already noticed.

Of the accuracy and impartiality of Moses as a historian, many examples are given in the course of the notes, with such observations and reflections as the subjects themselves suggested; and the succeeding books will afford many opportunities for farther remarks on these topics.

The character of Moses as a philosopher and chronologist, has undergone the severest scrutiny. A class of philosophers, professedly infidels, have assailed the Mosaic account of the formation of the universe, and that of the general deluge, with such repeated attacks as sufficiently prove that, in their apprehension, the pillars of their system must be shaken into ruin if those accounts could not be proved to be false. Traditions, supporting accounts different from those in the sacred history, have been borrowed from the most barbarous as well as the most civilized nations, in order to bear on this argument. These, backed by various geologic observations made in extensive travels, experiments on the formation of different strata or beds of earth, either by inundations or volcanic eruption, have been all condensed into one apparently strong but strange argument, intended to overthrow the Mosaic account of the creation. The argument may be stated thus: "The account given by Moses of the time when God commenced his creative acts is too recent; for, according to his Genesis, six thousand years have not yet elapsed since the formation of the universe; whereas a variety of phenomena prove that the earth itself must have existed, if not from eternity, yet at least fourteen if not twenty thousand years." This I call a strange argument, because it is well known that all the ancient nations in the world, the Jews excepted, have, to secure their honor and respectability, assigned to themselves a duration of the most improbable length; and have multiplied months, weeks, and even days, into years, in order to support their pretensions to the most remote antiquity. The millions of years which have been assumed by the Chinese and the Hindoos have been ridiculed for their manifest absurdity, even by those philosophers who have brought the contrary charge against the Mosaic account. So notorious are the pretensions to remote ancestry and remote eras, in every false and fabricated system of family pedigree and national antiquity, as to produce doubt at the very first view of their subjects, and to cause the impartial inquirer after truth to take every step with the extreme of caution, knowing that in going over such accounts he everywhere treads on a kind of enchanted ground.

When in the midst of these a writer is found who, without saying a word of the systems of other nations, professes to give a simple account of the creation and peopling of the earth, and to show the very conspicuous part that his own people acted among the various nations of the world, and

who assigns to the earth and to its inhabitants a duration comparatively but as of yesterday, he comes forward with such a variety of claims to be heard, read, and considered, as no other writer can pretend to. And as he departs from the universal custom of all writers on similar subjects, in assigning a comparatively recent date, not only to his own nation, but to the universe itself, he must have been actuated by motives essentially different from those which have governed all other ancient historians and chronologists.

The generally acknowledged extravagance and absurdity of all the chronological systems of ancient times, the great simplicity and harmony of that of Moses, its facts evidently borrowed by others, though disgraced by the fables they have intermixed with them, and the very late invention of arts and sciences, all tend to prove, at the very first view, that the Mosaic account, which assigns the shortest duration to the earth, is the most ancient and the most likely to be true. But all this reasoning has been supposed to be annihilated by an argument brought against the Mosaic account of the creation by Mr. Patrick Brydone, F.R.S., drawn from the evidence of different eruptions of Mount AETna. The reader may find this in his "Tour through Sicily and Malta," letter vii., where, speaking of his acquaintance with the Canonico Recuperero at Catania, who was then employed on writing a natural history of Mount AETna, he says: "Near to a vault which is now thirty feet below ground, and has probably been a burying-place, there is a draw-well where there are several strata of lavas, (i. e., the liquid matter formed of stones, etc., which is discharged from the mountain in its eruptions,) with earth to a considerable thickness over each stratum. Recuperero has made use of this as an argument to prove the great antiquity of the eruptions of this mountain. For if it requires two thousand years and upwards to form but a scanty soil on the surface of a lava, there must have been more than that space of time between each of the eruptions which have formed these strata. But what shall we say of a pit they sunk near to Jaci, of a great depth? They pierced through seven distinct lavas, one under the other, the surfaces of which were parallel, and most of them covered with a thick bed of rich earth. Now, says he, the eruption which formed the lowest of these lavas, if we may be allowed to reason from analogy, must have flowed from the mountain at least fourteen thousand years ago! Recuperero tells me, he is exceedingly embarrassed by

these discoveries, in writing the history of the mountain; that Moses hangs like a dead weight upon him, and blunts all his zeal for inquiry, for that he really has not the conscience to make his mountain so young as that prophet makes the world.

“The bishop, who is strenuously orthodox, (for it is an excellent see,) has already warned him to be upon his guard; and not to pretend to be a better natural historian than Moses, nor to presume to urge any thing that may in the smallest degree be deemed contradictory to his sacred authority.”

Though Mr. Brydone produces this as a sneer against revelation, bishops, and orthodoxy, yet the sequel will prove that it was good advice, and that the bishop was much better instructed than either Recuperero or Brydone, and that it would have been much to their credit had they taken his advice.

I have given, however, this argument at length; and even in the insidious dress of Mr. Brydone, whose faith in Divine revelation appears to have been upon a par with that of Signior Recuperero, both being built nearly on the same foundation; to show from the answer how slight the strongest arguments are, produced from insulated facts by prejudice and partiality, when brought to the test of sober, candid, philosophical investigation, aided by an increased knowledge of the phenomena of nature. “In answer to this argument,” says Bishop Watson, (Letters to Gibbon,) “It might be urged that the time necessary for converting lavas into fertile fields must be very different, according to the different consistencies of the lavas, and their different situations with respect to elevation and depression, or their being exposed to winds, rains, and other circumstances; as for instance, the quantity of ashes deposited over them, after they had cooled, etc., etc., just as the time in which heaps of iron slag, which resembles lava, are covered with verdure, is different at different furnaces, according to the nature of the slag and situation of the furnace; and something of this kind is deducible from the account of the canon (Recuperero) himself, since the crevices in the strata are often full of rich good soil, and have pretty large trees growing upon them. But should not all this be thought sufficient to remove the objection, I will produce the canon an analogy in opposition to his analogy, and which is grounded on more certain facts.

“Ætna and Vesuvius resemble each other in the causes which produce their eruptions, in the nature of their lavas, and in the time necessary to

mellow them into soil fit for vegetation; or, if there be any slight difference in this respect, it is probably not greater than what subsists between different lavas of the same mountain. This being admitted, which no philosopher will deny, the canon's (Recupero's) analogy will prove just nothing at all if we can produce an instance of seven different lavas, with interjacent strata of vegetable earth, which have flowed from Mount Vesuvius within the space, not of fourteen thousand, but of somewhat less than one thousand seven hundred years; for then, according to our analogy, a stratum of lava may be covered with vegetable soil in about two hundred and fifty years, instead of requiring two thousand for that purpose.

“The eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii, is rendered still more famous by the death of Pliny, recorded by his nephew in his letter to Tacitus. This event happened A. D. 79; but we are informed by unquestionable authority, (Remarks on the nature of the soil of Naples and its vicinity, by Sir William Hamilton, *Philos. Transact.*, vol. lxi., p. 7,) that the matter which covers the ancient town of Herculaneum is not the produce of one eruption only, for there are evident marks that the matter of six eruptions has taken its course over that which lies immediately over the town, and was the cause of its destruction. The strata are either of lava or burnt matter with veins of good soil between them. You perceive,” says the bishop, “with what ease a little attention and increase of knowledge may remove a great difficulty; but had we been able to say nothing in explanation of this phenomenon, we should not have acted a very rational part in making our ignorance the foundation of our infidelity, or suffering a minute philosopher to rob us of our religion.” In this, as well as in all other cases, the foundation stands sure, being deeply and legibly impressed with God's seal. See also Dr. Greaves's Lectures on the Pentateuch.

There is a very sensible paper written by Don Joseph Gioeni (The Chevalier Gioeni was an inhabitant of the first region of AETna.) on the eruption of AETna in 1781; in which, among many other valuable observations, I find the following note: “I was obliged to traverse the current of lava made by the eruption of 1766, the most ancient of any that took this direction, viz., Bronte. I saw several streams of lava which had crossed others, and which afforded me evident proofs of the fallacy of the conclusions of those who seek to estimate the period of the formation of the beds of lava from the change they have undergone. Some lava of earlier

date than others still resist the weather, and present a vitreous and unaltered surface, while the lava of later date already begin to be covered with vegetation.” -See Pinkerton on Rock, vol. ii., p. 395.

On the geology and astronomy of the book of Genesis, much has been written, both by the enemies and friends of revelation; but as Moses has said but very little on these subjects, and nothing in a systematic way, it is unfair to invent a system pretendedly collected out of his words, and thus make him accountable for what he never wrote. There are systems of this kind, the preconceived fictions of their authors, for which they have sought support and credit by tortured meanings extracted from a few Hebrew roots, and then dignified them with the title of The Mosaic System of the Universe. This has afforded infidelity a handle which it has been careful to turn to its own advantage. On the first chapter of Genesis, I have given a general view of the solar system, without pretending that I had found it there. I have also ventured to apply the comparatively recent doctrine of caloric to the Mosaic account of the creation of light previous to the formation of the sun, and have supported it with such arguments as appeared to me to render it at least probable: but I have not pledged Moses to any of my explanations, being fully convinced that it was necessarily foreign from his design to enter into philosophic details of any kind, as it was his grand object, as has been already remarked, to give a history of CREATION and PROVIDENCE in the most abridged form of which it was capable. And who, in so few words, ever spoke so much? By Creation I mean the production of every being, animate and inanimate, material and intellectual. And by Providence, not only the preservation and government of all being, but also the various and extraordinary provisions made by Divine justice and mercy for the comfort and final salvation of man. These subjects I have endeavored to trace out through every chapter of this book, and to exhibit them in such a manner as appeared to me the best calculated to promote glory to GOD in the highest, and upon EARTH PEACE AND GOOD WILL AMONG MEN.

Observations on the Jewish manner of DIVIDING and READING the LAW and the PROPHETS.

The ancient Jews divided the whole law of Moses into fifty-four sections, which they read in their synagogues in the course of the fifty-two

Sabbaths in the year, joining two of the shortest twice together, that the whole might be finished in one year's space; but in their intercalated years, in which they added a month, they had fifty-four Sabbaths, and then they had a section for each Sabbath: and it was to meet the exigency of the intercalated years that they divided the law into fifty-four sections at first. When Antiochus Epiphanes forbade the Jews on pain of death to read their law, they divided the prophets into the same number of sections, and read them in their synagogues in place of the law; and when, under the Asmoneans, they recovered their liberty, and with it the free exercise of their religion, though the reading of the law was resumed, they continued the use of the prophetic sections, reading them conjointly with those in the law. To this first division and mode of reading the law there is a reference, Acts 15:21: For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being READ IN THE SYNAGOGUES EVERY SABBATH DAY. To the second division and conjoint reading of the law and the prophets we also find a reference, Acts 13:15; And after the reading of the LAW AND THE PROPHETS, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, etc. And that the prophets were read in this way in our Lord's time, we have a proof, Luke 4:16, etc., where, going into the synagogue to read on the Sabbath day, as was his custom, there was delivered unto him the book of the Prophet Isaiah: and it appears that the prophetic section for that Sabbath was taken from the sixty-first chapter of his prophecies.

Of these sections the book of Genesis contains twelve:

The FIRST, called **ברשית** bereshith, begins Genesis 1:1, and ends Genesis 6:8.

The SECOND, called **נח** Noach, begins Genesis 6:9, and ends Genesis 11:32.

The THIRD, called **לך לך** lech lecha, begins Genesis 12:1, and ends Genesis 18:1.

The FOURTH, called **וירא** vaiyera, begins Genesis 18:1, and ends Genesis 22:24.

The FIFTH, called **חיי שרה** chaiyey Sarah, begins Genesis 23:1, and ends Genesis 25:18.

The SIXTH, called **תולדת** toledoth, begins Genesis 25:19, and ends Genesis 28:9.

The SEVENTH, called **ויצא** vaiyetse, begins Genesis 28:10, and ends Genesis 32:3.

The EIGHTH, called **וישלח** vaiyishlach, begins Genesis 32:4, and ends Genesis 36:43.

The NINTH, called **וישב** vaiysheb, begins Genesis 37:1, and ends Genesis 40:23.

The TENTH, called **מקץ** mikkets, begins Genesis 41:1, and ends Genesis 14:17.

The ELEVENTH, called **ויגש** vaiyiggash, begins Genesis 44:18, and ends Genesis 47:27.

The TWELFTH, called **ויחי** vayechi, begins Genesis 47:28, and ends Genesis 50:26.

These sections have their technical names, from the words with which they commence; and are marked in the Hebrew Bibles with three **פפפ** pe's, which are an abbreviation for **פרשה** parashah, a section or division; and sometimes with three **ססס** samech's, which are an abbreviation for the word **סדר** seder, or **סדרא** sidra, an order, a full and absolute division. The former are generally called **פרשיות** parashioth, distinctions, divisions, sections; the latter **סדרים** sedarim, orders, arrangements; as it is supposed that the sense is more full and complete in these than in the parashioth. See the Tables, etc., at the end of the Book of Deuteronomy, where all these matters, and others connected with them, are considered in great detail.

MASORETIC Notes on the Book of GENESIS.

At the end of all the books in the Hebrew Bible, the Masoretes have affixed certain notes, ascertaining the number of greater and smaller sections, chapters, verses, and letters. These they deemed of the greatest importance, in order to preserve the integrity of their law, and the purity

of their prophets. And to this end they not only numbered every verse, word, and letter, but even went so far as to ascertain how often each letter of the alphabet occurred in the whole Bible! Thus sacredly did they watch over their records in order to prevent every species of corruption.

The sum of all the VERSES in Bereshith (Genesis) is 1534. And the memorial sign of this sum is אָלֶפֶסֶּ-aleph ס signifying 1000; final caph ך 500; lamed ל 30, and daleth ד 4.=1534.

The middle verse of Genesis is the fortieth of chap. 27.: By thy sword shalt thou live.

The PARASHIOTH, or greater sections; are twelve. The symbol of which is the word זֶה זֶה, THIS, Exodus 3:15: And THIS is my memorial to all generations. Where zain ז stands for 7, and he ה, for 5.=12.

The SEDARIM, or orders, (see above) are forty-three. The symbol of which is the word גַּם גַּם, YEA (גַּם gam) and he shall be blessed. Where gimel ג stands for 3, and mem מ for 40.=43.

The PERAKIM, or modern division of chapters, are fifty; the symbol of which is לֶחָ לֶחָ, Isaiah 33:2: We have waited FOR THEE. Where lamed ל stands for 30, and caph כ for 20.=50.

The open sections are 43, the close sections 48, total 91: the numerical sign of which is תֵּסֵ תֵּסֵ, GET THEE OUT, Exodus 11:8, where tsaddi ט stands for 90, and aleph א for 1.=91.

The number of letters is about 52, 740; but this last is more a matter of conjecture and computation than of certainty, and on it no dependence can safely be placed, it being a mere multiplication by twelve, the number of sections, of 4395, the known number of letters in the last or twelfth section of the book. On this subject see Buxtorf's Tiberias, p. 181.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

**OF THE PRINCIPAL TRANSACTIONS RELATED IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS,
ACCORDING TO THE COMPILATION OF ARCHBISHOP USHER, WHICH IS**

CHIEFLY FOLLOWED IN THE PRECEDING NOTES; SHOWING IN WHAT YEAR OF THE WORLD, AND WHAT YEAR BEFORE CHRIST, EACH EVENT HAPPENED.

THE reader will observe, from the chronological notes in the margin of the preceding work, that in a few instances I have departed from the Usherian computation, for which he will find my reasons in the notes.

This table I have considerably enlarged by inserting the Edomitish kings and dukes, and a few other transactions of profane history contemporary with the facts mentioned by Moses, by which the reader will have a synopsis or general view of all the transactions of the first two thousand four hundred years of the world, which stand upon any authentic records.

The first year of the world, answering to the 710th year of the Julian period, and supposed to be 4004 before the vulgar era of the birth of Christ.

A.M. 1 B.C. 4004 First day's work: Creation of the heavens and earth; of light, with the distinction of day and night, Gen. 1:1-5. Second day: Creation of the firmament, and separation of the superior and inferior waters, 1:6-8. Third day: The earth drained, the seas, lakes, etc., formed; trees, plants, and vegetables produced, 1:9-13. Fourth day: The sun, moon, planets, and stars produced, 1:14-19. Fifth day: All kinds of fowls and fishes created, 1:20-23. Sixth day: Beasts wild and tame, reptiles, insects, and man, 1:24-28. Seventh day: Set apart and hallowed to be a Sabbath, or day of rest for ever, 2:2, 3. Tenth day: The first woman sins, leads her husband into the transgression, is called Eve, 3:1-20. They are both expelled from Paradise, 3:22-24. N. B. This opinion, though rendered respectable by great names, is very doubtful, and should be received with very great caution. I think it wholly inadmissible; and though I insert it as the generally received opinion, yet judge it best to form no guesses and indulge no conjectures on such an obscure point.

A.M. 2 B.C. 4002 Cain and Abel born, 4:1, 2.

A.M 129 B.C. 3875 Abel killed by his brother Cain, 4:8.

A.M 130 B.C. 3874 Birth of Seth, 4:25.

A.M 235 B.C. 3769 Enos son of Seth born, 4:26. Hence followed the distinction between the descendants of Cain and those of Seth; the former being called sons of men, the latter sons of God, 6:1-4.

A.M 325 B.C. 3679 Birth of Cainan, son of Enos, 5:9.

A.M 395 B.C. 3609 of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, 5:12.

A.M 460 B.C. 3544 of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, 5:15.

A.M 622 B.C. 3382 of Enoch, son of Jared, 5:18.

A.M 687 B.C. 3317 Birth of Methuselah, son of Enoch, 5:21.

A.M 874 B.C. 3130 of Lamech, son of Methuselah, 5:25.

A.M 930 B.C. 3074 Death of Adam, aged 930 years, 5:5.

A.M 987 B.C. 3017 Enoch is translated in the 365th year of his age, 5:24.

A.M 1042 B.C. 2962 Seth dies, aged 912 years, 5:8.

A.M 1056 B.C. 2948 Birth of Noah, son of Lamech, 5:29.

A.M 1140 B.C. 2864 Enos dies, aged 905 years, 5:11.

A.M 1235 B.C. 2769 Cainan dies, aged 910 years, 5:14.

A.M 1290 B.C. 2714 Mahalaleel dies, aged 895 years, 5:17.

A.M 1422 B.C. 2582 Jared dies, aged 962 years, 5:20.

A.M 1536 B.C. 2468 God commissions Noah to preach repentance to the guilty world, and to announce the deluge. He commands him also to build an ark for the safety of himself and his family. This commission was given 120 years before the flood came, 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; Gen. 6:17.

A.M 1556 B.C. 2448 Birth of Japheth, son of Noah, 5:32, compared with 10:21.

A.M 1558 B.C. 2446 of Shem.

A.M 1560 B.C. 2444 of Ham.

A.M 1651 B.C. 2353 Death of Lamech, aged 777 years, 5:31.

A.M 1656 B.C. 2348 of Methuselah, aged 969 years, 5:27. The general DELUGE, 7: Noah, his family, and the animals to be preserved, enter the ark the 17th day of the 2d month of this year, 7:11. The rain commences, and continues 40 days and nights, and the waters continue without decreasing 150 days; they afterwards begin to abate, and the ark rests on Mount Ararat, 8:4. Noah sends out a raven, 8:7. Seven days after he sends out a dove, which returns the same day; after seven days he sends out the dove a second time, which returns no more, 8:8-12.

A.M 1657 B.C. 2347 Noah, his family, etc., leave the ark. He offers sacrifices to God, 8:and 9:

A.M 1658 B.C. 2346 Birth of Arphaxad, son of Shem, 11:10, 11.

A.M 1693 B.C. 2311 of Salah, son of Arphaxad, 11:12.

A.M 1723 B.C. 2281 of Eber, son of Salah, 11:14.

A.M 1757 B.C. 2247 of Peleg, son of Eber, 11:16. 2247 Building of the Tower of Babel, 11:1-9.

A.M 1771 B.C. 2233 About this time Babylon was built by the command of Nimrod.

A.M 1787 B.C. 2217 Birth of Reu, son of Peleg, 11:18.

A.M 1816 B.C. 2188 Commencement of the regal government of Egypt, from Mizraim, son of Ham. Egypt continued an independent kingdom from this time to the reign of Cambyses, king of Persia, which was a period of 1663 years, according to Constantinus Manasses.

A.M 1819 B.C. 2185 Birth of Serug, son of Reu 11:20

A.M 1849 B.C. 2155 of Nahor, son of Serug, 11:22.

A.M 1878 B.C. 2126 of Terah, son of Nahor, 11:24.

A.M 1915 B.C. 2089 About this time, AEGialeus founds the kingdom of Sicyon, according to Eusebius.

A.M 1948 B.C. 2056 Birth of Nahor and Haran, sons of Terah, 11:26.

A.M 1996 B.C. 2008 Peleg dies, aged 239 years, 11:19.

A.M 1997 B.C. 2007 Nahor dies, aged 148 years, 11:25.

A.M 2006 B.C. 1998 Noah dies, aged 950 years, 350 years after the flood, 9:29.

A.M 2008 B.C. 1996 Birth of ABEAM, son of Terah, 11:26.

A.M 2018 B.C. 1986 of SARAI, wife of Abram.

A.M 2026 B.C. 1978 Reu dies, 11:21

A.M 2049 B.C. 1955 Serug dies, 11:23.

A.M 2079 B.C. 1925 Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, subdues the kings of the Pentapolis, Sodom, Gomorrah, etc., to whom they continued in subjection 12 years, 14:4.

A.M 2083 B.C. 1921 The calling of Abram out of UR of the Chaldees, where the family had been addicted to idolatry, Josh. 24:2. He comes to Haran in Mesopotamia, with Lot his nephew, Sarai his wife, and his father Terah, who dies at Haran, aged 205 years, 11:31, 32. Abram comes to Canaan, when 75 years of age, Gen. 41:4. From this period the 430 years of the sojourning of the Israelites, mentioned Exodus 12:40, 41, is generally dated.

A.M 2084 B.C. 1920 Abram goes into Egypt because of the famine, 12:10; causes Sarai to pass for his sister. Pharaoh (Apophis) takes her to his house; but soon restores her, finding her to be Abram's wife, ver. 14-20.

A.M 2086 B.C. 1913 Abram and Lot, having returned to the land of Canaan, separate; Lot goes to Sodom, and Abram to the valley of Mamre, near to Hebron, 13.

A.M 2090 B.C. 1914 The kings of the Pentapolis revolt from Chedorlaomer, 14:4.

A.M 2091 B.C. 1913 Chedorlaomer and his allies make war with the kings of the Pentapolis; Lot is taken captive; Abram with his allies pursues Chedorlaomer, defeats him and the confederate kings, delivers Lot and the other captives, and is blessed by Melchizedek, king of Salem, 14.

A.M 2093 B.C. 1911 God promises Abram a numerous posterity, 15:1. About this time Bela, the first king of the Edomites, began to reign, 36:32.

A.M 2094 B.C. 1910 Sarai gives Hagar to Abram, 16:2. Of her Ishmael is born, 16:15, Abram being then 86 years old.

A.M 2096 B.C. 1908 Arphaxad dies, 403 years after the birth of Salah, 11:13.

A.M 2107 B.C. 1897 God makes a covenant with Abram; gives him the promise of a son; changes his name into Abraham, and Sarai's into Sarah, and enjoins circumcision, 17: 1, 5, 6, etc. Abraham entertains three angels on their way to destroy Sodom, etc., 18:He intercedes for the inhabitants; but as ten righteous persons not be found in those cities, are destroyed, 19:23. Lot is delivered and for his sake Zoar is preserved, ver. 19, etc. — Abram retires to Beer-sheba, afterwards sojourns at Gerar. Abimelech, king of Gerar, takes Sarah, in order to make her his wife, but is obliged to restore her. 20.

A.M 2108 B.C. 1896 Isaac is born, 21:2, 3.

A.M 2110 B.C. 1894 — Moab and Ben-ammi, the sons of Lot, born, 19:37, 38. Abraham sends away Ishmael, 21:13, 14.

A.M 2118 B.C. 1886 Abimelech and Phichol his chief captain make an agreement with Abraham, and surrender the well of Beer-sheba for seven ewe lambs, 21:22, etc.

A.M 2126 B.C. 1878 Salah dies 403 years after the birth of Eber, 11:15.

A.M 2135 B.C. 1869 About this time Jobab, the second king of the Edomites, began to reign, 36:33.

A.M 2141 B.C. 1863 Abraham is called to sacrifice his son Isaac, 22.

A.M 2145 B.C. 1859 Sarah dies, aged 127 years, 23:1.

A.M 2148 B.C. 1856 Abraham sends Eliezer to Mesopotamia to get a wife for his son Isaac, 34

A.M 2154 B.C. 1850 About this time Abraham marries Keturah, 25:1.

A.M 2158 B.C. 1846 Shem, son of Noah, dies 500 years after the birth of Arphaxed, 11:11.

A.M 2168 B.C. 1836 Birth of Jacob and Esau, Isaac their father being 60 years old, 15:22, etc.

A.M 2177 B.C. 1827 About this time Husham, the third king of the Edomites, began to reign, 36:34.

A.M 2183 B.C. 1821 Abraham dies, aged 175 years, 25:7, 8.

A.M 2187 B.C. 1817 Eber dies, 430 years after the birth of Peleg, 11:17.

A.M 2200 B.C. 1804 God appears to Isaac, and gives him glorious promises, 26:4. He stays at Gerar during the famine, 26:6.

A.M 2208 B.C. 1796 Esau marries two Canaanitish women, 26:34.

A.M 2219 B.C. 1785 About this time Hadad, the fourth king of the Edomites, began to reign, 36:35. Deluge of Ogyges in Greece, 1020 years before the first Olympiad.

A.M 2225 B.C. 1779 Jacob by subtlety obtains Esau's blessing, 27: He goes to Haran, and engages to serve Laban seven years for Rachel, 28., 29: Esau marries Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, 28:9.

A.M 2231 B.C. 1773 Ishmael dies, aged 137 years, 25:17.

A.M 2232 B.C. 1772 Jacob espouses Rachel seven years after his engagement with Laban: Leah is put in the place of her sister; but seven days after he receives Rachel, 29:

A.M 2233 B.C. 1771 Reuben is born, 29:32

A.M 2234 B.C. 1770 Simeon is born, 29:33.

A.M 2235 B.C. 1769 Levi is born, 29:34.

A.M 2236 B.C. 1768 Judah is born, 29:35.

A.M 2237 B.C. 1767 Dan is born, 30:5, 6.

A.M 2239 B.C. 1765 Naphtali is born, 30:7, 8.

A.M 2240 B.C. 1764 Gad is born, 30:10, 11.

A.M 2242 B.C. 1762 Asher is born, 30:12, 13. Evechous begins to reign over the Chaldeans 224 years before the Arabs reigned in that country (Julius Africanus.) Usher supposes him to have been the same with Belus, who was afterwards worshipped by the Chaldeans.

A.M 2247 B.C. 1757 Issachar is born, 31:17, 18.

A.M 2249 B.C. 1755 Zebulun is born, 30:19, 20.

A.M 2250 B.C. 1754 Dinah is born, 30:21.

A.M 2259 B.C. 1745 Joseph is born, 30:23, 24.

A.M 2261 B.C. 1743 About this time Samlah, the fifth king of the Edomites, began to reign, 36:36.

A.M 2265 B.C. 1739 Jacob and his family, unknown to Laban, set out for Canaan. Laban, hearing of his departure, pursues him; after seven days he comes up with him at the mountains of Gilead; they make a covenant, and gather a heap of stones, and set up a pillar as a memorial of the transaction, 31: Jacob wrestles with an Angel, and has his name changed to that of Israel, 32:24-29. Esau meets Jacob, 33:4. — Jacob arrives in Canaan, and settles among the Shechemites, 31 2:18.

A.M 2266 B.C. 1738 Benjamin born, and Rachel dies immediately after his birth, 35:18. Dinah defiled by Shechem, and the subsequent murder of the Shechemites by Simeon and Levi, 34:

A.M 2276 B.C. 1728 Joseph, aged seventeen years, falling under the displeasure of his brothers, they conspire to take away his life, but afterwards change their minds, and sell him for a slave to some Ishmaelite merchants, who bring him to Egypt and sell him to Potiphar, 37:

A.M 2278 B.C. 1762 Pharez and Zarah, the twin-sons of 1726 Judah, born about this time, 38: 27-30.

A.M 2285 B.C. 1719 Joseph, through the false accusation of his mistress, is cast into prison, where, about two years after, he interprets the dreams of the chief butler and the chief baker, 39., 40.

A.M 2288 B.C. 1716 Isaac dies, aged 180 years, 35:28.

A.M 2289 B.C. 1715 Joseph interprets the two-prophetic dreams of Pharaoh, 41. Commencement of the seven years of plenty.

A.M 2290 B.C. 1714 About this time was born Manasseh, Joseph's first-born.

A.M 2292 B.C. 1712 About this time was born Ephraim, Joseph's second son.

A.M 2296 B.C. 1708 Commencement of the seven years of famine.

A.M 2297 B.C. 1707 Jacob sends his sons to Egypt to buy corn, 42:1, etc.

A.M 2298 B.C. 1706 He sends them a second time, and with them his son Benjamin, 43.

Joseph makes himself known to his brethren, sends for his father, and allots him and his household the land of Goshen to dwell in; Jacob being then 130 years old, 45., 46.

A.M 2300 B.C. 1704 Joseph sells corn to the Egyptians, and brings all the money in Egypt into the king's treasury, 47:14.

A.M 2301 B.C. 1703 He buys all the cattle, 47:16.

A.M 2302 B.C. 1702 All the Egyptians give themselves up to be Pharaoh's servants, in order to get corn to preserve their lives and sow their ground, 47:18, etc.

A.M 2303 B.C. 1701 The seven years of famine ended. About this time Saul, the sixth king of — the Edomites, began to reign, 36:37.

A.M 2315 B.C. 1689 Jacob, having blessed his sons and the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, dies, aged 147 years. He is embalmed and carried into Canaan, and buried in the cave of Machpelah, 49:1.

A.M 2345 B.C. 1659 About this time Baal-hanan, the seventh king of the Edomites, began to reign, 36:38.

A.M 2369 B.C. 1635 Joseph dies, aged 110, having governed Egypt fourscore years.

A.M 2387 B.C. 1617 About this time Hadar or Hadad, the eighth and last king of the Edomites, began to reign, 36:39.

A.M 2429 B.C. 1575 About this time the regal government of the Edomites is abolished, and the first aristocracy of dukes begins, 36:15, 16.

A.M 2471 B.C. 1533 About this time the second aristocracy of Edomitish dukes begins, 36:40-43.

A.M 2474 B.C. 1530 Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, born forty years before he was sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan.

A.M 2494 B.C. 1510 Ramasses Miamun died in the 67th year of his reign, under whom, and his son Amenophis, who succeeded him, the children of Israel endured the cruel bondage and oppression mentioned in Exodus 1: Finished the correction of this Part, April 6th, 1827. — A. CLARKE.

PREFACE

TO THE BOOK OF

EXODUS

THE name by which this book is generally distinguished is borrowed from the Septuagint, in which it is called *εξοδος*, EXODUS, the going out or departure; and by the Codex Alexandrinus, *εξοδος αιγυπτου*, the departure from Egypt, because the departure of the Israelites from Egypt is the most remarkable fact mentioned in the whole book. In the Hebrew Bibles it is called *ואלה שמות* VE-ELLEH SHEMOTH, these are the names, which are the words with which it commences. It contains a history of the transactions of 145 years, beginning at the death of Joseph, where the book of Genesis ends, and coming down to the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness at the foot of Mount Sinai.

In this book Moses details the causes and motives of the persecution raised up against the Israelites in Egypt, the orders given by Pharaoh to destroy all the Hebrew male children, and the prevention of the execution of those orders through the humanity and piety of the midwives appointed to deliver the Hebrew women. The marriage of Amram and Jochebed is next related; the birth of Moses; the manner in which he was exposed on the river Nile, and in which he was discovered by the daughter of Pharaoh; his being providentially put under the care of his own mother to be nursed, and educated as the son of the Egyptian princess; how, when forty years of age, he left the court, visited and defended his brethren; the danger to which he was in consequence exposed; his flight to Arabia; his contract with Jethro, priest or prince of Midian, whose daughter Zipporah he afterwards espoused. While employed in keeping the flocks of his father-in-law, God appeared to him in a burning bush, and commissioned him to go and deliver his countrymen from the oppression under which they groaned. Having given him the most positive assurances of protection

and power to work miracles, and having associated with him his brother Aaron, he sent them first to the Israelites to declare the purpose of Jehovah, and afterwards to Pharaoh to require him, in the name of the Most High, to set the Israelites at liberty. Pharaoh, far from submitting, made their yoke more grievous; and Moses, on a second interview with him, to convince him by whose authority he made the demand, wrought a miracle before him and his courtiers. This being in a certain way imitated by Pharaoh's magicians, he hardened his heart, and refused to let the people go, till God, by ten extraordinary plagues, convinced him of his omnipotence, and obliged him to consent to dismiss a people over whose persons and properties he had claimed and exercised a right founded only on the most tyrannical principles. The plagues by which God afflicted the whole land of Egypt, Goshen excepted, where the Israelites dwelt, were the following: — 1. He turned all the waters of Egypt into blood. 2. He caused innumerable frogs to come over the whole land. 3. He afflicted both man and beast with immense swarms of vermin. 4. Afterwards with a multitude of different kinds of insects. 5. He sent a grievous pestilence among their cattle. 6. Smote both man and beast with boils. 7. Destroyed their crops with grievous storms of hail, accompanied with the most terrible thunder and lightning. 8. Desolated the whole land by innumerable swarms of locusts. 9. He spread a palpable darkness all over Egypt; and, 10. In one night slew all the first-born, both of man and beast, through the whole of the Egyptian territories. What proved the miraculous nature of all these plagues most particularly was, 1st, Their coming exactly according to the prediction and at the command of Moses and Aaron. 2dly, Their extending only to the Egyptians, and leaving the land of Goshen, the Israelites, their cattle and substance, entirely untouched. After relating all these things in detail, with their attendant circumstances, Moses describes the institution, reason, and celebration of the passover; the preparation of the Israelites for their departure; their leaving Goshen and beginning their journey to the promised land, by the way of Rameses, Succoth, and Etham. How Pharaoh, repenting of the permission he had given them to depart, began to pursue them with an immense army of horse and foot, and overtook them at their encampment at Baal-zephon, on the borders of the Red Sea. Their destruction appearing then to be inevitable, Moses farther relates that having called earnestly upon God, and stretched his rod over the waters, they became divided, and the Israelites entered into the bed of

the sea, and passed over to the opposite shore. Pharaoh and his host madly pursuing in the same track, the rear of their army being fairly entered by the time the last of the Israelites had made good their landing on the opposite coast. Moses stretching his rod again over the waters, they returned to their former channel and overwhelmed the Egyptian army, so that every soul perished.

Moses next gives a circumstantial account of the different encampments of the Israelites in the wilderness, during the space of nearly forty years: the miracles wrought in their behalf; the chief of which were the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, to direct and protect them in the wilderness; the bringing water out of a rock for them and their cattle; feeding them with manna from heaven; bringing innumerable flocks of quails to their camp; giving them a complete victory over the Amalekites at the intercession of Moses; and particularly God's astonishing manifestation of himself on Mount Sinai, when he delivered to Moses an epitome of his whole law, in what was called the TEN WORDS or TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Moses proceeds to give a circumstantial detail of the different laws, statutes, and ordinances which he received from God, and particularly the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, and the awful display of the Divine Majesty on that solemn occasion; the formation of the ARK, holy Table and Candlestick; the TABERNACLE, with its furniture, covering, courts, etc., the brazen Altar, golden Altar, brazen Laver, anointing oil, perfume, sacerdotal garments for Aaron and his sons, and the artificers employed on the work of the Tabernacle, etc. He then gives an account of Israel's idolatry in the matter of the golden calf, made under the direction of Aaron; God's displeasure, and the death of the principal idolaters; the erection and consecration of the Tabernacle, and its being filled and encompassed with the Divine glory, with the order and manner of their marches by direction of the miraculous pillar; with which the book concludes.

THE SECOND BOOK OF

MOSES

CALLED

EXODUS

- Year before the common Year of Christ, 1706.
- Julian Period, 3008.
- Cycle of the Sun, 7.
- Dominical Letter, F.
- Cycle of the Moon, 2.
- Indiction, 15.
- Creation from Tisri or September, 2298.

CHAPTER 1

The names and number of the children of Israel that went down into Egypt, 1-5. Joseph and all his brethren of that generation die, 6. The great increase of their posterity, 7. The cruel policy of the king of Egypt to destroy them, 8-11. They increase greatly, notwithstanding their affliction, 12. Account of their hard bondage, 13, 14. Pharaoh's command to the Hebrew midwives to kill all the male children, 15, 16. The midwives disobey the king's command, and, on being questioned, vindicate themselves, 17-19. God is pleased with their conduct, blesses them, and increases the people, 20, 21. Pharaoh gives a general command to the Egyptians to drown all the male children of the Hebrews, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *These are the names*— Though this book is a continuation or the book of Genesis, with which probably it was in former times conjoined, Moses thought it necessary to introduce it with an account of the names and number of the family of Jacob when they came to Egypt, to show that though they were then very few, yet in a short time, under the especial blessing of God, they had multiplied exceedingly; and thus the promise to Abraham had been literally fulfilled. See the notes on Genesis 46.

Verse 6. *Joseph died, and all his brethren*— That is, Joseph had now been some time dead, as also all his brethren, and all the Egyptians who had known Jacob and his twelve sons; and this is a sort of reason why the important services performed by Joseph were forgotten.

Verse 7. *The children of Israel were fruitful*— פָּרוּ *paru*, a general term, signifying that they were like healthy trees, bringing forth an abundance of fruit.

And increased— יִשְׂרְטוּ *yishretsu*, they increased like fishes, as the original word implies. See Genesis 1:20, and the note there. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 1:20".

Abundantly— יָרְבוּ *yirbu*, they multiplied; this is a separate term, and should not have been used as an adverb by our translators.

And waxed exceeding mighty— וַיַּעֲצְמוּ בְמֵאדָּ מְאֹד *vaiyaatsumu bimod meod*, and they became strong beyond measure—superlatively, superlatively — so that the land (Goshen) was filled with them. This astonishing increase was, under the providence of God, chiefly owing to two causes: 1. The Hebrew women were exceedingly fruitful, suffered very little in parturition, and probably often brought forth twins. 2. There appear to have been no premature deaths among them. Thus in about two hundred and fifteen years they were multiplied to upwards of 600, 000, independently of old men, women, and children.

Verse 8. *There arose up a new king*— Who this was it is difficult to say. It was probably Ramesses Miamun, or his son Amenophis, who

succeeded him in the government of Egypt about A. M. 2400, before Christ 1604.

Which knew not Joseph.— The verb יָדַע yada, which we translate to know, often signifies to acknowledge or approve. See Judges 2:10; Psalm 1:6; 31:7; Hosea 2:8; Amos 3:2. The Greek verbs εἶδω and γινώσκω are used precisely in the same sense in the New Testament. See Matthew 25:12, and 1 John 3:1. We may therefore understand by the new king's not knowing Joseph, his disapproving of that system of government which Joseph had established, as well as his haughtily refusing to acknowledge the obligations under which the whole land of Egypt was laid to this eminent prime minister of one of his predecessors.

Verse 9. He said unto his people— He probably summoned a council of his nobles and elders to consider the subject; and the result was to persecute and destroy them, as is afterwards stated.

Verse 10. They join also unto our enemies— It has been conjectured that Pharaoh had probably his eye on the oppressions which Egypt had suffered under the shepherd-kings, who for a long series of years had, according to Manetho, governed the land with extreme cruelty. As the Israelites were of the same occupation, (viz., shepherds,) the jealous, cruel king found it easy to attribute to them the same motives; taking it for granted that they were only waiting for a favorable opportunity to join the enemies of Egypt, and so overrun the whole land.

Verse 11. Set over them task-masters— שָׂרֵי מִסִּים sarey missim, chiefs or princes of burdens, works, or tribute; ἐπιστάτας τῶν ἐργῶν, Sept. overseers of the works. The persons who appointed them their work, and exacted the performance of it. The work itself being oppressive, and the manner in which it was exacted still more so, there is some room to think that they not only worked them unmercifully, but also obliged them to pay an exorbitant tribute at the same time.

Treasure cities— עָרֵי מִסְכְּנוֹת arey miscenoth, store cities-public granaries. Calmet supposes this to be the name of a city, and translates the verse thus: "They built cities, viz., Miscenoth, Pithom, and Rameses." Pithom is supposed to be that which Herodotus calls Patumos. Raamses, or rather Rameses, (for it is the same Hebrew word as in Genesis 47:11,

and should be written the same way here as there,) is supposed to have been the capital of the land of Goshen, mentioned in the book of Genesis by anticipation; for it was probably not erected till after the days of Joseph, when the Israelites were brought under that severe oppression described in the book of Exodus. The Septuagint add here, **και ων, η εστιν ἡλιουπολις**· and ON, which is Heliopolis; i.e., the city of the Sun. The same reading is found also in the Coptic version.

Some writers suppose that beside these cities the Israelites built the pyramids. If this conjecture be well founded, perhaps they are intended in the word **מִסְכְּנוֹת** miscenoth, which, from **סָחַן** sachan, to lay up in store, might be intended to signify places where Pharaoh laid up his treasures; and from their structure they appear to have been designed for something of this kind. If the history of the pyramids be not found in the book of Exodus, it is nowhere else extant; their origin, if not alluded to here, being lost in their very remote antiquity. Diodorus Siculus, who has given the best traditions he could find relative to them, says that there was no agreement either among the inhabitants or the historians concerning the building of the pyramids. — Bib. Hist., lib. 1., cap. lxiv.

Josephus expressly says that one part of the oppression suffered by the Israelites in Egypt was occasioned by building pyramids. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 1:14".

In the book of Genesis, and in this book, the word Pharaoh frequently occurs, which, though many suppose it to be a proper name peculiar to one person, and by this supposition confound the acts of several Egyptian kings, yet is to be understood only as a name of office.

It may be necessary to observe that all the Egyptian kings, whatever their own name was, took the surname of Pharaoh when they came to the throne; a name which, in its general acceptance, signified the same as king or monarch, but in its literal meaning, as Bochart has amply proved, it signifies a crocodile, which being a sacred animal among the Egyptians, the word might be added to their kings in order to procure them the greater reverence and respect.

Verse 12. *But the more they afflicted them*— The margin has pretty nearly preserved the import of the original: And as they afflicted them, so

they multiplied and so they grew That is, in proportion to their afflictions was their prosperity; and had their sufferings been greater, their increase would have been still more abundant.

Verse 13. *To serve with rigour*— בפרך bepharech, with cruelty, great oppression; being ferocious with them. The word fierce is supposed by some to be derived from the Hebrew, as well as the Latin *ferox*, from which we more immediately bring our English term. This kind of cruelty to slaves, and ferociousness, unfeelingness, and hard-heartedness, were particularly forbidden to the children of Israel. See Leviticus 25:43, 46, where the same word is used: Thou shalt not rule over him with RIGOR, but shalt fear thy God.

Verse 14. *They made their lives bitter*— So that they became weary of life, through the severity of their servitude.

With hard bondage— בעבדה קשה baabodah kashah, with grievous servitude. This was the general character of their life in Egypt; it was a life of the most painful servitude, oppressive enough in itself, but made much more so by the cruel manner of their treatment while performing their tasks.

In mortar, and in brick— First, in digging the clay, kneading, and preparing it, and secondly, forming it into bricks, drying them in the sun, etc.

Service in the field— Carrying these materials to the places where they were to be formed into buildings, and serving the builders while employed in those public works. Josephus says “The Egyptians contrived a variety of ways to afflict the Israelites; for they enjoined them to cut a great number of channels for the river, and to build walls for their cities and ramparts, that they might restrain the river, and hinder its waters from stagnating upon its overrunning its own banks; they set them also to build pyramids, (πυραμιδας τε ανοικοδομουντες,) and wore them out, and forced them to learn all sorts of mechanic arts, and to accustom themselves to hard labor.”-Antiq., lib. ii., cap. ix., sec. 1. Philo bears nearly the same testimony, p. 86, Edit. Mangey.

Verse 15. Hebrew midwives— Shiphrah and Puah, who are here mentioned, were probably certain chiefs, under whom all the rest acted, and by whom they were instructed in the obstetric art. Aben Ezra supposes there could not have been fewer than five hundred midwives among the Hebrew women at this time, but that very few were requisite see proved on Exodus 1:19. See Clark on “Exodus 1:19”.

Verse 16. Upon the stools— **עַל הָאֲבָנִים** al haobnayim. This is a difficult word, and occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible but in Jeremiah 18:3, where we translate it the potter’s wheels. As **אֶבֶן** signifies a stone, the obnayim has been supposed to signify a stone trough, in which they received and washed the infant as soon as born. Jarchi, in his book of Hebrew roots, gives a very different interpretation of it; he derives it from **בֶּן** ben, a son, or **בָּנִים** banim, children; his words must not be literally translated, but this is the sense: “When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and ye see that the birth is broken forth, if it be a son, then ye shall kill him.” Jonathan ben Uzziel gives us a curious reason for the command given by Pharaoh to the Egyptian women: “Pharaoh slept, and saw in his sleep a balance, and behold the whole land of Egypt stood in one scale, and a lamb in the other; and the scale in which the lamb was outweighed that in which was the land of Egypt. Immediately he sent and called all the chief magicians, and told them his dream. And Janes and Jimbres, (see 2 Timothy 3:8.) who were chief of the magicians, opened their mouths and said to Pharaoh, ‘A child is shortly to be born in the congregation of the Israelites, whose hand shall destroy the whole land of Egypt.’ Therefore Pharaoh spake to the midwives, etc.”

Verse 17. The midwives feared God— Because they knew that God had forbidden murder of every kind; for though the law was not yet given, Exodus 20:13, being Hebrews they must have known that God had from the beginning declared, Whosoever sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, Genesis 9:6. Therefore they saved the male children of all to whose assistance they were called. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 1:19”.

Verse 19. The Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women— This is a simple statement of what general experience shows to be a fact, viz., that women, who during the whole of their pregnancy are accustomed to hard labor, especially in the open air, have comparatively little pain in

parturition. At this time the whole Hebrew nation, men and women, were in a state of slavery, and were obliged to work in mortar and brick, and all manner of service IN THE FIELD, Exodus 1:14, and this at once accounts for the ease and speediness of their travail. With the strictest truth the midwives might say, The Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women: the latter fare delicately, are not inured to labor, and are kept shut up at home, therefore they have hard, difficult, and dangerous labors; but the Hebrew women are lively, חַיִּוֹת chayoth, are strong, hale, and vigorous, and therefore are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. In such cases we may naturally conclude that the midwives were very seldom even sent for. And this is probably the reason why we find but two mentioned; as in such a state of society there could be but very little employment for persons of that profession, as a mother, an aunt, or any female acquaintance or neighbor, could readily afford all the assistance necessary in such cases. Commentators, pressed with imaginary difficulties, have sought for examples of easy parturition in AETHIOPIA, Persia, and India, as parallels to the case before us; but they might have spared themselves the trouble, because the case is common in all parts of the globe where the women labor hard, and especially in the open air. I have known several instances of the kind myself among the laboring poor. I shall mention one: I saw a poor woman in the open field at hard labor; she stayed away in the afternoon, but she returned the next morning to her work with her infant child, having in the interim been safely delivered! She continued at her daily work, having apparently suffered no inconvenience!

I have entered more particularly into this subject because, through want of proper information, (perhaps from a worse motive,) certain persons have spoken very unguardedly against this inspired record: "The Hebrew midwives told palpable lies, and God commends them for it; thus we may do evil that good may come of it, and sanctify the means by the end." Now I contend that there was neither lie direct nor even prevarication in the case. The midwives boldly state to Pharaoh a fact, (had it not been so, he had a thousand means of ascertaining the truth,) and they state it in such a way as to bring conviction to his mind on the subject of his oppressive cruelty on the one hand, and the mercy of Jehovah on the other. As if they had said, "The very oppression under which, through thy cruelty, the Israelites groan, their God has turned to their advantage; they are not only

fruitful, but they bring forth with comparatively no trouble; we have scarcely any employment among them.” Here then is a fact, boldly announced in the face of danger; and we see that God was pleased with this frankness of the midwives, and he blessed them for it.

Verse 20. *Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.*— This shows an especial providence and blessing of God; for though in all cases where females are kept to hard labor they have comparatively easy and safe travail, yet in a state of slavery the increase is generally very small, as the children die for want of proper nursing, the women, through their labor, being obliged to neglect their offspring; so that in the slave countries the stock is obliged to be recruited by foreign imports: yet in the case above it was not so; there was not one barren among their tribes, and even their women, though constantly obliged to perform their daily tasks, were neither rendered unfruitful by it, nor taken off by premature death through the violence and continuance of their labor, when even in the delicate situation mentioned above.

Verse 21. *He made them houses.*— Dr. Shuckford thinks that there is something wrong both in the punctuation and translation of this place, and reads the passage thus, adding the 21st to the 20th verse: “And they multiplied and waxed mighty; and this happened (וַיְהִי *vayehi*) because the midwives feared God; and he (Pharaoh) made (לָהֶם *lahem*, masc.) them (the Israelites) houses; and commanded all his people, saying, Every son that is born, etc.” The doctor supposes that previously to this time the Israelites had no fixed dwellings, but lived in tents, and therefore had a better opportunity of concealing their children; but now Pharaoh built them houses, and obliged them to dwell in them, and caused the Egyptians to watch over them, that all the male children might be destroyed, which could not have been easily effected had the Israelites continued to live in their usual scattered manner in tents. That the houses in question were not made for the midwives, but for the Israelites in general, the Hebrew text seems pretty plainly to indicate, for the pronoun לָהֶם *lahem*, to them, is the masculine gender; had the midwives been meant, the feminine pronoun לָהֶן *lahen* would have been used. Others contend that by making them houses, not only the midwives are intended, but also that the words mark

an increase of their families, and that the objection taken from the masculine pronoun is of no weight, because these pronouns are often interchanged; see 1 Kings 22:17, where לָהֶם lahem is written, and in the parallel place, 2 Chronicles 18:16, לָהֶן lahen is used. So בָּהֶם bahem, in 1 Chronicles 10:7, is written בָּהֶן bahen, 1 Samuel 31:7, and in several other places. There is no doubt that God did bless the midwives, his approbation of their conduct is strictly marked; and there can be no doubt of his prospering the Israelites, for it is particularly said that the people multiplied and waxed very mighty. But the words most probably refer to the Israelites, whose houses or families were built up by an extraordinary increase of children, notwithstanding the cruel policy of the Egyptian king. Vain is the counsel of man when opposed to the determinations of God! All the means used for the destruction of this people became in his hand instruments of their prosperity and increase. How true is the saying, If God be for us, who can be against us?

Verse 22. *Ye shall cast into the river*— As the Nile, which is here intended, was a sacred river among the Egyptians, it is not unlikely that Pharaoh intended the young Hebrews as an offering to his god, having two objects in view: 1. To increase the fertility of the country by thus procuring, as he might suppose, a proper and sufficient annual inundation; and 2. To prevent an increase of population among the Israelites, and in process of time procure their entire extermination.

It is conjectured, with a great show of probability, that the edict mentioned in this verse was not made till after the birth of Aaron, and that it was revoked soon after the birth of Moses; as, if it had subsisted in its rigour during the eighty-six years which elapsed between this and the deliverance of the Israelites, it is not at all likely that their males would have amounted to six hundred thousand, and those all effective men.

In the general preface to this work reference has been made to ORIGEN'S method of interpreting the Scriptures, and some specimens promised. On the plain account of a simple matter of fact, related in the preceding chapter, this very eminent man, in his 2d Homily on Exodus, imposes an interpretation of which the following is the substance.

“Pharaoh, king of Egypt, represents the devil; the male and female children of the Hebrews represent the animal and rational faculties of the soul. Pharaoh, the devil, wishes to destroy all the males, i.e., the seeds of rationality and spiritual science through which the soul tends to and seeks heavenly things; but he wishes to preserve the females alive, i.e., all those animal propensities of man, through which he becomes carnal and devilish.

Hence,” says he, “when you see a man living in luxury, banquetings, pleasures, and sensual gratifications, know that there the king of Egypt has slain all the males, and preserved all the females alive. The midwives represent the Old and New Testaments: the one is called Sephora, which signifies a sparrow, and means that sort of instruction by which the soul is led to soar aloft, and contemplate heavenly things; the other is called Phua, which signifies ruddy or bashful, and points out the Gospel, which is ruddy with the blood of Christ, spreading the doctrine of his passion over the earth. By these, as midwives, the souls that are born into the Church, are healed, for the reading of the Scriptures corrects and heals what is amiss in the mind. Pharaoh, the devil, wishes to corrupt those midwives, that all the males — the spiritual propensities, may be destroyed; and this he endeavors to do by bringing in heresies and corrupt opinions. But the foundation of God standeth sure. The midwives feared God, therefore he builded them houses. If this be taken literally, it has little or no meaning, and is of no importance; but it points out that the midwives — the law and the Gospel, by teaching the fear of God, build the houses of the Church, and fill the whole earth with houses of prayer. Therefore these midwives, because they feared God, and taught the fear of God, did not fulfill the command of the king of Egypt—they did not kill the males, and I dare confidently affirm that they did not preserve the females alive; for they do not teach vicious doctrines in the Church, nor preach up luxury, nor foster sin, which are what Pharaoh wishes in keeping the females alive; for by these virtue alone is cultivated and nourished. By Pharaoh’s daughter I suppose the Church to be intended, which is gathered from among the Gentiles; and although she has an impious and iniquitous father, yet the prophet says unto her, Hearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house, so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, Psalm 45:10, 11. This therefore is she who is come to the waters to bathe, i.e., to the baptismal font, that she may be

washed from the sins which she has contracted in her father's house. Immediately she receives bowels of commiseration, and pities the infant; that is, the Church, coming from among the Gentiles, finds Moses — the law, lying in the pool, cast out, and exposed by his own people in an ark of bulrushes, daubed over with pitch — deformed and obscured by the carnal and absurd glosses of the Jews, who are ignorant of its spiritual sense; and while it continues with them is as a helpless and destitute infant; but as soon as it enters the doors of the Christian Church it becomes strong and vigorous; and thus Moses — the law, grows up, and becomes, through means of the Christian Church, more respectable even in the eyes of the Jews themselves, according to his own prophecy: I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation, Deuteronomy 32:21. Thus taught by the Christian Church, the synagogue forsakes idolatry; for when it sees the Gentiles worshipping the true God, it is ashamed of its idols, and worships them no more. In like manner, though we have had Pharaoh for our father — though the prince of this world has begotten us by wicked works, yet when we come unto the waters of baptism we take unto us Moses — the law of God, in its true and spiritual meaning; what is low or weak in it we leave, what is strong and perfect we take and place in the royal palace of our heart. Then we have Moses grown up — we no longer consider the law as little or mean; all is magnificent, excellent, elegant, for all is spiritually understood. Let us beseech the Lord Jesus Christ that he may reveal himself to us more and more and show us how great and sublime Moses is; for he by his Holy Spirit reveals these things to whomsoever he will. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.

Neither the praise of piety nor the merit of ingenuity can be denied to this eminent man in such interpretations as these. But who at the same time does not see that if such a mode of exposition were to be allowed, the trumpet could no longer give a certain sound? Every passage and fact might then be obliged to say something, any thing, every thing, or nothing, according to the fancy, peculiar creed, or caprice of the interpreter.

I have given this large specimen from one of the ancients, merely to save the moderns, from whose works on the sacred writings I could produce many specimens equally singular and more absurd. Reader, it is possible to

trifle with the testimonies of God, and all the while speak serious things; but if all be not done according to the pattern shown in the mount, much evil may be produced, and many stumbling blocks thrown in the way of others, which may turn them totally out of the way of understanding; and then what a dreadful account must such interpreters have to give to that God who has pronounced a curse, not only on those who take away from his word, but also on those who add to it.

CHAPTER 2

Amram and Jochebed marry, 1. Moses is born, and is hidden by his mother three months, 2. Is exposed in an ark of bulrushes on the river Nile, and watched by his sister, 3, 4. He is found by the daughter of Pharaoh, who commits him to the care of his own mother, and has him educated as her own son, 5-9. When grown up, he is brought to Pharaoh's daughter, who receives him as her own child, and calls him Moses, 10. Finding an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, he kills the Egyptian, and hides him in the sand, 11, 12. Reproves two Hebrews that were contending together, one of whom charges him with killing the Egyptian, 13, 14. Pharaoh, hearing of the death of the Egyptian, sought to slay Moses, who, being alarmed, escapes to the land of Midian, 15. Meets with the seven daughters of Reuel, priest or prince of Midian, who came to water their flocks, and assists them, 16, 17. On their return they inform their father Reuel, who invites Moses to his house, 18-20. Moses dwells with him, and receives Zipporah his daughter to wife, 21. She bears him a son whom he calls Gershom, 22. The children of Israel, grievously oppressed in Egypt, cry for deliverance, 23. God remembers his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and hears their prayer, 24, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *There went a man*— Amram, son of Kohath, son of Levi, Exodus 6:16-20. A daughter of Levi, Jochebed, sister to Kohath, and consequently both the wife and aunt of her husband Amram, Exodus 6:20; Numbers 26:59. Such marriages were at this time lawful, though they were afterwards forbidden, Leviticus 18:12. But it is possible that daughter of Levi means no more than a descendant of that family, and that probably Amram and Jochebed were only cousin Germans. As a new law was to be given and a new priesthood formed, God chose a religious family out of which the lawgiver and the high priest were both to spring.

Verse 2. *Bare a son*— This certainly was not her first child, for Aaron was fourscore and three years old when Moses was but fourscore, see Exodus 7:7: and there was a sister, probably Miriam, who was older than either; see below, Exodus 2:4, and see Numbers 26:59. Miriam and Aaron had no doubt been both born before the decree was passed for the destruction of the Hebrew male children, mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Goodly child— The text simply says **כִּי טוֹב הוּא** *ki tob hu*, that he was good, which signifies that he was not only a perfect, well-formed child, but that he was very beautiful; hence the Septuagint translate the place, **ἰδόντες δε αὐτο ἀστειον**, Seeing him to be beautiful, which St. Stephen interprets, **ἦν ἀστειος τῷ θεῷ**, He was comely to God, or divinely beautiful. This very circumstance was wisely ordained by the kind providence of God to be one means of his preservation. Scarcely any thing interests the heart more than the sight of a lovely babe in distress. His beauty would induce even his parents to double their exertions to save him, and was probably the sole motive which led the Egyptian princess to take such particular care of him, and to educate him as her own, which in all likelihood she would not have done had he been only an ordinary child.

Verse 3. *An ark of bulrushes*— **תַּבַּת גֹּמָא** *tebath gome*, a small boat or basket made of the Egyptian reed called papyrus, so famous in all antiquity. This plant grows on the banks of the Nile, and in marshy grounds; the stalk rises to the height of six or seven cubits above the water, is triangular, and terminates in a crown of small filaments resembling hair, which the ancients used to compare to a thyrsus. This reed was of the greatest use to the inhabitants of Egypt, the pith contained in the stalk serving them for food, and the woody part to build vessels with; which vessels frequently appear on engraved stones and other monuments of Egyptian antiquity. For this purpose they made it up like rushes into bundles, and by tying them together gave their vessels the necessary figure and solidity. “The vessels of bulrushes or papyrus,” says Dr. Shaw, “were no other than large fabrics of the same kind with that of Moses, Exodus 2:3, which from the late introduction of planks and stronger materials are now laid aside.” Thus Pliny, lib. vi., cap. 16, takes notice of the *naves papyraceas armamentaque Nili*, “ships made of papyrus and the equipments of the Nile:” and lib. xiii., cap. 11, he observes, *Exodus ipsa*

quidem papyro navigia texunt: “Of the papyrus itself they construct sailing vessels.” Herodotus and Diodorus have recorded the same fact; and among the poets, Lucan, lib. iv., ver. 136: Conseritur bibula Memphitis cymba papyro, “The Memphian or Egyptian boat is constructed from the soaking papyrus.” The epithet bibula is particularly remarkable, as corresponding with great exactness to the nature of the plant, and to its Hebrew name **גִּמְלָה** gome, which signifies to soak, to drink up. See Parkhurst sub voce.

She laid it in the flags— Not willing to trust it in the stream for fear of a disaster; and probably choosing the place to which the Egyptian princess was accustomed to come for the purpose specified in the note on the following verse.

Verse 5. And the daughter of Pharaoh— Josephus calls her Thermuthis, and says that “the ark was borne along by the current, and that she sent one that could swim after it; that she was struck with the figure and uncommon beauty of the child; that she inquired for a nurse, but he having refused the breasts of several, and his sister proposing to bring a Hebrew nurse, his own mother was procured.” But all this is in Josephus’s manner, as well as the long circumstantial dream that he gives to Amram concerning the future greatness of Moses, which cannot be considered in any other light than that of a fable, and not even a cunningly devised one.

To wash herself at the river— Whether the daughter of Pharaoh went to bathe in the river through motives of pleasure, health, or religion, or whether she bathed at all, the text does not specify. It is merely stated by the sacred writer that she went down to the river to WASH; for the word herself is not in the original. Mr. Harmer, *Observat.*, vol. iii., p. 529, is of opinion that the time referred to above was that in which the Nile begins to rise; and as the dancing girls in Egypt are accustomed now to plunge themselves into the river at its rising, by which act they testify their gratitude for the inestimable blessing of its inundations, so it might have been formerly; and that Pharaoh’s daughter was now coming down to the river on a similar account. I see no likelihood in all this. If she washed herself at all, it might have been a religious abluion, and yet extended no farther than to the hands and face; for the word **רָחַץ** rachats, to wash, is repeatedly used in the Pentateuch to signify religious ablutions of different

kinds. Jonathan in his Targum says that God had smitten all Egypt with ulcers, and that the daughter of Pharaoh came to wash in the river in order to find relief; and that as soon as she touched the ark where Moses was, her ulcers were healed. This is all fable. I believe there was no bathing in the case, but simply what the text states, washing, not of her person, but of her clothes, which was an employment that even kings' daughters did not think beneath them in those primitive times. Homer, *Odyss.* vi., represents Nausicaa, daughter of Alcinous, king of the Phaeacians, in company with her maidens, employed at the seaside in washing her own clothes and those of her five brothers! While thus employed they find Ulysses just driven ashore after having been shipwrecked, utterly helpless, naked, and destitute of every necessary of life. The whole scene is so perfectly like that before us that they appear to me to be almost parallels. I shall subjoin a few lines. The princess, having piled her clothes on a carriage drawn by several mules, and driven to the place of washing, commences her work, which the poet describes thus:—

ται δ' ἀπ' ἀπηνης ἐλματα χερσιν ἐλοντο,
 και εσφορεον μελαν ὕδωρ.
 στειβον δ' ἐν βαθροισι θοως,
 ἐριδα προφερουσαι. αυταρ ἐπει πλυναν τε,
 καθηραν τε ρυπα παντα, ἐξειης πετασαν παρα θιν' αλος,
 ηχι μαλιστα. λαιγγας ποτι χερσον αποπλυνεσκε θαλασσα.

ODYSSEY, lib. vi., ver. 90.

*“Light’ning the carriage, next they bore in hand
 The garments down to the unsullied wave,
 And thrust them heap’d into the pools; their task
 Despatching brisk, and with an emulous haste.
 When all were purified, and neither spot
 Could be perceived or blemish more, they spread
 The raiment orderly along the beach,
 Where dashing tides had cleansed the pebbles most.”*

COWPER.

When this task was finished we find the Phaeacian princess and her ladies (κουρη δ' εκ θαλαμοιο- αμφιπολοι αλλαι) employed in amusing themselves upon the beach, till the garments they had washed should be dry and fit to be folded up, that they might reload their carriage and return.

In the text of Moses the Egyptian princess, accompanied by her maids, נַעֲרֹתֶיהָ *naarotheyha*, comes down to the river, not to bathe herself, for this is not intimated, but merely to wash, לִרְחוֹץ *lirchots*; at the time in which the ark is perceived we may suppose that she and her companions had finished their task, and, like the daughter of Alcinous and her maidens, were amusing themselves walking along by the river's side, as the others did by tossing a ball, σφαιρηται τ' αρ επιζον, when they as suddenly and as unexpectedly discovered Moses adrift on the flood, as Nausicaa and her companions discovered Ulysses just escaped naked from shipwreck. In both the histories, that of the poet and this of the prophet, both the strangers, the shipwrecked Greek and the almost drowned Hebrew, were rescued by the princesses, nourished and preserved alive! Were it lawful to suppose that Homer had ever seen the Hebrew story, it would be reasonable to conclude that he had made it the basis of the 6th book of the *Odyssey*.

Verse 6. *She had compassion on him*— The sight of a beautiful babe in distress could not fail to make the impression here mentioned; see Clarke on “Exodus 2:2”. It has already been conjectured that the cruel edict of the Egyptian king did not continue long in force; see Exodus 1:22. And it will not appear unreasonable to suppose that the circumstance related here might have brought about its abolition. The daughter of Pharaoh, struck with the distressed state of the Hebrew children from what she had seen in the case of Moses, would probably implore her father to abolish this sanguinary edict.

Verse 7. *Shall I go and call a nurse*— Had not the different circumstances marked here been placed under the superintendence of an especial providence, there is no human probability that they could have had such a happy issue. The parents had done every thing to save their child that piety, affection, and prudence could dictate, and having done so, they left the event to God. By faith, says the apostle, Hebrews 11:23, Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. Because of the king's commandment they were obliged to make use of the most prudent caution to save the child's life; and their faith in God enabled them to risk their own safety, for they were not afraid of the king's commandment- they feared God, and they had no other fear.

Verse 10. *And he became her son.*— From this time of his being brought home by his nurse his education commenced, and he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Acts 7:22, who in the knowledge of nature probably exceeded all the nations then on the face of the earth.

And she called his name— משה *mosheh*, because מֵהַמַּיִם *min hammayim*, out of the waters מִשִּׁיתְהוּ *meshithihu*, have I drawn him.

משה *mashah* signifies to draw out; and *mosheh* is the person drawn out; the word is used in the same sense Psalm 18:16, and 2 Samuel 22:17. What name he had from his parents we know not; but whatever it might be it was ever after lost in the name given to him by the princess of Egypt. Abul Farajius says that Thermuthis delivered him to the wise men Janees and Jimbrees to be instructed in wisdom.

Verse 11. *When Moses was grown*— Being full forty years of age, as St. Stephen says, Acts 7:23, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, i.e., he was excited to it by a Divine inspiration; and seeing one of them suffer wrong, by an Egyptian smiting him, probably one of the task-masters, he avenged him and smote — slew, the Egyptian, supposing that God who had given him commission, had given also his brethren to understand that they were to be delivered by his hand; see Acts 7:23-25. Probably the Egyptian killed the Hebrew, and therefore on the Noahic precept Moses was justified in killing him; and he was authorized so to do by the commission which he had received from God, as all succeeding events amply prove. Previously to the mission of Moses to deliver the Israelites, Josephus says, “The AETHiopians having made an irruption into Egypt, and subdued a great part of it, a Divine oracle advised them to employ Moses the Hebrew. On this the king of Egypt made him general of the Egyptian forces; with these he attacked the AETHiopians, defeated and drove them back into their own land, and forced them to take refuge in the city of Saba, where he besieged them. Tharbis, daughter of the AETHiopian king, seeing him, fell desperately in love with him, and promised to give up the city to him on condition that he would take her to wife, to which Moses agreed, and the city was put into the hands of the Egyptians.”-Jos. Ant. lib. ii., chap. 9. St. Stephen probably alluded to something of this kind when he said Moses was mighty in deeds as well as words.

Verse 13. *Two men of the Hebrews strove together*— How strange that in the very place where they were suffering a heavy persecution because they were Hebrews, the very persons themselves who suffered it should be found persecuting each other! It has been often seen that in those times in which the ungodly oppressed the Church of Christ, its own members have been separated from each other by disputes concerning comparatively unessential points of doctrine and discipline, in consequence of which both they and the truth have become an easy prey to those whose desire was to waste the heritage of the Lord. The Targum of Jonathan says that the two persons who strove were Dathan and Abiram.

Verse 14. *And Moses feared*— He saw that the Israelites were not as yet prepared to leave their bondage; and that though God had called him to be their leader, yet his providence had not yet sufficiently opened the way; and had he stayed in Egypt he must have endangered his life. Prudence therefore dictated an escape for the present to the land of Midian.

Verse 15. *Pharaoh — sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh*— How can this be reconciled with He 11:27: By faith he (Moses) forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king? Very easily. The apostle speaks not of this forsaking of Egypt, but of his and the Israelites' final departure from it, and of the bold and courageous manner in which Moses treated Pharaoh and the Egyptians, disregarding his threatenings and the multitudes of them that pursued after the people whom, in the name and strength of God, he led in the face of their enemies out of Egypt.

Dwelt in the land of Midian— A country generally supposed to have been in Arabia Petraea, on the eastern coast of the Red Sea, not far from Mount Sinai. This place is still called by the Arabs the land of Midian or the land of Jethro. Abul Farajius calls it the land of the Arabs. It is supposed that the Midianites derived their origin from Midian, the fourth son of Abraham by Keturah, thus:-Abraham, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan and Midian, Raguel, Jethro; see Genesis 25:1. But Calmet contends that if Jethro had been of the family of Abraham, either by Jokshan, or Midian, Aaron and Miriam could not have reproached Moses with marrying a Cushite, Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel. He thinks therefore that the

Midianites were of the progeny of Cush, the son of Ham; see Genesis 10:6.

Verse 16. *The priest of Midian*— Or prince, or both; for the original כהן cohen has both meanings. See it explained at large, See Clarke's note on "Genesis 15:18". The transaction here very nearly resembles that mentioned Gen. xxix. concerning Jacob and Rachel; see the notes there.

Verse 17. *The shepherds-drove them*— The verb יגרשום yegareshum, being in the masculine gender, seems to imply that the shepherds drove away the flocks of Reuel's daughters, and not the daughters themselves. The fact seems to be, that, as the daughters of Reuel filled the troughs and brought their flocks to drink, the shepherds drove those away, and, profiting by the young women's labor, watered their own cattle. Moses resisted this insolence, and assisted them to water their flocks, in consequence of which they were enabled to return much sooner than they were wont to do, Exodus 2:18.

Verse 18. *Reuel, their father*— In Numbers 10:29 this person is called Raguel, but the Hebrew is the same in both places. The reason of this difference is that the ע ain in רעואל is sometimes used merely as vowel, sometimes as g, ng, and gn, and this is occasioned by the difficulty of the sound, which scarcely any European organs can enunciate. As pronounced by the Arabs it strongly resembles the first effort made by the throat in gargling, or as Meninski says, Est vox vituli matrem vocantis, "It is like the sound made by a calf in seeking its dam." Raguel is the worst method of pronouncing it; Re-u-el, the first syllable strongly accented, is nearer to the true sound. A proper uniformity in pronouncing the same word wherever it may occur, either in the Old or New Testament, is greatly to be desired. The person in question appears to have several names. Here he is called Reuel; in Numbers 10:29, Raguel; in Exodus 3:1, Jethor; in Judges 4:11, Hobab; and in Judges 1:16 he is called קיני Keyni, which in chap. iv. we translate Kenite. Some suppose that Re-u-el was father to Hobab, who was also called Jethro. This is the most likely; see Clarke's note on "Exodus 3:1".

Verse 20. *That he may eat bread*.— That he may be entertained, and receive refreshment to proceed on his journey. Bread, among the Hebrews,

was used to signify all kinds of food commonly used for the support of man's life.

Verse 21. *Zipporah his daughter.*— Abul Farajius calls her “Saphura the black, daughter of Rewel the Midianite, the son of Dedan, the son of Abraham by his wife Keturah.” The Targum calls her the granddaughter of Reuel. It appears that Moses obtained Zipporah something in the same way that Jacob obtained Rachel; namely, for the performance of certain Services, probably keeping of sheep: see Exodus 3:1.

Verse 22. *Called his name Gershom*— Literally, a stranger; the reason of which Moses immediately adds, for I have been an ALIEN in a strange land.

The Vulgate, the Septuagint, as it stands in the Complutensian Polyglot, and in several MSS., the Syriac, the Coptic, and the Arabic, add the following words to this verse: And the name of the second he called Eliezer, for the God of my father has been my help, and delivered me from the hand of Pharaoh. These words are found in Exodus 18:4, but they are certainly necessary here, for it is very likely that these two sons were born within a short space of each other; for in Exodus 4:20, it is said, Moses took his wife and his SONS, by which it is plain that he had both Gershom and Eliezer at that time. Houbigant introduces this addition in his Latin version, and contends that this is its most proper place. Notwithstanding the authority of the above versions, the clause is found in no copy, printed or MS., of the Hebrew text.

Verse 23. *In process of time-the king of Egypt died*— According to St. Stephen, (Acts 7:30, compared with Exodus 7:7,) the death of the Egyptian king happened about forty years after the escape of Moses to Midian. The words **וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם** vayehi baiyamlm harabbim hahem, which we translate And it came to pass in process of time, signify, And it was in many days from these that the king, etc. It has already been remarked that Archbishop Usher supposes this king to have been Ramesses Miamun, who was succeeded by his son Amenophis, who was drowned in the Red Sea when pursuing the Israelites, but Abul Farajius says it was Amunfathis, (Amenophis,) he who made the cruel edict against the Hebrew children.

Some suppose that Moses wrote the book of Job during the time he sojourned in Midian, and also the book of Genesis. See the preface to the book of Job, where this subject is considered.

Sighed by reason of the bondage— For the nature of their bondage, see Clarke note on “Exodus 1:14”.

Verse 24. *God remembered his covenant*— God’s covenant is God’s engagement; he had promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give their posterity a land flowing with milk and honey, etc. They are now under the most oppressive bondage, and this was the most proper time for God to show them his mercy and power in fulfilling his promise. This is all that is meant by God’s remembering his covenant, for it was now that he began to give it its effect.

Verse 25. *And God had respect unto them.*— וידע אלהים *vaiyeda* Elohim, God knew them, i.e., he approved of them, and therefore it is said that their cry came up before God, and he heard their groaning. The word ידע *yada*, to know, in the Hebrew Bible, as well as γινωσκω in the Greek Testament, is frequently used in the sense of approving; and because God knew — had respect for and approved of, them, therefore he was determined to deliver them. For אלהים *Elohim*, GOD, in the last clause of this verse, Houbigant reads אליהם *aleyhem*, UPON THEM, which is countenanced by the Vulgate, Septuagint, Chaldee, Coptic, and Arabic, and appears to have been the original reading. The difference in the original consists in the interchange of two letters, the י *yod* and ה *he*. Our translators insert unto them, in order to make up that sense which this various reading gives without trouble.

THE farther we proceed in the sacred writings, the more the history both of the grace and providence of God opens to our view. He ever cares for his creatures, and is mindful of his promise. The very means made use of to destroy his work are, in his hands, the instruments of its accomplishment. Pharaoh orders the male children of the Hebrews to be thrown into the river; Moses, who was thus exposed, is found by his own daughter, brought up as her own son, and from his Egyptian education becomes much better qualified for the great work to which God had called him; and his being obliged to leave Egypt was undoubtedly a powerful

means to wean his heart from a land in which he had at his command all the advantages and luxuries of life. His sojourning also in a strange land, where he was obliged to earn his bread by a very painful employment, fitted him for the perilous journey he was obliged to take in the wilderness, and enabled him to bear the better the privations to which he was in consequence exposed.

The bondage of the Israelites was also wisely permitted, that they might with less reluctance leave a country where they had suffered the greatest oppression and indignities. Had they not suffered severely previously to their departure, there is much reason to believe that no inducements could have been sufficient to have prevailed on them to leave it. And yet their leaving it was of infinite consequence, in the order both of grace and providence, as it was indispensably necessary that they should be a people separated from all the rest of the world, that they might see the promises of God fulfilled under their own eyes, and thus have the fullest persuasion that their law was Divine, their prophets inspired by the Most High, and that the Messiah came according to the prophecies before delivered concerning him.

From the example of Pharaoh's daughter, (see Clarke's note "Exodus 2:5",) and the seven daughters of Jethro, (Exodus 2:16,) we learn that in the days of primitive simplicity, and in this respect the best days, the children, particularly the daughters of persons in the highest ranks in life, were employed in the most laborious offices. Kings' daughters performed the office of the laundress to their own families; and the daughters of princes tended and watered the flocks. We have seen similar instances in the case of Rebekah and Rachel; and we cannot be too pointed in calling the attention of modern delicate females, who are not only above serving their own parents and family, but even their own selves: the consequence of which is, they have neither vigor nor health; their growth, for want of healthy exercise, is generally cramped; their natural powers are prematurely developed, and their whole course is rather an apology for living, than a state of effective life. Many of these live not out half their days, and their offspring, when they have any, is more feeble than themselves; so that the race of man where such preposterous conduct is followed (and where is it not followed?) is in a state of gradual deterioration. Parents who wish to fulfill the intention of God and nature,

will doubtless see it their duty to bring up their children on a different plan. A worse than the present can scarcely be found out.

Afflictions, under the direction of God's providence and the influence of his grace, are often the means of leading men to pray to and acknowledge God, who in the time of their prosperity hardened their necks from his fear. When the Israelites were sorely oppressed, they began to pray. If the cry of oppression had not been among them, probably the cry for mercy had not been heard. Though afflictions, considered in themselves, can neither atone for sin nor improve the moral state of the soul, yet God often uses them as means to bring sinners to himself, and to quicken those who, having already escaped the pollutions of the world, were falling again under the influence of an earthly mind. Of many millions besides David it may truly be said, Before they were afflicted they went astray.

CHAPTER 3

Moses keeping the flock of Jethro at Mount Horeb, the angel of the Lord appears to him in a burning bush, 1, 2. Astonished at the sight, he turns aside to examine it, 3, when God speaks to him out of the fire, and declares himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 4-6; announces his purpose of delivering the Israelites from their oppression, and of bringing them into the promised land, 7-9; commissions him to go to Pharaoh, and to be leader of the children of Israel from Egypt, 10. Moses excuses himself, 11; and God, to encourage him, promises him his protection, 12. Moses doubts whether the Israelites will credit him, 13, and God reveals to him his NAME, and informs him what he is to say to the people, 14-17, and instructs him and the elders of Israel to apply unto Pharaoh for permission to go three days' journey into the wilderness, to sacrifice unto the Lord, 18; foretells the obstinacy of the Egyptian king, and the miracles which he himself should work in the sight of the Egyptians, 19, 20; and promises that, on the departure of the Israelites, the Egyptians should be induced to furnish them with all necessaries for their journey, 21, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. Jethro his father-in-law— Concerning Jethro, see Clarke's note on "Exodus 2:18". Learned men are not agreed on the signification of the word חותן chothen, which we translate father-in-law, and which in Genesis 19:14, we translate son-in-law. It seems to be a general term for a relative by marriage, and the connection only in which it stands can determine its precise meaning. It is very possible that Reuel was now dead, it being forty years since Moses came to Midian; that Jethro was his son, and had succeeded him in his office of prince and priest of Midian; that Zipporah was the sister of Jethro; and that consequently the word חותן chothen should be translated brother-in-law in this place: as we learn from Genesis 34:9, Deuteronomy 7:3, Joshua 23:12, and other places, that it simply signifies to contract affinity by marriage. If this conjecture be right, we

may well suppose that, Reuel being dead, Moses was continued by his brother-in-law Jethro in the same employment he had under his father.

Mountain of God— Sometimes named Horeb, at other times Sinai. The mountain itself had two peaks; one was called Horeb, the other Sinai. Horeb was probably the primitive name of the mountain, which was afterwards called the mountain of God, because God appeared upon it to Moses; and Mount Sinai, סיני, from סנה seneh, a bush, because it was in a bush or bramble, in a flame of fire, that this appearance was made.

Verse 2. The angel of the Lord— Not a created angel certainly; for he is called יהוה Jehovah, Exodus 3:4, etc., and has the most expressive attributes of the Godhead applied to him, Exodus 3:14, etc. Yet he is an angel, מלאך malach, a messenger, in whom was the name of God, Exodus 23:21; and in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, Colossians 2:9; and who, in all these primitive times, was the Messenger of the covenant, Malachi 3:1. And who was this but JESUS, the Leader, Redeemer, and Savior of mankind? See Clarke's note on "Genesis 16:7".

A flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush— Fire was, not only among the Hebrews but also among many other ancient nations, a very significant emblem of the Deity. God accompanied the Israelites in all their journeyings through the wilderness as a pillar of fire by night; and probably a fire or flame in the holy of holies, between the cherubim, was the general symbol of his presence; and traditions of these things, which must have been current in the east, have probably given birth, not only to the pretty general opinion that God appears in the likeness of fire, but to the whole of the Zoroastrian system of fire-worship. It has been reported of Zoroaster, or Zeradusht, that having retired to a mountain for the study of wisdom, and the benefit of solitude, the whole mountain was one day enveloped with flame, out of the midst of which he came without receiving any injury; on which he offered sacrifices to God, who, he was persuaded, had then appeared to him. M. Anquetil du Perron gives much curious information on this subject in his Zend Avesta. The modern Parsees call fire the off-spring of Ormusd, and worship it with a vast variety of ceremonies.

Among the fragments attributed to Æschylus, and collected by Stanley in his invaluable edition of this poet, p. 647, col. 1, we find the following beautiful verses:

χωριζε θνητων τον θεον, και μη δοκει
ομοιον αυτω σαπκινον καθεσταναι.
ουκ οισθα δ' αυτον· ποτε μεν ως πυρ φαινεται
απλαστον ορμη· ποτε δ' υδωρ, ποτε δε γνοφος.

“Distinguish God from mortal men; and do not suppose that any thing fleshly is like unto him. Thou knowest him not: sometimes indeed he appears as a formless and impetuous FIRE, sometimes as water, sometimes as thick darkness.” The poet proceeds:

τρεμει δ' ορη, και γαια, και πελεριος
βυθος θαλασσης, κωρεων υψος μεγα,
’οταν επιβλεψη γοργον ομμα δεσποτου.

“The mountains, the earth, the deep and extensive sea, and the summits of the highest mountains tremble whenever the terrible eye of the Supreme Lord looks down upon them.”

These are very remarkable fragments, and seem all to be collected from traditions relative to the different manifestations of God to the Israelites in Egypt, and in the wilderness. Moses wished to see God, but he could behold nothing but an indescribable glory: nothing like mortals, nothing like a human body, appeared at any time to his eye, or to those of the Israelites. “Ye saw no manner of similitude,” said Moses, “on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the FIRE,” Deuteronomy 4:15. But sometimes the Divine power and justice were manifested by the indescribable, formless, impetuous, consuming flame; at other times he appeared by the water which he brought out of the flinty rock; and in the thick darkness on Horeb, when the fiery law proceeded from his right hand, then the earth quaked and the mountain trembled: and when his terrible eye looked out upon the Egyptians through the pillar of cloud and fire, their chariot wheels were struck off, and confusion and dismay were spread through all the hosts of Pharaoh; Exodus 14:24, 25.

And the bush was not consumed.— 1. An emblem of the state of Israel in its various distresses and persecutions: it was in the fire of adversity, but

was not consumed. 2. An emblem also of the state of the Church of God in the wilderness, in persecutions often, in the midst of its enemies, in the region of the shadow of death-yet not consumed. 3. An emblem also of the state of every follower of Christ: cast down, but not forsaken; grievously tempted, but not destroyed; walking through the fire, but still unconsumed! Why are all these preserved in the midst of those things which have a natural tendency to destroy them! Because GOD IS IN THE MIDST OF THEM; it was this that preserved the bush from destruction; and it was this that preserved the Israelites; and it is this, and this alone, that preserves the Church, and holds the soul of every genuine believer in the spiritual life. He in whose heart Christ dwells not by faith, will soon be consumed by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Verse 5. Put off thy shoes— It is likely that from this circumstance all the eastern nations have agreed to perform all the acts of their religious worship barefooted. All the Mohammedans, Brahmins, and Parsees do so still. The Jews were remarked for this in the time of Juvenal; hence he speaks of their performing their sacred rites barefooted; Sat. vi., ver. 158:

Observant ubi festa mero pede sabbata reges.

The ancient Greeks did the same. Jamblichus, in the life of Pythagoras, tells us that this was one of his maxims, **αυτοποδητος θυε και προσκυνει**, Offer sacrifice and worship with your shoes off. And Solinus asserts that no person was permitted to enter into the temple of Diana, in Crete, till he had taken off his shoes. “AEdem Numinis (Dianae) praeterquam nudus vestigio nulles licito ingreditur.” Tertullian observes, de jejunio, that in a time of drought the worshippers of Jupiter deprecated his wrath, and prayed for rain, walking barefooted. “Cum stupet caelum, et aret annus, nudipedalia, denunciantur.” It is probable that **נעלים** nealim, in the text, signifies sandals, translated by the Chaldee **סנדל** sandal, and **סנדל** sandala, (see Genesis 14:23,) which was the same as the Roman solea, a sole alone, strapped about the foot As this sole must let in dust, gravel, and sand about the foot in travelling, and render it very uneasy, hence the custom of frequently washing the feet in those countries where these sandals were worn. Pulling off the shoes was, therefore, an emblem of laying aside the pollutions contracted by walking in the way of sin. Let those who name the Lord Jesus Christ depart from iniquity. In our

western countries reverence is expressed by pulling off the hat; but how much more significant is the eastern custom! “The natives of Bengal never go into their own houses with their shoes on, nor into the houses of others, but always leave their shoes at the door. It would be a great affront not to attend to this mark of respect when visiting; and to enter a temple without pulling off the shoes would be an unpardonable offense.”—Ward.

The place whereon thou standest is holy ground.— It was not particularly sanctified by the Divine presence; but if we may credit Josephus, a general opinion had prevailed that God dwelt on that mountain; and hence the shepherds, considering it as sacred ground, did not dare to feed their flocks there. Moses, however, finding the soil to be rich and the pasturage good, boldly drove his flock thither to feed on it. — Antiq., b. ii., c. xii., s. 1.

Verse 6. *I am the God of thy father*— Though the word אָבִי *abi*, father, is here used in the singular, St Stephen, quoting this place, Acts 7:32, uses the plural, ο θεος των πατερων σου, The God of thy FATHERS; and that this is the meaning the following words prove: The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. These were the fathers of Moses in a direct line. This reading is confirmed by the Samaritan and by the Coptic. ABRAHAM was the father of the Ishmaelites, and with him was the covenant first made. ISAAC was the father of the Edomites as well as the Israelites, and with him was the covenant renewed. JACOB was the father of the twelve patriarchs, who were founders of the Jewish nation, and to him were the promises particularly confirmed. Hence we see that the Arabs and Turks in general, who are descendants of Ishmael; the Edomites, now absorbed among the Jews, (see Clarke’s note on “Genesis 25:23”,) who are the descendants of Esau; and the Jewish people, wheresoever scattered, who are the descendants of Jacob, are all heirs of the promises included in this primitive covenant; and their gathering in with the fullness of the Gentiles may be confidently expected.

And Moses hid his face— For similar acts, see the passages referred to in the margin. He was afraid to look — he was overawed by God’s presence, and dazzled with the splendor of the appearance.

Verse 7. *I have surely seen*— רָאִיתִי רַחֵם רַחֵם raoh raithi, seeing, I have seen — I have not only seen the afflictions of this people because I am omniscient, but I have considered their sorrows, and my eye affects my heart.

Verse 8. *And I am come down to deliver them*— This is the very purpose for which I am now come down upon this mountain, and for which I manifest myself to thee.

Large-land— Canaan, when compared with the small tract of Goshen, in which they were now situated, and where, we learn, from Exodus 1:7, they were straitened for room, might be well called a large land. See a fine description of this land Deuteronomy 8:7.

A land flowing with milk and honey— Excellent for pasturage, because abounding in the most wholesome herbage and flowers; and from the latter an abundance of wild honey was collected by the bees. Though cultivation is now almost entirely neglected in this land, because of the badness of the government and the scantiness of the inhabitants, yet it is still good for pasturage, and yields an abundance of honey. The terms used in the text to express the fertility of this land, are commonly used by ancient authors on similar subjects. It is a metaphor taken from a breast producing copious streams of milk. Homer calls Argos οὐθαρ αρουρης, the breast of the country, as affording streams of milk and honey, Il. ix., ver. 141. So Virgil:

Prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere laeto Accipiet.

AEn., lib. iii., ver. 95.

“The land that first produced you shall receive you again into its joyous bosom.” The poets feign that Bacchus, the fable of whom they have taken from the history of Moses, produced rivers of milk and honey, of water and wine: —

ἔπει δε γαλακτι πεδον,
ἔπει δ' οινω, πει δε μελισσαν νεκταρι.

EURIP. Bacch., εἰσοδ., ver. 8.

“The land flows with milk; it flows also with wine; it flows also with the nectar of bees, (honey.)” This seems to be a mere poetical copy from the

Pentateuch, where the sameness of the metaphor and the correspondence of the descriptions are obvious.

Place of the Canaanites, etc.— See Genesis 15:18, etc.

Verse 11. *Who am I—that I should bring*— He was so satisfied that this was beyond his power, and all the means that he possessed, that he is astonished that even God himself should appoint him to this work! Such indeed was the bondage of the children of Israel, and the power of the people by whom they were enslaved, that had not their deliverance come through supernatural means, their escape had been utterly impossible.

Verse 12. *Certainly I will be with thee*— This great event shall not be left to thy wisdom and to thy power; my counsel shall direct thee, and my power shall bring all these mighty things to pass.

And this shall be a token— Literally, And THIS to thee for a sign, i.e., this miraculous manifestation of the burning bush shall be a proof that I have sent thee; or, My being with thee, to encourage thy heart, strengthen thy hands, and enable thee to work miracles, shall be to thyself and to others the evidence of thy Divine mission.

Ye shall serve God upon this mountain.— This was not the sign, but God shows him, that in their return from Egypt they should take this mountain in their way, and should worship him in this place. There may be a prophetic allusion here to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. As Moses received his commands here, so likewise should the Israelites receive theirs in the same place. After all, the Divine Being seems to testify a partial predilection for this mountain, for reasons that are not expressed. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 3:5".

Verse 13. *They shall say—What is his name?*— Does not this suppose that the Israelites had an idolatrous notion even of the Supreme Being? They had probably drank deep into the Egyptian superstitions, and had gods many and lords many; and Moses conjectured that, hearing of a supernatural deliverance, they would inquire who that God was by whom it was to be effected. The reasons given here by the rabbins are too refined for the Israelites at this time. "When God," say they, "judgeth his creatures, he is called אלהים Elohim; when he warreth against the wicked,

he is called **צבאות** Tsebaoth; but when he showeth mercy unto the world, he is called **יהוה** Yehovah.” It is not likely that the Israelites had much knowledge of God or of his ways at the time to which the sacred text refers; it is certain they had no written word. The book of Genesis, if even written, (for some suppose it had been composed by Moses during his residence in Midian,) had not yet been communicated to the people; and being so long without any revelation, and perhaps without even the form of Divine worship, their minds being degraded by the state of bondage in which they had been so long held, and seeing and hearing little in religion but the superstitions of those among whom they sojourned, they could have no distinct notion of the Divine Being. Moses himself might have been in doubt at first on this subject, and he seems to have been greatly on his guard against illusion; hence he asks a variety of questions, and endeavors, by all prudent means, to assure himself of the truth and certainty of the present appearance and commission. He well knew the power of the Egyptian magicians, and he could not tell from these first views whether there might not have been some delusion in this case. God therefore gives him the fullest proof, not only for the satisfaction of the people to whom he was to be sent, but for his own full conviction, that it was the supreme God who now spoke to him.

Verse 14. I AM THAT I AM— **אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה** EHEYEH asher EHEYEH.

These words have been variously understood. The Vulgate translates EGO SUM QUI SUM, I am who am. The Septuagint, **εγω εμι ο ων**, I am he who exists. The Syriac, the Persic, and the Chaldee preserve the original words without any gloss. The Arabic paraphrases them, The Eternal, who passes not away; which is the same interpretation given by Abul Farajius, who also preserves the original words, and gives the above as their interpretation. The Targum of Jonathan, and the Jerusalem Targum paraphrase the words thus: “He who spake, and the world was; who spake, and all things existed.” As the original words literally signify, I will be what I will be, some have supposed that God simply designed to inform Moses, that what he had been to his fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he would be to him and the Israelites; and that he would perform the promises he had made to his fathers, by giving their descendants the promised land. It is difficult to put a meaning on the words; they seem intended to point out the eternity and self-existence of God. Plato, in his

Parmenides, where he treats sublimely of the nature of God, says, **οὐδ' ἀρα ὄνομα ἐστὶν αὐτῷ**, nothing can express his nature; therefore no name can be attributed to him. See the conclusion of this chapter, See Clarke's note at "Exodus 3:22". and on the word Jehovah, Exodus 34:6, 7.

Verse 15. *This is my name for ever*— The name here referred to is that which immediately precedes, **יהוה אלהים** Yehovah Elohim, which we translate the LORD GOD, the name by which God had been known from the creation of the world, (see Genesis 2:4.) and the name by which he is known among the same people to the present day. Even the heathens knew this name of the true God; and hence out of our **יהוה** Yehovah they formed their Jao, Jeve, and Jove; so that the word has been literally fulfilled, This is my memorial unto all generations. See Clarke's note on the word Elohim, "Genesis 1:1". As to be self-existent and eternal must be attributes of God for ever, does it not follow that the **לעלם** leolam, for ever, in the text signifies eternity? "This is my name to eternity-and my memorial," **לדור דור** ledor dor, "to all succeeding generations." While human generations continue he shall be called the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; but when time shall be no more, he shall be Jehovah Elohim. Hence the first expression refers to his eternal existence, the latter to the discovery he should make of himself as long as time should last. See Genesis 21:33. Diodorus Siculus says, that "among the Jews, Moses is reported to have received his laws from the God named Jao," **ιαω**, i.e., Jeue, Jove, or Jeve; for in all these ways the word **יהוה** Yehovah may be pronounced; and in this way I have seen it on Egyptian monuments. See Diod., lib. 1., c. xciv.

Verse 16. *Elders of Israel*— Though it is not likely the Hebrews were permitted to have any regular government at this time, yet there can be no doubt of their having such a government in the time of Joseph, and for some considerable time after; the elders of each tribe forming a kind of court of magistrates, by which all actions were tried, and legal decisions made, in the Israelitish community.

I have surely visited you— An exact fulfillment of the prediction of Joseph, Genesis 50:24, God will surely visit you, and in the same words too.

Verse 18. *They shall hearken to thy voice*— This assurance was necessary to encourage him in an enterprise so dangerous and important.

Three days' journey into the wilderness— Evidently intending Mount Sinai, which is reputed to be about three days' journey, the shortest way, from the land of Goshen. In ancient times, distances were computed by the time required to pass over them. Thus, instead of miles, furlongs, etc., it was said, the distance from one place to another was so many days', so many hours' journey; and it continues the same in all countries where there are no regular roads or highways.

Verse 19. *I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand*— When the facts detailed in this history have been considered in connection with the assertion as it stands in our Bibles, the most palpable contradiction has appeared. That the king of Egypt did let them go, and that by a mighty hand, the book itself amply declares. We should therefore seek for another meaning of the original word. **אלו** velo, which generally means and not, has sometimes the meaning of if not, unless, except, etc.; and in Becke's Bible, 1549, it is thus translated: I am sure that the kyng of Egypt wyl not let you go, EXCEPT wyth a mighty hand. This import of the negative particle, which is noticed by Noldius, Heb. Part., p. 328, was perfectly understood by the Vulgate, where it is translated nisi, unless; and the Septuagint in their **εαν μη**, which is of the same import; and so also the Coptic. The meaning therefore is very plain: The king of Egypt, who now profits much by your servitude, will not let you go till he sees my hand stretched out, and he and his nation be smitten with ten plagues. Hence God immediately adds, Exodus 3:20: I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders-and after that, he will let you go.

Verse 22. *Every woman shall borrow*— This is certainly not a very correct translation: the original word **שאל** shaal signifies simply to ask, request, demand, require, inquire, etc.; but it does not signify to borrow in the proper sense of that word, though in a very few places of Scripture it is thus used. In this and the parallel place, Exodus 12:35, the word signifies to ask or demand, and not to borrow, which is a gross mistake into which scarcely any of the versions, ancient or modern, have fallen, except our own. The SEPTUAGINT has **αιτησει**, she shall ask; the VULGATE,

postulabit, she shall demand; the SYRIAC, CHALDEE, SAMARITAN, SAMARITAN Version, COPTIC, and PERSIAN, are the same as the Hebrew. The European versions are generally correct on this point; and our common English version is almost the sole transgressor: I say, the common version, which, copying the Bible published by Becke in 1549, gives us the exceptionable term borrow, for the original שאל shaal, which in the Geneva Bible, and Barker's Bible of 1615, and some others, is rightly translated aske. God commanded the Israelites to ask or demand a certain recompense for their past services, and he inclined the hearts of the Egyptians to give liberally; and this, far from a matter of oppression, wrong, or even charity, was no more than a very partial recompense for the long and painful services which we may say six hundred thousand Israelites had rendered to Egypt, during a considerable number of years. And there can be no doubt that while their heaviest oppression lasted, they were permitted to accumulate no kind of property, as all their gains went to their oppressors.

Our exceptionable translation of the original has given some countenance to the desperate cause of infidelity; its abettors have exultingly said: "Moses represents the just God as ordering the Israelites to borrow the goods of the Egyptians under the pretense of returning them, whereas he intended that they should march off with the booty." Let these men know that there was no borrowing in the case; and that if accounts were fairly balanced, Egypt would be found still in considerable arrears to Israel. Let it also be considered that the Egyptians had never any right to the services of the Hebrews. Egypt owed its policy, its opulence, and even its political existence, to the Israelites. What had Joseph for his important services? NOTHING! He had neither district, nor city, nor lordship in Egypt; nor did he reserve any to his children. All his services were gratuitous; and being animated with a better hope than any earthly possession could inspire, he desired that even his bones should be carried up out of Egypt. Jacob and his family, it is true, were permitted to sojourn in Goshen, but they were not provided for in that place; for they brought their cattle, their goods, and all that they had into Egypt, Genesis 46:1, 6; so that they had nothing but the bare land to feed on; and had built treasure cities or fortresses, we know not how many; and two whole cities, Pithom and Raamses, besides; and for all these services they had no compensation whatever, but were

besides cruelly abused, and obliged to witness, as the sum of their calamities, the daily murder of their male infants. These particulars considered, will infidelity ever dare to produce this case again in support of its worthless pretensions?

Jewels of silver, etc.— The word כלי keley we have already seen signifies vessels, instruments, weapons, etc., and may be very well translated by our English term, articles or goods. The Israelites got both gold and silver, probably both in coin and in plate of different kinds; and such raiment as was necessary for the journey which they were about to undertake.

Ye shall spoil the Egyptians.— The verb נצל natsal signifies, not only to spoil, snatch away, but also to get away, to escape, to deliver, to regain, or to recover. SPOIL signifies what is taken by rapine or violence; but this cannot be the meaning of the original word here, as the Israelites only asked, and the Egyptians with out fear, terror, or constraint, freely gave. It is worthy of remark that the original word is used, 1 Samuel 30:22, to signify the recovery of property that had been taken away by violence: “Then answered all the wicked men, and men of Belial, of those that went with David, Because they went not with us we will not give them aught of the SPOIL (מהשלל mehashSHALAL) that we have RECOVERED, אשר הצלנו asher HITTSALNU. In this sense we should understand the word here. The Israelites recovered a part of their property — their wages, of which they had been most unjustly deprived by the Egyptians.

IN this chapter we have much curious and important information; but what is most interesting is the name by which God was pleased to make himself known to Moses and to the Israelites, a name by which the Supreme Being was afterwards known among the wisest inhabitants of the earth. HE who IS and who WILL BE what he IS. This is a proper characteristic of the Divine Being, who is, properly speaking, the only BEING, because he is independent and eternal; whereas all other beings, in whatsoever forms they may appear, are derived, finite, changeable, and liable to destruction, decay, and even to annihilation. When God, therefore, announced himself to Moses by this name, he proclaimed his own eternity and immateriality; and the very name itself precludes the possibility of idolatry, because it was impossible for the mind, in considering it, to represent the Divine Being in any assignable shape; for who could represent BEING or Existence

by any limited form? And who can have any idea of a form that is unlimited? Thus, then, we find that the first discovery which God made of himself was intended to show the people the simplicity and spirituality of his nature; that while they considered him as BEING, and the Cause of all BEING, they might be preserved from all idolatry for ever. The very name itself is a proof of a Divine revelation; for it is not possible that such an idea could have ever entered into the mind of man, unless it had been communicated from above. It could not have been produced by reasoning, for there were no premises on which it could be built, nor any analogies by which it could have been formed. We can as easily comprehend eternity as we can being, simply considered in and of itself, when nothing of assignable forms, colors, or qualities existed, besides its infinite and illimitable self.

To this Divine discovery the ancient Greeks owed the inscription which they placed above the door of the temple of Apollo at Delphi: the whole of the inscription consisted in the simple monosyllable ΕΙ, THOU ART, the second person of the Greek substantive verb εἰμι, I am. On this inscription Plutarch, one of the most intelligent of all the Gentile philosophers, made an express treatise, *περι του ΕΙ εν δελφοις*, having received the true interpretation in his travels in Egypt, whither he had gone for the express purpose of inquiring into their ancient learning, and where he had doubtless seen these words of God to Moses in the Greek version of the Septuagint, which had been current among the Egyptians (for whose sake it was first made) about four hundred years previously to the death of Plutarch. This philosopher observes that “this title is not only proper, but peculiar to God, because HE alone is being; for mortals have no participation of true being, because that which begins and ends, and is continually changing, is never one nor the same, nor in the same state. The deity on whose temple this word was inscribed was called Apollo, *απολλν*, from *α*, negative, and *πολυς*, many, because God is ONE, his nature simple, his essence uncompounded.” Hence he informs us the ancient mode of addressing God was, “ΕΙ ‘ΕΝ, Thou art One, *ος γαρ πολλα το θειον εστιν*, for many cannot be attributed to the Divine nature: *και ου προτερον ουδεν εστιν, ουδ’ υστερον, ουδε μελλον, ουδε παρωχημενον, ουδε πρεσβυτερον, ουδε νεωτερον*, in which there is neither first nor last, future nor past, old nor young; *αλλ’ εις ων*

ενι τω νυν το αει πεπληρωκε, but as being one, fills up in one Now an eternal duration.” And he concludes with observing that “this word corresponds to certain others on the same temple, viz., γνωθι σεαυτον Know thyself; as if, under the name EI. THOU ART, the Deity designed to excite men to venerate HIM as eternally existing, ως οντα διαπαντος, and to put them in mind of the frailty and mortality of their own nature.”

What beautiful things have the ancient Greek philosophers stolen from the testimonies of God to enrich their own works, without any kind of acknowledgment! And, strange perversity of man! these are the very things which we so highly applaud in the heathen copies, while we neglect or pass them by in the Divine originals!

CHAPTER 4

Moses continuing to express his fear that the Israelites would not credit his Divine mission, 1; God, to strengthen his faith, and to assure him that his countrymen would believe him, changed his rod into a serpent, and the serpent into a rod, 2-5; made his hand leprous, and afterwards restored it, 6, 7; intimating that he had now endued him with power to work such miracles, and that the Israelites would believe, 8; and farther assures him that he should have power to turn the water into blood, 9. Moses excuses himself on the ground of his not being eloquent, 10, and God reproves him for his unbelief, and promises to give him supernatural assistance, 11, 12. Moses expressing his utter unwillingness to go on any account, God is angry, and then promises to give him his brother Aaron to be his spokesman, 13-16, and appoints his rod to be the instrument of working miracles, 17. Moses returns to his relative Jethro, and requests liberty to visit his brethren in Egypt, and is permitted, 18. God appears to him in Midian, and assures him that the Egyptians who sought his life were dead, 19. Moses, with his wife and children, set out on their journey to Egypt, 20. God instructs him what he shall say to Pharaoh, 21-23. He is in danger of losing his life, because he had not circumcised his son, 24. Zipporah immediately circumcising the child, Moses escapes unhurt, 25, 26. Aaron is commanded to go and meet his brother Moses; he goes and meets him at Horeb, 27. Moses informs him of the commission he had received from God, 28. They both go to their brethren, deliver their message, and work miracles, 29, 30. The people believe and adore God, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *They will not believe me*— As if he had said, Unless I be enabled to work miracles, and give them proofs by extraordinary works as well as by words, they will not believe that thou hast sent me.

Verse 2. A rod.— מַטֵּה matteh, a staff, probably his shepherd's crook; see Leviticus 27:32. As it was made the instrument of working many miracles, it was afterwards called the rod of God; see Exodus 4:20.

Verse 3. A serpent— Of what sort we know not, as the word נָחָשׁ nachash is a general name for serpents, and also means several other things, see Genesis 3:1: but it was either of a kind that he had not seen before, or one that he knew to be dangerous; for it is said, he fled from before it. Some suppose the staff was changed into a crocodile; see Clarke on "Exodus 7:10".

Verse 4. He put forth his hand, and caught it— Considering the light in which Moses had viewed this serpent, it required considerable faith to induce him thus implicitly to obey the command of God; but he obeyed, and the noxious serpent became instantly the miraculous rod in his hand! Implicit faith and obedience conquer all difficulties; and he who believes in God, and obeys him in all things, has really nothing to fear.

Verse 5. That they may believe— This is an example of what is called an imperfect or unfinished speech, several of which occur in the sacred writings. It may be thus supplied: Do this before them, that they may believe that the Lord-hath appeared unto thee.

Verse 6. His hand was leprous as snow.— That is, the leprosy spread itself over the whole body in thin white scales; and from this appearance it has its Greek name λεπρά, from λεπις, a scale. Dr. Mead says, "I have seen a remarkable case of this in a countryman, whose whole body was so miserably seized with it, that his skin was shining as if covered with snow; and as the surfuraceous scales were daily rubbed off, the flesh appeared quick or raw underneath." The leprosy, at least among the Jews, was a most inveterate and contagious disorder, and deemed by them incurable. Among the heathens it was considered as inflicted by their gods, and it was supposed that they alone could remove it. It is certain that a similar belief prevailed among the Israelites; hence, when the king of Syria sent his general Naaman, to the king of Israel to cure him of his leprosy, he rent his clothes, saying, Amos I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? 2 Kings 5:7. This appears, therefore, to be the reason why God chose this sign, as the instantaneous

infliction and removal of this disease were demonstrations which all would allow of the sovereign power of God. We need, therefore, seek for no other reasons for this miracle: the sole reason is sufficiently obvious.

Verse 8. *If they will not believe—the voice of the first sign, etc.*—

Probably intimating that some would be more difficult to be persuaded than others: some would yield to the evidence of the first miracle; others would hesitate till they had seen the second; and others would not believe till they had seen the water of the Nile turned into blood, when poured upon the dry land; Exodus 4:9.

Verse 10. *I am not eloquent*— **לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים** lo ish debarim, I am not a

man of words; a periphrasis common in the Scriptures. So Job 11:2, **אִישׁ שִׁפְתָיִם** ish sephathayim, a man of lips, signifies one that is talkative.

Psalms 140:11, **אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן** ish lashon, a man of tongue, signifies a prattler.

But how could it be said that Moses was not eloquent, when St. Stephen asserts, Acts 7:22, that he was mighty in words as well as in deeds? There are three ways of solving this difficulty: 1. Moses might have had some natural infirmity, of a late standing, which at that time rendered it impossible for him to speak readily, and which he afterwards overcame; so that though he was not then a man of words, yet he might afterwards have been mighty in words as well as deeds. 2. It is possible he was not intimately acquainted with the Hebrew tongue, so as to speak clearly and distinctly in it. The first forty years of his life he had spent in Egypt, chiefly at court; and though it is very probable there was an affinity between the two languages, yet they certainly were not the same. The last forty he had spent in Midian, and it is not likely that the pure Hebrew tongue prevailed there, though it is probable that a dialect of it was there spoken. On these accounts Moses might find it difficult to express himself with that readiness and persuasive flow of language, which he might deem essentially necessary on such a momentous occasion; as he would frequently be obliged to consult his memory for proper expressions, which would necessarily produce frequent hesitation, and general slowness of utterance, which he might think would ill suit an ambassador of God. 3. Though Moses was slow of speech, yet when acting as the messenger of God his word was with power, for at his command the plagues came and

the plagues were stayed; thus was he mighty in words as well as in deeds: and this is probably the meaning of St. Stephen.

By the expression, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant, he might possibly mean that the natural inaptitude to speak readily, which he had felt, he continued to feel, even since God had begun to discover himself; for though he had wrought several miracles for him, yet he had not healed this infirmity. See Clarke on “Exodus 6:12”.

Verse 11. *Who hath made man’s mouth? etc.*— Cannot he who formed the mouth, the whole organs of speech, and hath given the gift of speech also, cannot he give utterance? God can take away those gifts and restore them again. Do not provoke him: he who created the eye, the ear, and the mouth, hath also made the blind, the deaf, and the dumb.

Verse 12. *I will be with thy mouth*— The Chaldee translates, My WORD, meimeri, shall be with thy mouth. And Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases, I and my WORD will be with the speech of thy mouth. See Clarke on “Genesis 15:1”, and Leviticus 25:10.

Verse 13. *Send-by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.*— Many commentators, both ancient and modern, have thought that Moses prays here for the immediate mission of the Messiah; as if he had said: “Lord, thou hast purposed to send this glorious person at some time or other, I beseech thee send him now, for who can be sufficient to deliver and rule this people but himself alone?” The Hebrew **שְׁלַח נָא בְיַד תְּשַׁלַּח** shelach na beyad tishlach literally translated is, Send now (or, I beseech thee) by the hand thou wilt send; which seems to intimate, Send a person more fit for the work than I am. So the Septuagint: **προχειρισαι δυναμενον αλλον, ον αποστειλεις**. Elect another powerful person, whom thou wilt send. It is right to find out the Messiah wherever he is mentioned in the Old Testament; but to press scriptures into this service which have not an obvious tendency that way, is both improper and dangerous. I am firmly of opinion that Moses had no reference to the Messiah when he spoke these words.

Verse 14. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses*— Surely this would not have been the case had he only in modesty, and from a deep sense of his own unfitness, desired that the Messiah should be preferred

before him. But the whole connection shows that this interpretation is unfounded.

Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother?— Houbigant endeavors to prove from this that Moses, in Exodus 4:13, did pray for the immediate mission of the Messiah, and that God gives him here a reason why this could not be, because the Levitical priesthood was to precede the priesthood of our Lord. Is not Aaron the Levite, etc. Must not the ministry of Aaron be first established, before the other can take place? Why then ask for that which is contrary to the Divine counsel? From the opinion of so great a critic as Houbigant no man would wish to dissent, except through necessity: however, I must say that it does appear to me that his view of these verses is fanciful, and the arguments by which he supports it are insufficient to establish his point.

I know that he can speak well.— ידעתי כי דבר ידבר הוא yadati ki dabber yedabber hu, I know that in speaking he will speak. That is, he is apt to talk, and has a ready utterance.

He cometh forth to meet thee— He shall meet thee at my mount, (Exodus 4:27,) shall rejoice in thy mission, and most heartily co-operate with thee in all things. A necessary assurance, to prevent Moses from suspecting that Aaron, who was his elder brother, would envy his superior call and office.

Verse 15. *I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth*— Ye shall be both, in all things which I appoint you to do in this business, under the continual inspiration of the Most High.

Verse 16. *He shall be thy spokesman*— Literally, He shall speak for thee (or in thy stead) to the people.

He shall be to thee instead of a mouth— He shall convey every message to the people; and thou shalt be to him instead of God — thou shalt deliver to him what I communicate to thee.

Verse 17. *Thou shalt take this rod*— From the story of Moses's rod the heathens have invented the fables of the thyrsus of Bacchus, and the caduceus of Mercury. Cicero reckons five Bacchuses, one of which, according to Orpheus, was born of the river Nile; but, according to the

common opinion, he was born on the banks of that river. Bacchus is expressly said to have been exposed on the river Nile, hence he is called Nilus, both by Diodorus and Macrobius; and in the hymns of Orpheus he is named Myses, because he was drawn out of the water. He is represented by the poets as being very beautiful, and an illustrious warrior; they report him to have overrun all Arabia with a numerous army both of men and women. He is said also to have been an eminent law-giver, and to have written his laws on two tables. He always carried in his hand the thyrsus, a rod wreathed with serpents, and by which he is reported to have wrought many miracles. Any person acquainted with the birth and exploits of the poetic Bacchus will at once perceive them to be all borrowed from the life and acts of Moses, as recorded in the Pentateuch; and it would be losing time to show the parallel, by quoting passages from the book of Exodus.

The caduceus or rod of Mercury is well known in poetic fables. It is another copy Of the rod of Moses. He also is reported to have wrought a multitude of miracles by this rod; and particularly he is said to kill and make alive, to send souls to the invisible world and bring them back from thence. Homer represents Mercury taking his rod to work miracles precisely in the same way as God commands Moses to take his.

Ἑρμῆς δὲ ψυχὰς κυλλῆνιος ἐξεκαλεῖτο
 ἀνδρῶν μνηστῆρων ἔχε δὲ παβδὸν μετὰ χερσίν
 κάλην, χρυσεῖην, τῆ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὀμματα θελεῖ,
 ὧν ἐθελεῖ, τοὺς δ' αὐτὲ καὶ ὑπνῶοντάς εἰρειρεῖ.

Odys., lib. xxiv., ver. 1.

*Cyllenian Hermes now call'd forth the souls
 Of all the suitors; with his golden WAND
 Of power, to seal in balmy sleep whose eyes
 Soe'er he will, and open them again.*

COWPER.

Virgil copies Homer, but carries the parallel farther, tradition having probably furnished him with more particulars; but in both we may see a disguised copy of the sacred history, from which indeed the Greek and Roman poets borrowed most of their beauties. TUM VIRGAM CAPIT: hac animas ille evocat Orco Pallentes, alias sub tristia Tartara mittit; Dat

somnos, adimitque, et lumina morte resignat ILLA fretus agit, ventos, et turbida tranat. AENEID, lib. iv., ver. 242.

*But first he grasps within his awful hand
The mark of sovereign power, the magic wand;
With this he draws the ghosts from hollow graves,
With this he drives them down the Stygian waves;
With this he seals in sleep the wakeful sight,
And eyes, though closed in death, restores to light.
Thus arm'd, the god begins his airy race,
And drives the racking clouds along the liquid space.*

DRYDEN.

Many other resemblances between the rod of the poets and that of Moses, the learned reader will readily recollect. These specimens may be deemed sufficient.

Verse 18. *Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren*— Moses, having received his commission from God, and directions how to execute it, returned to his father-in-law, and asked permission to visit his family and brethren in Egypt, without giving him any intimation of the great errand on which he was going. His keeping this secret has been attributed to his singular modesty: but however true it might be that Moses was a truly humble and modest man, yet his prudence alone was sufficient to have induced him to observe silence on this subject; for, if once imparted to the family of his father-in-law, the news might have reached Egypt before he could get thither, and a general alarm among the Egyptians would in all probability have been the consequence; as fame would not fail to represent Moses as coming to stir up sedition and rebellion, and the whole nation would have been armed against them. It was therefore essentially necessary that the business should be kept secret.

In the Septuagint and Coptic the following addition is made to this verse: *Μετα δε τας ημερας τας πολλας εκινας ετελευτησεν ο βασιλευς αιγυπτου*. After these many days, the king of Egypt died. This was probably an ancient gloss or side note, which in process of time crept into the text, as it appeared to throw light on the following verse.

Verse 19. *In Midian*— This was a new revelation, and appears to have taken place after Moses returned to his father-in-law previous to his departure for Egypt.

Verse 20. *His wife and his sons*— Both Gershom and Eliezer, though the birth of the latter has not yet been mentioned in the Hebrew text. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 2:22".

Set them upon an ass— The Septuagint reads the word in the plural, **ἐκτα υποζυγία**, upon asses, as it certainly required more than one to carry Zipporah, Gershom, and Eliezer.

The rod of God— The sign of sovereign power, by which he was to perform all his miracles; once the badge of his shepherd's office, and now that by which he is to feed, rule, and protect his people Israel.

Verse 21. *But I will harden his heart*— The case of Pharaoh has given rise to many fierce controversies, and to several strange and conflicting opinions. Would men but look at the whole account without the medium of their respective creeds, they would find little difficulty to apprehend the truth. If we take up the subject in a theological point of view, all sober Christians will allow the truth of this proposition of St. Augustine, when the subject in question is a person who has hardened his own heart by frequently resisting the grace and spirit of God: *Non obdurat Deus impertiendo malitiam, sed non impertiendo misericordiam*; Epist. 194, ad Sixtum, "God does not harden men by infusing malice into them, but by not imparting mercy to them." And this other will be as readily credited: *Non operatur Deus in homine ipsam duritiam cordis; sed indurare eum dicitur quem mollire noluerit, sic etiam excaecare quem illuminare noluerit, et repellere eum quem noluerit vocare*. "God does not work this hardness of heart in man; but he may be said to harden him whom he refuses to soften, to blind him whom he refuses to enlighten, and to repel him whom he refuses to call." It is but just and right that he should withhold those graces which he had repeatedly offered, and which the sinner had despised and rejected. Thus much for the general principle. The verb **חָזַק** *chazak*, which we translate harden, literally signifies to strengthen, confirm, make bold or courageous; and is often used in the sacred writings to excite to duty, perseverance, etc., and is placed by the Jews at the end of most books in the Bible as an exhortation to the reader to take courage, and proceed with his reading and with the obedience it requires. It constitutes an essential part of the exhortation of God to Joshua, Joshua 1:7: Only be thou STRONG, **חָזַק** *rak chazak*. And of Joshua's dying exhortation to

the people, Joshua 23:6: Be ye therefore VERY COURAGEOUS, וְחִזְקֶתֶם vachazaktem, to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law. Now it would be very strange in these places to translate the word harden: Only be thou hard, Be ye therefore very hard; and yet if we use the word hardy, it would suit the sense and context perfectly well: Only be thou HARDY; Be ye therefore very HARDY. Now suppose we apply the word in this way to Pharaoh, the sense would be good, and the justice of God equally conspicuous. I will make his heart hardy, bold, daring, presumptuous; for the same principle acting against God's order is presumption, which when acting according to it is undaunted courage. It is true that the verb קָשָׁה kashah is used, Exodus 7:3, which signifies to render stiff, tough, or stubborn, but it amounts to nearly the same meaning with the above.

All those who have read the Scriptures with care and attention, know well that God is frequently represented in them as doing what he only permits to be done. So because a man has grieved his Spirit and resisted his grace he withdraws that Spirit and grace from him, and thus he becomes bold and presumptuous in sin. Pharaoh made his own heart stubborn against God, Exodus 9:34; and God gave him up to judicial blindness, so that he rushed on stubbornly to his own destruction. From the whole of Pharaoh's conduct we learn that he was bold, haughty, and cruel; and God chose to permit these dispositions to have their full sway in his heart without check or restraint from Divine influence: the consequence was what God intended, he did not immediately comply with the requisition to let the people go; and this was done that God might have the fuller opportunity of manifesting his power by multiplying signs and miracles, and thus impress the hearts both of the Egyptians and Israelites with a due sense of his omnipotence and justice. The whole procedure was graciously calculated to do endless good to both nations. The Israelites must be satisfied that they had the true God for their protector; and thus their faith was strengthened. The Egyptians must see that their gods could do nothing against the God of Israel; and thus their dependence on them was necessarily shaken. These great ends could not have been answered had Pharaoh at once consented to let the people go. This consideration alone unravels the mystery, and explains everything. Let it be observed that there is nothing spoken here of the eternal state of the Egyptian king; nor

does anything in the whole of the subsequent account authorize us to believe that God hardened his heart against the influences of his own grace, that he might occasion him so to sin that his justice might consign him to hell. This would be such an act of flagrant injustice as we could scarcely attribute to the worst of men. He who leads another into an offense that he may have a fairer pretense to punish him for it, or brings him into such circumstances that he cannot avoid committing a capital crime, and then hangs him for it, is surely the most execrable of mortals. What then should we make of the God of justice and mercy should we attribute to him a decree, the date of which is lost in eternity, by which he has determined to cut off from the possibility of salvation millions of millions of unborn souls, and leave them under a necessity of sinning, by actually hardening their hearts against the influences of his own grace and Spirit, that he may, on the pretext of justice, consign them to endless perdition? Whatever may be pretended in behalf of such unqualified opinions, it must be evident to all who are not deeply prejudiced, that neither the justice nor the sovereignty of God can be magnified by them. See Clarke farther on “Exodus 9:16”.

Verse 22. *Israel is my son, even my firstborn*— That is, The Hebrew people are unutterably dear to me.

Verse 23. *Let my son go, that he may serve me*— Which they could not do in Goshen, consistently with the policy and religious worship of the Egyptians; because the most essential part of an Israelite’s worship consisted in sacrifice, and the animals which they offered to God were sacred among the Egyptians. Moses gives Pharaoh this reason Exodus 8:26.

I will slay thy son, even thy first-born.— Which, on Pharaoh’s utter refusal to let the people go, was accordingly done; see Exodus 12:29.

Verse 24. *By the way in the inn*— See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 42:27”. The account in this and the following verse is very obscure. Some suppose that the 23d verse is not a part of the message to Pharaoh, but was spoken by the Lord to Moses; and that the whole may be thus paraphrased: “And I have said unto thee, (Moses,) Send forth **שְׁלַח** shallach, my son, (Gershom, by circumcising him,) that he may serve me, (which he cannot do till entered into the covenant by circumcision,) but thou hast refused to

send him forth; behold, (therefore,) I will slay thy son, thy first-born. And it came to pass by the way in the inn, (when he was on his journey to Egypt,) that Jehovah met him, and sought (threatened) to kill him (Gershom.) Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut away the foreskin of her son, and caused it to touch his feet, (Jehovah's, who probably appeared in a bodily shape; the Septuagint call him the Angel of the Lord,) and said unto him, A spouse by blood art thou unto me. Then he (Jehovah) ceased from him (Gershom.) Then she said, A spouse by blood art thou unto me, because of this circumcision." That is, I who am an alien have entered as fully into covenant with thee by doing this act, as my son has on whom this act has been performed.

The meaning of the whole passage seems to be this:-The son of Moses, Gershom or Eliezer, (for it does not appear which,) had not been circumcised, though it would seem that God had ordered the father to do it; but as he had neglected this, therefore Jehovah was about to have slain the child, because not in covenant with him by circumcision, and thus he intended to have punished the disobedience of the father by the natural death of his son. Zipporah, getting acquainted with the nature of the case and the danger to which her first-born was exposed, took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son. By this act the displeasure of the Lord was turned aside, and Zipporah considered herself as now allied to God because of this circumcision. According to the law, (Genesis 17:14,) the uncircumcised child was to be cut off from his people, so that there should be no inheritance for that branch of the family in Israel. Moses therefore, for neglecting to circumcise the child, exposed him to this cutting off, and it was but barely prevented by the prompt obedience of Zipporah. As circumcision was the seal of that justification by faith which comes through Christ, Moses by neglecting it gave a very bad example, and God was about to proceed against him with that severity which the law required.

The sharp stone mentioned Exodus 4:25 was probably a knife made of flint, for such were anciently used, even where knives of metal might be had, for every kind of operation about the human body, such as embowelling for the purpose of embalming, circumcision, etc. Ancient authors are full of proofs of these facts. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 50:2".

It is probable that Zipporah, being alarmed by this circumstance, and fearing worse evils, took the resolution to return to her father's house with her two sons. See Exodus 18:1, etc.

Verse 27. *The Lord said to Aaron*— See Exodus 4:14. By some secret but powerful movement on Aaron's mind, or by some voice or angelic ministry, he was now directed to go and meet his brother Moses; and so correctly was the information given to both, that they arrived at the same time on the sacred mountain.

Verse 30. *Aaron spake all the words*— It is likely that Aaron was better acquainted with the Hebrew tongue than his brother, and on this account he became the spokesman. See Clarke on "Exodus 4:14".

Did the signs— Turned the rod into a serpent, made the hand leprous, and changed the water into blood. See Clarke on "Exodus 4:6". See Clarke on "Exodus 4:8".

Verse 31. *The people believed*— They credited the account given of the Divine appointment of Moses and Aaron to be their deliverers out of their bondage, the miracles wrought on the occasion confirming the testimony delivered by Aaron.

They bowed their heads and worshipped.— See a similar act mentioned, and in the same words, Genesis 24:26. The bowing the head, etc., here, may probably refer to the eastern custom of bowing the head down to the knees, then kneeling down and touching the earth with the forehead. This was a very painful posture and the most humble in which the body could possibly be placed. Those who pretend to worship God, either by prayer or thanksgiving, and keep themselves during the performance of those solemn acts in a state of perfect ease, either carelessly standing or stupidly sitting, surely cannot have a due sense of the majesty of God, and their own sinfulness and unworthiness. Let the feelings of the body put the soul in remembrance of its sin against God. Let a man put himself in such a position (kneeling for instance) as it is generally acknowledged a criminal should assume, when coming to his sovereign and judge to bewail his sins, and solicit forgiveness.

The Jewish custom, as we learn from Rabbi Maymon, was to bend the body so that every joint of the backbone became incurvated, and the head

was bent towards the knees, so that the body resembled a bow; and prostration implied laying the body flat upon the earth, the arms and legs extended to the uttermost, the mouth and forehead touching the ground. In Matthew 8:2 the leper is said to worship our Lord, **προσεκυνει αυτω**· but in Luke 5:12 he is said to have fallen on his face, **πεσων επι προσωπον**. These two accounts show that he first kneeled down, probably putting his face down to his knees, and touching the earth with his forehead; and then prostrated himself, his legs and arms being both extended. See Clarke on “Genesis 17:3.

THE backwardness of Moses to receive and execute the commission to deliver the children of Israel, has something very instructive in it. He felt the importance of the charge, his own insufficiency, and the awful responsibility under which he should be laid if he received it. Who then can blame him for hesitating? If he miscarried (and how difficult in such a case not to miscarry!) he must account to a jealous God, whose justice required him to punish every delinquency. What should ministers of the Gospel feel on such subjects? Is not their charge more important and more awful than that of Moses? How few consider this! It is respectable, it is honorable, to be in the Gospel ministry, but who is sufficient to guide and feed the flock of God? If through the pastor’s unfitness or neglect any soul should go astray, or perish through want of proper spiritual nourishment, or through not getting his portion in due season, in what a dreadful state is the pastor! That soul, says God, shall die in his iniquities, but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hands! Were these things only considered by those who are candidates for the Gospel ministry, who could be found to undertake it? We should then indeed have the utmost occasion to pray the Lord of the harvest, **εκβαλλειν**, to THRUST OUT laborers into the harvest, as no one, duly considering those things would go, unless thrust out by God himself. O ye ministers of the sanctuary! tremble for your own souls, and the souls of those committed to your care, and go not into this work unless God go with you. Without his presence, unction, and approbation, ye can do nothing.

CHAPTER 5

Moses and Aaron open their commission to Pharaoh, 1. He insultingly asks who Jehovah is, in whose name they require him to dismiss the people, 2. They explain, 3. He charges them with making the people disaffected, 4, 5; and commands the task-masters to increase their work, and lessen their means of performing it, 6-9. The task-masters do as commanded, and refuse to give the people straw to assist them in making brick, and yet require the fulfillment of their daily tasks as formerly, when furnished with all the necessary means, 10-13. The Israelites failing to produce the ordinary quantity of brick, their own officers, set over them by the task-masters, are cruelly insulted and beaten, 14. The officers complain to Pharaoh, 15, 16; but find no redress, 17, 18. The officers, finding their case desperate, bitterly reproach Moses and Aaron for bringing them into their present circumstances, 19-21. Moses retires, and lays the matter before the Lord, and pleads with him, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *And afterward Moses and Aaron went*— This chapter is properly a continuation of the preceding, as the succeeding is a continuation of this; and to preserve the connection of the facts they should be read together.

How simply, and yet with what authority, does Moses deliver his message to the Egyptian king! Thus saith JEHOVAH, GOD of ISRAEL, Let my people go. It is well in this, as in almost every other case where יהוה Jehovah occurs, to preserve the original word: our using the word LORD is not sufficiently expressive, and often leaves the sense indistinct.

Verse 2. *Who is the Lord*— Who is Jehovah, that I should obey his voice? What claims has he on me? I am under no obligation to him. Pharaoh spoke here under the common persuasion that every place and people had a tutelary deity, and he supposed that this Jehovah might be the tutelary deity of the Israelites, to whom he, as an Egyptian, could be under no kind

of obligation. It is not judicious to bring this question as a proof that Pharaoh was an atheist: of this the text affords no evidence.

Verse 3. *Three days' journey*— The distance from Goshen to Sinai; see Exodus 3:18.

And sacrifice unto the Lord— Great stress is laid on this circumstance. God required sacrifice; no religious acts which they performed could be acceptable to him without this. He had now showed them that it was their indispensable duty thus to worship him, and that if they did not they might expect him to send the pestilence — some plague or death proceeding immediately from himself, or the sword — extermination by the hands of an enemy. The original word דָּבַר *deber*, from דָּבַר *dabar*, to drive off, draw under, etc., which we translate pestilence from the Latin *pestis*, the plague, signifies any kind of disease by which an extraordinary mortality is occasioned, and which appears from the circumstances of the case to come immediately from God. The Israelites could not sacrifice in the land of Egypt, because the animals they were to offer to God were held sacred by the Egyptians; and they could not omit this duty, because it was essential to religion even before the giving of the law. Thus we find that Divine justice required the life of the animal for the life of the transgressor, and the people were conscious, if this were not done, that God would consume them with the pestilence or the sword. From the foundation of the world the true religion required sacrifice. Before, under, and after the law, this was deemed essential to salvation. Under the Christian dispensation Jesus is the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; and being still the Lamb newly slain before the throne, no man cometh unto the Father but by him.

“In this first application to Pharaoh, we observe,” says Dr. Dodd, “that proper respectful submission which is due from subjects to their sovereign. They represent to him the danger they should be in by disobeying their God, but do not so much as hint at any punishment that would follow to Pharaoh.”

Verse 4. *Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron*— He hints that the Hebrews are in a state of revolt, and charges Moses and Aaron as being ringleaders of the sedition. This unprincipled charge has been, in nearly similar circumstances, often repeated since. Men who have labored to bring the

mass of the common people from ignorance, irreligion, and general profligacy of manners, to an acquaintance with themselves and God, and to a proper knowledge of their duty to him and to each other, have been often branded as being disaffected to the state, and as movers of sedition among the people! See Clarke on “Exodus 5:17”.

Let the people— תפריעו taphriu, from פרע para, to loose or disengage, which we translate to let, from the Anglo-Saxon [AS] lettan, to hinder. Ye hinder the people from working. Get ye to your burdens. “Let religion alone, and mind your work.” The language not only of tyranny, but of the basest irreligion also.

Verse 5. The people of the land now are many— The sanguinary edict had no doubt been long before repealed, or they could not have multiplied so greatly.

Verse 6. The task-masters of the people and their officers— The task-masters were Egyptians, (see Clarke on “Exodus 1:11”,) the officers were Hebrews; see Clarke below “Exodus 5:14”. But it is probable that the task-masters Exodus 1:11, who are called שרי מסים sarey missim, princes of the burdens or taxes, were different from those termed taskmasters here, as the words are different; נגשים nagesim signifies exactors or oppressors — persons who exacted from them an unreasonable proportion either of labor or money.

Officers. — שטררים shoterim; those seem to have been an inferior sort of officers, who attended on superior officers or magistrates to execute their orders. They are supposed to have been something like our sheriffs.

Verse 7. Straw to make brick— There have been many conjectures concerning the use of straw in making bricks. Some suppose it was used merely for burning them, but this is unfounded. The eastern bricks are often made of clay and straw kneaded together, and then not burned, but thoroughly dried in the sun. This is expressly mentioned by Philo in his life of Moses, who says, describing the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt, that some were obliged to work in clay for the formation of bricks, and others to gather straw for the same purpose, because straw is the bond by which the brick is held together, πλιυθου γαρ αχορα δεσμος. — PHIL. Oper., edit. MANG., vol. ii., p. 86. And Philo’s account is confirmed

by the most intelligent travelers. Dr. Shaw says that the straw in the bricks still preserves its original color, which is a proof that the bricks were never burned. Some of these are still to be seen in the cabinets of the curious; and there are several from ancient Babylon now before me, where the straw which was amalgamated with the clay is still perfectly visible. From this we may see the reason of the complaint made to Pharaoh, Exodus 5:16: the Egyptians refused to give the necessary portion of straw for kneading the bricks, and yet they required that the full tale or number of bricks should be produced each day as they did when all the necessary materials were brought to hand; so the people were obliged to go over all the cornfields, and pluck up the stubble, which they were obliged to substitute for straw. See Exodus 5:12.

Verse 8. *And the tale of the bricks*— Tale signifies the number, from the Anglo-Saxon [AS], to number, to count, etc.

For they be idle; therefore they cry—Let us go and sacrifice— Thus their desire to worship the true God in a proper manner was attributed to their unwillingness to work; a reflection which the Egyptians (in principle) of the present day cast on these who, while they are fervent in spirit serving the Lord, are not slothful in business. See Clarke below “Exodus 5:17”.

Verse 14. *And the officers-were beaten*— Probably bastinadoed; for this is the common punishment in Egypt to the present day for minor offenses. The manner of it is this: the culprit lies on his belly, his legs being turned up behind erect, and the executioner gives him so many blows on the soles of the feet with a stick. This is a very severe punishment, the sufferer not being able to walk for many weeks after, and some are lamed by it through the whole of their lives.

Verse 16. *The fault is in thine own people.*— **חַטָּאת** chatath, the SIN, is in thy own people. 1st. Because they require impossibilities; and 2dly, because they punish us for not doing what cannot be performed.

Verse 17. *Ye are idle-therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice*— It is common for those who feel unconcerned about their own souls to attribute the religious earnestness of others, who feel the importance of eternal things, to idleness or a disregard of their secular concerns. Strange that they cannot see there is a medium! He who has commanded them to be diligent

in business, has also commanded them to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. He whose diligence in business is not connected with a true religious fervor of spirit, is a lover of the world; and whatever form he may have he has not the power of godliness, and therefore is completely out of the road to salvation.

Verse 19. *Did see that they were in evil case*— They saw that they could neither expect justice nor mercy; that their deliverance was very doubtful, and their case almost hopeless.

Verse 21. *The Lord look upon you, and judge*— These were hasty and unkind expressions; but the afflicted must be allowed the privilege of complaining; it is all the solace that such sorrow can find; and if in such distress words are spoken which should not be justified, yet the considerate and benevolent will hear them with indulgence. God is merciful; and the stroke of this people was heavier even than their groaning.

Put a sword in their hand— Given them a pretense which they had not before, to oppress us even unto death.

Verse 22. *And Moses returned unto the Lord*— This may imply, either that there was a particular place into which Moses ordinarily went to commune with Jehovah; or it may mean that kind of turning of heart and affection to God, which every pious mind feels itself disposed to practice in any time or place. The old adage will apply here: “A praying heart never lacks a praying place.”

Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people?— It is certain that in this address Moses uses great plainness of speech. Whether the offspring of a testy impatience and undue familiarity, or of strong faith which gave him more than ordinary access to the throne of his gracious Sovereign, it would be difficult to say. The latter appears to be the most probable, as we do not find, from the succeeding chapter, that God was displeased with his freedom; we may therefore suppose that it was kept within due bounds, and that the principles and motives were all pure and good. However, it should be noted, that such freedom of speech with the Most High should never be used but on very special occasions, and then only by his extraordinary messengers.

Verse 23. *He hath done evil to this people*— Their misery is increased instead of being diminished.

Neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.— The marginal reading is both literal and correct: And delivering thou hast not delivered. Thou hast begun the work by giving us counsels and a commission, but thou hast not brought the people from under their bondage. Thou hast signified thy pleasure relative to their deliverance, but thou hast not brought them out of the hands of their enemies.

1. IT is no certain proof of the displeasure of God that a whole people, or an individual, may be found in a state of great oppression and distress; nor are affluence and prosperity any certain signs of his approbation. God certainly loved the Israelites better than he did the Egyptians; yet the former were in the deepest adversity, while the latter were in the height of prosperity. Luther once observed, that if secular prosperity were to be considered as a criterion of the Divine approbation, then the grand Turk must be the highest in the favor of God, as he was at that time the most prosperous sovereign on the earth. An observation of this kind, on a case so obvious, was really well calculated to repress hasty conclusions drawn from these external states, and to lay down a correct rule of judgment for all such occasions.

2. In all our addresses to God we should ever remember that we have sinned against him, and deserve nothing but punishment from his hand. We should therefore bow before him with the deepest humiliation of soul, and take that caution of the wise man, “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few,” Ecclesiastes 5:2. There is the more need to attend to this caution, because many ignorant though well-meaning people use very improper, not to say indecent, freedoms in their addresses to the throne of grace. With such proceedings God cannot be well pleased; and he who has not a proper impression of the dignity and excellence of the Divine Nature, is not in such a disposition as it is essentially necessary to feel in order to receive help from God. He who knows he has sinned, and feels that he is less than the least of all God’s mercies, will pray with the deepest humility, and even rejoice before God with trembling. A solemn AWE of the Divine

Majesty is not less requisite to successful praying, than faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. When we have such a commission as that of Moses, we may make use of his freedom of speech; but till then, the publican's prayer will best suit the generality of those who are even dignified by the name of Christian-Lord, be merciful to ME, a SINNER!

CHAPTER 6

God encourages Moses, and promises to show wonders upon Pharaoh, and to bring out his people with a strong hand, 1. He confirms this promise by his essential name JEHOVAH, 2, 3; by the covenant he had made with their fathers, 4, 5. Sends Moses with a fresh message to the Hebrews, full of the most gracious promises, and confirms the whole by appealing to the name in which his unchangeable existence is implied, 6-8. Moses delivers the message to the Israelites, but through anguish of spirit they do not believe, 9. He receives a new commission to go to Pharaoh, 10, 11. He excuses himself on account of his unreadiness of speech, 12. The Lord gives him and Aaron a charge both to Pharaoh and to the children of Israel, 13. The genealogy of Reuben, 14; of Simeon, 15; of Levi, from whom descended Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, 16. The sons of Gershon, 17; of Kohath, 15; of Merari, 19. The marriage of Amram and Jochebed, 20. The sons of Izhar and Uzziel, the brothers of Amram, 21, 22. Marriage of Aaron and Elisheba, and the birth of their sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, 23. The sons of Korah, the nephew of Aaron, 24. The marriage of Eleazar to one of the daughters of Putiel, and the birth of Phinehas, 25. These genealogical accounts introduced for the sake of showing the line of descent of Moses and Aaron, 26, 27. A recapitulation of the commission delivered to Moses and Aaron, 29, and a repetition of the excuse formerly made by Moses, 30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. With a strong hand—**יד חזקה** yad chazakah, the same verb which we translate to harden; see Clarke on “Exodus 4:21”. The strong hand here means sovereign power, suddenly and forcibly applied. God purposed to manifest his sovereign power in the sight of Pharaoh and the Egyptians; in consequence of which Pharaoh would manifest his power and authority as sovereign of Egypt, in dismissing and thrusting out the people. See Exodus 12:31-33.

Verse 2. *I am the Lord*— It should be, I am JEHOVAH, and without this the reason of what is said in the 3d verse is not sufficiently obvious.

Verse 3. *By the name of God Almighty*— אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי EL-SHADDAL, God All-sufficient; God the dispenser or pourer-out of gifts. See Clarke on “Genesis 17:1.

But by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.— This passage has been a sort of crux criticorum, and has been variously explained. It is certain that the name Jehovah was in use long before the days of Abraham, see Genesis 2:4, where the words אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה Jehovah Elohim occur, as they do frequently afterwards; and see Genesis 15:2, where Abraham expressly addresses him by the name Adonai JEHOVAH; and see Genesis 15:7, where God reveals himself to Abraham by this very name: And he said unto him, I am JEHOVAH, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees. How then can it be said that by his name JEHOVAH he was not known unto them? Several answers have been given to this question; the following are the chief:-1. The words should be read interrogatively, for the negative particle לוֹ lo, not, has this power often in Hebrew. “I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by the name of God Almighty, and by my name Jehovah was I not also made known unto them?” 2. The name JEHOVAH was not revealed before the time mentioned here, for though it occurs so frequently in the book of Genesis, as that book was written long after the name had come into common use, as a principal characteristic of God, Moses employs it in his history because of this circumstance; so that whenever it appears previously to this, it is by the figure called prolepsis or anticipation. 3. As the name יְהוָה JEHOVAH signifies existence, it may be understood in the text in question thus: “I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by my name God Almighty, or God All-sufficient, i.e., having all power to do all good; in this character I made a covenant with them, supported by great and glorious promises; but as those promises had respect unto their posterity, they could not be fulfilled to those fathers: but now, as JEHOVAH, I am about to give existence to all those promises relative to your support, deliverance from bondage, and your consequent settlement in the promised land.” 4. The words may be considered as used comparatively: though God did appear to those patriarchs as JEHOVAH, and they acknowledged him by this name, yet it

was but comparatively known unto them; they knew nothing of the power and goodness of God, in comparison of what the Israelites were now about to experience.

I believe the simple meaning is this, that though from the beginning the name JEHOVAH was known as one of the names of the Supreme Being, yet what it really implied they did not know. **אל שׁלִי** El-Shaddai, God All-sufficient, they knew well by the continual provision he made for them, and the constant protection he afforded them: but the name **יְהוָה** JEHOVAH is particularly to be referred to the accomplishment of promises already made; to the giving them a being, and thus bringing them into existence, which could not have been done in the order of his providence sooner than here specified: this name therefore in its power and significancy was not known unto them; nor fully known unto their descendants till the deliverance from Egypt and the settlement in the promised land. It is surely possible for a man to bear the name of a certain office or dignity before he fulfills any of its functions. King, mayor, alderman, magistrate, constable, may be borne by the several persons to whom they legally belong, before any of the acts peculiar to those offices are performed. The KING, acknowledged as such on his coronation, is known to be such by his legislative acts; the civil magistrate, by his distribution of justice, and issuing warrants for the apprehending of culprits; and the constable, by executing those warrants. All these were known to have their respective names, but the exercise of their powers alone shows what is implied in being king, magistrate, and constable. The following is a case in point, which fell within my own knowledge.

A case of dispute between certain litigious neighbors being heard in court before a weekly sitting of the magistrates, a woman who came as an evidence in behalf of her bad neighbor, finding the magistrates inclining to give judgment against her mischievous companion, took her by the arm and said, "Come away! I told you you would get neither law nor justice in this place." A magistrate, who was as much an honor to his function as he was to human nature, immediately said, "Here, constable! take that woman and lodge her in Bridewell, that she may know there is some law and justice in this place."

Thus the worthy magistrate proved he had the power implied in the name by executing the duties of his office. And God who was known as JEHOVAH, the being who makes and gives effect to promises, was known to the descendants of the twelve tribes to be THAT JEHOVAH, by giving effect and being to the promises which he had made to their fathers.

Verse 4. *I have also established my covenant*— I have now fully purposed to give present effect to all my engagements with your fathers, in behalf of their posterity.

Verse 6. *Say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out, etc.*— This confirms the explanation given of Exodus 6:3, which see Clarke note on “Exodus 6:3”.

Verse 7. *I will take you to me for a people, etc.*— This was precisely the covenant that he had made with Abraham. See Genesis 17:7, and See Clarke note on “Genesis 17:7”.

And ye shall know that I am the LORD your God— By thus fulfilling my promises ye shall know what is implied in my name. See Clarke note on “Exodus 6:3”.

But why should God take such a most stupid, refractory, and totally worthless people for his people? 1. Because he had promised to do so to their noble ancestors Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Judah, etc., men worthy of all praise, because in general friends of God, devoted to his will and to the good of mankind.

2. “That (as Bishop Warburton properly observes) the extraordinary providence by which they were protected, might become the more visible and illustrious; for had they been endowed with the shining qualities of the more polished nations, the effects of that providence might have been ascribed to their own wisdom.”

3. That God might show to all succeeding generations that he delights to instruct the ignorant, help the weak, and save the lost; for if he bore long with Israel, showed them especial mercy, and graciously received them whenever they implored his protection, none need despair. God seems to have chosen the worst people in the universe, to give by them unto

mankind the highest and most expressive proofs, that he wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his iniquity and live.

Verse 8. Which I did swear— נִשְׁאַתִּי אֶת יָדִי nasathi eth yadi, I have lifted up my hand. The usual mode of making an appeal to God, and hence considered to be a form of swearing. It is thus that Isaiah 62:8 is to be understood: The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength.

Verse 9. But they hearkened not— Their bondage was become so extremely oppressive that they had lost all hope of ever being redeemed from it. After this verse the Samaritan adds, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians: for it is better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness. This appears to be borrowed from Exodus 14:12.

Anguish of spirit— קֶצֶר רוּחַ kotzer ruach, shortness of spirit or breath. The words signify that their labor was so continual, and their bondage so cruel and oppressive, that they had scarcely time to breathe.

Verse 12. Uncircumcised lips?— The word עָרַל aral, which we translate uncircumcised, seems to signify any thing exuberant or superfluous. Had not Moses been remarkable for his excellent beauty, I should have thought the passage might be rendered protuberant lips; but as this sense cannot be admitted for the above reason, the word must refer to some natural impediment in his speech; and probably means a want of distinct and ready utterance, either occasioned by some defect in the organs of speech, or impaired knowledge of the Egyptian language after an absence of forty years. See Clarke note on “Exodus 4:10”.

Verse 14. These be the heads— רֹאשֵׁי rashey, the chiefs or captains. The following genealogy was simply intended to show that Moses and Aaron came in a direct line from Abraham, and to ascertain the time of Israel’s deliverance. The whole account from Exodus 6:14-26 inclusive, is a sort of parenthesis, and does not belong to the narration; and what follows from Exodus 6:28 is a recapitulation of what was spoken in the preceding chapters.

Verse 16. *The years of the life of Levi*—“Bishop Patrick observes that Levi is thought to have lived the longest of all Jacob’s sons, none of whose ages are recorded in Scripture but his and Joseph’s, whom Levi survived twenty-seven years, though he was much the elder brother. By the common computation this would be twenty-three years: by Kennicott’s computation at the end of Genesis 31., (See Clarke note at “Genesis 31:55”) Levi’s birth is placed twenty-four years before that of Joseph; his death, therefore, would be only three years later. But this is not the only difficulty in ancient chronologies. Kohath, the second son of Levi, according to Archbishop Usher was thirty years old when Jacob came into Egypt, and lived there one hundred and three years. He attained to nearly the same age with Levi, to one hundred and thirty-three years; and his son Amram, the father of Moses, lived to the same age with Levi. We may observe here how the Divine promise, Genesis 15:16, of delivering the Israelites out of Egypt in the fourth generation was verified; for Moses was the son of Amram, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Jacob.”-DODD.

Verse 20. *His father’s sister*— דודתו dodatho. The true meaning of this word is uncertain. Parkhurst observes that דוד dod signifies an uncle in 1 Samuel 10:14; Leviticus 10:4, and frequently elsewhere. It signifies also an uncle’s son, a cousin-german: compare Jeremiah 32:8 with Exodus 6:12, where the Vulgate renders דודי dodi by patruelis mei, my paternal cousin; and in Amos 6:10, for דודו dodo, the Targum has קרִיבִייהוּ karibiah, his near relation. So the Vulgate, propinquus ejus, his relative, and the Septuagint, οἱ οἰκεῖοι αὐτῶν, those of their household. The best critics suppose that Jochebed was the cousin-german of Amram, and not his aunt. See Clarke note on “Exodus 2:1”.

Bare him Aaron and Moses— The Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, and one Hebrew MS. add, And Miriam their sister. Some of the best critics suppose these words to have been originally in the Hebrew text.

Verse 21. *Korah*— Though he became a rebel against God and Moses, (see Numbers 16:1, etc.,) yet Moses, in his great impartiality, inserts his name among those of his other progenitors.

Verse 22. *Uzziel*— He is called Aaron’s uncle, Leviticus 10:4.

Verse 23. *Elisheba*— The oath of the Lord. It is the same name as Elizabeth, so very common among Christians. She was of the royal tribe of Judah, and was sister to Nahshon, one of the princes; see Numbers 2:3.

Eleazar— He succeeded to the high priesthood on the death of his father Aaron, Numbers 20:25, etc.

Verse 25. *Phinehas*— Of the celebrated act of this person, and the most honorable grant made to him and his posterity, see Numbers 25:7-13.

Verse 26. *According to their armies*.— צבאותם tsibotham, their battalions-regularly arranged troops. As God had these particularly under his care and direction, he had the name of יהוה צבאות Yehovah tsebaoth, Lord of hosts or armies.

“The plain and disinterested manner,” says Dr. Dodd, “in which Moses speaks here of his relations, and the impartiality wherewith he inserts in the list of them such as were afterwards severely punished by the Lord, are striking proofs of his modesty and sincerity. He inserts the genealogy of Reuben and Simeon, because they were of the same mother with Levi; and though he says nothing of himself, yet he relates particularly what concerns Aaron, Exodus 6:23, who married into an honorable family, the sister of a prince of the tribe of Judah.”

Verse 28. *And it came to pass*— Here the seventh chapter should commence, as there is a complete ending of the sixth with Exodus 6:27, and the 30th verse of this chapter is intimately connected with the 1st verse of the succeeding.

THE principal subjects in this chapter have been so amply considered in the notes, that little of importance remains to be done. On the nature of a covenant (See Clarke note on “Exodus 6:4”) ample information may be obtained by referring to Genesis 6:18, and Genesis 15:9-18, which places the reader will do well to consult.

Supposing Moses to have really labored under some defect in speech, we may consider it as wisely designed to be a sort of counterbalance to his other excellences: at least this is an ordinary procedure of Divine Providence; personal accomplishments are counterbalanced by mental defects, and mental imperfections often by personal accomplishments.

Thus the head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee. And God does all this in great wisdom, to hide pride from man, and that no flesh may glory in his presence. To be contented with our formation, endowments, and external circumstances, requires not only much submission to the providence of God, but also much of the mind of Christ. On the other hand, should we feel vanity because of some personal or mental accomplishment, we have only to take a view of our whole to find sufficient cause of humiliation; and after all, the meek and gentle spirit only is, in the sight of God, of great price.

CHAPTER 7

The dignified mission of Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh—the one to be as God, the other as a prophet of the Most High, 1, 2. The prediction that Pharaoh’s heart should be hardened, that God might multiply his signs and wonders in Egypt, that the inhabitants might know he alone was the true God, 3-4. The age of Moses and Aaron, 7. God gives them directions how they should act before Pharaoh, 5, 9. Moses turns his rod into a serpent, 10. The magicians imitate this miracle, and Pharaoh’s heart is hardened, 11-13. Moses is commanded to wait upon Pharaoh next morning when he should come to the river, and threaten to turn the waters into blood if he did not let the people go, 14-18. The waters in all the land of Egypt are turned into blood, 19, 20. The fish die, 21. The magicians imitate this, and Pharaoh’s heart is again hardened, 22, 23. The Egyptians sorely distressed because of the bloody waters, 24. This plague endures seven days, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *I have made thee a god*— At thy word every plague shall come, and at thy command each shall be removed. Thus Moses must have appeared as a god to Pharaoh.

Shall be thy prophet.— Shall receive the word from thy mouth, and communicate it to the Egyptian king, Exodus 7:2.

Verse 3. *I will harden Pharaoh’s heart*— I will permit his stubbornness and obstinacy still to remain, that I may have the greater opportunity to multiply my wonders in the land, that the Egyptians may know that I only am Jehovah, the self-existent God. See Clarke note on “Exodus 4:21”.

Verse 5. *And bring out the children of Israel*— Pharaoh’s obstinacy was either caused or permitted in mercy to the Egyptians, that he and his magicians being suffered to oppose Moses and Aaron to the uttermost of their power, the Israelites might be brought out of Egypt in so signal a

manner, in spite of all the opposition of the Egyptians, their king, and their gods, that Jehovah might appear to be All-mighty and All-sufficient.

Verse 7. Moses was fourscore years old— He was forty years old when he went to Midian, and he had tarried forty years in Midian; (see Exodus 2:11, and Acts 7:30;) and from this verse it appears that Aaron was three years older than Moses. We have already seen that Miriam their sister was older than either, Exodus 2:4.

Verse 9. Show a miracle for you— A miracle, מופת mopheth, signifies an effect produced in nature which is opposed to its laws, or such as its powers are inadequate to produce. As Moses and Aaron professed to have a Divine mission, and to come to Pharaoh on the most extraordinary occasion, making a most singular and unprecedented demand, it was natural to suppose, if Pharaoh should even give them an audience, that he would require them to give him some proof by an extraordinary sign that their pretensions to such a Divine mission were well founded and incontestable. For it appears to have ever been the sense of mankind, that he who has a Divine mission to effect some extraordinary purpose can give a supernatural proof that he has got this extraordinary commission.

Take thy rod— This rod, whether a common staff, an ensign of office, or a shepherd's crook, was now consecrated for the purpose of working miracles; and is indifferently called the rod of God, the rod of Moses, and the rod of Aaron. God gave it the miraculous power, and Moses and Aaron used it indifferently.

Verse 10. It became a serpent.— תני tannin. What kind of a serpent is here intended, learned men are not agreed. From the manner in which the original word is used in Psalm 74:13; Isaiah 27:1; 51:9; Job 7:12; some very large creature, either aquatic or amphibious, is probably meant; some have thought that the crocodile, a well-known Egyptian animal, is here intended. In Exodus 4:3 it is said that this rod was changed into a serpent, but the original word there is נחש nachash, and here תני tannin, the same word which we translate whale, Genesis 1:21.

As נחש nachash seems to be a term restricted to no one particular meaning, as has already been shown on Gen. iii.; See Clarke note on "Genesis 3:1". So the words תני tannin, תנינים tanninim, תנים tannim,

and **תנור** tannoth, are used to signify different kinds of animals in the Scriptures. The word is supposed to signify the jackal in Job 30:29; Psalm 44:19; Isaiah 13:22; Isaiah 34:13; 35:7; Isaiah 43:20; Jeremiah 9:11, etc., etc.; and also a dragon, serpent, or whale, Job 7:12; Psalm 91:13; Isaiah 27:1; 51:9; Jeremiah 51:34; Ezekiel 29:3; 32:2; and is termed, in our translation, a sea-monster, Lamentations 4:3. As it was a rod or staff that was changed into the tannim in the cases mentioned here, it has been supposed that an ordinary serpent is what is intended by the word, because the size of both might be then pretty nearly equal: but as a miracle was wrought on the occasion, this circumstance is of no weight; it was as easy for God to change the rod into a crocodile, or any other creature, as to change it into an adder or common snake.

Verse 11. Pharaoh-called the wise men— **חכמים** chacamim, the men of learning. Sorcerers, **כשפים** cashshephim, those who reveal hidden things; probably from the Arabic root [A] kashafa, to reveal, uncover, etc., signifying diviners, or those who pretended to reveal what was in futurity, to discover things lost, to find hidden treasures, etc. Magicians, **חרטומי** chartummey, decypherers of abstruse writings. See Clarke note on “Genesis 41:8”.

They also did in like manner with their enchantments.— The word **להתים** lahatim, comes from **להט** lahat, to burn, to set on fire; and probably signifies such incantations as required lustral fires, sacrifices, fumigations, burning of incense, aromatic and odoriferous drugs, etc., as the means of evoking departed spirits or assistant demons, by whose ministry, it is probable, the magicians in question wrought some of their deceptive miracles: for as the term miracle signifies properly something which exceeds the powers of nature or art to produce, (see Exodus 7:9,) hence there could be no miracle in this case but those wrought, through the power of God, by the ministry of Moses and Aaron. There can be no doubt that real serpents were produced by the magicians. On this subject there are two opinions: 1st, That the serpents were such as they, either by juggling or sleight of hand, had brought to the place, and had secreted till the time of exhibition, as our common conjurers do in the public fairs, etc. 2dly, That the serpents were brought by the ministry of a familiar spirit, which, by the magic flames already referred to, they had evoked for the

purpose. Both these opinions admit the serpents to be real, and no illusion of the sight, as some have supposed. The first opinion appears to me insufficient to account for the phenomena of the case referred to. If the magicians threw down their rods, and they became serpents after they were thrown down, as the text expressly says, Exodus 7:12, juggling or sleight of hand had nothing farther to do in the business, as the rods were then out of their hands. If Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods, their sleight of hand was no longer concerned. A man, by dexterity of hand, may so far impose on his spectators as to appear to eat a rod; but for rods lying on the ground to become serpents, and one of these to devour all the rest so that it alone remained, required something more than juggling. How much more rational at once to allow that these magicians had familiar spirits who could assume all shapes, change the appearances of the subjects on which they operated, or suddenly convey one thing away and substitute another in its place! Nature has no such power, and art no such influence as to produce the effects attributed here and in the succeeding chapters to the Egyptian magicians.

Verse 12. Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.— As Egypt was remarkably addicted to magic, sorcery, etc., it was necessary that God should permit Pharaoh's wise men to act to the utmost of their skill in order to imitate the work of God, that his superiority might be clearly seen, and his powerful working incontestably ascertained; and this was fully done when Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. We have already seen that the names of two of the chief of these magicians were Jannes and Jambres; see Clarke on "Exodus 2:10", and 2 Timothy 3:8. Many traditions and fables concerning these may be seen in the eastern writers.

Verse 13. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart— **ויחזק לב פרעה** vaiyechezah leb Paroh, "And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened," the identical words which in Exodus 7:22 are thus translated, and which should have been rendered in the same way here, lest the hardening, which was evidently the effect of his own obstinate shutting of his eyes against the truth, should be attributed to God. See Clarke note on "Exodus 4:21".

Verse 14. Pharaoh's heart is hardened— **כבד** cabed, is become heavy or stupid; he receives no conviction, notwithstanding the clearness of the light which shines upon him. We well know the power of prejudice: where

persons are determined to think and act after a predetermined plan, arguments, demonstrations, and even miracles themselves, are lost on them, as in the case of Pharaoh here, and that of the obstinate Jews in the days of our Lord and his apostles.

Verse 15. *Lo, he goeth out unto the water*— Probably for the purpose of bathing, or of performing some religious ablution. Some suppose he went out to pay adoration to the river Nile, which was an object of religious worship among the ancient Egyptians. “For,” says Plutarch, Deuteronomy I side., *ουδεν ουτω τιμη αιγυπτιοις ως ο νειλος*. “nothing is in greater honor among the Egyptians than the river Nile.” Some of the ancient Jews supposed that Pharaoh himself was a magician, and that he walked by the river early each morning for the purpose of preparing magical rites, etc.

Verse 17. *Behold, I will smite*— Here commences the account of the TEN plagues which were inflicted on the Egyptians by Moses and Aaron, by the command and through the power of God. According to Archbishop Usher these ten plagues took place in the course of one month, and in the following order:—

The first, the WATERS turned into BLOOD, took place, he supposes, the 18th day of the sixth month; Exodus 7:20.

The second, the plague of FROGS, on the 25th day of the sixth month; Exodus 8:2.

The third, the plague of LICE, on the 27th day of the sixth month; Exodus 8:16.

The fourth, grievous SWARMS of FLIES, on the 29th day of the sixth month; Exodus 8:24.

The fifth, the grievous MURRAIN, on the 2d day of the seventh month; Exodus 9:3.

The sixth, the plague of BOILS and BLAINS, on the 3d day of the seventh month; Exodus 9:10.

The seventh, the grievous HAIL, on the 5th day of the seventh month; Exodus 9:18.

The eighth, the plague of LOCUSTS, on the 8th day of the seventh month; Exodus 10:12.

The ninth, the THICK DARKNESS, on the 10th day of Abib, (April 30,) now become the first month of the Jewish year; Exodus 10:22. See Clarke note on "Exodus 12:2".

The tenth, the SLAYING the FIRST-BORN, on the 15th of Abib; Exodus 12:29. But most of these dates are destitute of proof.

Verse 18. *The Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water*— The force of this expression cannot be well felt without taking into consideration the peculiar pleasantness and great salubrity of the waters of the Nile. "The water of Egypt," says the Abbe Mascrier, "is so delicious, that one would not wish the heat to be less, or to be delivered from the sensation of thirst. The Turks find it so exquisite that they excite themselves to drink of it by eating salt. It is a common saying among them, that if Mohammed had drank of it he would have besought God that he might never die, in order to have had this continual gratification. When the Egyptians undertake the pilgrimage of Mecca, or go out of their country on any other account, they speak of nothing but the pleasure they shall have at their return in drinking of the waters of the Nile. There is no gratification to be compared to this; it surpasses, in their esteem, that of seeing their relations and families. All those who have tasted of this water allow that they never met with the like in any other place. When a person drinks of it for the first time he can scarcely be persuaded that it is not a water prepared by art; for it has something in it inexpressibly agreeable and pleasing to the taste; and it should have the same rank among waters that champaign has among wines. But its most valuable quality is, that it is exceedingly salutary. It never incommodes, let it be drank in what quantity it may: this is so true that it is no uncommon thing to see some persons drink three buckets of it in a day without the least inconvenience! When I pass such encomiums on the water of Egypt it is right to observe that I speak only of that of the Nile, which indeed is the only water drinkable, for their well water is detestable and unwholesome. Fountains are so rare that they are a kind of prodigy in that country; and as to rain water, that is out of the question, as scarcely any falls in Egypt."

“A person,” says Mr. Harmer, “who never before heard of the deliciousness of the Nile water, and of the large quantities which on that account are drank of it, will, I am sure, find an energy in those words of Moses to Pharaoh, The Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river, which he never observed before. They will loathe to drink of that water which they used to prefer to all the waters of the universe; loathe to drink of that for which they had been accustomed to long, and will rather choose to drink of well water, which in their country is detestable!”
-Observations, vol. iii., p. 564.

Verse 19. *That there may be blood-both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone.*— Not only the Nile itself was to be thus changed into blood in all its branches, and the canals issuing from it, but all the water of lakes, ponds, and reservoirs, was to undergo a similar change. And this was to extend even to the water already brought into their houses for culinary and other domestic purposes. As the water of the Nile is known to be very thick and muddy, and the Egyptians are obliged to filter it through pots of a kind of white earth, and sometimes through a paste made of almonds, Mr. Harmer supposes that the vessels of wood and stone mentioned above may refer to the process of filtration, which no doubt has been practiced among them from the remotest period. The meaning given above I think to be more natural.

THE FIRST PLAGUE. THE WATERS TURNED INTO BLOOD

Verse 20. *All the waters-were turned to blood.*— Not merely in appearance, but in reality; for these changed waters became corrupt and insalubrious, so that even the fish that were in the river died; and the smell became highly offensive, so that the waters could not be drank; Exodus 7:21.

Verse 22. *And the magicians-did so*— But if all the water in Egypt was turned into blood by Moses, where did the magicians get the water which they changed into blood? This question is answered in Exodus 7:24. The Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink, and it seems that the water obtained by this means was not bloody like that in the river: on this water therefore the magicians might operate. Again, though a general commission was given to Moses, not only to turn the waters of the

river (Nile) into blood, but also those of their streams, rivers, ponds, and pools; yet it seems pretty clear from Exodus 7:20 that he did not proceed thus far, at least in the first instance; for it is there stated that only the waters of the river were turned into blood. Afterwards the plague doubtless became general. At the commencement therefore of this plague, the magicians might obtain other water to imitate the miracle; and it would not be difficult for them, by juggling tricks or the assistance of a familiar spirit, (for we must not abandon the possibility of this use,) to give it a bloody appearance, a fetid smell, and a bad taste. On either of these grounds there is no contradiction in the Mosaic account, though some have been very studious to find one.

The plague of the bloody waters may be considered as a display of retributive justice against the Egyptians, for the murderous decree which enacted that all the male children of the Israelites should be drowned in that river, the waters of which, so necessary to their support and life, were now rendered not only insalubrious but deadly, by being turned into blood. As it is well known that the Nile was a chief object of Egyptian idolatry, (See Clarke note on “Exodus 7:15”,) and that annually they sacrificed a girl, or as others say, both a boy and a girl, to this river, in gratitude for the benefits received from it, (Universal Hist., vol. i., p. 178, fol. edit.) God might have designed this plague as a punishment for such cruelty: and the contempt poured upon this object of their adoration, by turning its waters into blood, and rendering them fetid and corrupt, must have had a direct tendency to correct their idolatrous notions, and lead them to acknowledge the power and authority of the true God.

Verse 25. *And seven days were fulfilled*— So we learn that this plague continued at least a whole week.

THE contention between Moses and Aaron and the magicians of Egypt has become famous throughout the world. Tradition in various countries has preserved not only the account, but also the names of the chief persons concerned in the opposition made by the Egyptians to these messengers of God. Though their names are not mentioned in the sacred text, yet tradition had preserved them in the Jewish records, from which St. Paul undoubtedly quotes 2 Timothy 3:8, where, speaking of the enemies of the Gospel, he compares them to Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses.

That these names existed in the ancient Jewish records, their own writings show. In the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel on this place they are called **יָנִיס וְיַמְבְּרִיס** Janis and Jambris; and in the Babylonian Talmud they are named Joanne and Mambre, and are represented as chiefs of the sorcerers of Egypt, and as having ridiculed Moses and Aaron for pretending to equal them in magical arts. And Rab. Tanchum, in his Commentary, names them Jonos and Jombrus. If we allow the readings of the ancient editions of Pliny to be correct, he refers, in *Hist. Nat.*, l. xxx., c. 2, to the same persons, the names being a little changed: *Est et alia magices factio, a Mose et Jamne et Jotape Judaeis pendens, sed multis millibus annorum post Zoroastrem;* “There is also another faction of magicians which took its origin from the Jews, Moses, Jamnes, and Jotapes, many thousands of years after Zoroaster;” where he confounds Moses with the Egyptian magicians; for the heathens, having no just notion of the power of God, attributed all miracles to the influence of magic. Pliny also calls the Egyptian magicians Jews; but this is not the only mistake in his history; and as he adds, *sed multis millibus annorum post Zoroastrem,* he is supposed by some to refer to the Christians, and particularly the apostles, who wrought many miracles, and whom he considers to be a magical sect derived from Moses and the Jews, because they were Jews by nation, and quoted Moses and the prophets in proof of the truth of the doctrines of Christianity, and of the Divine mission of Christ.

Numenius, a Pythagorean philosopher, mentioned by Eusebius, names these magicians, Jamnes and Jambres, and mentions their opposition to Moses; and we have already seen that there was a tradition among the Asiatics that Pharaoh’s daughter had Moses instructed by the wise men Jannes and Jambres; see Abul Faraje, edit. Pococ., p. 26. Here then is a very remarkable fact, the principal circumstances of which, and the chief actors in them, have been preserved by a sort of universal tradition. See Ainsworth.

When all the circumstances of the preceding case are considered, it seems strange that God should enter into any contest with such persons as the Egyptian magicians; but a little reflection will show the absolute necessity of this. Mr. Psalmanazar, who wrote the *Account of the Jews* in the first volume of the *Universal History*, gives the following judicious reasons for this: “If it be asked,” says he, “why God did suffer the Egyptian magicians

to borrow power from the devil to invalidate, if possible, those miracles which his servant wrought by his Divine power, the following reasons may be given for it: 1. It was necessary that these magicians should be suffered to exert the utmost of their power against Moses, in order to clear him from the imputation of magic or sorcery; for as the notion of such an extraordinary art was very rife, not only among the Egyptians, but all other nations, if they had not entered into this strenuous competition with him, and been at length overcome by him, both the Hebrews and the Egyptians would have been apter to have attributed all his miracles to his skill in magic, than to the Divine power.

“2. It was necessary, in order to confirm the faith of the wavering and desponding Israelites, by making them see the difference between Moses acting by the power of God, and the sorcerers by that of Satan.

“3. It was necessary, in order to preserve them afterwards from being seduced by any false miracles from the true worship of God.”

To these a fourth reason may be added: God permitted this in mercy to the Egyptians, that they might see that the gods in whom they trusted were utterly incapable of saving them; that they could not undo or counteract one of the plagues sent on them by the power of Jehovah; the whole of their influence extending only to some superficial imitations of the genuine miracles wrought by Moses in the name of the true God. By these means it is natural to conclude that many of the Egyptians, and perhaps several of the servants of Pharaoh, were cured of their idolatry; though the king himself hardened his heart against the evidences which God brought before his eyes. Thus God is known by his judgments: for in every operation of his hand his design is to enlighten the minds of men, to bring them from false dependences to trust in himself alone; that, being saved from error and sin, they may become wise, holy, and happy. When his judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants learn righteousness. (See Clarke note on “Exodus 4:21”,)

CHAPTER 8

The plague of frogs threatened, 1, 2. The extent of this plague, 3, 4. Aaron commanded to stretch out his hand, with the rod, over the river and waters of Egypt, in consequence of which the frogs came, 5, 6. The magicians imitate this miracle, 7. Pharaoh entreats Moses to remove the frogs, and promises to let the people go, 8. Moses promises that they shall be removed from every part of Egypt, the river excepted, 9-11. Moses prays to God, and the frogs die throughout the land of Egypt, 12-14. Pharaoh, finding himself respited, hardens his heart, 15. The plague of lice on man and beast, 16, 17. The magicians attempt to imitate this miracle, but in vain, 18. They confess it to be the finger of God, and yet Pharaoh continues obstinate, 19. Moses is sent again to him to command him to let the people go, and in case of disobedience he is threatened with swarms of flies, 20, 21. A promise made that the land of Goshen, where the Israelites dwelt, should be exempted from this plague, 22, 23. The flies are sent, 24. Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron, and offers to permit them to sacrifice in the land, 25. They refuse, and desire to go three days' journey into the wilderness, 26, 27. Pharaoh consents to let them go a little way, provided they would entreat the Lord to remove the flies, 28. Moses consents, prays to God, and the flies are removed, 29-31. After which Pharaoh yet hardened his heart, and refused to let the people go, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

THE SECOND PLAGUE — FROGS

Verse 1. *Let my people go*— God, in great mercy to Pharaoh and the Egyptians, gives them notice of the evils he intended to bring upon them if they continued in their obstinacy. Having had therefore such warning, the evil might have been prevented by a timely humiliation and return to God.

Verse 2. *If thou refuse*— Nothing can be plainer than that Pharaoh had it still in his power to have dismissed the people, and that his refusal was the mere effect of his own wilful obstinacy.

With frogs— צפרדעים tsepardeim. This word is of doubtful etymology: almost all interpreters, both ancient and modern, agree to render it as we do, though some mentioned by Aben Ezra think the crocodile is meant; but these can never weigh against the conjoint testimony of the ancient versions. Parkhurst derives the word from צפר tsaphar, denoting the brisk action, or motion of the light, and ידע yada, to feel, as they seem to feel or rejoice in the light, croaking all the summer months, yet hiding themselves in the winter. The Arabic name for this animal is very nearly the same with the Hebrew [A] zafda, where the letters are the same, the ר resch being omitted. It is used as a quadrilateral root in the Arabic language, to signify froggy, or containing frogs: see Golius. But the true etymology seems to be given by Bochart, who says the word is compounded of [A] zifa, a bank, and [A] rada, mud, because the frog delights in muddy or marshy places; and that from these two words the noun [A] zafda is formed, the [A] re being dropped. In the *Batrocho myomachia* of Homer, the frog has many of its epithets from this very circumstance. Hence λιμνοχαρις, delighting in the lake; βορβοροκοιτης, lying or engendering in the mud; πηλεως, and πηλβατης, belonging to the mud, walking in the mud, etc., etc.

A frog is in itself a very harmless animal; but to most people who use it not as an article of food, exceedingly loathsome. God, with equal ease, could have brought crocodiles, bears, lions, or tigers to have punished these people and their impious king, instead of frogs, lice, flies, etc. But had he used any of those formidable animals, the effect would have appeared so commensurate to the cause, that the hand of God might have been forgotten in the punishment; and the people would have been exasperated without being humbled. In the present instance he shows the greatness of his power by making an animal, devoid of every evil quality, the means of a terrible affliction to his enemies. How easy is it, both to the justice and mercy of God, to destroy or save by means of the most despicable and insignificant of instruments! Though he is the Lord of hosts he has no need of powerful armies, the ministry of angels, or the thunderbolts of justice,

to punish a sinner or a sinful nation; the frog or the fly in his hands is a sufficient instrument of vengeance.

Verse 3. *The river shall bring forth frogs abundantly*— The river Nile, which was an object of their adoration, was here one of the instruments of their punishment. The expression, bring forth abundantly, not only shows the vast numbers of those animals, which should now infest the land, but it seems also to imply that all the spawn or ova of those animals which were already in the river and marshes, should be brought miraculously to a state of perfection. We may suppose that the animals were already in an embryo existence, but multitudes of them would not have come to a state of perfection had it not been for this miraculous interference. This supposition will appear the more natural when it is considered that the Nile was remarkable for breeding frogs, and such other animals as are principally engendered in such marshy places as must be left in the vicinity of the Nile after its annual inundations.

Into thine ovens— In various parts of the east, instead of what we call ovens they dig a hole in the ground, in which they insert a kind of earthen pot, which having sufficiently heated, they stick their cakes to the inside, and when baked remove them and supply their places with others, and so on. To find such places full of frogs when they came to heat them, in order to make their bread, must be both disgusting and distressing in the extreme.

Verse 5. *Stretch forth thine hand—over the streams, over the rivers*— The streams and rivers here may refer to the grand divisions of the Nile in the Lower Egypt, which were at least seven, and to the canals by which these were connected; as there were no other streams, etc., but what proceeded from this great river.

Verse 6. *The frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt*.— In some ancient writers we have examples of a similar plague. The Abderites, according to Orosius, and the inhabitants of Paeonia and Dardania, according to Athenaeus, were obliged to abandon their country on account of the great numbers of frogs by which their land was infested.

Verse 7. *The magicians did so*— A little juggling or dexterity of hand might have been quite sufficient for the imitation of this miracle, because frogs in abundance had already been produced; and some of these kept in

readiness might have been brought forward by the magicians, as proofs of their pretended power and equality in influence to Moses and Aaron.

Verse 9. *Glory over me*— **התפאר עלי** hithpaer alai. These words have greatly puzzled commentators in general; and it is not easy to assign their true meaning. The Septuagint render the words thus: **ταξαί προς με ποτε**, etc., Appoint unto me when I shall pray, etc. The constitute mihi quando of the Vulgate is exactly the same; and in this sense almost all the versions understood this place. This countenances the conjectural emendation of Leviticus Clerc, who, by the change of a single letter, reading **התבאר** hithbaer for **התפאר** hithpaer, gives the same sense as that in the ancient versions. Houbigant, supposing a corruption in the original, amends the reading thus: **אתה באר עלי** attah baar alai—Dic mihi quo tempore, etc., “Tell me when thou wishest me to pray for thee,” etc., which amounts to the same in sense with that proposed by Leviticus Clerc. Several of our English versions preserve the same meaning; so in the Saxon Heptateuch, [AS]; so in Becke’s Bible, 1549, “And Moses sayed unto Pharaoh, Appoint thou the time unto me.” This appears to be the genuine import of the words, and the sense taken in this way is strong and good. We may conceive Moses addressing Pharaoh in this way: “That thou mayest be persuaded that Jehovah alone is the inflicter of these plagues, appoint the time when thou wouldst have the present calamity removed, and I will pray unto God, and thou shalt plainly see from his answer that this is no casual affliction, and that in continuing to harden thy heart and resist thou art sinning against God.” Nothing could be a fuller proof that this plague was supernatural than the circumstance of Pharaoh’s being permitted to assign himself the time of its being removed, and its removal at the intercession of Moses according to that appointment. And this is the very use made of it by Moses himself, Exodus 8:10, when he says, Be it according to thy word: that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the Lord our God; and that, consequently, he might no longer trust in his magicians, or in his false gods.

Verse 14. *They gathered them together upon heaps*— The killing of the frogs was a mitigation of the punishment; but the leaving them to rot in the land was a continual proof that such a plague had taken place, and that the displeasure of the Lord still continued.

The conjecture of Calmet is at least rational: he supposes that the plague of flies originated from the plague of frogs; that the former deposited their ova in the putrid masses, and that from these the innumerable swarms afterwards mentioned were hatched. In vindication of this supposition it may be observed, that God never works a miracle when the end can be accomplished by merely natural means; and in the operations of Divine providence we always find that the greatest number of effects possible are accomplished by the fewest causes. As therefore the natural means for this fourth plague had been miraculously provided by the second, the Divine Being had a right to use the instruments which he had already prepared.

THE THIRD PLAGUE — LICE

Verse 16. *Smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice*— If the vermin commonly designated by this name be intended, it must have been a very dreadful and afflicting plague to the Egyptians, and especially to their priests, who were obliged to shave the hair off every part of their bodies, and to wear a single tunic, that no vermin of this kind might be permitted to harbor about them. See Herod. in Euterp., c. xxxvii., p. 104, edit. Gale. Of the nature of these insects it is not necessary to say much. The common louse is very prolific. In the space of twelve days a full-grown female lays one hundred eggs, from which, in the space of six days, about fifty males and as many females are produced. In eighteen days these young females are at their full growth, each of which may lay one hundred eggs, which will be all hatched in six days more. Thus, in the course of six weeks, the parent female may see 5, 000 of its own descendants! So mightily does this scourge of indolence and filthiness increase!

But learned men are not agreed on the signification of the original word כִּנִּים kinnim, which different copies of the Septuagint render σκνιφες, σκνιπες, and σκνηπες, gnats; and the Vulgate renders sciniphes, which signifies the same.

Mr. Harmer supposes he has found out the true meaning in the word tarrentes, mentioned by Vinisauf, one of our ancient English writers; who, speaking of the expedition of King Richard I. to the Holy Land, says, that “while the army were marching from Cayphas to Caesarea, they were

greatly distressed every night by certain worms called tarrentes, which crept on the ground, and occasioned a very burning heat by most painful punctures; for, being armed with stings, they conveyed a poison which quickly occasioned those who were wounded by them to swell, and was attended with the most acute pain.” All this is far fetched. Bochart has endeavored to prove that the כִּנִּים kinnim of the text may mean lice in the common acceptation of the term, and not gnats. 1. Because those in question sprang from the dust of the earth, and not from the waters. 2. Because they were both on men and cattle, which cannot be spoken of gnats. 3. Because their name comes from the radix כּוּן kun, which signifies to make firm, fix, establish, which can never agree to gnats, flies, etc., which are ever changing their place, and are almost constantly on the wing. 4. Because כִּנָּה kinnah is the term by which the Talmudists express the louse, etc. See his Hierozoicon, vol. ii., c. xviii., col. 571. The circumstance of their being in man and in beast agrees so well with the nature of the acarus sanguisugus, commonly called the tick, belonging to the seventh order of insects called APTERA, that I am ready to conclude this is the insect meant. This animal buries both its sucker and head equally in man or beast; and can with very great difficulty be extracted before it is grown to its proper size, and filled with the blood and juices of the animal on which it preys. When fully grown, it has a glossy black oval body: not only horses, cows, and sheep are infested with it in certain countries, but even the common people, especially those who labor in the field, in woods, etc. I know no insect to which the Hebrew term so properly applies. This is the fixed, established insect, which will permit itself to be pulled in pieces rather than let go its hold; and this is literally וּבְבַהֲמָה בְּאָדָם baadam ubabbehemah, IN man and IN beast, burying its trunk and head in the flesh of both. In woodland countries I have seen many persons as well as cattle grievously infested with these insects.

Verse 18. *The magicians did so*— That is, They tried the utmost of their skill, either to produce these insects or to remove this plague; but they could not, no juggling could avail here, because insects must be produced which would stick to and infix themselves in man and beast, which no kind of trick could possibly imitate; and to remove them, as some would translate the passage, was to their power equally impossible. If the magicians even acted by spiritual agents, we find from this case that these

agents had assigned limits, beyond which they could not go; for every agent in the universe is acting under the direction or control of the Almighty.

Verse 19. *This is the finger of God*— That is, The power and skill of God are here evident. Probably before this the magicians supposed Moses and Aaron to be conjurers, like themselves; but now they are convinced that no man could do these miracles which these holy men did, unless God were with him. God permits evil spirits to manifest themselves in a certain way, that men may see that there is a spiritual world, and be on their guard against seduction. He at the same time shows that all these agents are under his control, that men may have confidence in his goodness and power.

THE FOURTH PLAGUE — FLIES

Verse 21. *Swarms of flies upon thee*— It is not easy to ascertain the precise meaning of the original word **הֵעָרַב** hearob; as the word comes from **עָרַב** arab, he mingled, it may be supposed to express a multitude of various sorts of insects. And if the conjecture be admitted that the putrid frogs became the occasion of this plague, (different insects laying their eggs in the bodies of those dead animals, which would soon be hatched, see on Exodus 8:14,) then the supposition that a multitude of different kinds of insects is meant, will seem the more probable. Though the plague of the locusts was miraculous, yet God both brought it and removed it by natural means; see Exodus 10:13-19.

Bochart, who has treated this subject with his usual learning and ability, follows the Septuagint, explaining the original by **κυννομύια**, the dog-fly; which must be particularly hateful to the Egyptians, because they held dogs in the highest veneration, and worshipped Anubis under the form of a dog. In a case of this kind the authority of the Septuagint is very high, as they translated the Pentateuch in the very place where these plagues happened. But as the Egyptians are well known to have paid religious veneration to all kinds of animals and monsters, whence the poet:—

Omnigenumque deum monstra, et latrator Anubis,

I am inclined to favor the literal construction of the word: for as ערב ereb, Exodus 12:38, expresses that mixed multitude of different kinds of people who accompanied the Israelites in their departure from Egypt; so here the same term being used, it may have been designed to express a multitude of different kinds of insects, such as flies, wasps, hornets, etc., etc. The ancient Jewish interpreters suppose that all kinds of beasts and reptiles are intended, such as wolves, lions, bears, serpents, etc. Mr. Bate thinks the raven is meant, because the original is so understood in other places; and thus he translates it in his literal version of the Pentateuch: but the meaning already given is the most likely. As to the objection against this opinion drawn from Exodus 8:31, there remained not one, it can have very little weight, when it is considered that this may as well be spoken of one of any of the different kinds, as of an individual of one species.

Verse 22. *I will sever in that day*— הפליתי hiphleythi, has been translated by some good critics, I will miraculously separate; so the Vulgate: Faciam mirabilem, “I will do a marvellous thing.” And the Septuagint, παραδοξασω, I will render illustrious the land of Goshen in that day; and this he did, by exempting that land, and its inhabitants the Israelites, from the plagues by which he afflicted the land of Egypt.

Verse 23. *And I will put a division*— פדה peduth, a redemption, between my people and thy people; God hereby showing that he had redeemed them from those plagues to which he had abandoned the others.

Verse 24. *The land was corrupted*— Every thing was spoiled, and many of the inhabitants destroyed, being probably stung to death by these venomous insects. This seems to be intimated by the psalmist, “He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which DEVoured them,” Psalm 78:45.

In ancient times, when political, domestic, and personal cleanliness was but little attended to, and offal of different kinds permitted to corrupt in the streets and breed vermin, flies multiplied exceedingly, so that we read in ancient authors of whole districts being laid waste by them; hence different people had deities, whose office it was to defend them against flies. Among these we may reckon Baalzebub, the fly-god of Ekron; Hercules, muscarum abactor, Hercules, the expeller of flies, of the Romans; the Muagrus of the Eleans, whom they invoked against pestilential swarms

of flies; and hence Jupiter, the supreme god of the heathens, had the epithets of *απομυιος* and *μυωδης*, because he was supposed to expel flies, and defend his worshippers against them. See Dodd.

Verse 25. *Sacrifice to your God in the land.*— That is, Ye shall not leave Egypt, but I shall cause your worship to be tolerated here.

Verse 26. *We shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians*— That is, The animals which they hold sacred, and will not permit to be slain, are those which our customs require us to sacrifice to our God; and should we do this in Egypt the people would rise in a mass, and stone us to death. Perhaps few people were more superstitious than the Egyptians. Almost every production of nature was an object of their religious worship: the sun, moon, planets, stars, the river Nile, animals of all sorts, from the human being to the monkey, dog, cat, and ibis, and even the onions and leeks which grew in their gardens. Jupiter was adored by them under the form of a ram, Apollo under the form of a crow, Bacchus under that of a goat, and Juno under that of a heifer. The reason why the Egyptians worshipped those animals is given by Eusebius, viz., that when the giants made war on the gods, they were obliged to take refuge in Egypt, and assume the shapes or disguise themselves under different kinds of animals in order to escape. Jupiter hid himself in the body of a ram, Apollo in that of a crow, Bacchus in a goat, Diana in a cat, Juno in a white heifer, Venus in a fish, and Mercury in the bird ibis; all which are summoned up by Ovid in the following lines: —

*Duxque gregis fit Jupiter —
Delius in corvo, proles Semeleia capro,
Fele soror Phoebi, nivea Saturnia vacca,
Pisce Venus latuit, Cyllenius ibidis alis.*

METAM., l. v., fab. v., l. 326.

How the gods fled to Egypt's slimy soil, And hid their heads beneath the banks of Nile; How Typhon from the conquer'd skies pursued Their routed godheads to the seven-mouth'd flood; Forced every god, his fury to escape, Some beastly form to take, or earthly shape. Jove, so she sung, was changed into a ram, From whence the horns of Libyan Ammon came; Bacchus a goat, Apollo was a crow, Phoebe a cat, the wife of Jove a cow, Whose hue was whiter than the falling snow; Mercury, to a nasty ibis

turn'd, The change obscene, afraid of Typhon mourn'd, While Venus from a fish protection craves, And once more plunges in her native waves.

MAYNWARING.

These animals therefore became sacred to them on account of the deities, who, as the fable reports, had taken refuge in them. Others suppose that the reason why the Egyptians would not sacrifice or kill those creatures was their belief in the doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls; for they feared lest in killing an animal they should kill a relative or a friend. This doctrine is still held by the Hindoos.

Verse 27. *And sacrifice to the Lord-as he shall command us.*— It is very likely that neither Moses nor Aaron knew as yet in what manner God would be worshipped; and they expected to receive a direct revelation from him relative to this subject, when they should come into the wilderness.

Verse 28. *I will let you go only ye shall not go very far away*— Pharaoh relented because the hand of God was heavy upon him; but he was not willing to give up his gain. The Israelites were very profitable to him; they were slaves of the state, and their hard labor was very productive: hence he professed a willingness, first to tolerate their religion in the land, (Exodus 8:25;) or to permit them to go into the wilderness, so that they went not far away, and would soon return. How ready is foolish man, when the hand of God presses him sore, to compound with his Maker! He will consent to give up some sins, provided God will permit him to keep others.

Entreat for me.— Exactly similar to the case of Simon Magus, who, like Pharaoh, fearing the Divine judgments, begged an interest in the prayers of Peter, Acts 8:24.

Verse 31. *The Lord did according to the word of Moses*— How powerful is prayer! God permits his servant to prescribe even the manner and time in which he shall work.

He removed the swarms— Probably by means of a strong wind, which swept them into the sea.

Verse 32. *Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also*— See Exodus 8:15. This hardening was the mere effect of his self-determining obstinacy. He preferred his gain to the will and command of Jehovah, and God made his obstinacy the means of showing forth his own power and providence in a supereminent degree.

1. As every false religion proves there is a true one, as a copy, however marred or imperfect, shows there was an original from which it was taken, so false miracles prove that there were genuine miracles, and that God chooses at particular times, for the most important purposes, to invert the established order of nature, and thus prove his omnipotence and universal agency. That the miracles wrought at this time were real we have the fullest proof. The waters, for instance, were not turned into blood in appearance merely, but were really thus changed. Hence the people could not drink of them; and as blood in a very short time, when exposed to the air, becomes putrid, so did the bloody waters; therefore all the fish that were in the river died.

2. No human power or ingenuity could produce such frogs as annoyed the land of Egypt. This also was a real, not an imaginary, plague. Innumerable multitudes of these animals were produced for the purpose; and the heaps of their dead carcasses, which putrefied and infected the land, at once demonstrated the reality of the miracle.

3. The lice both on man and beast through the whole land, and the innumerable swarms of flies, gave such proofs of their reality as to put the truth of these miracles out of question for ever. It was necessary that this point should be fully proved, that both the Egyptians and Israelites might see the finger of God in these awful works.

4. To superficial observers only do “Moses and the magicians appear to be nearly matched.” The power of God was shown in producing and removing the plagues. In certain cases the magicians imitated the production of a plague, but they had no power to remove any. They could not seem to remove the bloody color, nor the putrescency from the waters through which the fish were destroyed, though they could imitate the color itself; they could not remove the frogs, the lice, or swarms of flies, though they could imitate the former and latter; they could by dexterity of hand or diabolic influence produce serpents, but they could not bring one forward

that could swallow up the rod of Aaron. In every respect they fall infinitely short of the power and wonderful energy evidenced in the miracles of Moses and Aaron. The opposition therefore of those men served only as a foil to set off the excellence of that power by which these messengers of God acted.

5. The courage, constancy, and faith of Moses are worthy of the most serious consideration. Had he not been fully satisfied of the truth and certainty of his Divine mission, he could not have encountered such a host of difficulties; had he not been certain of the issue, he could not have preserved amidst so many discouraging circumstances; and had he not had a deep acquaintance with God, his faith in every trial must have necessarily failed. So strong was this grace in him that he could even pledge his Maker to the performance of works concerning which he had not as yet consulted him! He therefore let Pharaoh fix the very time on which he would wish to have the plague removed; and when this was done, he went to God by faith and prayer to obtain this new miracle; and God in the most exact and circumstantial manner fulfilled the word of his servant.

6. From all this let us learn that there is a God who worketh in the earth; that universal nature is under his control; that he can alter, suspend, counteract, or invert its general laws whensoever he pleases; and that he can save or destroy by the most feeble and most contemptible instruments. We should therefore deeply reverence his eternal power and Godhead, and look with respect on every creature he has made, as the meanest of them may in his hand, become the instrument of our salvation or our ruin.

7. Let us not imagine that God has so bound himself to work by general laws, that those destructions cannot take place which designate a particular providence. Pharaoh and the Egyptians are confounded, afflicted, routed, and ruined, while the land of Goshen and the Israelites are free from every plague! No blood appears in their streams; no frogs, lice, nor flies, in all their borders! They trusted in the true God, and could not be confounded. Reader, how secure mayest thou rest if thou hast this God for thy friend! He was the Protector and Friend of the Israelites through the blood of that covenant which is the very charter of thy salvation: trust in and pray to him as Moses did, and then Satan and his angels shall be bruised under thy

feet, and thou shalt not only be preserved from every plague, but be crowned with his loving kindness and tender mercy. He is the same to-day that he was yesterday, and shall continue the same for ever. Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!

CHAPTER 9

The Lord sends Moses to Pharaoh to inform him that, if he did not let the Israelites depart, a destructive pestilence should be sent among his cattle, 1-3; while the cattle of the Israelites should be preserved, 4. The next day this pestilence, which was the fifth plague, is sent, and all the cattle of the Egyptians die, 5, 6. Though Pharaoh finds that not one of the cattle of the Israelites had died, yet, through hardness of heart, he refuses to let the people go, 7. Moses and Aaron are commanded to sprinkle handfuls of ashes from the furnace, that the sixth plague, that of boils and blains, might come on man and beast, 5, 9; which having done, the plague takes place, 10. The magicians cannot stand before this plague, which they can neither imitate nor remove, 11. Pharaoh's heart is again hardened, 12. God's awful message to Pharaoh, with the threat of more severe plagues than before, 13-17. The seventh plague of rain, hail, and fire threatened, 18. The Egyptians commanded to house their cattle that they might not be destroyed, 19. These who feared the word of the Lord brought home their servants and cattle, and those who did not regard that word left their cattle and servants in the fields, 20. 21. The storm of hail, thunder, and lightning takes place, 22-24. It nearly desolates the whole land of Egypt, 25, while the land of Goshen escapes, 26. Pharaoh confesses his sin, and begs an interest in the prayers of Moses and Aaron, 27, 28. Moses promises to intercede for him, and while he promises that the storm shall cease, he foretells the continuing obstinacy of both himself and his servants, 29. 30. The flax and barley, being in a state of maturity, are destroyed by the tempest, 31; while the wheat and the rye, not being grown up, are preserved, 32. Moses obtains a cessation of the storm, 33. Pharaoh and his servants, seeing this, harden their hearts, and refuse to let the people go, 34, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. The LORD God of the Hebrews— It is very likely that the term Lord, יהוה Yehovah, is used here to point out particularly his eternal

power and Godhead; and that the term God, אֱלֹהִים Elohey, is intended to be understood in the sense of Supporter, Defender, Protector, etc. Thus saith the self-existent, omnipotent, and eternal Being, the Supporter and Defender of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may worship me.”

THE FIFTH PLAGUE — THE MURRAIN

Verse 3. *The hand of the Lord*— The power of God manifested in judgment.

Upon the horses— סוּסִים susim. This is the first place the horse is mentioned; a creature for which Egypt and Arabia were always famous. סוס sus is supposed to have the same meaning with שש sas, which signifies to be active, brisk, or lively, all which are proper appellatives of the horse, especially in Arabia and Egypt. Because of their activity and swiftness they were sacrificed and dedicated to the sun, and perhaps it was principally on this account that God prohibited the use of them among the Israelites.

A very grievous murrain.— The murrain is a very contagious disease among cattle, the symptoms of which are a hanging down and swelling of the head, abundance of gum in the eyes, rattling in the throat, difficulty of breathing, palpitation of the heart, staggering, a hot breath, and a shining tongue; which symptoms prove that a general inflammation has taken place. The original word דֵּבַר deber is variously translated. The Septuagint have θάνατος, death; the Vulgate has pestis, a plague or pestilence; the old Saxon version, [AS], from [AS], to die, any fatal disease. Our English word murrain comes either from the French mourir, to die, or from the Greek μαραινω maraino, to grow lean, waste away. The term mortality would be the nearest in sense to the original, as no particular disorder is specified by the Hebrew word.

Verse 4. *The Lord shall sever*— See Clarke on “Exodus 8:22”.

Verse 5. *To-morrow the Lord shall do this*— By thus foretelling the evil, he showed his prescience and power; and from this both the Egyptians and Hebrews must see that the mortality that ensued was no casualty, but the effect of a predetermined purpose in the Divine justice.

Verse 6. *All the cattle of Egypt died*— That is, All the cattle that did die belonged to the Egyptians, but not one died that belonged to the Israelites, Exodus 9:4, 6. That the whole stock of cattle belonging to the Egyptians did not die we have the fullest proof, because there were cattle both to be killed and saved alive in the ensuing plague, Exodus 9:19-25. By this judgment the Egyptians must see the vanity of the whole of their national worship, when they found the animals which they not only held sacred but deified, slain without distinction among the common herd, by a pestilence sent from the hand of Jehovah. One might naturally suppose that after this the animal worship of the Egyptians could never more maintain its ground.

Verse 7. *And Pharaoh sent, etc.*— Finding so many of his own cattle and those of his subjects slain, he sent to see whether the mortality had reached to the cattle of the Israelites, that he might know whether this were a judgment inflicted by their God, and probably designing to replace the lost cattle of the Egyptians with those of the Israelites.

THE SIXTH PLAGUE-THE BOILS AND BLAINS

Verse 8. *Handfuls of ashes of the furnace*— As one part of the oppression of the Israelites consisted in their labor in the brick-kilns, some have observed a congruity between the crime and the punishment. The furnaces, in the labor of which they oppressed the Hebrews, now yielded the instruments of their punishment; for every particle of those ashes, formed by unjust and oppressive labor, seemed to be a boil or a blain on the tyrannic king and his cruel and hard-hearted people.

Verse 9. *Shall be a boil*— שֶׁחִי shechin. This word is generally expounded, an inflammatory swelling, a burning boil; one of the most poignant afflictions, not immediately mortal, that can well affect the surface of the human body. If a single boil on any part of the body throws the whole system into a fever, what anguish must a multitude of them on the body at the same time occasion!

Breaking forth with blains— אֲבַעֲבֹת ababuoth, supposed to come from בָּעָה baah, to swell, bulge out; any inflammatory swelling, node, or pustule, in any part of the body, but more especially in the more glandular

parts, the neck, arm-pits, groin, etc. The Septuagint translate it thus: **καί
εσται ελκη φλυκτιδες αναζευσαι**. And it shalt be an ulcer with
burning pustules. It seems to have been a disorder of an uncommon kind,
and hence it is called by way of distinction, the botch of Egypt,
Deuteronomy 28:27, perhaps never known before in that or any other
country. Orosius says that in the sixth plague “all the people were
blistered, that the blisters burst with tormenting pain, and that worms
issued out of them.” [AS] Alfred’s Oros., lib. i., c. vii.

Verse 11. *The boil was upon the magicians*— They could not produce a
similar malady by throwing ashes in the air; and they could neither remove
the plague from the people, nor from their own tormented flesh. Whether
they perished in this plague we know not, but they are no more
mentioned. If they were not destroyed by this awful judgment, they at
least left the field, and no longer contended with these messengers of God.
The triumph of God’s power was now complete, and both the Hebrews
and the Egyptians must see that there was neither might, nor wisdom, nor
counsel against the Lord; and that, as universal nature acknowledged his
power, devils and men must fail before him.

Verse 15. *For now I will stretch out my hand*— In the Hebrew the verbs
are in the past tense, and not in the future, as our translation improperly
expresses them, by which means a contradiction appears in the text: for
neither Pharaoh nor his people were smitten by a pestilence, nor was he
by any kind of mortality cut off from the earth. It is true the first-born
were slain by a destroying angel, and Pharaoh himself was drowned in the
Red Sea; but these judgments do not appear to be referred to in this place.
If the words be translated, as they ought, in the subjunctive mood, or in
the past instead of the future, this seeming contradiction to facts, as well
as all ambiguity, will be avoided: For if now I HAD STRETCHED OUT
(**שַׁלַּחְתִּי** shalachti, had set forth) my hand, and had smitten thee (**וְאָתָּךְ**
וָאֶתְּ vaach otheca) and thy people with the pestilence, thou SHOULDST
HAVE BEEN cut off (**וְנִכְחַדְתָּ** ticcached) from the earth.

Verse 16. But truly, on this very account, have I caused thee to SUBSIST,
(**וְהֵמַדְתִּיךָ** heemadticha,) that I MIGHT cause thee to see my power, (**כִּי**
וְהָרַאתִיךָ אֶת harothecha eth cochi,) and that my name MIGHT be declared

throughout all the earth, (or, **בכל הארץ** becol haarets, in all THIS LAND.) See Ainsworth and Houbigant.

Thus God gave this impious king to know that it was in consequence of his especial providence that both he and his people had not been already destroyed by means of the past plagues; but God had preserved him for this very purpose, that he might have a farther opportunity of manifesting that he, Jehovah, was the only true God for the full conviction both of the Hebrews and Egyptians, that the former might follow and the latter fear before him. Judicious critics of almost all creeds have agreed to translate the original as above, a translation which it not only can bear but requires, and which is in strict conformity to both the Septuagint and Targum. Neither the Hebrew **העמדתיך** heemadticha, I have caused thee to stand; nor the apostle's translation of it, Romans 9:17, **εξηγειρα σε**, I have raised thee; nor that of the Septuagint, **ενεκεν τουτου διετηρηθης**, on this account art thou preserved, viz., in the past plagues; can countenance that most exceptionable meaning put on the words by certain commentators, viz., "That God ordained or appointed Pharaoh from all eternity, by certain means, to this end; that he made him to exist in time; that he raised him to the throne; promoted him to that high honor and dignity; that he preserved him, and did not cut him off as yet; that he strengthened and hardened his heart; irritated, provoked, and stirred him up against his people Israel, and suffered him to go all the lengths he did go in his obstinacy and rebellion; all which was done to show in him his power in destroying him in the Red Sea. The sum of which is, that this man was raised up by God in every sense for God to show his power in his destruction." So man speaks; thus GOD hath not spoken. See Henry on the place.

Verse 17. *As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people*— So it appears that at this time he might have submitted, and thus prevented his own destruction.

THE SEVENTH PLAGUE-THE HAIL.

Verse 18. *To-morrow about this time*— The time of this plague is marked thus circumstantially to show Pharaoh that Jehovah was Lord of heaven and earth, and that the water, the fire, the earth, and the air, which were all

objects of Egyptian idolatry, were the creatures of his power; and subservient to his will; and that, far from being able to help them, they were now, in the hands of God, instruments of their destruction.

To rain a very grievous hail— To rain hail may appear to some superficial observers as an unphilosophical mode of expression, but nothing can be more correct. “Drops of rain falling through a cold region of the atmosphere are frozen and converted into hail;” and thus the hail is produced by rain. When it begins to fall it is rain; when it is falling it is converted into hail; thus it is literally true that it rains hail. The farther a hail-stone falls the larger it generally is, because in its descent it meets with innumerable particles of water, which, becoming attached to it, are also frozen, and thus its bulk is continually increasing till it reaches the earth. In the case in question, if natural means were at all used, we may suppose a highly electrified state of an atmosphere loaded with vapors, which, becoming condensed and frozen, and having a considerable space to fall through, were of an unusually large size. Though this was a supernatural storm, there have been many of a natural kind, that have been exceedingly dreadful. A storm of hail fell near Liverpool, in Lancashire, in the year 1795, which greatly damaged the vegetation, broke windows, etc., etc. Many of the stones measured five inches in circumference. Dr. Halley mentions a similar storm of hail in Lancashire, Cheshire, etc., in 1697, April 29, that for sixty miles in length and two miles in breadth did immense damage, by splitting trees, killing fowls and all small animals, knocking down men and horses, etc., etc. Mezeray, in his History of France, says “that in Italy, in 1510, there was for some time a horrible darkness, thicker than that of night, after which the clouds broke into thunder and lightning, and there fell a shower of hail-stones which destroyed all the beasts, birds, and even fish of the country. It was attended with a strong smell of sulphur, and the stones were of a bluish color, some of them weighing one hundred pounds’ weight.” The Almighty says to Job: “Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?” Job 38:22, 23. While God has such artillery at his command, how soon may he desolate a country or a world! See the account of a remarkable hail-storm in Joshua 10:11.

Verse 19. *Send-now, and gather thy cattle*— So in the midst of judgment, God remembered mercy. The miracle should be wrought that they might know he was the Lord; but all the lives both of men and beasts might have been saved, had Pharaoh and his servants taken the warning so mercifully given them. While some regarded not the word of the Lord, others feared it, and their cattle and their servants were saved, See Exodus 9:20, 21.

Verse 23. *The Lord sent thunder*— קלוֹת koloth, voices; but loud, repeated peals of thunder are meant.

And the fire ran along upon the ground— וַתֵּלֶךְ אֵשׁ אַרְצָה vattihalac esh aretsah, and the fire walked upon the earth. It was not a sudden flash of lightning, but a devouring fire, walking through every part, destroying both animals and vegetables; and its progress was irresistible.

Verse 24. *Hail, and fire mingled with the hail*— It is generally allowed that the electric fluid is essential to the formation of hail. On this occasion it was supplied in a supernatural abundance; for streams of fire seem to have accompanied the descending hail, so that herbs and trees, beasts and men, were all destroyed by them.

Verse 26. *Only in the land of Goshen-was there no hail.*— What a signal proof of a most particular providence! Surely both the Hebrews and Egyptians profited by this display of the goodness and severity of God.

Verse 27. *The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.*— The original is very emphatic: The Lord is THE RIGHTEOUS ONE, (הַצַּדִּיק hatstaddik,) and I and my people are THE SINNERS, (הַרְשָׁעִים hareshaim;) i.e., He is alone righteous, and we alone are transgressors. Who could have imagined that after such an acknowledgment and confession, Pharaoh should have again hardened his heart?

Verse 28. *It is enough*— There is no need of any farther plague; I submit to the authority of Jehovah and will rebel no more.

Mighty thunderings— כְּלוֹת אֱלֹהִים koloth Elohim, voices of God;-that is, superlatively loud thunder. So mountains of God (Psalm 36:6) means exceeding high mountains. So a prince of God (Genesis 23:6) means a mighty prince. See a description of thunder, Psalm 29:3-8: “THE VOICE OF

THE LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth; the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars. The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness,” etc. The production of rain by the electric spark is alluded to in a very beautiful manner, Jeremiah 10:13: When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens. See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 7:11”, and See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 8:1”.

Verse 29. *I will spread abroad my hands*— That is, I will make supplication to God that he may remove this plague. This may not be an improper place to make some observations on the ancient manner of approaching the Divine Being in prayer. Kneeling down, stretching out the hands, and lifting them up to heaven, were in frequent use among the Hebrews in their religious worship. SOLOMON kneeled down on his knees, and spread forth his hands to heaven; 2 Chronicles 6:13. So DAVID, Psalm 143:6: I stretch forth my hands unto thee. So EZRA: I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God; Ezra 9:5. See also JOB Job 11:13: If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thy hands towards him. Most nations who pretended to any kind of worship made use of the same means in approaching the objects of their adoration, viz., kneeling down and stretching out their hands; which custom it is very likely they borrowed from the people of God. Kneeling was ever considered to be the proper posture of supplication, as it expresses humility, contrition, and subjection. If the person to whom the supplication was addressed was within reach, the supplicant caught him by the knees; for as among the ancients the forehead was consecrated to genius, the ear to memory, and the right hand to faith, so the knees were consecrated to mercy. Hence those who entreated favor fell at and caught hold of the knees of the person whose kindness they supplicated. This mode of supplication is particularly referred to in the following passages in Homer: —

των νυν μιν μνησασα παρεξο, και λαβε γουνων.

Iliad i., ver. 407.

*Now therefore, of these things reminding Jove,
Embrace his knees.*

COWPER.

To which the following answer is made:—

και τοτ' επειτα τοι ειμι διος ποτι χαλκοβατες δω,
και μιν γουνασομαι, και μιν πεισεσθαι οιω.

Iliad i., ver. 426.

Then will I to Jove's brazen-floor'd abode, That I may clasp his knees;
and much misdeem Of my endeavor, or my prayer shall speed. Id. See the
issue of thus addressing Jove, Ibid., ver. 500-502, and ver. 511, etc.

In the same manner we find our Lord accosted, Matthew 17:14: There
came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him **γονυπετων αυτον**,
falling down at his knees.

As to the lifting up or stretching out of the hands, (often joined to
kneeling,) of which we have seen already several instances, and of which
we have a very remarkable one in this book, Exodus 17:11, where the
lifting up or stretching out of the hands of Moses was the means of
Israel's prevailing over Amalek; we find many examples of both in ancient
authors. Thus HOMER:—

εσθλον γαρ δυ χειρας ανασχεμεν, αι κ' ελεση.

Iliad xxiv., ver. 301.

For right it is to spread abroad the hands To Jove for mercy.

Also VIRGIL:—

*Corripio e stratis corpus,
TENDOQUE SUPINAS AD COELUM
cum voce MANUS, et munera libo*

AEneid iii., ver. 176.

*I started from my bed, and raised on high
My hands and voice in rapture to the sky;
And pour libations.*

PTT.

*Dixerat: et GENUA AMPLEXUS,
genibusque volutans Haerebat. Ibid., ver. 607.*

*Then kneel'd the wretch, and suppliant clung around
My knees with tears, and grovell'd on the ground. Id.*

— *media inter numina divum Multa Jovem
Manibus SUPPLEX orasse SUPINIS. Ibid. iv., ver. 204.*

*Amidst the statues of the gods he stands,
And spreading forth to Jove his lifted hands. Id.*

*Et DUPLICES cum voce MANUS ad sidera
TENDIT. Ibid. x., ver. 667.*

And lifted both his hands and voice to heaven. In some cases the person petitioning came forward, and either sat in the dust or kneeled on the ground, placing his left hand on the knee of him from whom he expected the favor, while he touched the person's chin with his right. We have an instance of this also in HOMER:

και ρα παροιθ' αυτοιο καθεζετο, και λαβε γουνων
σκαιη· δεξιτερη δ' αρ' υπ' ανθερεωνος ελουσα.

Iliad i., ver. 500.

Suppliant the goddess stood: one hand she placed Beneath his chin, and one his knee embraced. POPE.

When the supplicant could not approach the person to whom he prayed, as where a deity was the object of the prayer, he washed his hands, made an offering, and kneeling down, either stretched out both his hands to heaven, or laid them upon the offering or sacrifice, or upon the altar. Thus Homer represents the priest of Apollo praying:—

χερνιψαντο δ' επειτα, και ουλοχυτας ανελοντο.
τοισιν δε χρυσης μεγαλ' ευχετο, χειρας ανασχων.

Iliad i., ver. 449.

*With water purify their hands, and take
The sacred offering of the salted cake,
While thus, with arms devoutly raised in air,
And solemn voice, the priest directs his prayer.*

POPE.

How necessary ablutions of the whole body, and of the hands particularly, accompanied with offerings and sacrifices were, under the law, every reader of the Bible knows: see especially Exodus 29:1-4, where Aaron and his sons were commanded to be washed, previously to their performing the priest's office; and Exodus 30:19-21, where it is said: "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands — that they die not." See also Leviticus 17:15. When the high priest among the Jews blessed the people, he lifted up his hands, Leviticus 9:22. And the Israelites, when they presented a sacrifice to God, lifted up their hands and placed them on the head of the victim: "If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord-of the cattle of the herd, and of the flock- he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him;" Leviticus 1:2-4. To these circumstances the apostle alludes, 1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." In the apostle's word **επαίροντας**, lifting up, there is a manifest reference to stretching out the hands to place them either on the altar or on the head of the victim. Four things were signified by this lifting up of the hands. 1. It was the posture of supplication, and expressed a strong invitation-Come to my help; 2. It expressed the earnest desire of the person to lay hold on the help he required, by bringing him who was the object of his prayer to his assistance; 3. It showed the ardor of the person to receive the blessings he expected; and 4. By this act he designated and consecrated his offering or sacrifice to his God.

From a great number of evidences and coincidences it is not unreasonable to conclude that the heathens borrowed all that was pure and rational, even in their mode of worship, from the ancient people of God; and that the preceding quotations are proofs of this.

Verse 31. *The flax and the barley was smitten*— The word **פשתה** pishtah, flax, Mr. Parkhurst thinks, is derived from the root **פשמ** pashat, to strip, because the substance which we term flax is properly the bark or rind of the vegetable, pilled or stripped off the stalks. From time immemorial Egypt was celebrated for the production and manufacture of flax: hence the linen and fine linen of Egypt, so often spoken of in ancient authors.

Barley— שַׁעֲרָה seorah, from שַׁעַר saar, to stand on end, to be rough, bristly, etc.; hence שַׁעַר sear, the hair of the head, and שַׁעִיר sair, a he-goat, because of its shaggy hair; and hence also barley, because of the rough and prickly beard with which the ears are covered and defended.

Dr. Pocock has observed that there is a double seed-time and harvest in Egypt: Rice, India wheat, and a grain called the corn of Damascus, and in Italian surgo rosso, are sown and reaped at a very different time from wheat, barley and flax. The first are sown in March, before the overflowing of the Nile, and reaped about October; whereas the wheat and barley are sown in November and December, as soon as the Nile is gone off, and are reaped before May.

Pliny observes, Hist. Nat., lib. xviii., cap. 10, that in Egypt the barley is ready for reaping in six months after it is sown, and wheat in seven. In Agypto HORDEUM sexto a satu mense, FEUMENTA septimo metuntur.

The flax was boiled.— Meaning, I suppose, was grown up into a stalk: the original is גִּבּוֹל gibol, podded or was in the pod.

The word well expresses that globous pod on the top of the stalk of flax which succeeds the flower and contains the seed, very properly expressed by the Septuagint, **το δε λινον σπερματιζον**, but the flax was in seed or was seeding.

Verse 32. But the wheat and the rye were not smitten— Wheat, חֲטָה chittah, which Mr. Parkhurst thinks should be derived from the Chaldee and Samaritan חָטִי chati, which signifies tender, delicious, delicate, because of the superiority of its flavor, etc., to every other kind of grain. But this term in Scripture appears to mean any kind of bread-corn. Rye, כְּסֻמֶת kussemeth, from כָּסַם casam, to have long hair; and hence, though the particular species is not known, the word must mean some bearded grain. The Septuagint call it **ολυρα**, the Vulgate for, and Aquila **ζεα**, which signify the grain called spelt; and some suppose that rice is meant.

Mr. Harmer, referring to the double harvest in Egypt mentioned by Dr. Pocock, says that the circumstance of the wheat and the rye being אֶפִּילֹת aphiloth, dark or hidden, as the margin renders it, (i.e., they were sown, but not grown up,) shows that it was the Indian wheat or surgo rosso

mentioned Exodus 9:31, which, with the rye, escaped, while the barley and flax were smitten because they were at or nearly at a state of maturity. See Harmer's Obs., vol. iv., p. 11, edit 1808. But what is intended by the words in the Hebrew text we cannot positively say, as there is a great variety of opinions on this subject, both among the versions and the commentators. The Anglo-Saxon translator, probably from not knowing the meaning of the words, omits the whole verse.

Verse 33. *Spread abroad his hands*— Probably with the rod of God in them. See what has been said on the spreading out of the hands in prayer, Exodus 9:29. See Clarke on "Exodus 9:29".

Verse 34. *He sinned yet more, and hardened his heart*— These were merely acts of his own; "for who can deny," says Mr. Psalmanazar, "that what God did on Pharaoh was much more proper to soften than to harden his heart; especially when it is observable that it was not till after seeing each miracle, and after the ceasing of each plague, that his heart is said to have been hardened? The verbs here used are in the conjugations *pihel* and *hiphil*, and often signify a bare permission, from which it is plain that the words should have been read, God suffered the heart of Pharaoh to be hardened."-Universal Hist., vol. i., p. 494. Note D.

Verse 35. *And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened*— In consequence of his sinning yet more, and hardening his own heart against both the judgments and mercies of God, we need not be surprised that, after God had given him the means of softening and repentance, and he had in every instance resisted and abused them, he should at last have been left to the hardness and darkness of his own obstinate heart, so as to fill up the measure of his iniquity, and rush headlong to his own destruction.

IN the fifth, sixth, and seventh plagues described in this chapter, we have additional proofs of the justice and mercy of God, as well as of the stupidity, rebellion, and wickedness of Pharaoh and his courtiers. As these continued to contradict and resist, it was just that God should continue to inflict those punishments which their iniquities deserved. Yet in the midst of judgment he remembers mercy; and therefore Moses and Aaron are sent to inform the Egyptians that such plagues would come if they continued obstinate. Here is mercy; the cattle only are destroyed, and the people saved! Is it not evident from all these messages, and the repeated

expostulations of Moses and Aaron in the name and on the authority of God, that Pharaoh was bound by no fatal necessity to continue his obstinacy; that he might have humbled himself before God, and thus prevented the disasters that fell on the land, and saved himself and his people from destruction? But he would sin, and therefore he must be punished.

In the sixth plague Pharaoh had advantages which he had not before. The magicians, by their successful imitations of the miracles wrought by Moses, made it doubtful to the Egyptians whether Moses himself was not a magician acting without any Divine authority; but the plague of the boils, which they could not imitate, by which they were themselves afflicted, and which they confessed to be the finger of God, decided the business. Pharaoh had no longer any excuse, and must know that he had now to contend, not with Moses and Aaron, mortals like himself, but with the living God. How strange, then, that he should continue to resist! Many affect to be astonished at this, and think it must be attributed only to a sovereign controlling influence of God, which rendered it impossible for him to repent or take warning. But the whole conduct of God shows the improbability of this opinion: and is not the conduct of Pharaoh and his courtiers copied and reacted by thousands who are never suspected to be under any such necessitating decree? Every sinner under heaven, who has the Bible in his hand, is acting the same part. God says to the swearer and the profane, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; and yet common swearing and profaneness are most scandalously common among multitudes who bear the Christian name, and who presume on the mercy of God to get at last to the kingdom of heaven! He says also, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet; and sanctions all these commandments with the most awful penalties: and yet, with all these things before them, and the professed belief that they came from God, Sabbath-breakers, men-slayers, adulterers, fornicators, thieves, dishonest men, false witnesses, liars, slanderers, backbiters, covetous men, lovers of the world more than lovers of God, are found by hundreds and thousands! What were the crimes of the poor half-blind Egyptian king when compared with these! He sinned against a comparatively unknown God; these sin against the God of their

fathers-against the God and Father of Him whom they call their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! They sin with the Bible in their hand, and a conviction of its Divine authority in their hearts. They sin against light and knowledge; against the checks of their consciences, the reproofs of their friends, the admonitions of the messengers of God; against Moses and Aaron in the law; against the testimony of all the prophets; against the evangelists, the apostles, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Judge of all men, and the Savior of the world! What were Pharaoh's crimes to the crimes of these? On comparison, his atom of moral turpitude is lost in their world of iniquity. And yet who supposes these to be under any necessitating decree to sin on, and go to perdition? Nor are they; nor was Pharaoh. In all things God has proved both his justice and mercy to be clear in this point. Pharaoh, through a principle of covetousness, refused to dismiss the Israelites, whose services he found profitable to the state: these are absorbed in the love of the world, the love of pleasure, and the love of gain; nor will they let one lust go, even in the presence of the thunders of Sinai, or in sight of the agony, bloody sweat, crucifixion, and death of Jesus Christ! Alas! how many are in the habit of considering Pharaoh the worst of human beings, inevitably cut off from the possibility of being saved because of his iniquities, who outdo him so far in the viciousness of their lives, that Pharaoh, hardening his heart against ten plagues, appears a saint when compared with those who are hardening their hearts against ten millions of mercies. Reader, art thou of this number? Proceed no farther! God's judgments linger not. Desperate as thy state is, thou mayest return; and thou, even thou, find mercy through the blood of the Lamb.

See the observations at the conclusion of the next chapter. See Clarke at "Exodus 10:29".

CHAPTER 10

Moses is again sent to Pharaoh, and expostulates with him on his refusal to let the Hebrews go, 1-3. The eighth plague, viz., of locusts, is threatened, 4. The extent and oppressive nature of this plague, 5, 6. Pharaoh's servants counsel him to dismiss the Hebrews, 7. He calls for Moses and Aaron, and inquires who they are of the Hebrews who wish to go, 8. Moses having answered that the whole people, with their flocks and herds must go and hold a feast to the Lord, 9, Pharaoh is enraged, and having granted permission only to the men, drives Moses and Aaron from his presence, 10, 11. Moses is commanded to stretch out his hand and bring the locusts, 12. He does so, and an east wind is sent, which, blowing all that day and night, brings the locusts the next morning, 13. The devastation occasioned by these insects, 14, 15. Pharaoh is humbled, acknowledges his sin, and begs Moses to intercede with Jehovah for him, 16, 17. Moses does so, and at his request a strong west wind is sent, which carries all the locusts to the Red Sea, 18, 19. Pharaoh's heart is again hardened, 20. Moses is commanded to bring the ninth plague of extraordinary darkness over all the land of Egypt, 21. The nature, duration, and effects of this, 22, 23. Pharaoh, again humbled, consents to let the people go, provided they leave their cattle behind, 24. Moses insists on having all their cattle, because of the sacrifices which they must make to the Lord, 25, 26. Pharaoh, again hardened, refuses, 27. Orders Moses from his presence, and threatens him with death should he ever return, 28. Moses departs with the promise of returning no more, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. *Hardened his heart*— God suffered his natural obstinacy to prevail, that he might have farther opportunities of showing forth his eternal power and Godhead.

Verse 2. *That thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son*— That the miracles wrought at this time might be a record for the instruction of the latest posterity, that Jehovah alone, the God of the Hebrews, was the sole

Maker, Governor, and Supporter of the heavens and the earth. Thus we find God so did his marvelous works, that they might be had in everlasting remembrance. It was not to crush the poor worm, Pharaoh, that he wrought such mighty wonders, but to convince his enemies, to the end of the world, that no cunning or power can prevail against him; and to show his followers that whosoever trusted in him should never be confounded.

Verse 3. *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself*— Had it been impossible for Pharaoh, in all the preceding plagues, to have humbled himself and repented can we suppose that God could have addressed him in such language as the preceding? We may rest assured that there was always a time in which he might have relented, and that it was because he hardened his heart at such times that God is said to harden him, i.e., to give him up to his own stubborn and obstinate heart; in consequence of which he refused to let the people go, so that God had a fresh opportunity to work another miracle, for the very gracious purposes mentioned in Exodus 10:2. Had Pharaoh relented before, the same gracious ends would have been accomplished by other means.

THE EIGHTH PLAGUE-THE LOCUSTS

Verse 4. *To-morrow will I bring the locusts*— The word אַרְבֵּה *arbeh*, a locust, is probably from the root רָבָה *rabah*, he multiplied, became great, mighty, etc.; because of the immense swarms of these animals by which different countries, especially the east, are infested. The locust, in entomology, belongs to a genus of insects known among naturalists by the term GRYLLI; and includes three species, crickets, grasshoppers, and those commonly called locusts; and as they multiply faster than any other animal in creation, they are properly entitled to the name אַרְבֵּה *arbeh*, which might be translated the numerous or multiplied insect. See this circumstance referred to, Judges 6:5; 7:12; Psalm 105:34; Jeremiah 46:23; 51:14; Joel 1:6; Nahum 3:15; Judith 2:19, 20; where the most numerous armies are compared to the *arbeh* or locust. The locust has a large open mouth; and in its two jaws it has four incisive teeth, which traverse each other like scissors, being calculated, from their mechanism, to grip or cut. Mr. Volney, in his Travels in Syria, gives a striking account of this most awful scourge of God:—

“Syria partakes together with Egypt and Persia, and almost all the whole middle part of Asia, in the terrible scourge, I mean those clouds of locusts of which travelers have spoken; the quantity of which is incredible to any person who has not himself seen them, the earth being covered by them for several leagues round. The noise they make in browsing the plants and trees may be heard at a distance, like an army plundering in secret. Fire seems to follow their tracks. Wherever their legions march the verdure disappears from the country, like a curtain drawn aside; the trees and plants, despoiled of their leaves, make the hideous appearance of winter instantly succeed to the bright scenes of spring. When these clouds of locusts take their flight, in order to surmount some obstacle, or the more rapidly to cross some desert, one may literally say that the sun is darkened by them.”

Baron de Tott gives a similar account: “Clouds of locusts frequently alight on the plains of the Noguais, (the Tartars,) and giving preference to their fields of millet, ravage them in an instant. Their approach darkens the horizon, and so enormous is their multitude, it hides the light of the sun. They alight on the fields, and there form a bed of six or seven inches thick. To the noise of their flight succeeds that of their devouring actively, which resembles the rattling of hail-stones; but its consequences are infinitely more destructive. Fire itself eats not so fast; nor is there any appearance of vegetation to be found when they again take their flight, and go elsewhere to produce new disasters.”

Dr. Shaw, who witnessed most formidable swarms of these in Barbary in the years 1724 and 1725, gives the following account of them: “They were much larger than our grasshoppers, and had brown-spotted wings, with legs and bodies of a bright yellow. Their first appearance was towards the latter end of March. In the middle of April their numerous swarms, like a succession of clouds, darkened the sun. In the month of May they retired to the adjacent plains to deposit their eggs: these were no sooner hatched in June than the young brood first produced, while in their caterpillar or worm-like state, formed themselves into a compact body of more than a furlong square, and, marching directly forward, climbed over trees, walls, and houses, devouring every plant in their way. Within a day or two another brood was hatched, and advancing in the same manner, gnawed off the young branches and bark of the trees left by the former, making a

complete desolation. The inhabitants, to stop their progress, made a variety of pits and trenches all over their fields and gardens, which they filled with water, or else heaped up therein heath, stubble, etc., which they set on fire; but to no purpose: for the trenches were quickly filled up and the fires extinguished, by infinite swarms succeeding one another; while the front seemed regardless of danger, and the rear pressed on so close that retreat was altogether impossible. In a month's time they threw off their worm-like state; and in a new form, with wings and legs, and additional powers, returned to their former voracity."-Shaw's Travels, 187. 188, 4to edition.

The descriptions given by these travelers show that God's army, described by the Prophet Joel, Joel 2:1-11, was innumerable swarms of locusts, to which the accounts given by Dr. Shaw and others exactly agree.

Verse 5. *They shall cover the face of the earth*— They sometimes cover the whole ground to the depth of six or eight inches. See the preceding accounts.

Verse 6. *They shall fill thy houses*— Dr. Shaw mentions this circumstance; "they entered," says he, "Into our very houses and bed-chambers, like so many thieves."-Ibid. p. 187.

Verse 7. *How long shall this man be a snare unto us?*— As there is no noun in the text, the pronoun זֶה zeh may either refer to the Israelites, to the plague by which they were then afflicted, or to Moses and Aaron, the instruments used by the Most High in their chastisement. The Vulgate translates, Usquequo patiemur hoc scandalum? "How long shall we suffer this scandal or reproach?"

Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God— Much of the energy of several passages is lost in translating יהוה Yehovah by the term Lord. The Egyptians had their gods, and they supposed that the Hebrews had a god like unto their own; that this Jehovah required their services, and would continue to afflict Egypt till his people were permitted to worship him in his own way.

Egypt is destroyed?— This last plague had nearly ruined the whole land.

Verse 8. *Who are they that shall go?*— Though the Egyptians, about fourscore years before, wished to destroy the Hebrews, yet they found them now so profitable to the state that they were unwilling to part with them.

Verse 9. *We will go with our young and with our old, etc.*— As a feast was to be celebrated to the honor of Jehovah, all who were partakers of his bounty and providential kindness must go and perform their part in the solemnity. The men and the women must make the feast, the children must witness it, and the cattle must be taken along with them to furnish the sacrifices necessary on this occasion. This must have appeared reasonable to the Egyptians, because it was their own custom in their religious assemblies. Men, women, and children attended them, often to the amount of several hundred thousand. Herodotus informs us, in speaking of the six annual feasts celebrated by the Egyptians in honor of their deities, that they hold their chief one at the city of Bubastis in honor of Neith or Diana; that they go thither by water in boats—men, women, and children; that during their voyage some of the women play on castanets, and some of the men upon flutes, while the rest are employed in singing and clapping their hands; and that, when they arrive at Bubastis, they sacrifice a vast number of victims, and drink much wine; and that at one such festival, the inhabitants assured him, that there were not assembled fewer than 700,000 men and women, without reckoning the children. — Euterpe, chap. lix., lx. I find that the ancient Egyptians called Diana Neith; this comes as near as possible to the Gaile of the Isle of Man. The moon is called yn neith or neath; and also ke-sollus, from ke, smooth or even, and sollus, light, the SMOOTH LIGHT; perhaps to distinguish her from the sun, grian, from gri-tien or cri-tien, i.e., TREMBLING FIRE; yn neith-easya, as Macpherson has it, signifies wan complexion. I should rather incline to think it may come from aise. The Celtic nations thought that the heavenly luminaries were the residences of spirits which they distinguished by the name of aise, thus grian-ais signifies the spirit of the sun.

Moses and Aaron, requesting liberty for the Hebrews to go three days' journey into the wilderness, and with them all their wives, little ones, and cattle, in order to hold a feast unto Jehovah their God, must have at least appeared as reasonable to the Egyptians as their going to the city of Bubastis with their wives, little ones, and cattle, to hold a feast to Neith or

Diana, who was there worshipped. The parallel in these two cases is too striking to pass unnoticed.

Verse 10. *Let the Lord be so with you*— This is an obscure sentence. Some suppose that Pharaoh meant it as a curse, as if he had said, “May your God be as surely with you, as I shall let you go!” For as he purposed not to permit them to go, so he wished them as much of the Divine help as they should have of his permission.

Look-for evil is before you.— ראו כי רעה נגד פניכם reu ki raah neged peneychem, See ye that evil is before your faces — if you attempt to go, ye shall meet with the punishment ye deserve. Probably Pharaoh intended to insinuate that they had some sinister designs, and that they wished to go in a body that they might the better accomplish their purpose; but if they had no such designs they would be contented for the males to go, and leave their wives and children behind: for he well knew if the men went and left their families they would infallibly return, but that if he permitted them to take their families with them, they would undoubtedly make their escape; therefore he says, Exodus 10:11, Go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord.

Verse 13. *The Lord brought an east wind*— As locusts abounded in those countries, and particularly in Aethiopia, and more especially at this time of the year, God had no need to create new swarms for this purpose; all that was requisite was to cause such a wind to blow as would bring those which already existed over the land of Egypt. The miracle in this business was the bringing the locusts at the appointed time, and causing the proper wind to blow for that purpose; and then taking them away after a similar manner.

Verse 14. *Before them there were no such locusts, etc.*— They exceeded all that went before, or were since, in number, and in the devastations they produced. Probably both these things are intended in the passage. See Exodus 10:15.

Verse 15. *There remained not any green thing*— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 10:4”.

Verse 17. *Forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once*— What a strange case! And what a series of softening and hardening, of sinning and

repenting! Had he not now another opportunity of returning to God? But the love of gain, and the gratification of his own self-will and obstinacy, finally prevailed.

Verse 19. A mighty strong west wind—רוח ים ruach yam, literally the wind of the sea; the wind that blew from the Mediterranean Sea, which lay north-west of Egypt, which had the Red Sea on the east. Here again God works by natural means; he brought the locusts by the east wind, and took them away by the west or north-west wind, which carried them to the Red Sea where they were drowned.

The Red Sea—ים סופ yam suph, the weedy sea; so called, as some suppose, from the great quantity of alga or sea-weed which grows in it and about its shores. But Mr. Bruce, who has sailed the whole extent of it, declares that he never saw in it a weed of any kind; and supposes it has its name suph from the vast quantity of coral which grows in it, as trees and plants do on land. “One of these,” he observes, “from a root nearly central, threw out ramifications in a nearly circular form measuring twenty-six feet diameter every way.”-Travels, vol. ii., p. 138. In the Septuagint it is called *θαλασσα ερυθρα*, the Red Sea, from which version we have borrowed the name; and Mr. Bruce supposes that it had this name from Edom or Esau, whose territories extended to its coasts; for it is well known that the word *אדום* Edom in Hebrew signifies red or ruddy. The Red Sea, called also the Arabic Gulf, separates Arabia from Upper Aethiopia and part of Egypt. It is computed to be three hundred and fifty leagues in length from Suez to the Straits of Babelmandel, and is about forty leagues in breadth. It is not very tempestuous, and the winds usually blow from north to south, and from south to north, six months in the year; and, like the monsoons of India, invariably determine the seasons of sailing into or out of this sea. It is divided into two gulfs: that to the east called the Elanitic Gulf, from the city of Elana to the north end of it; and that to the west called the Heroopolitan Gulf, from the city of Heroopolis; the former of which belongs to Arabia, the latter to Egypt. The Heroopolitan Gulf is called by the Arabians Bahr el Kolzum, the sea of destruction, or of Clysmæ, an ancient town in that quarter; and the Elanitic Gulf Bahr el Akaba, the sea of Akaba, a town situated on its most inland point.

Verse 21. *Darkness which may be felt.*— Probably this was occasioned by a superabundance of aqueous vapors floating in the atmosphere, which were so thick as to prevent the rays of the sun from penetrating through them; an extraordinarily thick mist supernaturally, i.e., miraculously, brought on. An awful emblem of the darkened state of the Egyptians and their king.

Verse 23. *They saw not one another*— So deep was the obscurity, and probably such was its nature, that no artificial light could be procured; as the thick clammy vapors would prevent lamps, etc., from burning, or if they even could be ignited, the light through the palpable obscurity, could diffuse itself to no distance from the burning body. The author of the book of Wisdom, chap. 17:2-19, gives a fearful description of this plague. He says, “The Egyptians were shut up in their houses, the prisoners of darkness: and were fettered with the bonds of a long night. They were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness, being horribly astonished and troubled with strange apparitions; for neither might the corner that held them keep them from fear; but noises as of waters falling down sounded about them; and sad visions appeared unto them with heavy countenances. No power of the fire could give them light-only there appeared unto them a fire kindled of itself very dreadful; for being much terrified, they thought the things which they saw to be worse than the sight they saw not. For though no terrible thing did scare them, yet being scared with beasts that passed by, and hissing of serpents, they died for fear: for whether he were husbandman, or shepherd, or a laborer in the field, he was overtaken; for they were all bound with one chain of darkness. Whether it were a whistling wind, or a terrible sound of stones cast down, or a running that could not be seen of tripping beasts, or a roaring voice of most savage wild beasts, or a rebounding echo from the hollow mountains, these things made them to swoon for fear.” See Psalm 78:49.

To this description nothing need be added except this circumstance, that the darkness, with its attendant horrors, lasted for three days.

All the children of Israel had light— By thus distinguishing the Israelites, God showed the Egyptians that the darkness was produced by his power; that he sent it in judgment against them for their cruelty to his

people; that because they trusted in him they were exempted from these plagues; that in the displeasure of such a Being his enemies had every thing to fear, and in his approbation his followers had every thing to hope.

Verse 24. *Only let your flocks and your herds be stayed*— Pharaoh cannot get all he wishes; and as he sees it impossible to contend with Jehovah, he now consents to give up the Israelites, their wives and their children, provided he may keep their flocks and their herds. The cruelty of this demand is not more evident than its avarice. Had six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, gone three days' journey into the wilderness without their cattle, they must have inevitably perished, being without milk for their little ones, and animal food for their own sustenance, in a place where little as a substitute could possibly be found. It is evident from this that Pharaoh intended the total destruction of the whole Israelitish host.

Verse 26. *We know not with what we must serve the Lord, etc.*— The law was not yet given; the ordinances concerning the different kinds of sacrifices and offerings not known. What kind and what number of animals God should require to be sacrificed, even Moses himself could not as yet tell. He therefore very properly insists on taking the whole of their herds with them, and not leaving even one hoof behind.

Verse 27. *The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart*— He had yet another miracle to work for the complete conviction of the Egyptians and triumph of his people; and till that was wrought he permitted the natural obstinacy of Pharaoh's haughty heart to have its full sway, after each resistance of the gracious influence which was intended to soften and bring him to repentance.

Verse 28. *See my face no more*— Hitherto Pharaoh had left the way open for negotiation; but now, in wrath against Jehovah, he dismisses his ambassador, and threatens him with death if he should attempt any more to come into his presence.

Verse 29. *I will see thy face again no more.*— It is very likely that this was the last interview that Moses had with Pharaoh, for what is related, Exodus 11:4-8, might have been spoken on this very occasion, as it is very possible that God gave Moses to understand his purpose to slay the

first-born, while before Pharaoh at this time; so, in all probability, the interview mentioned here was the last which Moses had with the Egyptian king. It is true that in Exodus 12:31 it is stated that Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night, and ordered them to leave Egypt, and to take all their substance with them, which seems to imply that there was another interview, but the words may imply no more than that Moses and Aaron received such a message from Pharaoh. If, however, this mode of interpreting these passages should not seem satisfactory to any, he may understand the words of Moses thus: I will see thy face — seek thy favor, no more in behalf of my people, which was literally true; for if Moses did appear any more before Pharaoh, it was not as a supplicant, but merely as the ambassador of God, to denounce his judgments by giving him the final determination of Jehovah relative to the destruction of the first-born.

1. To the observations at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, we may add that at first view it seems exceedingly strange that, after all the proofs Pharaoh had of the power of God, he should have acted in the manner related in this and the preceding chapters, alternately sinning and repenting; but it is really a common case, and multitudes who condemn the conduct of this miserable Egyptian king, act in a similar manner. They relent when smarting under God's judgments, but harden their hearts when these judgments are removed. Of this kind I have witnessed numerous cases. To such God says by his prophet, Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more. Reader, are not the vows of God upon thee? Often when afflicted in thyself or family hast thou not said like Pharaoh, (Exodus 10:17,) Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only **THIS ONCE**, and take away from me this death **ONLY**? And yet when thou hadst respite, didst thou not harden thy heart, and with returning health and strength didst thou not return unto iniquity? And art thou not still in the broad road of transgression? Be not deceived; God is not mocked; he warns thee, but he will not be mocked by thee. What thou sowest, that thou must reap. Think then what a most dreadful harvest thou mayest expect from the seeds of vice which thou hast already sown!

2. Even in the face of God's judgments the spirit of avarice will make its requisitions. Only let your flocks and your herds be stayed, says Pharaoh. The love of gain was the ruling principle of this man's soul, and he chooses desperately to contend with the justice of his Maker, rather than give up

his bosom sin! Reader, is this not thy own case? And art thou not ready, with Pharaoh, to say to the messenger of God, who rebukes thee for thy worldly mindedness, etc., Get thee gone from me. Take heed to thyself, and see my face no more. Esau and Pharaoh have both got a very bad name, and many persons who are repeating their crimes are the foremost to cover them with obloquy! When shall we learn to look at home? to take warning by the miscarriages of others, and thus shun the pit into which we have seen so many fall? If God were to give the history of every man who hardens himself from his fear, how many Pharaoh-like cases should we have on record! But a day is coming in which the secrets of every heart shall be revealed, and the history of every man's life laid open to an assembled world.

CHAPTER 11

God purposes to bring another plague upon Pharaoh, after which he should let the Israelites go, 1. They are commanded to ask gold and silver from the Egyptians, 2. The estimation in which Moses was held among the Egyptians, 3. Moses predicts the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, 4-6, and Israel's protection, 7. On seeing which, Pharaoh and his servants should entreat the Hebrews to depart, 8. The prediction of his previous obstinacy, 9, 10.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *The Lord said unto Moses*— Calmet contends that this should be read in the preterpluperfect tense, for the Lord HAD said to Moses, as the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth verses appear to have been spoken when Moses had the interview with Pharaoh mentioned in the preceding chapter; see Clarke's note on "Exodus 10:29". If therefore this chapter be connected with the preceding, as it should be, and the first three verses not only read in the past tense but also in a parenthesis, the sense will be much more distinct and clear than it now appears.

Verse 2. *Let every man borrow*— For a proper correction of the strange mistranslation of the word שאל shaal in this verse, see Clarke's note on "Exodus 3:22".

Verse 3. *The man Moses was very great*— The miracles which Pharaoh and his servants had already seen him work had doubtless impressed them with a high opinion of his wisdom and power. Had he not appeared in their sight as a very extraordinary person, whom it would have been very dangerous to molest, we may naturally conclude that some violence would long ere this have been offered to his person.

Verse 4. *About midnight will I go out*— Whether God did this by the ministry of a good or of an evil angel is a matter of little importance, though some commentators have greatly magnified it. Both kinds of angels are under his power and jurisdiction, and he may employ them as he

pleases. Such a work of destruction as the slaying of the first-born is supposed to be more proper for a bad than for a good angel. But the works of God's justice are not less holy and pure than the works of his mercy; and the highest archangel may, with the utmost propriety, be employed in either.

Verse 5. *The first-born of Pharaoh, etc.*— From the heir to the Egyptian throne to the son of the most abject slave, or the principal person in each family. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 12:29".

The maid-servant that is behind the mill— The meanest slaves were employed in this work. In many parts of the east they still grind all their corn with a kind of portable mill-stones, the upper one of which is turned round by a sort of lever fixed in the rim. A drawing of one of these machines as used in China is now before me, and the person who grinds is represented as pushing the lever before him, and thus running round with the stone. Perhaps something like this is intended by the expression **BEHIND the mill** in the text. On this passage Dr. Shaw has the following observation:—"Most families grind their wheat and barley at home, having two portable mill-stones for that purpose, the uppermost of which is turned round by a small handle of wood or iron that is placed in the rim. When this stone is large, or expedition required, a second person is called in to assist; and as it is usual for women alone to be concerned in this employment, who seat themselves over against each other with the mill-stone between them, we may see, not only the propriety of the expression (Exodus 11:5) of sitting behind the mill, but the force of another, (Matthew 24:41,) that two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."—*Travels*, p. 231, 4to edit. These portable mills, under the name of querns, were used among our ancestors in this and the sister kingdoms, and some of them are in use to the present day. Both the instrument and its name our forefathers seem to have borrowed from the continent. They have long existed among the inhabitants of Shetland, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, etc.

Verse 6. *There shall be a great cry*— Of the dying and for the dead. See more on this subject, Exodus 12:30.

Verse 7. *Not a dog move his tongue*— This passage has been generally understood as a proverbial expression, intimating that the Israelites should

not only be free from this death, but that they should depart without any kind of molestation. For though there must be much bustle and comparative confusion in the sudden removal of six hundred thousand persons with their wives, children, goods, cattle, etc., yet this should produce so little alarm that even the dogs should not bark at them, which it would be natural to expect, as the principal stir was to be about midnight.

After giving this general explanation from others, I may be permitted to hazard a conjecture of my own. And, 1. Is it not probable that the allusion is here made to a well-known custom of dogs howling when any mortality is in a village, street, or even house, where such animals are? There are innumerable instances of the faithful house-dog howling when a death happens in a family, as if distressed on the account, feeling for the loss of his benefactor; but their apparent presaging such an event by their cries, as some will have it, may be attributed, not to any prescience, but to the exquisite keenness of their scent. If the words may be understood in this way, then the great cry through the whole land of Egypt may refer to this very circumstance: as dogs were sacred among them, and consequently religiously preserved, they must have existed in great multitudes. 2. We know that one of their principal deities was Osiris, whose son, worshipped under the form of a dog, or a man with a dog's head, was called Anubis latrator, the barking Anubis. May he not be represented as deploring a calamity which he had no power to prevent among his worshippers, nor influence to inflict punishment upon those who set his deity at naught? Hence while there was a great cry, **צעקה גדולה** tseakah gedolah, throughout all the land of Egypt, because of the mortality in every house, yet among the Israelites there was no death, consequently no dog moved his tongue to howl for their calamity; nor could the object of the Egyptians' worship inflict any similar punishment on the worshippers of Jehovah.

In honor of this dog-god there was a city called Anubis in Egypt, by the Greeks called Cynopolis, the city of the dog, the same that is now called Menich; in this he had a temple, and dogs, which were sacred to him, were here fed with consecrated victuals.

Thus, as in the first plagues their magicians were confounded, so in this last their gods were put to flight. And may not this be referred to in

Exodus 12:12, when Jehovah says: Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment? Should it be objected, that to consider the passage in this light would be to acknowledge the being and deity of the fictitious Anubis, it may be answered, that in the sacred writings it is not an uncommon thing to see the idol acknowledged in order to show its nullity, and the more forcibly to express contempt for it, for its worshippers, and for its worship. Thus Isaiah represents the Babylonish idols as being endued with sense, bowing down under the judgments of God, utterly unable to help themselves or their worshippers, and being a burden to the beasts that carried them: BEL boweth down, NEBO stoopeth; their idols were upon the beasts and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy laden; they are a burden to the weary beast. THEY stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity; Isaiah 46:1, 2. The case of Elijah and the prophets of Baal should not be forgotten here; this prophet, by seeming to acknowledge the reality of Baal's being, though by a strong irony, poured the most sovereign contempt upon him, his worshippers, and his worship: And Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; FOR HE IS A GOD: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked; 1 Kings 18:27. See the observations at the end of chap. 12. See Clarke note at "Exodus 12:51".

The Lord doth put a difference— See on Exodus 8:22. See Clarke note at "Exodus 8:22". And for the variations between the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuch in this place, see at the end of the chapter. See Clarke note at "Exodus 11:9".

Verse 8. *And all these thy servants shall come*— A prediction of what actually took place. See Exodus 12:31-33.

Verse 9. *Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you*— Though shall and will are both reputed signs of the future tense, and by many indiscriminately used, yet they make a most essential difference in composition in a variety of cases. For instance, if we translate לֹא שָׁמַע lo yishma, Pharaoh SHALL not hearken, as in our text, the word shall strongly intimates that it was impossible for Pharaoh to hearken, and that God had placed him under that impossibility: but if we translate as we should do, Pharaoh WILL not hearken, it alters the case most essentially, and agrees with the many

passages in the preceding chapters, where he is said to have hardened his own heart; as this proves that he, without any impulsive necessity, obstinately refused to attend to what Moses said or threatened; and that God took the advantage of this obstinacy to work another miracle, and thus multiply his wonders in the land.

Pharaoh WILL not hearken unto you; and because he would not God hardened his heart-left him to his own obstinacy.

To most critics it is well known that there are in several parts of the Pentateuch considerable differences between the Hebrew and Samaritan copies of this work. In this chapter the variations are of considerable importance, and competent critics have allowed that the Samaritan text, especially in this chapter, is fuller and better connected than that of the Hebrew. 1. It is evident that the eighth verse in the present Hebrew text has no natural connection with the seventh. For in the seventh verse Moses delivers to the Israelites what God had commanded him to say: and in the eighth he appears to continue a direct discourse unto Pharaoh, though it does not appear when this discourse was begun. This is quite contrary to the custom of Moses, Who always particularly notes the commencement of his discourses.

2. It is not likely that the Samaritans have added these portions, as they could have no private interest to serve by so doing; and therefore it is likely that these additions were originally parts of the sacred text, and might have been omitted, because an ancient copyist found the substance of them in other places. It must however be granted, that the principal additions in the Samaritan are repetitions of speeches which exist in the Hebrew text.

3. The principal part of these additions do not appear to have been borrowed from any other quarter. Interpolations in general are easily discerned from the confusion they introduce; but instead of deranging the sense, the additions here made it much more apparent; for should these not be admitted it is evident that something is wanting, without which the connection is incomplete. — See Calmet. But the reader is still requested to observe, that the supplementary matter in the Samaritan is collected from other parts of the Hebrew text; and that the principal merit of the Samaritan is, that it preserves the words in a better arrangement.

Dr. Kennicott has entered into this subject at large, and by printing the two texts in parallel columns, the supplementary matter in the Samaritan and the hiatus in the Hebrew text will be at once perceived. It is well known that he preferred the Samaritan to the Hebrew Pentateuch; and his reasons for that preference in this case I shall subjoin. As the work is extremely scarce from which I select them, one class of readers especially will be glad to meet with them in this place.

“Within these five chapters. 7., 8., 9., 10., and 11., are seven very great differences between the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuchs, relating to the speeches which denounced seven out of the ten judgments upon the Egyptians, viz., waters into blood, frogs, flies, murrain, hail, locusts and destruction of the first-born. The Hebrew text gives the speeches concerning these judgments only once at each; but the Samaritan gives each speech TWICE. In the Hebrew we have the speeches concerning the five first as in command from GOD to Moses, without reading that Moses delivered them; and concerning the two last, as delivered by Moses to Pharaoh, without reading that GOD had commanded them. Whereas in the Samaritan we find every speech TWICE: GOD commands Moses to go and speak thus or thus before Pharaoh; Moses goes and denounces the judgment; Pharaoh disobeys, and the judgment takes place. All this is perfectly regular, and exactly agreeable to the double speeches of Homer in very ancient times. I have not the least doubt that the Hebrew text now wants many words in each of the seven following places: chap. 7., between verses 18 and 19; {Exodus 7:18-19} end of chap. 7.; {Exodus 7:25} chap. 8., between 19 and 20; {Exodus 8:19-20} chap. 10., between 2 and 3; {Exodus 10:2-3} chap. 11., at verses 3 and 4. {Exodus 11:3-4} The reader will permit me to refer him (for all the words thus omitted) to my own edition of the Hebrew Bible, (Oxford 1780, 2 vols. fol.) where the whole differences are most clearly described. As this is a matter of very extensive consequence, I cannot but observe here, that the present Hebrew text of Exodus 11. did formerly, and does still appear to me to furnish a demonstration against itself, in proof of the double speech being formerly recorded there, as it is now in the Samaritan. And some very learned men have confessed the impossibility of explaining this chapter without the assistance of the Samaritan Pentateuch. I shall now give this important chapter as I presume it stood originally, distinguishing by italics all such

words as are added to or differ from our present translation. And before this chapter must be placed the two last verses of the chapter preceding, Exodus 10:28-29: And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast well spoken, I will see thy face again no more.

EXODUS XI

HEBREW TEXT AND PRESENT SAMARITAN TEXT AND VERSION NEW VERSION

1. And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt, afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.
2. Speak now in the ears of the people; and let every man BORROW of his neighbor, and every jewels of silver, jewels of gold.
3. And the LORD GAVE the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man was very great in the land of Egypt, in sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.
4. And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt.
5. And all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill; and all the first-born of beasts.
6. And there shall be a great cry through all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it nor shall be like it any more.
7. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tounge against man or beast that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.
8. And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying Get thee out and all thy people that follow thee; and after that I wil go out. And he went out from Pharoh in great anger.

9. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

10. And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

SAMARITAN TEXT

1. Then Jehovah said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt, and afterwards he will send you out hence: when he will send you away, he will surely drive you hence altogether.

2. Speak now in the ears of the people; and let every man ASK of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, woman of her neighbor, and vessels of silver, and vessels of gold and raiment.

3. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they shall give them what they ask.

4. For about midnight I will go forth into the midst of the land of Egypt.

5. And every first-born in the land of Egypt shalt die, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sitteth upon his throne, unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill; and even unto the first-born of every beast.

6. And there shall be a great cry through all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.

7. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or even against beast; that thou mayest know that Jehovah doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. Moses

8. And thou also shalt be greatly honored in land of Egypt, in the the Pharaoh's the sight of in the servants, and sight of the people.

9. THEN Moses said unto Pharaoh, Thus saith Jehovah, Israel is my son, my first-born; and I said unto thee, Let my son go that he may serve me.

10. But thou hast refused to let him go; behold, Jehovah slayeth thy son, thy first-born.

11. And Moses said, Thus saith Jehovah, About midnight will I go forth into the midst of the land of Egypt.

12. And every first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill; and all and even unto the first-born of every beast.

13. And there shall be a great cry through the land of Egypt, such as there was none like as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.

14. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or even against beast: that thou mayest know that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

15. And all these thy servants shall come down to me, and bow down themselves to me, saying, Go forth, thou and all the people that follow and then I will go that I will go out. forth.

16. Then went he forth from before Pharaoh in great indignation.

17. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Pharaoh doth not hearken unto you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the Egypt.

18. And Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh: but Jehovah hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that not let the children go out of his children of Israel go out of his land.

“The reader has now the whole of this chapter before him. When, therefore, he has first read the 28th and 29th verses of the preceding chapter, and has then observed with due surprise the confusion of the Hebrew text in chap. 11., he will be prepared to acknowledge with due gratitude the regularity and truth of the Samaritan text, through these many and very considerable differences.”-REMARKS on select passages in the Old Testament, 8vo., Oxford, 1787.

The reader will pass his own judgment on the weight of this reasoning, and the importance of the additions preserved in the Samaritan text; a conviction of their utility has induced me to insert them.

CHAPTER 12

The month Abib is to be considered as the commencement of the year, 1, 2. The PASSOVER instituted; the lamb or kid to be used on the occasion to be taken from the flock the tenth day of the month, and each family to provide one, 3, 4. The lamb or kid to be a male of the first year without blemish, 5. To be killed on the fourteenth day, 6, and the blood to be sprinkled on the side posts and lintels of the doors, 7. The flesh to be prepared by roasting, and not to be eaten either sodden or raw, 8, 9; and no part of it to be left till the morning, 10. The people to eat it with their loins girded, etc., as persons prepared for a journey, 11. Why called the PASSOVER, 12. The blood sprinkled on the door posts, etc., to be a token to them of preservation from the destroying angel, 13. The fourteenth day of the month Abib to be a feast for ever, 14. Unleavened bread to be eaten seven days, 15. This also to be observed in all their generations for ever, 17-20. Moses instructs the elders of Israel how they are to offer the lamb and sprinkle his blood, and for what purpose, 21-23. He binds them to instruct their children in the nature of this rite, 24-27. The children of Israel act as commanded, 28. All the first-born of Egypt slain, 29, 30. Pharaoh and the Egyptians urge Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites to depart, 31-33. They prepare for their departure, and get gold, silver, and raiment from the Egyptians, 34-36. They journey from Rameses to Succoth, in number six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, and a mixed multitude, 37, 38. They bake unleavened cakes of the dough they brought with them out of Egypt, 39. The time in which they sojourned in Egypt, 40-42. Different ordinances concerning the PASSOVER, 43-49; which are all punctually observed by the people, who are brought out of Egypt the same day, 50, 51.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 2. *This month shall be unto you the beginning of months*— It is supposed that God now changed the commencement of the Jewish year. The month to which this verse refers, the month Abib, answers to a part of our March and April; whereas it is supposed that previously to this the

year began with Tisri, which answers to a part of our September; for in this month the Jews suppose God created the world, when the earth appeared at once with all its fruits in perfection. From this circumstance the Jews have formed a twofold commencement of the year, which has given rise to a twofold denomination of the year itself, to which they afterwards attended in all their reckonings: that which began with Tisri or September was called their civil year; that which began with Abib or March was called the sacred or ecclesiastical year.

As the exodus of the Israelites formed a particular era, which is referred to in Jewish reckonings down to the building of the temple, I have marked it as such in the chronology in the margin; and shall carry it down to the time in which it ceased to be acknowledged.

Some very eminently learned men dispute this; and especially Houbigant, who contends with great plausibility of argument that no new commencement of the year is noted in this place; for that the year had always begun in this month, and that the words shall be, which are inserted by different versions, have nothing answering to them in the Hebrew, which he renders literally thus. *Hic mensis vobis est caput mensium; hic vobis primus est anni mensis.* “This month is to you the head or chief of the months; it is to you the first month of the year.” And he observes farther that God only marks it thus, as is evident from the context, to show the people that this month, which was the beginning of their year, should be so designated as to point out to their posterity on what month and on what day of the month they were to celebrate the passover and the fast of unleavened bread. His words are these: “*Ergo superest, et Hebr. ipso ex contextu efficitur, non hic novi ordinis annum constitui, sed eum anni mensem, qui esset primus, ideo commemorari, ut posteris constaret, quo mense, et quo die mensis paseha et azyma celebranda essent.*”

Verse 3. *In the tenth day of this month*— In after times they began their preparation on the thirteenth day or day before the PASSOVER, which was not celebrated till the fourteenth day, see Exodus 12:6: but on the present occasion, as this was their first passover, they probably required more time to get ready in; as a state of very great confusion must have prevailed at this time. Mr. Ainsworth remarks that on this day the Israelites did afterwards go through Jordan into the land of Canaan; Joshua 4:19. And

Christ, our Paschal Lamb, on this day entered Jerusalem, riding on an ass; the people bearing palm branches, and crying, Hosanna, John 12:1, 12, 13, etc.: and in him this type was truly fulfilled.

A lamb— The original word **לֶמֶן** seh signifies the young of sheep and of goats, and may be indifferently translated either lamb or kid. See Exodus 12:5.

A lamb for a house— The whole host of Israel was divided into twelve tribes, these tribes into families, the families into houses, and the houses into particular persons; Numbers 1., Joshua 7:14. — Ainsworth.

Verse 4. *If the household be too little*— That is, if there be not persons enough in one family to eat a whole lamb, then two families must join together. The rabbins allow that there should be at least ten persons to one paschal lamb, and not more than twenty.

Take it, according to the number of the souls— The persons who were to eat of it were to be first ascertained, and then the lamb was to be slain and dressed for that number.

Verse 5. *Without blemish*— Having no natural imperfection, no disease, no deficiency or redundancy of parts. On this point the rabbins have trifled most egregiously, reckoning fifty blemishes that render a lamb or kid, or any animal, improper to be sacrificed: five in the ear, three in the eyelid, eight in the eye, three in the nose, six in the mouth, etc., etc.

A male of the first year— That is, any age in the first year between eight days and twelve months.

From the sheep, or from the goats— The **לֶמֶן** seh means either; and either was equally proper if without blemish. The Hebrews however in general preferred the lamb to the kid.

Verse 6. *Ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day*— The lamb or kid was to be taken from the flock on the tenth day, and kept up and fed by itself till the fourteenth day, when it was to be sacrificed. This was never commanded nor practiced afterwards. The rabbins mark four things that were required in the first passover that were never required afterwards: 1. The eating of the lamb in their houses dispersed through Goshen. 2. The

taking the lamb on the tenth day. 3. The striking of its blood on the door posts and lintels of their houses. And, 4. Their eating it in haste. These things were not required of the succeeding generations.

The whole assembly-shall kill it— Any person might kill it, the sacrificial act in this case not being confined to the priests.

In the evening— **בֵּי הָעֶרְבִים** beyn haabayim, “between the two evenings.” The Jews divided the day into morning and evening: till the sun passed the meridian all was morning or fore-noon; after that, all was afternoon or evening. Their first evening began just after twelve o’clock, and continued till sunset; their second evening began at sunset and continued till night, i.e., during the whole time of twilight; between twelve o’clock, therefore, and the termination of twilight, the passover was to be offered.

“The day among the Jews had twelve hours, John 11:9. Their first hour was about six o’clock in the morning with us. Their sixth hour was our noon. Their ninth hour answered to our three o’clock in the afternoon. By this we may understand that the time in which Christ was crucified began at the third hour, that is, at nine o’clock in the morning, the ordinary time for the daily morning sacrifice, and ended at the ninth hour, that is, three o’clock in the afternoon, the time of the evening sacrifice, Mark 15:25, 33, 34, 37. Wherefore their ninth hour was their hour of prayer, when they used to go into the temple at the daily evening sacrifice, Acts 3:1; and this was the ordinary time for the passover. It is worthy of remark that God sets no particular hour for the killing of the passover: any time between the two evenings, i.e., between twelve o’clock in the day and the termination of twilight, was lawful. The daily sacrifice (see Exodus 29:38, 39) was killed at half past the eighth hour, that is, half an hour BEFORE three in the afternoon; and it was offered up at half past the ninth hour, that is, half an hour AFTER three. In the evening of the passover it was killed at half past the seventh hour, and offered at half past the eighth, that is, half an hour BEFORE three: and if the evening of the passover fell on the evening of the Sabbath, it was killed at half past the SIXTH hour, and offered at half past the SEVENTH, that is, half an hour BEFORE two in the afternoon. The reason of this was, they were first obliged to kill the daily sacrifice, and then to kill and roast the paschal lamb, and also to rest the

evening before the passover. Agreeably to this Maimonides says ‘the killing of the passover is after mid-day, and if they kill it before it is not lawful; and they do not kill it till after the daily evening sacrifice, and burning of incense: and after they have trimmed the lamps they begin to kill the paschal lambs until the end of the day.’ By this time of the day God foreshowed the sufferings of Christ in the evening of times or in the last days, Hebrews 1:2; 1 Peter 1:19, 20: and about the same time of the day, when the paschal lamb ordinarily died, HE died also, viz., at the ninth hour; Matthew 27:46-50.” See Ainsworth.

Verse 7. *Take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts*— This was to be done by dipping a bunch of hyssop into the blood, and thus sprinkling it upon the posts, etc.; see Exodus 12:22. That this sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb was an emblem of the sacrifice and atonement made by the death of Jesus Christ, is most clearly intimated in the sacred writings, 1 Peter 1:2; Hebrews 9:13, 14; 8:10. It is remarkable that no blood was to be sprinkled on the threshold, to teach, as Mr. Ainsworth properly observes, a reverent regard for the blood of Christ, that men should not tread under foot the Son of GOD, nor count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing; Hebrews 10:29.

Verse 8. *They shall eat the flesh-roast with fire*— As it was the ordinary custom of the Jews to boil their flesh, some think that the command given here was in opposition to the custom of the Egyptians, who ate raw flesh in honor of Osiris. The AEthiopians are to this day remarkable for eating raw flesh, as is the case with most savage nations.

Unleavened bread— מצות matstsoth, from מצה matsah, to squeeze or compress, because the bread prepared without leaven or yeast was generally compressed, sad or heavy, as we term it. The word here properly signifies unleavened cakes; the word for leaven in Hebrew is חמץ chamets, which simply signifies to ferment. It is supposed that leaven was forbidden on this and other occasions, that the bread being less agreeable to the taste, it might be emblematical of their bondage and bitter servitude, as this seems to have been one design of the bitter herbs which were commanded to be used on this occasion; but this certainly was not the sole design of the prohibition: leaven itself is a species of corruption, being

produced by fermentation, which in such cases tends to putrefaction. In this very light St. Paul considers the subject in this place; hence, alluding to the passover as a type of Christ, he says: Purge out therefore the old leaven—for Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8.

Bitter herbs— What kind of herbs or salad is intended by the word מררים merorim, which literally signifies bitter, is not well known. The Jews think chicory, wild lettuce, horehound, and the like are intended. Whatever may be implied under the term, whether bitter herbs or bitter ingredients in general, it was designed to put them in mind of their bitter and severe bondage in the land of Egypt, from which God was now about to deliver them.

Verse 9. With the purtenance thereof.— All the intestines, for these were abused by the heathens to purposes of divination; and when roasted in the manner here directed they could not be thus used. The command also implies that the lamb was to be roasted whole; neither the head or legs were to be separated, nor the intestines removed. I suppose that these last simply included the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, etc., and not the intestinal canal.

Verse 10. Ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning— Merely to prevent putrefaction; for it was not meet that a thing offered to God should be subjected to corruption, which in such hot countries it must speedily undergo. Thus the body of our blessed Lord saw no corruption, Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27, because, like the paschal lamb, it was a sacrifice offered to God.

It appears that from the Jewish passover the heathens borrowed their sacrifice termed PROPTER VIAM. It was their custom previously to their undertaking a journey, to offer a sacrifice to their gods, and to eat the whole if possible, but if any part was left they burned it with fire; and this was called propter viam, because it was made to procure a prosperous journey. It was in reference to this that Cato is said to have rallied a person called Q. Albidius, who, having eaten up all his goods, set fire to his house, his only remaining property. “He has offered his sacrifice propter viam,”

says Cato, “because he has burned what he could not eat.” This account is given by Macrobius, Saturn., lib. ii., 2, edit. Bipont., vol. 1., p. 333; and is a remarkable instance how closely some of the religious observances of the people of God have been copied by the heathen nations.

Verse 11. *And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded*— As in the eastern countries they wear long loose garments, whenever they travel they tuck up the fore parts of their garments in the girdle which they wear round their loins.

Your shoes on your feet— This seems particularly mentioned because not customary. “The easterns throw off their shoes when they eat, because it would be troublesome,” says Sir J. Chardin, “to keep their shoes upon their feet, they sitting cross-legged on the floor, and having no hinder quarters to their shoes, which are made like slippers; and as they do not use tables and chairs as we do in Europe, but have their floors covered with carpets, they throw off their shoes when they enter their apartments, lest they should soil those beautiful pieces of furniture.” On the contrary the Israelites were to have their shoes on, because now about to commence their journey. It was customary among the Romans to lay aside their shoes when they went to a banquet. The servants took them off them when they entered the house, and returned them when they departed to their own habitations.

Your staff in your hand— The same writer observes that the eastern people universally make use of a staff when they travel on foot.

Ye shall eat it in haste— Because they were suddenly to take their departure: the destroying angel was at hand, their enemies were coming against them, and they had not a moment to lose.

It is the Lord's passover.— That is, Jehovah is now about to pass over the land, and the houses only where the blood is sprinkled shall be safe from the stroke of death. The Hebrew word פֶּסַח pesach, which we very properly translate PASSOVER, and which should always be pronounced as two words, has its name from the angel of God passing by or over the houses of the Israelites, on the posts and lintels of which the blood of the lamb was sprinkled, while he stopped at the houses of the Egyptians to slay their first-born.

Verse 12. Against all the gods of Egypt, etc.— As different animals were sacred among the Egyptians, the slaying of the first-born of all the beasts might be called executing judgment upon the gods of Egypt. As this however does not appear very clear and satisfactory, some have imagined that the word **אלהי** *elohey* should be translated princes, which is the rendering in our margin; for as these princes, who were rulers of the kingdom under Pharaoh, were equally hostile to the Hebrews with Pharaoh himself, therefore these judgments fell equally heavy on them also. But we may ask, Did not these judgments fall equally on all the families of Egypt, though multitudes of them had no particular part either in the evil counsel against the Israelites or in their oppression? Why then distinguish those in calamities in which all equally shared? None of these interpretations therefore appear satisfactory. Houbigant, by a very simple and natural emendation, has, he thinks, restored the whole passage to sense and reason. He supposes that **אלהי** *elohey*, GODS, is a mistake for **אהלי** *ahley*, TENTS or habitations, the **ה** *he* and the **ל** *lamed* being merely interchanged. This certainly gives a very consistent sense, and points out the universality of the desolation to which the whole context continually refers. He therefore contends that the text should be read thus: And on all the TENTS (or HABITATIONS) of Egypt I will execute judgment; by which words the Lord signified that not one dwelling in the whole land of Egypt should be exempted from the judgment here threatened. It is but justice to say that however probable this criticism may appear, it is not supported by any of the ancient versions, nor by any of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi. The parallel place also, Numbers 33:4, is rather against Houbigant's interpretation: For the Egyptians buried all their first-born, which the Lord had smitten among them: upon their gods also [**ובאלהיהם** *ubeloheyhem*] the Lord executed judgments. But Houbigant amends the word in this place in the same way as he does that in Exodus. There appears also to be an allusion to this former judgment in Isaiah 19:1: Behold, the Lord-shall come into Egypt, and the idols [**אלילי** *eliley*] of Egypt shall be moved at his presence. And in Jeremiah 43:13: The houses of the gods [**בתי אלהי** *bottey elohey*] of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire. The rabbins say that “when Israel came out of Egypt, the holy blessed God threw down all the images of their abominations, and they were broken to pieces.” When a nation was conquered, it was always

supposed that their gods had either abandoned them or were overcome. Thus Egypt was ruined, and their gods confounded and destroyed by Jehovah. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 11:7".

Verse 13. *The blood shall be to you for a token*— It shall be the sign to the destroying angel, that the house on which he sees this blood sprinkled is under the protection of God, and that no person in it is to be injured. See Clarke on "Exodus 12:11".

Verse 14. *A memorial*— To keep up a remembrance of the severity and goodness, or justice and mercy, of God. Ye shall keep it a feast — it shall be annually observed, and shall be celebrated with solemn religious joy, throughout your generations — as long as ye continue to be a distinct people; an ordinance — a Divine appointment, an institution of God himself, neither to be altered nor set aside by any human authority.

For ever— **חֻקַּת עוֹלָם** chukkath olam, an everlasting or endless statute, because representative of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world; whose mediation, in consequence of his sacrifice, shall endure while time itself lasts; and to whose merits and efficacy the salvation of the soul shall be ascribable throughout eternity. This, therefore, is a statute and ordinance that can have no end, either in this world or in the world to come. It is remarkable that though the Jews have ceased from the whole of their sacrificial system, so that sacrifices are no longer offered by them in any part of the world, yet they all, in all their generations and in all countries, keep up the remembrance of the passover, and observe the feast of unleavened bread. But no lamb is sacrificed. Their sacrifices have all totally ceased, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Even the flesh that is used on this occasion is partly roasted and partly boiled, that it may not even resemble the primitive sacrifice; for they deem it unlawful to sacrifice out of Jerusalem. The truth is, the true Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world has been offered, and they have no power to restore the ancient type. See Clarke on "Exodus 12:27".

Verse 15. *Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread*— This has been considered as a distinct ordinance, and not essentially connected with the passover. The passover was to be observed on the fourteenth day of the first month; the feast of unleavened bread began on the fifteenth and lasted seven days, the first and last of which were holy convocations.

That soul shall be cut off— There are thirty-six places in which this excision or cutting off is threatened against the Jews for neglect of some particular duty; and what is implied in the thing itself is not well known. Some think it means a violent death, some a premature death, and some an eternal death. It is very likely that it means no more than a separation from the rights and privileges of an Israelite; so that after this excision the person was considered as a mere stranger, who had neither lot nor part in Israel, nor any right to the blessings of the covenant. This is probably what St. Paul means, Romans 9:3. But we naturally suppose this punishment was not inflicted but on those who had showed a marked and obstinate contempt for the Divine authority. This punishment appears to have been nearly the same with excommunication among the Christians; and from this general notion of the cutting off, the Christian excommunication seems to have been borrowed.

Verse 16. *In the first day and in the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation*— This is the first place where we meet with the account of an assembly collected for the mere purpose of religious worship. Such assemblies are called holy convocations, which is a very appropriate appellation for a religious assembly; they were called together by the express command of God, and were to be employed in a work of holiness. **מִקְרָא** mikra, convocation, is a word of similar import with the Greek **ἐκκλησία**, which we commonly translate Church, and which properly signifies an assembly convened by public call.

Verse 17. *Self-same day*— **בַּעֲצֶם** beetsem, in the body of this day, or in the strength of this day; probably they began their march about day-break, called here the body or strength of the day, and in Deuteronomy 16:1, by night — sometime before the sun rose.

Verse 19. *No leaven found in your houses*— To meet the letter of this precept in the fullest manner possible, the Jews, on the eve of this festival, institute the most rigorous search through every part of their houses, not only removing all leavened bread, but sweeping every part clean, that no crumb of bread shall be left that had any leaven in it. And so strict were they in the observance of the letter of this law, that if even a mouse was seen to run across the floor with a crumb of bread in its mouth, they considered the whole house as polluted, and began their purification afresh.

We have already seen that leaven was an emblem of sin, because it proceeded from corruption; and the putting away of this implied the turning to God with simplicity and uprightness of heart. See on Exodus 12:8, and See Clarke's note on "Exodus 12:27".

Verse 21. *Kill the passover.*— That is, the lamb, which was called the paschal or passover lamb. The animal that was to be sacrificed on this occasion got the name of the institution itself: thus the word covenant is often put for the sacrifice offered in making the covenant; so the rock was Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:4; bread and wine the body and blood of Christ, Mark 14:22, 24. St. Paul copies the expression, 1 Corinthians 5:7: Christ our passover (that is, our paschal lamb) is sacrificed for us.

Verse 22. *A bunch of hyssop*— The original word **חִיֶּסוֹן** ezob has been variously translated musk, rosemary, polypody of the wall, mint, origanum, marjoram, and HYSSOP: the latter seems to be the most proper. Parkhurst says it is named from its detersive and cleansing qualities, whence it was used in sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb, in cleansing the leprosy, Leviticus 14:4, 6, 51, 52; in composing the water of purification, Numbers 19:6, and sprinkling it, Numbers 19:18. It was a type of the purifying virtue of the bitter sufferings of Christ. And it is plain, from Psalm 51:7, that the psalmist understood its meaning. Among botanists hyssop is described as "a genus of the gymnospermia (naked-seeded) order, belonging to the didynamia class of plants. It has under-shrubby, low, bushy stalks, growing a foot and a half high, small, spear-shaped, close-sitting, opposite leaves, with several smaller ones rising from the same joint; and all the stalks and branches terminated by erect whorled spikes of flowers of different colors, in the varieties of the plant. The leaves have an aromatic smell, and a warm pungent taste. The leaves of this plant are particularly recommended in humoral asthmas, and other disorders of the breast and lungs, and greatly promote expectoration." Its medicinal qualities were probably the reason why this plant was so particularly recommended in the Scriptures.

Verse 26. *What mean ye by this service?*— The establishment of this service annually was a very wise provision to keep up in remembrance this wonderful deliverance. From the remotest antiquity the institution of feasts, games, etc., has been used to keep up the memory of past grand

events. Hence God instituted the Sabbath, to keep up the remembrance of the creation; and the passover to keep up the remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt. All the other feasts were instituted on similar reasons. The Jews never took their sons to the tabernacle or temple till they were twelve years of age, nor suffered them to eat of the flesh of any victim till they had themselves offered a sacrifice at the temple, which they were not permitted to do before the twelfth year of their age. It was at this age that Joseph and Mary took our blessed Lord to the temple, probably for the first time, to offer his sacrifice. See Calmet.

Verse 27. *It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover*— We have already intimated that the paschal lamb was an illustrious type of Christ; and we shall find that every thing in this account is typical or representative. The bondage and affliction of the people of Israel may be considered as emblems of the hard slavery and wretchedness consequent on a state of sinfulness. Satan reigns over both body and soul, bringing the whole into subjection to the law of sin and death; while various evil tempers, passions, lusts, and irregular appetites, act as subordinate tormentors, making the lives of the vassals of sin bitter, because of the rigour by which they are obliged to serve. Reader, is this thy case? The mercy of God projects the redemption of man from this cruel bondage and oppression; and a sacrifice is appointed for the occasion by God himself, to be offered with particular and significant rites and ceremonies, all of which represent the passion and death of our blessed Lord, and the great end for which he became a sacrifice, viz., the redemption of a lost world from the power, the guilt, and the pollution of sin, etc. And it is worthy of remark, 1. That the anniversary or annual commemoration of the passover was strictly and religiously kept by the Jews on the day, and hour of the day, on which the original transaction took place, throughout all their succeeding generations. 2. That on one of these anniversaries, and, as many suppose, on the very day and hour on which the paschal lamb was originally offered, our blessed Lord expired on the cross for the salvation of the world. 3. That after the destruction of Jerusalem the paschal lamb ceased to be offered by the Jews throughout the world, though they continue to hold the anniversary of the passover, but without any sacrifice, notwithstanding their deep-rooted, inveterate antipathy against the author and grace of the Gospel. 4. That the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted to keep this true paschal

sacrifice in commemoration, and that this has been religiously observed by the whole Christian world (one very small class of Christians excepted) from the foundation of Christianity to the present day! 5. That the Jews were commanded to eat the paschal lamb; and our Lord, commemorating the passover, commanded his disciples, saying, Take, eat, THIS is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of ME. In the communion service of the Church of England, the spirit and design both of the type and antitype are most expressly condensed into one point of view, in the address to the communicant: "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for THEE; and FEED upon HIM, in thy heart, by FAITH with THANKSGIVING. Thus God continues the memorial of that grand transaction which he has said should be an ordinance for ever; evidently meaning thereby, that the paschal lamb should be the signifier till the passion and death of Christ; and that afterwards bread and wine taken sacramentally, in commemoration of his crucifixion, should be the continual representatives of that sacrifice till the end of the world. Thus the passover in itself, and in its reference, is an ordinance for ever; and thus the words of the Lord are literally fulfilled. Reader, learn from this, 1. That if thou art not rescued from the thralldom of sin, thou must perish for ever. 2. That nothing less than the power and mercy of God can set thee free. 3. That God will save thee in no other way than by bringing thee out of thy sinful state, and from thy wicked practices and companions. 4. That in order to thy redemption it was absolutely necessary that the Son of God should take thy nature upon him, and die in thy stead. 5. That unless the blood of this sacrifice be sprinkled, in its atoning efficacy and merits, on thy heart and conscience, the guilt and power of thy sin cannot be taken away. 6. That as the blood of the paschal lamb must be sprinkled on every house, in order to the preservation of its inhabitants, so there must be a personal application of the blood of the cross to thy conscience, to take away thy sins. 7. As it was not enough that the passover was instituted, but the blood must be sprinkled on the lintels and door posts of every house to make the rite effectual to the salvation of each individual, so it is not enough that Christ should have taken human nature upon him, and died for the sin of the world; for no man who has the opportunity of hearing the Gospel is saved by that death, who does not, by faith, get a personal application of it to his own heart. 8. That those who wish for an application of the atoning blood, must receive this spiritual passover with

a perfect readiness to depart from the land of their captivity, and travel to the rest that remains for the people of God; it being impossible, not only to a gross sinner, continuing such, to be finally saved, (however he may presume upon the mercy of God,) but also to a worldly-minded man to get to the kingdom of God; for Christ died to save us from the present evil world, according to the will of God. 9. That in order to commemorate aright, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the great atonement made for the sin of the world, all leaven of malice, bitterness, and insincerity, must be put away; as God will have no man to partake of this mystery who does not fully enter into its spirit and meaning. See 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8.

Verse 29. *Smote all the first born*— If we take the term first-born in its literal sense only, we shall be led to conclude that in a vast number of the houses of the Egyptians there could have been no death, as it is not at all likely that every first-born child of every Egyptian family was still alive, and that all the first-born of their cattle still remained. And yet it is said, Exodus 12:30, that there was not a house where there was not one dead. The word therefore must not be taken in its literal sense only. From its use in a great variety of places in the Scriptures it is evident that it means the chief, most excellent, best beloved, most distinguished, etc. In this sense our blessed Lord is called the **FIRST-BORN** of every creature, Co 1:15, and the **FIRST-BORN** among many brethren, Romans 8:29; that is, he is more excellent than all creatures, and greater than all the children of men. In the same sense we may understand Revelation 1:5, where **CHRIST** is called the **FIRST-BEGOTTEN** from the dead, i.e., the chief of all that have ever visited the empire of death, and on whom death has had any power; and the only one who by his own might quickened himself. In the same sense wisdom is represented as being brought forth before all the creatures, and being possessed by the Lord in the beginning of his ways, Proverbs 8:22-30; that is, the wisdom of God is peculiarly conspicuous in the production, arrangement, and government of every part of the creation. So Ephraim is called the Lord's **FIRST-BORN**, Jeremiah 31:9. And the people of Israel are often called by the same name, see Exodus 4:22: Israel is my son, my **FIRST-BORN**; that is, the people in whom I particularly delight, and whom I will especially support and defend. And because the first-born are in general peculiarly dear to their parents, and because among the Jews they had especial and peculiar privileges, whatever was most dear, most

valuable, and most prized, was thus denominated. So Micah 6:7: Shall I give my FIRST-BORN for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Shall I give up the most beloved child I have, he that is most dear and most necessary to me, in order to make an atonement for my sins! In like manner the Prophet Zechariah, speaking of the conversion of the Jews to the Gospel of Christ, represents them as looking on him whom they have pierced, and being as one that is in bitterness for his FIRST-BORN; that is, they shall feel distress and anguish as those who had lost their most beloved child. So the Church triumphant in the kingdom of God are called, Hebrews 12:23, the general assembly and Church of the FIRST-BORN, i.e., the most noble and excellent of all human if not created beings. So Homer, Il. iv., ver. 102: **αρνων πρωτογονων ρεξειν κλειτην εκατομβην**. “A hecatomb of lambs all firstlings of the flock.” That is, the most excellent of their kind.

In a contrary sense, when the word first-born is joined to another that signifies any kind of misery or disgrace, it then signifies the depth of misery, the utmost disgrace. So the FIRST-BORN of the poor, Isaiah 14:30, signifies the most abject, destitute, and impoverished. The FIRST-BORN of death, Job 18:13, means the most horrible kind of death. So in the threatening against Pharaoh, Exodus 11:5, where he informs him that he will slay all the first-born, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon the throne; to the first born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill, he takes in the very highest and lowest conditions of life. As there was no state in Egypt superior to the throne, so there was none inferior to that of the female slave that ground at the mill. The Prophet Habakkuk seems to fix this as the sense in which the word is used here; for speaking of the plagues of Egypt in general, and the salvation which God afforded his people, he says, Habakkuk 3:13: Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people-thou woundedst the HEAD (**רֹאשׁ** rosh, the chief, the most excellent) of the house of the wicked — of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. And the author of the book of Wisdom understood it in the same way: The master and the servant were punished after one manner; and like as the king, so suffered the common people-for in one moment the NOBLEST OFFSPRING of them was destroyed, Wisdom 18:11, 12. And in no other sense can we understand the word in Psalm 89:27, where, among the promises of God to David, we find the following: Also I will make him my

FIRST-BORN, higher than the kings of the earth; in which passage the latter clause explains the former; David, as king, should be the FIRST-BORN, of God, i.e., he should be higher than the kings of the earth — the MOST EMINENT potentate in the universe. In this sense, therefore, we should understand the passage in question; the most eminent person in every family in Egypt, as well as those who were literally the first-born, being slain in this plague. Calmet and some other critics particularly contend for this sense.

Verse 30. *There was a great cry*— No people in the universe were more remarkable for their mournings than the Egyptians, especially in matters of religion; they whipped, beat, tore themselves, and howled in all the excess of grief. When a relative died, the people left the house, ran into the streets, and howled in the most lamentable and frantic manner. See Diod. Sicul., lib. i., and Herod., lib. ii., c. 85, 86. And this latter author happening to be in Egypt on one of their solemnities, saw myriads of people whipping and beating themselves in this manner, lib. ii., c. 60; and see Mr. Bryant on the Plagues of Egypt, where many examples are given, p. 162, etc. How dreadful then must the scene of horror and distress appear when there was not one house or family in Egypt where there was not one dead; and according to their custom, all the family running out into the streets bewailing this calamity!

Verse 31. *Called for Moses and Aaron*— That is, he sent the message here mentioned to them; for it does not appear that he had any farther interview with Moses and Aaron, after what is mentioned Exodus 10:28, 29, and Exodus 11:8. See Clarke note “Exodus 10:28”. See Clarke note “Exodus 10:29”. See Clarke note “Exodus 11:8”.

Verse 33. *The Egyptians were urgent upon the people*— They felt much, they feared more; and therefore wished to get immediately rid of a people on whose account they found they were smitten with so many and such dreadful plagues.

Verse 34. *The people took their dough before it was leavened, etc.*— There was no time now to make any regular preparation for their departure, such was the universal hurry and confusion. The Israelites could carry but little of their household utensils with them; but some, such as they kneaded their bread and kept their meal in, they were obliged to carry

with them. The kneading troughs of the Arabs are comparatively small wooden bowls, which, after kneading their bread in, serve them as dishes out of which they eat their victuals. And as to these being bound up in their clothes, no more may be intended than their wrapping them up in their long, loose garments, or in what is still used among the Arabs, and called hykes, which is a long kind of blanket, something resembling a highland plaid, in which they often carry their provision, wrap themselves by day, and sleep at night. Dr. Shaw has been particular in his description of this almost entire wardrobe of an Arab. He says they are of different sizes and of different qualities, but generally about six yards in length, and five or six feet broad. He supposes that what we call Ruth's veil, Ruth 3:15, was a hyke, and that the same is to be understood of the clothes of the Israelites mentioned in this verse. See his Travels, p. 224, 4to edition.

Verse 35. *They borrowed of the Egyptians*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 3:22", where the very exceptionable term borrow is largely explained.

Verse 37. *From Rameses to Succoth*— Rameses appears to have been another name for Goshen, though it is probable that there might have been a chief city or village in that land, where the children of Israel rendezvoused previously to their departure, called Rameses. As the term Succoth signifies booths or tents, it is probable that this place was so named from its being the place of the first encampment of the Israelites.

Six hundred thousand— That is, There was this number of effective men, twenty years old and upwards, who were able to go out to war. But this was not the whole number, and therefore the sacred writer says they were about 600, 000; for when the numbers were taken about thirteen months after this they were found to be six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty, without reckoning those under twenty years of age, or any of the tribe of Levi; see Numbers 1:45, 46. But besides those on foot, or footmen, there were no doubt many old and comparatively infirm persons, who rode on camels, horses, or asses, besides the immense number of women and children, which must have been at least three to one of the others; and the mixed multitude, Exodus 12:38, probably of refugees in Egypt, who came to sojourn there, because of the dearth which had obliged them to emigrate from their own countries; and who now, seeing

that the hand of Jehovah was against the Egyptians and with the Israelites, availed themselves of the general consternation, and took their leave of Egypt, choosing Israel's God for their portion, and his people for their companions. Such a company moving at once, and emigrating from their own country, the world never before nor since witnessed; no doubt upwards of two millions of souls, besides their flocks and herds, even very much cattle; and what but the mere providence of God could support such a multitude, and in the wilderness, too, where to this day the necessaries of life are not to be found? Suppose we take them at a rough calculation thus, two millions will be found too small a number.

Effective men, 20 years old and upward. 600, 000

Two-thirds of whom we may suppose were married, in which case their wives would amount to .400, 000

These, on an average, might have 5 children under 20 years of age, an estimate which falls considerably short of the number of children each family must have averaged in order to produce from 75 persons, in A. M. 2298, upwards of 600, 000 effective men in A. M. 2494, a period of only 196 years 2, 000, 000

The Levites, who probably were not included among the effective men 45, 000

Their wives 33, 000

Their children 165, 000

The mixed multitude probably not less than 20, 000 —

Total 3, 263, 000

Besides a multitude of old and infirm persons who would be obliged to ride on camels and asses, etc., and who must, from the proportion that such bear to the young and healthy, amount to many thousands more! Exclude even the Levites and their families, and upwards of three millions will be left.

“In Numbers 3:39 the male Levites, aged one month and upwards, are reckoned 22, 000, perhaps the females did not much exceed this number,

say 23, 000, and 500 children, under one month, will make 45, 500.”-Anon.

Had not Moses the fullest proof of his Divine mission, he never could have put himself at the head of such an immense concourse of people, who, without the most especial and effective providence, must all have perished for lack of food. This single circumstance, unconnected with all others, is an ample demonstration of the Divine mission of Moses, and of the authenticity and Divine inspiration of the Pentateuch. To suppose that an impostor, or one pretending only to a Divine call, could have ventured to place himself at the head of such an immense body of people, to lead them through a trackless wilderness, utterly unprovided for such a journey, to a land as yet in the possession of several powerful nations whom they must expel before they could possess the country, would have implied such an extreme of madness and folly as has never been witnessed in an individual, and such a blind credulity in the multitude as is unparalleled in the annals of mankind! The succeeding stupendous events proved that Moses had the authority of God to do what he did; and the people had at least such a general conviction that he had this authority, that they implicitly followed his directions, and received their law from his mouth.

Verse 40. *Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, etc.*— The statement in this verse is allowed on all hands to be extremely difficult, and therefore the passage stands in especial need of illustration. “That the descendants of Israel did not dwell 430 years in Egypt,” says Dr. Kennicott, “may be easily proved, and has often been demonstrated. Some therefore imagine that by Egypt here both it and Canaan are to be understood. But this greater latitude of place will not solve the difficulty, since the Israelites, including Israel their father, did not sojourn 430 years in both countries previous to their departure from Egypt. Others, sensible of the still remaining deficiency, would not only have Egypt in the text to signify it and Canaan, but by a figure more comprehensive would have the children of Israel to mean Israel’s children, and Israel their father, and Isaac the father of Israel, and part of the life of Abraham, the father of Isaac.

“Thus indeed,” says Dr. Kennicott, “we arrive at the exact sum, and by this method of reckoning we might arrive at any thing but truth, which we

may presume was never thus conveyed by an inspired writer.” But can the difficulty be removed without having recourse to such absurd shifts? Certainly it can. The Samaritan Pentateuch, in all its manuscripts and printed copies, reads the place thus:—

[*Samaritan*]

Umoshab beney Yishrael veabotham asher yashebu baarets Cenaan, ubaarets mitsraim sheloshim shanah vearba meoth shanah.

“Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt, was 430 years.” This same sum is given by St. Paul, Galatians 3:17, who reckons from the promise made to Abraham, when God commanded him to go to Canaan, to the giving of the law, which soon followed the departure from Egypt; and this chronology of the apostle is concordant with the Samaritan Pentateuch, which, by preserving the two passages, they and their fathers, and in the land of Canaan, which are lost out of the present copies of the Hebrew text, has rescued this passage from all obscurity and contradiction. It may be necessary to observe that the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint has the same reading as that in the Samaritan. The Samaritan Pentateuch is allowed by many learned men to exhibit the most correct copy of the five books of Moses; and the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint must also be allowed to be one of the most authentic as well as most ancient copies of this version which we possess. As to St. Paul, no man will dispute the authenticity of his statement; and thus in the mouth of these three most respectable witnesses the whole account is indubitably established. That these three witnesses have the truth, the chronology itself proves: for from Abraham’s entry into Canaan to the birth of Isaac was 25 years, Genesis 12:4; 17:1-21; Isaac was 60 years old at the birth of Jacob, Genesis 25:26; and Jacob was 130 at his going down into Egypt, Genesis 47:9; which three sums make 215 years. And then Jacob and his children having continued in Egypt 215 years more, the whole sum of 430 years is regularly completed. See Kennicott’s Dissertation on the Hebrew Text.

Verse 42. *A night to be much observed*— A night to be held in everlasting remembrance, because of the peculiar display of the power and goodness

of God, the observance of which annually was to be considered a religious precept while the Jewish nation should continue.

Verse 43. *This is the ordinance of the passover*— From the last verse of this chapter it appears pretty evident that this, to the 50th verse inclusive, constituted a part of the directions given to Moses relative to the proper observance of the first passover, and should be read conjointly with the preceding account beginning at Exodus 12:21. It may be supposed that these latter parts contain such particular directions as God gave to Moses after he had given those general ones mentioned in the preceding verses, but they seem all to belong to this first passover.

There shall no stranger eat thereof— **בן נכר** ben nechar, the son of a stranger or foreigner, i.e., one who was not of the genuine Hebrew stock, or one who had not received circumcision; for any circumcised person might eat the passover, as the total exclusion extends only to the uncircumcised, see Exodus 12:48. As there are two sorts of strangers mentioned in the sacred writings; one who was admitted to all the Jewish ordinances, and another who, though he dwelt among the Jews, was not permitted to eat the passover or partake of any of their solemn feasts; it may be necessary to show what was the essential point of distinction through which the one was admitted and the other excluded.

In treatises on the religious customs of the Jews we frequently meet with the term proselyte, from the Greek **προσηλυτος**, a stranger or foreigner; one who is come from his own people and country to sojourn with another. All who were not descendants of some one of the twelve sons of Jacob, or of Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, were reputed strangers or proselytes among the Jews. But of those strangers or proselytes there were two kinds, called among them proselytes of the gate, and proselytes of injustice or of the covenant. The former were such as wished to dwell among the Jews, but would not submit to be circumcised; they, however, acknowledged the true God, avoided all idolatry, and observed the seven precepts of Noah, but were not obliged to observe any of the Mosaic institutions. The latter submitted to be circumcised, obliged themselves to observe all the rites and ceremonies of the law, and were in nothing different from the Jews but merely in their having once been heathens. The former, or proselytes of the gate, might not eat the passover

or partake of any of the sacred festivals; but the latter, the proselytes of the covenant, had the same rights, spiritual and secular, as the Jews themselves. See Exodus 12:48.

Verse 45. A foreigner— תושב toshab, from ישב yashab, to sit down or dwell; one who is a mere sojourner, for the purpose of traffic, merchandise, etc., but who is neither a proselyte of the gate nor of the covenant.

And a hired servant— Who, though he be bought with money, or has indented himself for a certain term to serve a Jew, yet has not become either a proselyte of the gate or of the covenant. None of these shall eat of it, because not circumcised — not brought under the bond of the covenant; and not being under obligation to observe the Mosaic law, had no right to its privileges and blessings. Even under the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is the author of eternal salvation only to them who OBEY him, Hebrews 5:9; and those who become Christians are chosen to salvation through SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, 2 Thessalonians 2:13; for the grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared, teaching us that, DENYING UNGODLINESS and WORLDLY LUSTS we should live SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY, and GODLY, in this present world; Titus 2:11, 12. Such persons only walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called.

Verse 46. In one house shall it be eaten— In one family, if that be large enough; if not, a neighboring family might be invited, Exodus 12:4.

Thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh— Every family must abide within doors because of the destroying angel, none being permitted to go out of his house till the next day, Exodus 12:22.

Neither shall ye break a bone thereof.— As it was to be eaten in haste, (Exodus 12:11,) there was no time either to separate the bones, or to break them in order to extract the marrow; and lest they should be tempted to consume time in this way, therefore this ordinance was given. It is very likely that, when the whole lamb was brought to table, they cut off the flesh without even separating any of the large joints, leaving the skeleton, with whatever flesh they could not eat, to be consumed with fire, Exodus 12:10. This precept was also given to point out a most remarkable circumstance which 1500 years after was to take place in the crucifixion of

the Savior of mankind, who was the true Paschal Lamb, that Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world; who, though he was crucified as a common malefactor, and it was a universal custom to break the legs of such on the cross, yet so did the providence of God order it that a bone of HIM was not broken. See the fulfillment of this wondrously expressive type, John 19:33, 36.

Verse 48. *And when a stranger-will keep the passover, etc.*— Let all who sojourn among you, and who desire to partake of this sacred ordinance, not only be circumcised themselves, but all the males of their families likewise, that they may all have an equal right to the blessings of the covenant.

Verse 49. *One law shall be to him that is home-born, etc.*— As this is the first place that the term תּוֹרָה torah or LAW occurs, a term of the greatest importance in Divine revelation, and on the proper understanding of which much depends, I judge it best to give its genuine explanation once for all.

The word תּוֹרָה torah comes from the root יָרָה yarah, which signifies to aim at, teach, point out, direct, lead, guide, make straight, or even; and from these significations of the word (and in all these senses it is used in the Bible) we may see at once the nature, properties, and design of the law of God. It is a system of INSTRUCTION in righteousness; it teaches the difference between moral good and evil; ascertains what is right and fit to be done, and what should be left undone, because improper to be performed. It continually aims at the glory of God, and the happiness of his creatures; teaches the true knowledge of the true God, and the destructive nature of sin; points out the absolute necessity of an atonement as the only means by which God can be reconciled to transgressors; and in its very significant rites and ceremonies points out the Son of God, till he should come to put away iniquity by the sacrifice of himself. It is a revelation of God's wisdom and goodness, wonderfully well calculated to direct the hearts of men into the truth, to guide their feet into the path of life, and to make straight, even, and plain that way which leads to God, and in which the soul must walk in order to arrive at eternal life. It is the fountain whence every correct notion relative to God-his perfections, providence, grace, justice, holiness, omniscience, and omnipotence, has been derived. And it has been the origin whence all the

true principles of law and justice have been deduced. The pious study of it was the grand means of producing the greatest kings, the most enlightened statesmen, the most accomplished poets, and the most holy and useful men, that ever adorned the world. It is exceeded only by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is at once the accomplishment of its rites and predictions, and the fulfillment of its grand plan and outline. As a system of teaching or instruction, it is the most sovereign and most effectual; as by it is the knowledge of sin, and it alone is the schoolmaster, *παιδαγωγός*, that leads men to Christ, that they may be justified through faith.

Galatians 3:24. Who can absolutely ascertain the exact quantum of obliquity in a crooked line, without the application of a straight one? And could sin, in all its twistings, windings, and varied involutions, have ever been truly ascertained, had not God given to man this perfect rule to judge by? The nations who acknowledge this revelation of God have, as far as they attained to its dictates, the wisest, purest, most equal, and most beneficial laws. The nations that do not receive it have laws at once extravagantly severe and extravagantly indulgent. The proper distinctions between moral good and evil, in such states, are not known: hence the penal sanctions are not founded on the principles of justice, weighing the exact proportion of moral turpitude; but on the most arbitrary caprices, which in many cases show the utmost indulgence to first-rate crimes, while they punish minor offenses with rigour and cruelty. What is the consequence? Just what might be reasonably expected: the will and caprice of a man being put in the place of the wisdom of God, the government is oppressive, and the people, frequently goaded to distraction, rise up in a mass and overturn it; so that the monarch, however powerful for a time, seldom lives out half his days. This was the case in Greece, in Rome, in the major part of the Asiatic governments, and is the case in all nations of the world to the present day, where the governor is despotic, and the laws not formed according to the revelation of God.

The word *lex*, law, among the Romans, has been derived from *lego*, I read; because when a law or statute was made, it was hung up in the most public places, that it might be seen, read, and known by all men, that those who were to obey the laws might not break them through ignorance, and thus incur the penalty. This was called *promulgatio legis*, *q. provulgatio*, the promulgation of the law, i.e., the laying it before the common people. Or

from ligo, I bind, because the law binds men to the strict observance of its precepts. The Greeks call a law νομος nomos, from νεμω, to divide, distribute, minister to, or serve, because the law divides to all their just rights, appoints or distributes to each his proper duty, and thus serves or ministers to the welfare of the individual and the support of society. Hence where there are either no laws, or unequal and unjust ones, all is distraction, violence, rapine, oppression, anarchy, and ruin.

Verse 51. By their armies.— צבאותם tsibotham, from צבא tsaba, to assemble, meet together, in an orderly or regulated manner, and hence to war, to act together as troops in battle; whence צבאות tsebaoth, troops, armies, hosts. It is from this that the Divine Being calls himself צבאות יהוה Yehovah tsebaoth, the LORD OF HOSTS or armies, because the Israelites were brought out of Egypt under his direction, marshalled and ordered by himself, guided by his wisdom, supported by his providence, and protected by his might. This is the true and simple reason why God is so frequently styled in Scripture the Lord of hosts; for the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their ARMIES.

ON this chapter the notes have been so full and so explicit, that little can be added to set the subject before the reader in a clearer light. On the ordinance of the PASSOVER, the reader is requested to consult the notes on verses 7, 14, and 27. See Clarke note on “Exodus 12:7”. See Clarke note on “Exodus 12:14”. See Clarke note on “Exodus 12:27”. For the display of God’s power and providence in supporting so great a multitude where, humanly speaking, there was no provision, and the proof that the exodus of the Israelites gives of the truth of the Mosaic history, he is referred to Exodus 12:37. And for the meaning of the term LAW, to Exodus 12:49.

On the ten plagues it may be but just necessary, after what has been said in the notes, to make a few general reflections. When the nature of the Egyptian idolatry is considered, and the plagues which were sent upon them, we may see at once the peculiarity of the judgment, and the great propriety of its being inflicted in the way related by Moses. The plagues were either inflicted on the objects of their idolatry, or by their means.

1. That the river Nile was an object of their worship and one of their greatest gods, we have already seen. As the FIRST plague, its waters were

therefore turned into blood; and the fish, many of which were objects also of their adoration, died. Blood was particularly offensive to them, and the touch of any dead animal rendered them unclean. When then their great god, the river, was turned into blood, and its waters became putrid, so that all the fish, minor objects of their devotion, died, we see a judgment at once calculated to punish, correct, and reform them. Could they ever more trust in gods who could neither save themselves nor their deluded worshippers?

2. Mr. Bryant has endeavored to prove that frogs, the SECOND plague, were sacred animals in Egypt, and dedicated to Osiris: they certainly appear on many ancient Egyptian monuments, and in such circumstances and connections as to show that they were held in religious veneration. These therefore became an awful scourge; first, by their numbers, and their intrusion into every place; and, secondly, by their death, and the infection of the atmosphere which took place in consequence.

3. We have seen also that the Egyptians, especially the priests, affected great cleanliness, and would not wear woollen garments lest any kind of vermin should harbour about them. The THIRD plague, by means of lice or such like vermin, was wisely calculated both to humble and confound them. In this they immediately saw a power superior to any that could be exerted by their gods or their magicians; and the latter were obliged to confess, This is the finger of God!

4. That flies were held sacred among the Egyptians and among various other nations, admits of the strongest proof. It is very probable that Baal-zebul himself was worshipped under the form of a fly or great cantharid. These, therefore, or some kind of winged noxious insects, became the prime agents in the FOURTH plague; and if the cynomyia or dog-fly be intended, we have already seen in the notes with what propriety and effect this judgment was inflicted.

5. The murrain or mortality among the cattle was the FIFTH plague, and the most decisive mark of the power and indignation of Jehovah. That dogs, cats, monkeys, rams, heifers, and bulls, were all objects of their most religious veneration, all the world knows. These were smitten in a most singular manner by the hand of God; and the Egyptians saw themselves deprived at once of all their imaginary helpers. Even Apis, their ox-god, in whom they particularly trusted, now suffers, groans, and dies under the

hand of Jehovah. Thus does he execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. See Exodus 12:12.

6. The SIXTH plague, viz., of boils and blains, was as appropriate as any of the preceding; and the sprinkling of the ashes, the means by which it was produced, peculiarly significant. Pharmacy, Mr. Bryant has observed, was in high repute among the Egyptians; and Isis, their most celebrated goddess, was considered as the preventer or healer of all diseases. “For this goddess,” says Diodorus, Hist., lib. i., “used to reveal herself to people in their sleep when they labored under any disorder, and afford them relief. Many who placed their confidence in her influence, **παραδοξως υγιαινεσθαι**, were miraculously restored. Many likewise who had been despaired of and given over by the physicians on account of the obstinacy of the distemper, were saved by this goddess. Numbers who had been deprived of their eyes, and of other parts of their bodies, were all restored on their application to Isis.” By this disorder, therefore, which no application to their gods could cure, and which was upon the magicians also, who were supposed to possess most power and influence, God confounded their pride, showed the folly of their worship, and the vanity of their dependence. The means by which these boils and blains were inflicted, viz., the sprinkling of ashes from the furnace, was peculiarly appropriate. Plutarch assures us, Deuteronomy Iside et Osiride, that in several cities of Egypt they were accustomed to sacrifice human beings to Typhon, which they burned alive upon a high altar; and at the close of the sacrifice the priests gathered the ashes of these victims, and scattered them in the air: “I presume, says Mr. Bryant, “with this view, that where an atom of their dust was wafted, a blessing might be entailed. The like was done by Moses with the ashes of the furnace, that wherever any, the smallest portion, alighted, it might prove a plague and a curse to this cruel, ungrateful, and infatuated people. Thus there was a designed contrast in these workings of Providence, an apparent opposition to the superstition of the times.”

7. The grievous hail, the SEVENTH plague, attended with rain, thunder, and lightning, in a country where these scarcely ever occur, and according to an express prediction of Moses, must in the most signal manner point out the power and justice of God. Fire and water were some of the principal objects of Egyptian idolatry; and fire, as Porphyry says, they considered

μεγαν ειναι θεον, to be a great god. To find, therefore, that these very elements, the objects of their adoration, were, at the command of a servant of Jehovah, brought as a curse and scourge on the whole land, and upon men also and cattle, must have shaken their belief in these imaginary deities, while it proved to the Israelites that there was none like the God of Jeshurun.

8. In the EIGHTH plague we see by what insignificant creatures God can bring about a general destruction. A caterpillar is beyond all animals the most contemptible, and, taken singly, the least to be dreaded in the whole empire of nature; but in the hand of Divine justice it becomes one of the most formidable foes of the human race. From the examples in the notes we see how little human power, industry, or art, can avail against this most awful scourge. Not even the most contemptible animal should be considered with disrespect, as in the hand of God it may become the most terrible instrument for the punishment of a criminal individual or a guilty land.

9. The NINTH plague, the total and horrible darkness that lasted for three days, afforded both Israelites and Egyptians the most illustrious proof of the power and universal dominion of God; and was particularly to the latter a most awful yet instructive lesson against a species of idolatry which had been long prevalent in that and other countries, viz., the worship of the celestial luminaries. The sun and moon were both adored as supreme deities, as the sole dispensers of light and life; and the sun was invoked as the giver of immortality and eternal blessedness. Porphyry, Deuteronomy Abstin., l. 4, preserves the very form used by the Egyptian priests in addressing the sun on behalf of a deceased person, that he might be admitted into the society of the gods: **ω δεσποτα ἡλιε, και θεοι παντες, οι ρην ζωην τοις ανθρωποις δοντες, προσδεξασθε με, και παραδοτε τοις αιδιοις θεοις συνοικον**, "O sovereign lord the sun, and all ye other deities who bestow life on mankind! Receive me, and grant that I may be admitted as a companion with the immortal gods!" These objects of their superstitious worship Jehovah showed by this plague to be his creatures, dispensing or withholding their light merely at his will and pleasure; and that the people might be convinced that all this came by his appointment alone, he predicted this awful darkness; and that their astronomers might have the fullest proof that this was no natural

occurrence, and could not be the effect of any kind of eclipse, which even when total could endure only about four minutes, (and this case could happen only once in a thousand years,) he caused this palpable darkness to continue for three days!

10. The TENTH and last plague, the slaying of the first-born or chief person in each family, may be considered in the light of a Divine retribution: for after that their nation had been preserved by one of the Israelitish family, “they had,” says Mr. Bryant, “contrary to all right, and in defiance of original stipulation, enslaved the people to whom they had been so much indebted; and not contented with this, they had proceeded to murder their offspring, and to render the people’s bondage intolerable by a wanton exertion of power. It had been told them that the family of the Israelites were esteemed as God’s first-born, Exodus 4:22; therefore God said: Let my son go, that he may serve me; and if thou refuse-behold, I will slay thy son, even thy FIRST-BORN, Exodus 4:23. But they heeded not this admonition, and hence those judgments came upon them that terminated in the death of the eldest in each family; a just retaliation for their disobedience and cruelty.” See several curious and important remarks on this subject in a work entitled, *Observations upon the Plagues inflicted on the Egyptians*, by Jacob Bryant, 8vo., 1810.

On the whole we may say, Behold the goodness and severity of God! Severity mixed with goodness even to the same people. He punished and corrected them at the same time; for there was not one of these judgments that had not, from its peculiar nature and circumstances, some emendatory influence. Nor could a more effectual mode be adopted to demonstrate to that people the absurdity of their idolatry, and the inefficacy of their dependence, than that made use of on this occasion by the wise, just, and merciful God. At the same time the Israelites themselves must have received a lesson of the most impressive instruction on the vanity and wickedness of idolatry, to which they were at all times most deplorably prone, and of which they would no doubt have given many more examples, had they not had the Egyptian plagues continually before their eyes. It was probably these signal displays of God’s power and justice, and these alone, that induced them to leave Egypt at his command by Moses and Aaron; otherwise, with the dreadful wilderness before them, totally unprovided for such a journey, in which humanly speaking it was

impossible for them and their households to subsist, they would have rather preferred the ills they then suffered, than have run the risk of greater by an attempt to escape from their present bondage. This is proved by their murmurings, Exodus 16:2, 3, from which it is evident that they preferred Egypt with all its curses to their situation in the wilderness, and never could have been induced to leave it had they not had the fullest evidence that it was the will of God; which will they were obliged, on pain of utter destruction, to obey.

CHAPTER 13

God establishes the law concerning the first-born, and commands that all such, both of man and beast, should be sanctified unto him, 1, 2. Orders them to remember the day in which they were brought out of Egypt, when they should be brought to the land of Canaan; and to keep this service in the month Abib, 3-5. Repeats the command concerning the leavened bread, 6, 7, and orders them to teach their children the cause of it, 8, and to keep strictly in remembrance that it was by the might of God alone they had been delivered from Egypt, 9. Shows that the consecration of the first-born, both of man and beast, should take place when they should be settled in Canaan, 10-12. The first-born of man and beast to be redeemed, 13. The reason of this also to be shown to their children, 14, 15. Frontlets or phylacteries for the hands and forehead commanded, 16. And the people are not led directly to the promised land, but about through the wilderness; and the reason assigned, 17, 18. Moses takes the bones of Joseph with him, 19. They journey from Succoth and come to Etham, 20. And the Lord goes before them by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire, 21, which miracle is regularly continued both by day and night, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. *The Lord spake unto Moses*— The commands in this chapter appear to have been given at Succoth, on the same day in which they left Egypt.

Verse 2. *Sanctify unto me all the first-born*— To sanctify, **קדש** *kadash*, signifies to consecrate, separate, and set apart a thing or person from all secular purposes to some religious use; and exactly answers to the import of the Greek **αγιαζω**, from **α**, privative, and **γη**, the earth, because every thing offered or consecrated to God was separated from all earthly uses. Hence a holy person or saint is termed **αγιος**, i.e., a person separated from the earth; one who lives a holy life, entirely devoted to the service of God. Thus the persons and animals sanctified to God were employed in the

service of the tabernacle and temple; and the animals, such as were proper, were offered in sacrifice.

The Hindoos frequently make a vow, and devote to an idol the first-born of a goat and of a man. The goat is permitted to run wild, as a consecrated animal. A child thus devoted has a lock of hair separated, which at the time appointed is cut off and placed near the idol. Hindoo women sometimes pray to Gunga (the Ganges) for children, and promise to devote the first-born to her. Children thus devoted are cast into the Ganges, but are generally saved by the friendly hand of some stranger. — Ward's Customs.

Whatsoever openeth the womb— That is, the first-born, if a male; for females were not offered, nor the first male, if a female had been born previously. Again, if a man had several wives, the first-born of each, if a male, was to be offered to God. And all this was done to commemorate the preservation of the first-born of the Israelites, when those of the Egyptians were destroyed.

Verse 5. *When the Lord shall bring thee into the land*— Hence it is pretty evident that the Israelites were not obliged to celebrate the Passover, or keep the feast of unleavened bread, till they were brought into the promised land.

Verse 6. *Unleavened bread*— See Clarke on “Exodus 12:15”. See Clarke on “Exodus 12:16”.

Verse 9. *And it shall be for a sign-upon thine hand*— This direction, repeated and enlarged Exodus 13:16, gave rise to phylacteries or tephillin, and this is one of the passages which the Jews write upon them to the present day. The manner in which the Jews understood and kept these commands may appear in their practice. They wrote the following four portions of the law upon slips of parchment or vellum: Sanctify unto me the first-born, Exodus xiii., from verse 2 to 10 {Exodus 13:2-10} inclusive. And it shall be, when the Lord shall bring thee into the land, Exodus 13., from verse 11 to 16 {Exodus 13:11-16} inclusive. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, Deuteronomy 6., from verse 4 to 9 {Deuteronomy 6:4-9} inclusive. And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently, Deuteronomy 11., from verse 13 to 21 {Deuteronomy 9:13-21} inclusive.

These four portions, making in all 30 verses, written as mentioned above, and covered with leather, they tied to the forehead and to the hand or arm.

Those which were for the HEAD (the frontlets) they wrote on four slips of parchment, and rolled up each by itself, and placed them in four compartments, joined together in one piece of skin or leather. Those which were designed for the hand were formed of one piece of parchment, the four portions being written upon it in four columns, and rolled up from one end to the other. These were all correct transcripts from the Mosaic text, without one redundant or deficient letter, otherwise they were not lawful to be worn. Those for the head were tied on so as to rest on the forehead. Those for the hand or arm were usually tied on the left arm, a little above the elbow, on the inside, that they might be near the heart, according to the command, Deuteronomy 6:6: And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart. These phylacteries formed no inconsiderable part of a Jew's religion; they wore them as a sign of their obligation to God, and as representing some future blessedness. Hence they did not wear them on feast days nor on the Sabbath, because these things were in themselves signs; but they wore them always when they read the law, or when they prayed, and hence they called them תפלין tephillin, prayer, ornaments, oratories, or incitements to prayer. In process of time the spirit of this law was lost in the letter, and when the word was not in their mouth, nor the law in their heart, they had their phylacteries on their heads and on their hands. And the Pharisees, who in our Lord's time affected extraordinary piety, made their phylacteries very broad, that they might have many sentences written upon them, or the ordinary portions in very large and observable letters.

It appears that the Jews wore these for three different purposes:—

1. As signs or remembrancers. This was the original design, as the institution itself sufficiently proves.
2. To procure reverence and respect in the sight of the heathen. This reason is given in the Gemara, Berachoth, chap. i: "Whence is it proved that the phylacteries or tephillin are the strength of Israel? Ans. From what is written, Deuteronomy 28:10: All the people of the earth shall see

that thou art called by the name of the LORD (יהוה Yehovah) and they shall be afraid of thee.”

3. They used them as amulets or charms, to drive away evil spirits. This appears from the Targum on Canticles 8. 3 {Song of Solomon 8:3}: His left hand is under my head, etc. “The congregation of Israel hath said, I am elect above all people, because I bind my phylacteries on my left hand and on my head, and the scroll is fixed to the right side of my gate, the third part of which looks to my bed-chamber, that demons may not be permitted to injure me.

One of the original phylacteries or תפלין tephillin now lies before me; it is a piece of fine vellum, about eighteen inches long, and an inch and quarter broad. It is divided into four unequal compartments; the letters are very well formed, but written with many apices, after the manner of the German Jews. In the first compartment is written the portion taken from Exodus 13:2-10; in the second, Exodus 13:11-16; in the third, Deuteronomy 6:4-9; in the fourth, Deuteronomy 11:13-21, as before related. This had originally served for the hand or arm.

These passages seem to be chosen in vindication of the use of the phylactery itself, as the reader may see on consulting them at large. Bind them for a SIGN upon thy HAND; and for FRONTLETS between thy EYES; write them upon the POSTS of thy HOUSE and upon thy GATES; all which commands the Jews take in the most literal sense. To acquire the reputation of extraordinary sanctity they wore the fringes of their garments of an uncommon length. Moses had commanded them, Numbers 15:38, 39, to put fringes to the borders of their garments, that when they looked upon even these distinct threads they might remember, not only the law in general but also the very minutiae or smaller parts of all the precepts, rites, and ceremonies belonging to it. As those hypocrites (for such our Lord proves them to be) were destitute of all the life and power of religion within, they endeavored to supply its place with phylacteries and fringes without. The same principles distinguish hypocrites every where, and multitudes of them may be found among those termed Christians as well as among the Jews. It is probably to this institution relative to the phylactery that the words, Revelation 14:1, allude: And I looked, and, lo, a hundred and forty-four thousand having his Father’s

name written on their foreheads. “That is,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “as a sign of the profession of God’s law; for THAT which in the Gospel is called his NAME, (Matthew 12:21,) in the prophets is called his LAW, (Isaiah 42:4).” So again antichrist exacts the obedience to his precepts by a mark on men’s right hands or on their foreheads, Revelation 13:16.

Verse 13. *Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb*— Or a kid, as in the margin. In Numbers 18:15, it is said: “The first-born of man shalt thou surely redeem; and the firstling of an unclean beast shalt thou redeem.” Hence we may infer that ass is put here for any unclean beast, or for unclean beasts in general. The lamb was to be given to the Lord, that is, to his priest, Numbers 18:8, 15. And then the owner of the ass might use it for his own service, which without this redemption he could not do; see Deuteronomy 15:19.

The first-born of man-shalt thou redeem.— This was done by giving to the priests five standard shekels, or shekels of the sanctuary, every shekel weighing twenty gerahs. What the gerah was, See Clarke on “Genesis 20:16”. And for the shekel, See Clarke on “Genesis 20:16”.

It may be necessary to observe here that the Hebrew doctors teach, that if a father had neglected or refused thus to redeem his first-born, the son himself was obliged to do it when he came of age. As this redeeming of the first-born was instituted in consequence of sparing the first-born of the Israelites, when the first-born both of man and beast among the Egyptians was destroyed, on this ground all the first-born were the Lord’s, and should have been employed in his service; but he permitted the first-born of a useful unclean animal to be redeemed by a clean animal of much less value. And he chose the tribe of Levi in place of all the first-born of the tribes in general; and the five shekels were ordered to be paid in lieu of such first-born sons as were liable to serve in the sanctuary, and the money was applied to the support of the priests and Levites. See this subject at large in Numbers 3:12, 13, 41, 43, 45, 47-51.

Verse 16. *It shall be for a token, etc.*— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 13:9”.

Verse 17. *God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, etc.*— Had the Israelites been obliged to commence their

journey to the promised land by a military campaign, there is little room to doubt that they would have been discouraged, have rebelled against Moses and Aaron, and have returned back to Egypt. Their long slavery had so degraded their minds that they were incapable of any great or noble exertions; and it is only on the ground of this mental degradation, the infallible consequence of slavery, that we can account for their many dastardly acts, murmurings, and repinings after their escape from Egypt. The reader is requested to bear this in mind, as it will serve to elucidate several circumstances in the ensuing history. Besides, the Israelites were in all probability unarmed, and totally unequipped for battle, encumbered with their flocks, and certain culinary utensils. which they were obliged to carry with them in the wilderness to provide them with bread, etc.

Verse 18. *But God led the people about*— Dr. Shaw has shown that there were two roads from Egypt to Canaan, one through the valleys of Jendilly, Rumeleah, and Baideah, bounded on each side by the mountains of the lower Thebais; the other lies higher, having the northern range of the mountains of Mocatee running parallel with it on the right hand, and the desert of the Egyptian Arabia, which lies all the way open to the land of the Philistines, to the left. See his account of these encampments at the end of Exodus. See Clarke note on “Exodus 40:38”.

Went up harnessed— **חַמְשִׁים** chamushim. It is truly astonishing what a great variety of opinions are entertained relative to the meaning of this word. After having maturely considered all that I have met with on the subject, I think it probable that the word refers simply to that orderly or well arranged manner in which the Israelites commenced their journey from Egypt. For to arrange, array, or set in order, seems to be the ideal meaning of the word **חַמַּשׁ** chamash. As it was natural to expect that in such circumstances there must have been much hurry and confusion, the inspired writer particularly marks the contrary, to show that God had so disposed matters that the utmost regularity and order prevailed; and had it been otherwise, thousands of men, women, and children must have been trodden to death. Our margin has it by five in a rank; but had they marched only five abreast, supposing only one yard for each rank to move in, it would have required not less than sixty-eight miles for even the 600, 000 to proceed on regularly in this way; for 600, 000 divided by five gives 120, 000 ranks of five each; and there being only 1, 760 yards in a mile, the

dividing 120, 000 by 1, 760 will give the number of miles such a column of people would take up, which by such an operation will be found to be something more than sixty-eight miles. But this the circumstances of the history will by no means admit. — Harmer. The simple meaning therefore appears to be that given above; and if the note on the concluding verse of the preceding chapter be considered, it may serve to place this explanation in a still clearer point of view.

Verse 19. *Moses took the bones of Joseph*— See Clarke note on “Genesis 50:25”. It is supposed that the Israelites carried with them the bones or remains of all the twelve sons of Jacob, each tribe taking care of the bones of its own patriarch, while Moses took care of the bones of Joseph. St. Stephen expressly says, Acts 7:15, 16, that not only Jacob, but the fathers were carried from Egypt into Sychem; and this, as Calmet remarks, was the only opportunity that seems to have presented itself for doing this: and certainly the reason that rendered it proper to remove the bones of Joseph to the promised land, had equal weight in reference to those of the other patriarchs. See Clarke note on “Genesis 49:29”.

Verse 20. *Encamped in Etham*.— As for the reasons assigned on Exodus 13:17, God would not lead the Israelites by the way of the Philistines’ country, he directed them towards the wilderness of Shur, Exodus 15:22, upon the edge or extremity of which, next to Egypt, at the bottom of the Arabian Gulf, lay Etham, which is the second place of encampment mentioned. See the extracts from Dr. Shaw at the end of Exodus. See Clarke note on “Exodus 40:38”.

Verse 21. *The Lord went before them*— That by the LORD here is meant the Lord Jesus, we have the authority of St. Paul to believe, 1 Corinthians 10:9: it was he whose Spirit they tempted in the wilderness, for it was he who led them through the desert to the promised rest.

Pillar of a cloud— This pillar or column, which appeared as a cloud by day, and a fire by night, was the symbol of the Divine presence. This was the Shechinah or Divine dwelling place, and was the continual proof of the presence and protection of GOD. It was necessary that they should have a guide to direct them through the wilderness, even had they taken the most direct road; and how much more so when they took a circuitous route not usually traveled, and of which they knew nothing but just as the luminous

pillar pointed out the way! Besides, it is very likely that even Moses himself did not know the route which God had determined on, nor the places of encampment, till the pillar that went before them became stationary, and thus pointed out, not only the road, but the different places of rest. Whether there was more than one pillar is not clearly determined by the text. If there was but one it certainly assumed three different appearances, for the performance of THREE very important offices. 1. In the day-time, for the purpose of pointing out the way, a column or pillar of a cloud was all that was requisite. 2. At night, to prevent that confusion which must otherwise have taken place, the pillar of cloud became a pillar of fire, not to direct their journeyings, for they seldom traveled by night, but to give light to every part of the Israelitish camp. 3. In such a scorching, barren, thirsty desert, something farther was necessary than a light and a guide. Women, children, and comparatively infirm persons, exposed to the rays of such a burning sun, must have been destroyed if without a covering; hence we find that a cloud overshadowed them: and from what St. Paul observes, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2, we are led to conclude that this covering cloud was composed of aqueous particles for the cooling of the atmosphere and refreshment of themselves and their cattle; for he represents the whole camp as being sprinkled or immersed in the humidity of its vapours, and expressly calls it a being under the cloud and being baptized in the cloud. To the circumstance of the cloud covering them, there are several references in Scripture. Thus: He spread a CLOUD for their COVERING; Psalm 105:39. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, A CLOUD and SMOKE BY DAY, and the shining of a FLAMING FIRE by night; for upon all the glory shall be a DEFENCE, (or COVERING,) Isaiah 4:5; which words contain the most manifest allusion to the threefold office of the cloud in the wilderness. See Numbers 9:16-18, etc.

Verse 22. *He took not away the pillar of the cloud*— Neither Jews nor Gentiles are agreed how long the cloud continued with the Israelites. It is very probable that it first visited them at Succoth, if it did not accompany them from Rameses; and that it continued with them till they came to the river Jordan, to pass over opposite to Jericho, for after that it appears that the ark alone was their guide, as it always marched at their head. See Joshua 3:10-11, etc. But others think that it went no farther with them

than Mount Hor, and never appeared after the death of Aaron. We may safely assert that while it was indispensably necessary it continued with them, when it was not so it was removed. But it is worthy of remark that the ark of the covenant became its substitute. While a miracle was necessary, a miracle was granted; when that was no longer necessary, then the testimony of the Lord deposited in the ark was deemed sufficient by Him who cannot err. So, under the Gospel dispensation, miracles were necessary at its first promulgation; but after that the canon of Scripture was completed, the new covenant having been made, ratified by the blood of the Lamb, and published by the Holy Spirit, then God withdrew generally those outward signs, leaving his word for a continual testimony, and sealing it on the souls of believers by the Spirit of truth.

It is also worthy of remark that the ancient heathen writers represent their gods, in their pretended manifestations to men, as always encompassed with a cloud; Homer and Virgil abound with examples of this kind: and is it not very probable that they borrowed this, as they did many other things in their mythologic theology, from the tradition of Jehovah guiding his people through the desert by means of the cloud, in and by which he repeatedly manifested himself?

1. EXTRAORDINARY manifestations and interpositions of providence and grace should be held in continual remembrance. We are liable to forget the hole of the pit whence we were digged, and the rock whence we were hewn. Prudence and piety will institute their anniversaries, that the merciful dealings of the Lord may never be forgotten. The passover and the feast of unleavened bread, by an annual commemoration, became standing proofs to the children of Israel of the Divine origin of their religion; and are supporting pillars of it to the present day. For when a fact is reported to have taken place, and certain rites or ceremonies have been instituted in order to commemorate it, which rites or ceremonies continue to be observed through succeeding ages, then the fact itself, no matter how remote the period of its occurrence may have been, has the utmost proofs of authenticity that it is possible for any fact to have; and such as every person pretending to reason and judgment is obliged to receive. On this ground the Mosaic religion, and the facts recorded in it, are indubitably proved; and the Christian religion and its facts, being commemorated in the same way, particularly by baptism and the Lord's Supper, stand on such a

foundation of moral certainty as no other records in the universe can possibly boast. Reader, praise God for his ordinances; they are not only means of grace to thy soul, but standing irrefragable proofs of the truth of that religion which thou hast received as from HIM.

2. A serious public profession of the religion of Christ has in all ages of the Church been considered not only highly becoming, but indispensably necessary to salvation. He who consistently confesses Christ before men shall be confessed by him before God and his angels. A Jew wore his phylacteries on his forehead, on his hands, and round his garments, that he might have reverence in the sight of the heathen; he gloried in his law, and he exulted that Abraham was his father. Christian! with a zeal not less becoming, and more consistently supported, let the words of thy mouth, the acts of thy hands, and all thy goings, show that thou belongest unto God; that thou hast taken his Spirit for the guide of thy heart, his word for the rule of thy life, his people for thy companions, his heaven for thy inheritance, and himself for the portion of thy soul. And see that thou hold fast the truth, and that thou hold it in righteousness.

3. How merciful is God in the dispensations of his providence! He permits none to be tried above what he is able to bear, and he proportions the burden to the back that is to bear it. He led not the Israelites by the way of the Philistines, lest, seeing war, they should repent and be discouraged. Young converts are generally saved from severe spiritual conflicts and heavy temptations till they have acquired a habit of believing, are disciplined in the school of Christ, and instructed in the nature of the path in which they go, and the difficulties they may expect to find in it. They are informed that such things may take place, they are thus armed for the battle, and when trials do come they are not taken by surprise. God, the most merciful and kind God, “tempers even the blast to the shorn lamb.” Trust in him therefore with all thy heart, and never lean to thy own understanding.

4. The providence and goodness of God are equally observable in the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. The former was the proof of his providential kindness by day; the latter, by night. Thus he adjusts the assistance of his grace and Spirit to the exigencies of his creatures, giving at some times, when peculiar trials require it, more particular manifestations of his mercy

and goodness; but at all times, such evidences of his approbation as are sufficient to satisfy a pious faithful heart. It is true the pillar of fire was more observable in the night, because of the general darkness, than the pillar of cloud was by day; yet the latter was as convincing and as evident a proof of his presence, approbation, and protection as the former. It is the duty and interest of every sound believer in Christ to have the witness of God's Spirit in his soul at all times, that his spirit and ways please his Maker; but in seasons of peculiar difficulty he may expect the more sensible manifestations of God's goodness. A good man is a temple of the Holy Spirit; but he who has an unholy heart, and who lives an unrighteous life, though he may have an orthodox creed, is a hold of unclean spirits, and an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Reader, let not these observations be fruitless to thee. God gives thee his word and his Spirit, obey this word that thou grieve not this Spirit. The following figurative saying of a Jewish rabbin is worthy of regard: "God addresses Israel and says, My son, I give thee my lamp, give me thy lamp. If thou keep my lamp, I will keep thy lamp; but if thou quench my lamp, I will extinguish thy lamp:" i.e., I give thee my word and Spirit, give me thy heart and soul. If thou carefully attend to my word, and grieve not my Spirit. I will preserve thy soul alive; but if thou rebel against my word, and quench my Spirit, then thy light shall be put out, and thy soul's blessedness extinguished in everlasting darkness.

CHAPTER 14

The Israelites are commanded to encamp before Pi-hahiroth, 1, 2. God predicts the pursuit of Pharaoh, 3, 4. Pharaoh is informed that the Israelites are fled, and regrets that he suffered them to depart, 5. He musters his troops and pursues them, 6-8. Overtakes them in their encampment by the Red Sea, 9. The Israelites are terrified at his approach, 10. They murmur against Moses for leading them out, 11, 12. Moses encourages them, and assures them of deliverance, 13, 14. God commands the Israelites to advance, and Moses to stretch out his rod over the sea that it might be divided, 15, 16; and promises utterly to discomfit the Egyptians, 17, 18. The angel of God places himself between the Israelites and the Egyptians, 19. The pillar of the cloud becomes darkness to the Egyptians, while it gives light to the Israelites, 20. Moses stretches out his rod, and a strong east wind blows, and the waters are divided, 21. The Israelites enter and walk on dry ground, 22. The Egyptians enter also in pursuit of the Israelites, 23. The Lord looks out of the pillar of cloud on the Egyptians, terrifies them, and disjoins their chariots, 24, 25. Moses is commanded to stretch forth his rod over the waters, that they may return to their former bed, 26. He does so, and the whole Egyptian army is overwhelmed, 27, 28, while every Israelite escapes, 29. Being thus saved from the hand of their adversaries, they acknowledge the power of God, and credit the mission of Moses, 30, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 2. Encamp before Pi-hahiroth—פִּי הַחִירוֹת *pi hachiroth*, the mouth, strait, or bay of Chiroth. Between Migdol, מִגְדֹּל *migdol*, the tower, probably a fortress that served to defend the bay. Over against Baal-zephon, בַּעַל צֶפֶן *baal tsephon*, the lord or master of the watch, probably an idol temple, where a continual guard, watch, or light was kept up for the defense of one part of the haven, or as a guide to ships. Dr. Shaw thinks that chiroth may denote the valley which extended itself from the wilderness of Etham to the Red Sea, and that the part in which the

Israelites encamped was called Pi-hachiroth, i.e., the mouth or bay of Chiroth. See his Travels, p. 310, and his account at the end of Exodus.

Verse 3. *They are entangled in the land*— God himself brought them into straits from which no human power or art could extricate them. Consider their situation when once brought out of the open country, where alone they had room either to fight or fly. Now they had the Red Sea before them, Pharaoh and his host behind them, and on their right and left hand fortresses of the Egyptians to prevent their escape; nor had they one boat or transport prepared for their passage! If they be now saved, the arm of the Lord must be seen, and the vanity and nullity of the Egyptian idols be demonstrated. By bringing them into such a situation he took from them all hope of human help, and gave their adversaries every advantage against them, so that they themselves said, *They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.*

Verse 4. *I will harden Pharaoh's heart*— After relenting and giving them permission to depart, he now changes his mind and determines to prevent them; and without any farther restraining grace, God permits him to rush on to his final ruin, for the cup of his iniquity was now full.

Verse 5. *And it was told the king-that the people fled*— Of their departure he could not be ignorant, because himself had given them liberty to depart: but the word fled here may be understood as implying that they had utterly left Egypt without any intention to return, which is probably what he did not expect, for he had only given them permission to go three days' journey into the wilderness, in order to sacrifice to Jehovah; but from the circumstances of their departure, and the property they had got from the Egyptians, it was taken for granted that they had no design to return; and this was in all likelihood the consideration that weighed most with this avaricious king, and determined him to pursue, and either recover the spoil or bring them back, or both. Thus the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people, and they said, *Why have we let Israel go from serving us? Here was the grand incentive to pursuit; their service was profitable to the state, and they were determined not to give it up.*

Verse 7. *Six hundred chosen chariots, etc.*— According to the most authentic accounts we have of war-chariots, they were frequently drawn

by two or by four horses, and carried three persons: one was charioteer, whose business it was to guide the horses, but he seldom fought; the second chiefly defended the charioteer; and the third alone was properly the combatant. It appears that in this case Pharaoh had collected all the cavalry of Egypt; (see Exodus 14:17;) and though these might not have been very numerous, yet, humanly speaking, they might easily overcome the unarmed and encumbered Israelites, who could not be supposed to be able to make any resistance against cavalry and war-chariots.

Verse 10. *The children of Israel cried out unto the Lord.*— Had their prayer been accompanied with faith, we should not have found them in the next verses murmuring against Moses, or rather against the Lord, through whose goodness they were now brought from under that bondage from which they had often cried for deliverance. Calmet thinks that the most pious and judicious cried unto God, while the unthinking and irreligious murmured against Moses.

Verse 13. *Moses said-Fear ye not*— This exhortation was not given to excite them to resist, for of that there was no hope; they were unarmed, they had no courage, and their minds were deplorably degraded.

Stand still— Ye shall not be even workers together with God; only be quiet, and do not render yourselves wretched by your fears and your confusion.

See the salvation of the Lord— Behold the deliverance which God will work, independently of all human help and means.

Ye shall see them again no more— Here was strong faith, but this was accompanied by the spirit of prophecy. God showed Moses what he would do, he believed, and therefore he spoke in the encouraging manner related above.

Verse 14. *The Lord shall fight for you*— Ye shall have no part in the honor of the day; God alone shall bring you off, and defeat your foes.

Ye shall hold your peace.— Your unbelieving fears and clamours shall be confounded, and ye shall see that by might none shall be able to prevail against the Lord, and that the feeblest shall take the prey when the power of Jehovah is exerted.

Verse 15. *Wherefore criest thou unto me?*— We hear not one word of Moses' praying, and yet here the Lord asks him why he cries unto him? From which we may learn that the heart of Moses was deeply engaged with God, though it is probable he did not articulate one word; but the language of sighs, tears, and desires is equally intelligible to God with that of words. This consideration should be a strong encouragement to every feeble, discouraged mind: Thou canst not pray, but thou canst weep; if even tears are denied thee, (for there may be deep and genuine repentance, where the distress is so great as to stop up those channels of relief,) then thou canst sigh; and God, whose Spirit has thus convinced thee of sin, righteousness, and judgment, knows thy unutterable groanings, and reads the inexpressible wish of thy burdened soul, a wish of which himself is the author, and which he has breathed into thy heart with the purpose to satisfy it.

Verse 16. *Lift thou up thy rod*— Neither Moses nor his rod could be any effective instrument in a work which could be accomplished only by the omnipotence of God; but it was necessary that he should appear in it, in order that he might have credit in the sight of the Israelites, and that they might see that God had chosen him to be the instrument of their deliverance.

Verse 18. *Shall know that I am the Lord*— Pharaoh had just recovered from the consternation and confusion with which the late plagues had overwhelmed him, and now he is emboldened to pursue after Israel; and God is determined to make his overthrow so signal by such an exertion of omnipotence, that he shall get himself honor by this miraculous act, and that the Egyptians shall know, i.e., acknowledge, that he is Jehovah, the omnipotent, self-existing, eternal God.

Verse 19. *The angel of God*— It has been thought by some that the angel, i.e., messenger, of the Lord, and the pillar of cloud, mean here the same thing. An angel might assume the appearance of a cloud; and even a material cloud thus particularly appointed might be called an angel or messenger of the Lord, for such is the literal import of the word מלאך malach, an angel. It is however most probable that the Angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus, appeared on this occasion in behalf of the people; for as this deliverance was to be an illustrious type of the

deliverance of man from the power and guilt of sin by his incarnation and death, it might have been deemed necessary, in the judgment of Divine wisdom, that he should appear chief agent in this most important and momentous crisis. On the word angel, and Angel of the covenant, See Clarke note on “Genesis 16:7”; See Clarke note on “Genesis 18:13”; and See Clarke note on “Exodus 3:2”.

Verse 20. *It was a cloud and darkness to them, etc.*— That the Israelites might not be dismayed at the appearance of their enemies, and that these might not be able to discern the object of their pursuit, the pillar of cloud moved from the front to the rear of the Israelitish camp, so as perfectly to separate between them and the Egyptians. It appears also that this cloud had two sides, one dark and the other luminous: the luminous side gave light to the whole camp of Israel during the night of passage; and the dark side, turned towards the pursuing Egyptians, prevented them from receiving any benefit from that light. How easily can God make the same thing an instrument of destruction or salvation, as seems best to his godly wisdom! He alone can work by all agents, and produce any kind of effect even by the same instrument; for all things serve the purposes of his will.

Verse 21. *The Lord caused the sea to go back*— That part of the sea over which the Israelites passed was, according to Mr. Bruce and other travelers, about four leagues across, and therefore might easily be crossed in one night. In the dividing of the sea two agents appear to be employed, though the effect produced can be attributed to neither. By stretching out the rod the waters were divided; by the blowing of the vehement, ardent, east wind, the bed of the sea was dried. It has been observed, that in the place where the Israelites are supposed to have passed, the water is about fourteen fathoms or twenty-eight yards deep: had the wind mentioned here been strong enough, naturally speaking, to have divided the waters, it must have blown in one narrow track, and continued blowing in the direction in which the Israelites passed; and a wind sufficient to have raised a mass of water twenty-eight yards deep and twelve miles in length, out of its bed, would necessarily have blown the whole six hundred thousand men away, and utterly destroyed them and their cattle. I therefore conclude that the east wind, which was ever remarked as a parching, burning wind, was used after the division of the waters, merely to dry the bottom, and render it passable. For an account of the hot drying winds in the east, See Clarke’s

note on “Genesis 8:1”. God ever puts the highest honor on his instrument, Nature; and where it can act, he ever employs it. No natural agent could divide these waters, and cause them to stand as a wall upon the right hand and upon the left; therefore God did it by his own sovereign power. When the waters were thus divided, there was no need of a miracle to dry the bed of the sea and make it passable; therefore the strong desiccating east wind was brought, which soon accomplished this object. In this light I suppose the text should be understood.

Verse 22. *And the waters were a wall unto them on their right and on their left.*— This verse demonstrates that the passage was miraculous. Some have supposed that the Israelites had passed through, favored by an extraordinary ebb, which happened at that time to be produced by a strong wind, which happened just then to blow! Had this been the case, there could not have been waters standing on the right hand and on the left; much less could those waters, contrary to every law of fluids, have stood as a wall on either side while the Israelites passed through, and then happen to become obedient to the laws of gravitation when the Egyptians entered in! An infidel may deny the revelation in toto, and from such we expect nothing better; but to hear those who profess to believe this to be a Divine revelation endeavoring to prove that the passage of the Red Sea had nothing miraculous in it, is really intolerable. Such a mode of interpretation requires a miracle to make itself credible. Poor infidelity! how miserable and despicable are thy shifts!

Verse 24. *The morning watch*— A watch was the fourth part of the time from sun-setting to sun-rising; so called from soldiers keeping guard by night, who being changed four times during the night, the periods came to be called watches. — Dodd.

As here and in 1 Samuel 11:11 is mentioned the morning watch; so in Lamentations 2:19, the beginning of the watches; and in Judges 7:19, the middle watch is spoken of; in Luke 12:38, the second and third watch; and in Matthew 14:25, the fourth watch of the night; which in Mark 13:35 are named evening, midnight, cock-crowing, and day-dawning. — Ainsworth.

As the Israelites went out of Egypt at the vernal equinox, the morning watch, or, according to the Hebrew, באשמרת הבקר, beashmoreth

habboker, the watch of day-break, would answer to our four o'clock in the morning. — Calmet.

The Lord looked unto— This probably means that the cloud suddenly assumed a fiery appearance where it had been dark before; or they were appalled by violent thunders and lightning, which we are assured by the psalmist did actually take place, together with great inundations of rain, etc.: The clouds **POURED OUT WATER**; the skies sent out a **SOUND**: thine **ARROWS** also went abroad. The **VOICE** of thy **THUNDER** was in the heaven; the **LIGHTNINGS LIGHTENED** the world; the earth **TREMBLED** and **SHOOK**. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters. Thou leddest thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron; Psalm 77:17-20. Such tempests as these would necessarily terrify the Egyptian horses, and produce general confusion. By their dashing hither and thither the wheels must be destroyed, and the chariots broken; and foot and horse must be mingled together in one universal ruin; see Exodus 14:25. During the time that this state of horror and confusion was at its summit the Israelites had safely passed over; and then Moses, at the command of God, (Exodus 14:26,) having stretched out his rod over the waters, the sea returned to its strength; (Exodus 14:27;) i.e., the waters by their natural gravity resumed their level, and the whole Egyptian host were completely overwhelmed, Exodus 14:28. But as to the Israelites, the waters had been a wall unto them on the right hand and on the left, Exodus 14:29. This the waters could not have been, unless they had been supernaturally supported; as their own gravity would necessarily have occasioned them to have kept their level, or, if raised beyond it, to have regained it if left to their natural law, to which they are ever subject, unless in cases of miraculous interference. Thus the enemies of the Lord perished; and that people who decreed that the male children of the Hebrews should be drowned, were themselves destroyed in the pit which they had destined for others. God's ways are all equal; and he renders to every man according to his works.

Verse 28. *There remained not so much as one of them.*— Josephus says that the army of Pharaoh consisted of fifty thousand horse, and two hundred thousand foot, of whom not one remained to carry tidings of this most extraordinary catastrophe.

Verse 30. *Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.*— By the extraordinary agitation of the waters, no doubt multitudes of the dead Egyptians were cast on the shore, and by their spoils the Israelites were probably furnished with considerable riches, and especially clothing and arms; which latter were essentially necessary to them in their wars with the Amalekites, Basanites, and Amorites, etc., on their way to the promised land. If they did not get their arms in this way, we know not how they got them, as there is not the slightest reason to believe that they brought any with them out of Egypt.

Verse 31. *The people feared the Lord*— They were convinced by the interference of Jehovah that his power was unlimited, and that he could do whatsoever he pleased, both in the way of judgment and in the way of mercy.

And believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.— They now clearly discerned that God had fulfilled all his promises; and that not one thing had failed of all the good which he had spoken concerning Israel. And they believed his servant Moses — they had now the fullest proof that he was Divinely appointed to work all these miracles, and to bring them out of Egypt into the promised land.

Thus God got himself honor upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and credit in the sight of Israel. After this overthrow of their king and his host, the Egyptians interrupted them no more in the journeyings, convinced of the omnipotence of their Protector: and how strange, that after such displays of the justice and mercy of Jehovah, the Israelites should ever have been deficient in faith, or have given place to murmuring!

1. THE events recorded in this chapter are truly astonishing; and they strongly mark what God can do, and what he will do, both against his enemies and in behalf of his followers. In vain are all the forces of Egypt united to destroy the Israelites: at the breath of God's mouth they perish; and his feeble, discouraged, unarmed followers take the prey! With such a history before their eyes, is it not strange that sinners should run on frowardly in the path of transgression; and that those who are redeemed from the world, should ever doubt of the all-sufficiency and goodness of their God! Had we not already known the sequel of the Israelitish history, we should have been led to conclude that this people would have gone on

their way rejoicing, trusting in God with their whole heart, and never leaning to their own understanding; but alas! we find that as soon as any new difficulty occurred, they murmured against God and their leaders, despised the pleasant land, and gave no credence to his word.

2. Their case is not a solitary one: most of those who are called Christians are not more remarkable for faith and patience. Every reverse will necessarily pain and discompose the people who are seeking their portion in this life. And it is a sure mark of a worldly mind, when we trust the God of Providence and grace no farther than we see the operations of his hand in our immediate supply; and murmur and repine when the hand of his bounty seems closed, and the influences of his Spirit restrained, though our unthankful and unholy carriage has been the cause of this change. Those alone who humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, shall be lifted up in due season. Reader, thou canst never be deceived in trusting thy all, the concerns of thy body and soul, to Him who divided the sea, saved the Hebrews, and destroyed the Egyptians.

CHAPTER 15

Moses and the Israelites sing a song of praise to God for their late deliverance, in which they celebrate the power of God, gloriously manifested in the destruction of Pharaoh and his host, 1; express their confidence in him as their strength and protector, 2, 3; detail the chief circumstances in the overthrow of the Egyptians, 4-8; and relate the purposes they had formed for the destruction of God's people, 9, and how he destroyed them in the imaginations of their hearts, 10. Jehovah is celebrated for the perfections of his nature and his wondrous works, 11-13. A prediction of the effect which the account of the destruction of the Egyptians should have on the Edomites, Moabites, and Canaanites, 14-16. A prediction of the establishment of Israel in the promised land, 17. The full chorus of praise, 18. Recapitulation of the destruction of the Egyptians, and the deliverance of Israel, 19. Miriam and the women join in and prolong the chorus, 20, 21. The people travel three days in the wilderness of Shur, and find no water, 22. Coming to Marah, and finding bitter waters, they murmur against Moses, 23, 24. In answer to the prayer of Moses, God shows him a tree by which the waters are sweetened, 25. God gives them statutes and gracious promises, 26. They come to Elim, where they find twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees, and there they encamp, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song*— POETRY has been cultivated in all ages and among all people, from the most refined to the most barbarous; and to it principally, under the kind providence of God, we are indebted for most of the original accounts we have of the ancient nations of the universe. Equally measured lines, with a harmonious collocation of expressive, sonorous, and sometimes highly metaphorical terms, the alternate lines either answering to each other in sense, or ending with similar sounds, were easily committed to memory, and easily retained. As these were often accompanied with a pleasing air or tune, the subject being a concatenation of striking and interesting events, histories

formed thus became the amusement of youth, the softeners of the tedium of labor, and even the solace of age. In such a way the histories of most nations have been preserved. The interesting events celebrated, the rhythm or metre, and the accompanying tune or recitativo air, rendered them easily transmissible to posterity; and by means of tradition they passed safely from father to son through the times of comparative darkness, till they arrived at those ages in which the pen and the press have given them a sort of deathless duration and permanent stability, by multiplying the copies. Many of the ancient historic and heroic British tales are continued by tradition among the aboriginal inhabitants of Ireland to the present day; and the repetition of them constitutes the chief amusement of the winter evenings. Even the prose histories, which were written on the ground of the poetic, copied closely their exemplars, and the historians themselves were obliged to study all the beauties and ornaments of style, that their works might become popular; and to this circumstance we owe not a small measure of what is termed refinement of language. How observable is this in the history of Herodotus, who appears to have closely copied the ancient poetic records in his inimitable and harmonious prose; and, that his books might bear as near a resemblance as possible to the ancient and popular originals, he divided them into nine, and dedicated each to one of the muses! His work therefore seems to occupy the same place between the ancient poetic compositions and mere prosaic histories, as the polype does between plants and animals. Much even of our sacred records is written in poetry, which God has thus consecrated to be the faithful transmitter of remote and important events; and of this the song before the reader is a proof in point. Though this is not the first specimen of poetry we have met with in the Pentateuch, (see Lamech's speech to his wives, Genesis 4:23, 24; Noah's prophecy concerning his sons, Genesis 9:25-27; and Jacob's blessing to the twelve patriarchs, Genesis 49:2-27, and the notes there,) yet it is the first regular ode of any considerable length, having but one subject; and it is all written in hemistichs, or half lines, the usual form in Hebrew poetry; and though this form frequently occurs, it is not attended to in our common printed Hebrew Bibles, except in this and three other places, (Deuteronomy 32., Judges 5., and 2 Samuel 22.,) all of which shall be noticed as they occur. But in Dr. Kennicott's edition of the Hebrew Bible, all the poetry, wheresoever it occurs, is printed in its own hemistich form.

After what has been said it is perhaps scarcely necessary to observe, that as such ancient poetic histories commemorated great and extraordinary displays of providence, courage, strength, fidelity, heroism, and piety; hence the origin of EPIC poems, of which the song in this chapter is the earliest specimen. And on the principle of preserving the memory of such events, most nations have had their epic poets, who have generally taken for their subject the most splendid or most remote events of their country's history, which either referred to the formation or extension of their empire, the exploits of their ancestors, or the establishment of their religion. Hence the ancient HEBREWS had their Shir Mosheh, the piece in question: the GREEKS, their Ilias; the HINDOOS, their Mahabarat; the ROMANS, their AENEIS; the NORWEGIANS, their Edda; the IRISH and SCOTCH, their Fingal and Chronological poems; the WELSH, their Taliessin and his Triads; the ARABS, their Nebiun-Nameh (exploits of Mohammed) and Hamleh Heedry, (exploits of Aly;) the PERSIANS, their SHAH Nameh, (book of kings;) the ITALIANS, their Gerusalemme Liberata; the PORTUGUESE, their Lusiad; the ENGLISH, their Paradise Lost; and, in humble imitation of all the rest, (etsi non passibus aequis,) the FRENCH, their Henriade.

The song of Moses has been in the highest repute in the Church of God from the beginning; the author of the Book of Wisdom attributes it in a particular manner to the wisdom of God, and says that on this occasion God opened the mouth of the dumb, and made the tongues of infants eloquent; Wisdom 10:21. As if he had said, Every person felt an interest in the great events which had taken place, and all labored to give Jehovah that praise which was due to his name. "With this song of victory over Pharaoh," says Mr. Ainsworth, "the Holy Ghost compares the song of those who have gotten the victory over the spiritual Pharaoh, the beast, (Antichrist,) when they stand by the sea of glass mingled with fire, (as Israel stood here by the Red Sea,) having the harps of God, (as the women here had timbrels, Exodus 15:20,) and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, the Son of God," Revelation 15:2-4.

I will sing unto the Lord— Moses begins the song, and in the two first hemistichs states the subject of it; and these two first lines became the grand chorus of the piece, as we may learn from Exodus 15:21. See Dr.

Kennicott's arrangement and translation of this piece at the end of this chapter. See Clarke note on "Exodus 15:26".

Triumphed gloriously— כִּי גָאֹחַ גָּאֹחַ ki gaoh gaah, he is exceedingly exalted, rendered by the Septuagint, *ενδοξως γαρ δεδοξασται*, He is gloriously glorified; and surely this was one of the most signal displays of the glorious majesty of God ever exhibited since the creation of the world. And when it is considered that the whole of this transaction shadowed out the redemption of the human race from the thralldom and power of sin and iniquity by the Lord Jesus, and the final triumph of the Church of God over all its enemies, we may also join in the song, and celebrate Him who has triumphed so gloriously, having conquered death, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

Verse 2. The Lord is my strength and song— How judiciously are the members of this sentence arranged! He who has God for his strength, will have him for his song; and he to whom Jehovah is become salvation, will exalt his name. Miserably and untunably, in the ears of God, does that man sing praises, who is not saved by the grace of Christ, nor strengthened by the power of his might.

It is worthy of observation that the word which we translate LORD here, is not יהוה JEHOVAH in the original, but יה JAH; "as if by abbreviation," says Mr. Parkhurst, "for יהיה yeheieh or יהי yehi. It signifies the Essence *ὁ ὢν*, He who Is, simply, absolutely, and independently. The relation between יה JAH and the verb יהיה to subsist, exist, be, is intimated to us the first time יה JAH is used in Scripture, (Exodus 15:2:) 'My strength and my song is יה JAH, and he is become (יהי vajehi) to me salvation.'" See Psalm 68:5; 89:6; 94:7; 115:17, 18; 118:17.

JAH יה is several times joined with the name Jehovah יהוה so that we may be sure that it is not, as some have supposed, a mere abbreviation of that word. See Isaiah 12:2; 26:4. Our blessed Lord solemnly claims to himself what is intended in this Divine name יה JAH, John 8:58: "Before Abraham was, (*γενεσθαι*, was born,) *εγω ειμι*, I AM," not I was, but I am, plainly intimating his Divine eternal existence. Compare Isaiah 43:13. And the Jews appear to have well understood him, for then took they up stones to cast at him as a blasphemer. Compare Colossians 1:16, 17, where

the Apostle Paul, after asserting that all things that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, were created, **ἐκτισται**, by and for Christ, adds **And HE IS (αυτος εστι, not ην, was)** before all things, and by him all things **συνεστηκε**, have subsisted, and still subsist. See Parkhurst.

From this Divine name **יה** Jah the ancient Greeks had their **ιη, ιη**, in their invocations of the gods, particularly of Apollo (the uncompounded ONE) the light; and hence **EI**, written after the oriental manner from right to left, afterwards **IE**, was inscribed over the great door of the temple at Delphi! See Clarke's note on "Exodus 3:14", and the concluding observations there.

I will prepare him a habitation— **וּאֲנַחֲהוּ** veanvehu. It has been supposed that Moses, by this expression, intended the building of the tabernacle; but it seems to come in very strangely in this place. Most of the ancient versions understood the original in a very different sense.

The Vulgate has *et glorificabo eum*; the Septuagint **δοξασω αυτον**, I will GLORIFY him; with which the Syriac, Coptic, the Targum of Jonathan, and the Jerusalem Targum, agree. From the Targum of Onkelos the present translation seems to have been originally derived; he has translated the place **וּאֲבַנֵּי לֵה מַקְדָּשׁ** veebnei leh makdash, "And I will build him a sanctuary," which not one of the other versions, the Persian excepted, acknowledges. Our own old translations are generally different from the present: Coverdale, "This my God, I will magnify him;" Matthew's, Cranmer's, and the Bishops' Bible, render it glorify, and the sense of the place seems to require it. Calmet, Houbigant, Kennicott, and other critics, contend for this translation.

My father's God— I believe Houbigant to be right, who translates the original, **אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי** Elohey abi, Deus meus, pater meus est, "My God is my Father." Every man may call the Divine Being his GOD; but only those who are his children by adoption through grace can call him their FATHER. This is a privilege which God has given to none but his children. See Galatians 4:6.

Verse 3. The Lord is a man of war— Perhaps it would be better to translate the words, Jehovah is the man or hero of the battle. As we scarcely ever apply the term to any thing but first-rate armed vessels, the change of the translation seems indispensable, though the common

rendering is literal enough. Besides, the object of Moses was to show that man had no part in this victory, but that the whole was wrought by the miraculous power of God, and that therefore he alone should have all the glory.

The LORD is his name.— That is, JEHOVAH. He has now, as the name implies, given complete existence to all his promises. See Clarke on “Genesis 2:4”, and See Clarke note on “Exodus 6:3”.

Verse 4. *Pharaoh’s chariots-his host-his chosen captains*— On such an expedition it is likely that the principal Egyptian nobility accompanied their king, and that the overthrow they met with here had reduced Egypt to the lowest extremity. Had the Israelites been intent on plunder, or had Moses been influenced by a spirit of ambition, how easily might both have gratified themselves, as, had they returned, they might have soon overrun and subjugated the whole land.

Verse 6. *Thy right hand*— Thy omnipotence, manifested in a most extraordinary way.

Verse 7. *In the greatness of thine excellency*— To this wonderful deliverance the Prophet Isaiah refers, Isaiah 63:11-14: “Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? That led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest; so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.”

Verse 8. *The depths were congealed*— The strong east wind (Exodus 14:21) employed to dry the bottom of the sea, is here represented as the blast of God’s nostrils that had congealed or frozen the waters, so that they stood in heaps like a wall on the right hand and on the left.

Verse 9. *The enemy said*— As this song was composed by Divine inspiration, we may rest assured that these words were spoken by Pharaoh and his captains, and the passions they describe felt, in their utmost sway, in their hearts; but how soon was their boasting

confounded? “Thou didst blow with thy wind, and the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters!”

Verse 11. *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?*— We have already seen that all the Egyptian gods, or the objects of the Egyptians’ idolatry, were confounded, and rendered completely despicable, by the ten plagues, which appear to have been directed principally against them. Here the people of God exult over them afresh: Who among these gods is like unto THEE? They can neither save nor destroy; THOU dost both in the most signal manner.

As the original words **מִי כַמֹּכָה בְּאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה** mi chamochah baelim Yehovah are supposed to have constituted the motto on the ensign of the Asmoneans, and to have furnished the name of Maccabeus to Judas, their grand captain, from whom they were afterwards called Maccabeans, it may be necessary to say a few words on this subject. It is possible that Judas Maccabeus might have had this motto on his ensign, or at least the initial letters of it, for such a practice was not uncommon. For instance, on the Roman standard the letters S. P. Q. R. stood for Senatus Populus Que Romanus, i.e. the Senate and Roman People, and **מִכַּבִּי** M. C. B. I. might have stood for Mi Chamochah Baelim Jehovah, “Who among the gods (or strong ones) is like unto thee, O Jehovah!” But it appears from the Greek **μακκαβαίος**, and also the Syriac [S] makabi, that the name was written originally with **ק** koph, not **כ** caph. It is most likely, as Michaelis has observed, that the name must have been derived from **מַקְבֵּי** makkab, a hammer or mallet; hence Judas, because of his bravery and success, might have been denominated the hammer or mallet by which the enemies of God had been beaten, pounded, and broken to pieces. Judas, the hammer of the Lord.

Glorious in holiness— Infinitely resplendent in this attribute, essential to the perfection of the Divine nature.

Fearful in praises— Such glorious holiness cannot be approached without the deepest reverence and fear, even by angels, who veil their faces before the majesty of God. How then should man, who is only sin and dust, approach the presence of his Maker!

Doing wonders?— Every part of the work of God is wonderful; not only miracles, which imply an inversion or suspension of the laws of nature, but every part of nature itself. Who can conceive how a single blade of grass is formed; or how earth, air, and water become consolidated in the body of the oak? And who can comprehend how the different tribes of plants and animals are preserved, in all the distinctive characteristics of their respective natures? And who can conceive how the human being is formed, nourished, and its different parts developed? What is the true cause of the circulation of the blood? or, how different ailments produce the solids and fluids of the animal machine? What is life, sleep, death? And how an impure and unholy soul is regenerated, purified, refined, and made like unto its great Creator? These are wonders which God alone works, and to himself only are they fully known.

Verse 12. *The earth swallowed them.*— It is very likely there was also an earthquake on this occasion, and that chasms were made in the bottom of the sea, by which many of them were swallowed up, though multitudes were overwhelmed by the waters, whose dead bodies were afterward thrown ashore. The psalmist strongly intimates that there was an earthquake on this occasion: The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven; the lightnings lightened the world; the EARTH TREMBLED and SHOOK; Psalm 77:18.

Verse 13. *Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.*— As this ode was dictated by the Spirit of God, It is most natural to understand this and the following verses, to the end of the 18th, as containing a prediction of what God would do for this people which he had so miraculously redeemed. On this mode of interpretation it would be better to read several of the verbs in the future tense.

Verse 15. *The dukes of Edom*— Idumea was governed at this time by those called אֲלֻפִּים alluphim, heads, chiefs, or captains. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 36:15".

Verse 16. *Till thy people pass over*— Not over the Red Sea, for that event had been already celebrated; but over the desert and Jordan, in order to be brought into the promised land.

Verse 17. *Thou shalt bring them in*— By thy strength and mercy alone shall they get the promised inheritance.

And plant them— Give them a fixed habitation in Canaan, after their unsettled wandering life in the wilderness.

In the mountain— Meaning Canaan, which was a very mountainous country, Deuteronomy 11:11; or probably Mount Zion, on which the temple was built. Where the pure worship of God was established, there the people might expect both rest and safety. Wherever the purity of religion is established and preserved, and the high and the low endeavor to regulate their lives according to its precepts, the government of that country is likely to be permanent.

Verse 18. *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.*— This is properly the grand chorus in which all the people joined. The words are expressive of God's everlasting dominion, not only in the world, but in the Church; not only under the law, but also under the Gospel; not only in time, but through eternity. The original לעולם ועד *leolam vaed* may be translated, for ever and onward; or, by our very expressive compound term, for EVERMORE, i.e. for ever and more — not only through time, but also through all duration. His dominion shall be ever the same, active and infinitely extending. With this verse the song seems to end, as with it the hemistichs or poetic lines terminate. The 20th and beginning of the 21st are in plain prose, but the latter part of the 21st is in hemistichs, as it contains the response made by Miriam and the Israelitish women at different intervals during the song. See Dr. Kennicott's arrangement of the parts at the end of this chapter.

Verse 20. *And Miriam the prophetess*— We have already seen that Miriam was older than either Moses or Aaron: for when Moses was exposed on the Nile, she was a young girl capable of managing the stratagem used for the preservation of his life; and then Aaron was only three years and three months old, for he was fourscore and three years old when Moses was but fourscore, (see Exodus 7:7;) so that Aaron was older than Moses, and Miriam considerably older than either, not less probably than nine or ten years of age. See Clarke's notes on "Exodus 2:2".

There is great diversity of opinion on the origin of the name of Miriam, which is the same with the Greek **μαριαμ**, the Latin *Maria*, and the English *Mary*. Some suppose it to be compounded of **מַר** *mar*, a drop, (Isaiah 40:15,) and **יָם** *yam*, the sea, and that from this etymology the heathens formed their *Venus*, whom they feign to have sprung from the sea. St. Jerome gives several etymologies for the name, which at once show how difficult it is to ascertain it: she who enlightens me, or she who enlightens them, or the star of the sea. Others, the lady of the sea, the bitterness of the sea, etc. It is probable that the first or the last is the true one, but it is a matter of little importance, as we have not the circumstance marked, as in the case of *Moses* and many others, that gave rise to the name.

The prophetess—**הַנְּבִיאָה** *hannebiah*. For the meaning of the word prophet, **נָבִיא** *nabi*, see the note on Genesis 20:7. It is very likely that *Miriam* was inspired by the Spirit of God to instruct the Hebrew women, as *Moses* and *Aaron* were to instruct the men; and when she and her brother *Aaron* sought to share in the government of the people with *Moses*, we find her laying claim to the prophetic influence, Numbers 12:2: Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by *Moses*? Hath he not SPOKEN ALSO BY US? And that she was constituted joint leader of the people with her two brothers, we have the express word of God by the Prophet *Micah*, *Micah* 6:4: For I brought thee up out of the land of *Egypt*-and I sent before thee *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam*. Hence it is very likely that she was the instructress of the women, and regulated the times, places, etc., of their devotional acts; for it appears that from the beginning to the present day the Jewish women all worshipped apart.

A timbrel—**תּוֹפ** *toph*, the same word which is translated *tabret*, Genesis 31:27, on which the reader is desired to consult the note. See *Clarke's* note on "Genesis 31:27".

And with dances.—**מְחֻלָּה** *mecholith*. Many learned men suppose that this word means some instruments of wind music, because the word comes from the root **חָלַל** *chalal*, the ideal meaning of which is to perforate, penetrate, pierce, stab, and hence to wound. Pipes or hollow tubes, such as flutes, hautboys, and the like, may be intended. Both the Arabic and

Persian understand it as meaning instruments of music of the pipe, drum, or sistrum kind; and this seems to comport better with the scope and design of the place than the term dances. It must however be allowed that religious dances have been in use from the remotest times; and yet in most of the places where the term occurs in our translation, an instrument of music bids as fair to be its meaning as a dance of any kind. Miriam is the first prophetess on record, and by this we find that God not only poured out his Spirit upon men, but upon women also; and we learn also that Miriam was not only a prophetess, but a poetess also, and must have had considerable skill in music to have been able to conduct her part of these solemnities. It may appear strange that during so long an oppression in Egypt, the Israelites were able to cultivate the fine arts; but that they did so there is the utmost evidence from the Pentateuch. Not only architecture, weaving, and such necessary arts, were well known among them, but also the arts that are called ornamental, such as those of the goldsmith, lapidary, embroiderer, furrier, etc., of which we have ample proof in the construction of the tabernacle and its utensils. However ungrateful, rebellious, etc., the Jews may have been, the praise of industry and economy can never be denied them. In former ages, and in all places even of their dispersions, they appear to have been frugal and industrious, and capable of great proficiency in the most elegant and curious arts; but they are now greatly degenerated.

Verse 22. *The wilderness of Shur*— This was on the coast of the Red Sea on their road to Mount Sinai. See the map.

Verse 23. *Marah*— So called from the bitter waters found there. Dr. Shaw conjectures that this place is the same as that now called Corondel, where there is still a small rill which, if not diluted with dews or rain, continues brackish. See his account at the end of Exodus. See Clarke note “Exodus 40:38”.

Verse 24. *The people murmured*— They were in a state of great mental degradation, owing to their long and oppressive vassalage, and had no firmness of character. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 13:17”.

Verse 25. *He cried unto the Lord*— Moses was not only their leader, but also their mediator. Of prayer and dependence on the Almighty, the great mass of the Israelites appear to have had little knowledge at this time.

Moses, therefore, had much to bear from their weakness, and the merciful Lord was long-suffering.

The Lord showed him a tree— What this tree was we know not: some think that the tree was extremely bitter itself, such as the quassia; and that God acted in this as he generally does, correcting contraries by contraries, which, among the ancient physicians, was a favourite maxim, *Clavus clavo expellitur*. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem say that, when Moses prayed, “the WORD of the Lord showed him the tree אַרְדִּפְנֵי ardiphney, on which he wrote the great and precious name of (JEHOVAH,) and then threw it into the waters, and the waters thereby became sweet” But what the tree ardiphney was we are not informed.

Many suppose that this tree which healed the bitter waters was symbolical of the cross of our blessed Redeemer, that has been the means of healing infected nature, and through the virtue of which the evils and bitters of life are sweetened, and rendered subservient to the best interests of God’s followers. Whatever may be in the metaphor, this is true in fact; and hence the greatest of apostles gloried in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world was crucified to him and he unto the world.

It appears that these waters were sweetened only for that occasion, as Dr. Shaw reports them to be still brackish, which appears to be occasioned by the abundance of natron which prevails in the surrounding soil. Thus we may infer that the natural cause of their bitterness or brackishness was permitted to resume its operations, when the occasion that rendered the change necessary had ceased to exist. Thus Christ simply changed that water into wine which was to be drawn out to be carried to the master of the feast; the rest of the water in the pots remaining as before. As the water of the Nile was so peculiarly excellent, to which they had been long accustomed, they could not easily put up with what was indifferent. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 7:18”.

There he made for them— Though it is probable that the Israelites are here intended, yet the word לוּ lo should not be translated for them, but to him, for these statutes were given to Moses that he might deliver them to the people.

There he proved them.— נִסָּהוּ nissahu, he proved HIM. By this murmuring of the people he proved Moses, to see, speaking after the manner of men, whether he would be faithful, and, in the midst of the trials to which he was likely to be exposed, whether he would continue to trust in the Lord, and seek all his help from him.

Verse 26. If thou wilt diligently hearken— What is contained in this verse appears to be what is intended by the statute and ordinance mentioned in the preceding: If thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, etc. This statute and ordinance implied the three following particulars: 1. That they should acknowledge Jehovah for their God, and thus avoid all idolatry. 2. That they should receive his word and testimony as a Divine revelation, binding on their hearts and lives, and thus be saved from profligacy of every kind, and from acknowledging the maxims or adopting the customs of the neighboring nations. 3. That they should continue to do so, and adorn their profession with a holy life. These things being attended to, then the promise of God was, that they should have none of the diseases of the Egyptians put on them; that they should be kept in a state of health of body and peace of mind; and if at any time they should be afflicted, on application to God the evil should be removed, because he was their healer or physician—I am the Lord that healeth thee. That the Israelites had in general a very good state of health, their history warrants us to believe; and when they were afflicted, as in the case of the fiery serpents, on application to God they were all healed. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel states that the statutes which Moses received at this time were commandments concerning the observance of the Sabbath, duty to parents, the ordinances concerning wounds and bruises, and the penalties which sinners should incur by transgressing them. But it appears that the general ordinances already mentioned are those which are intended here, and this seems to be proved beyond dispute by Jeremiah 7:22, 23: “For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; walk

ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.”

Verse 27. *They came to Elim*— This was in the desert of Sin, and, according to Dr. Shaw, about two leagues from Tor, and thirty from Marah or Corondel.

Twelve wells of water— One for each of the tribes of Israel, say the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem.

And threescore and ten palm trees— One for each of the seventy elders. — Ibid.

Dr. Shaw found nine of the twelve wells, the other three having been choked up with sand; and the seventy palm trees multiplied into more than 2000, the dates of which bring a considerable revenue to the Greek monks at Tor. See his account at the end of this book, {See Clarke note at “Exodus 40:38”.} and see also the map. Thus sufficient evidence of the authenticity of this part of the sacred history remains, after the lapse of more than 3000 years.

IN the preceding notes the reader has been referred to Dr. Kennicott’s translation and arrangement of the song of Moses. To this translation he prefixes the following observations:—

“This triumphant ode was sung by Moses and the sons of Israel: and the women, headed by Miriam, answered the men by repeating the two first lines of the song, altering only the first word, which two lines were probably sung more than once as a chorus.

“The conclusion of this ode seems very manifest; and yet, though the ancient Jews had sense enough to write this song differently from prose; and though their authority has prevailed even, to this day in this and three other poems in the Old Testament, (Deut. xxii.; Judg. v.; and 2 Sam. xxii.,) still expressed by them as poetry; yet have these critics carried their ideas of the song here to the end of Exodus 15:19. The reason why the same has been done by others probably is, they thought that the particle ׀ for, which begins Exodus 15:19, necessarily connected it with the preceding poetry. But this difficulty is removed by translating ׀ when, especially if we take Exodus 15:19-21 as being a prose explanation of the manner in

which this song of triumph was performed. For these three verses say that the men singers were answered in the chorus by Miriam and the women, accompanying their words with musical instruments. ‘When the horse of Pharaoh had gone into the sea, and the Lord had brought the sea upon them; and Israel had passed, on dry land, in the midst of the sea; then Miriam took a timbrel, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dances; and Miriam (with the women) answered them (לָהֶם lahem, the men, by way of chorus) in the words, O sing ye, etc.’ That this chorus was sung more than ONCE is thus stated by Bishop Lowth: *Maria, cum mulieribus, virorum choro IDENTIDEM succinebat.* — *Praelect.* 19.

‘I shall now give what appears to me to be an exact translation of this whole song: — MOSES. Part I

1. I will sing to JEHOVAH, for he hath triumphed gloriously; The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. 2. My strength and my song is JEHOVAH; And he is become to me for salvation: This is my God, and I will celebrate him; The God of my father, and I will exalt him. 3. Jehovah is mighty in\ Perhaps a battle! chorus sung Jehovah is his name! by the men. Chorus, by Miriam and the women. Perhaps sung first in this place. O sing ye to Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously: The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

MOSES. Part II

4. Pharaoh’s chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea; And his chosen captains are drowned in the Red Sea. 5. The depths have covered them, they went down; (They sank) to the bottom as a stone. 6. Thy right hand, Jehovah, is become glorious in power; Thy right hand, Jehovah, dasheth in pieces the enemy. 7. And in the greatness of thine excellence thou overthrowest them that rise against thee. Thou sendest forth thy wrath, which consumeth them as stubble. 8. Even at the blast of thy displeasure the waters are gathered together; The floods stand upright as a heap, Congealed are the depths in the very heart of the sea. O sing ye to JEHOVAH, etc. Chorus by the women.

MOSES. Part III

9. The enemy said: ‘I will pursue, I shall overtake; I shall divide the spoil, my soul shall be satiated with them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall

destroy them.' 10. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them; They sank as lead in the mighty waters. 11. Who is like thee among the gods, O JEHOVAH? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness! 12. Fearful in praises; performing wonders! Thou stretchest out thy right hand, the earth swalloweth them! 13. Thou in thy mercy leadest the people whom thou hast redeemed; Thou in thy strength guidest to the habitation of thy holiness! O sing ye to JEHOVAH, etc. Chorus by the women.

MOSES. Part IV

14. The nations have heard, and are afraid; Sorrow hath seized the inhabitants of Palestine. 15. Already are the dukes of Edom in consternation, And the mighty men of Moab, trembling hath seized them; All the inhabitants of Canaan do faint 16. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; Through the greatness of thine arm they shall be still as a stone. 17. Till thy people, JEHOVAH, pass over [Jordan;] Till the people pass over whom thou hast redeemed. 18. Thou shalt bring them and plant them in the mount of thine inheritance: The place for thy rest which thou, JEHOVAH, hast made; The sanctuary, JEHOVAH, which thy hands have established.

Grand chorus by ALL.

JEHOVAH FOR EVER AND EVER SHALL REIGN." 1. When poetry is consecrated to the service of God, and employed as above to commemorate his marvellous acts, it then becomes a very useful handmaid to piety, and God is honored by his gifts. God inspired the song of Moses, and perhaps from this very circumstance it has passed for current among the most polished of the heathen nations, that a poet is a person Divinely inspired; and hence the epithet of *προφήτης*, prophet, and vates, of the same import, was given them among the Greeks and Romans.

2. The song of Moses is a proof of the miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. There has been no period since the Hebrew nation left Egypt in which this song was not found among them, as composed on that occasion, and to commemorate that event. It may be therefore considered as completely authentic as any living witness could be who had himself passed through the Red Sea, and whose life had been protracted through all the intervening ages to the present day.

3. We have already seen that it is a song of triumph for the deliverance of the people of God, and that it was intended to point out the final salvation and triumph of the whole Church of Christ; so that in the heaven of heavens the redeemed of the Lord, both among the Jews and the Gentiles, shall unite together to sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. See Revelation 15:2-4. Reader, implore the mercy of God to enable thee to make thy calling and election sure, that thou mayest bear thy part in this glorious and eternal triumph.

CHAPTER 16

The Israelites journey from Elim, and come to the wilderness of Sin, 1. They murmur for lack of bread, 2, 3. God promises to rain bread from heaven for them, 4, of which they were to collect a double portion on the sixth day, 5. A miraculous supply of flesh in the evening and bread in the morning, promised, 6-9. The glory of the Lord appears in the cloud, 10. Flesh and bread promised as a proof of God's care over them, 11, 12. Quails come and cover the whole camp, 13. And a dew fell which left a small round substance on the ground, which Moses tells them was the bread which God had sent, 14, 15. Directions for gathering it, 16. The Israelites gather each an omer, 17, 18. They are directed to leave none of it till the next day, 19; which some neglecting, it become putrid, 20. They gather it every morning, because it melted when the sun waxed hot, 21. Each person gathers two omers on the sixth day, 22. Moses commands them to keep the seventh as a Sabbath to the Lord, 23. What was laid up for the Sabbath did not putrefy, 24. Nothing of it fell on that day, hence the strict observance of the Sabbath was enjoined, 25-30. The Israelites name the substance that fell with the dew manna; its appearance and taste described, 31. An omer of the manna is commanded to be laid up for a memorial of Jehovah's kindness, 32-34. The manna now sent continued daily for the space of forty years, 35. How much an omer contained, 36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. *The wilderness of Sin*— This desert lies between Elim and Sinai, and from Elim, Dr. Shaw says, Mount Sinai can be seen distinctly. Mr. Ainsworth supposes that this wilderness had its name from a strong city of Egypt called Sin, near which it lay. See Ezekiel 30:15, 16. Before they came to the wilderness of Sin, they had a previous encampment by the Red Sea after they left Elim, of which Moses makes distinct mention Numbers 33:10, 11.

The fifteenth day of the second month— This was afterwards called Ijar, and they had now left Egypt one month, during which it is probable they lived on the provisions they brought with them from Rameses, though it is possible they might have had a supply from the seacoast. Concerning Mount Sinai, See Clarke's note on "Exodus 19:1".

Verse 2. *The whole congregation-murmured*— This is an additional proof of the degraded state of the minds of this people; See Clarke's note on "Exodus 13:17". And this very circumstance affords a convincing argument that a people so stupidly carnal could not have been induced to leave Egypt had they not been persuaded so to do by the most evident and striking miracles. Human nature can never be reduced to a more abject state in this world than that in which the body is enthralled by political slavery, and the soul debased by the influence of sin. These poor Hebrews were both slaves and sinners, and were therefore capable of the meanest and most disgraceful acts.

Verse 3. *The flesh pots*— As the Hebrews were in a state of slavery in Egypt, they were doubtless fed in various companies by their task masters in particular places, where large pots or boilers were fixed for the purpose of cooking their victuals. To these there may be a reference in this place, and the whole speech only goes to prove that they preferred their bondage in Egypt to their present state in the wilderness; for they could not have been in a state of absolute want, as they had brought an abundance of flocks and herds with them out of Egypt.

Verse 4. *I will rain bread*— Therefore this substance was not a production of the desert: nor was the dew that was the instrument of producing it common there, else they must have had this bread for a month before.

Verse 6. *Ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out*— After all the miracles they had seen they appear still to suppose that their being brought out of Egypt was the work of Moses and Aaron; for though the miracles they had already seen were convincing for the time, yet as soon as they had passed by they relapsed into their former infidelity. God therefore saw it necessary to give them a daily miracle in the fall of the manna, that they might have the proof of his Divine interposition

constantly before their eyes. Thus they knew that Jehovah had brought them out, and that it was not the act of Moses and Aaron.

Verse 7. *Ye shall see the glory of the Lord*— Does it not appear that the glory of the Lord is here spoken of as something distinct from the Lord? for it is said HE (the glory) heareth your murmurings against the Lord; though the Lord may be here put for himself, the antecedent instead of the relative. This passage may receive some light from Hebrews 1:3: Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, etc. And as St. Paul's words are spoken of the Lord Jesus, is it not likely that the words of Moses refer to him also? "No man hath seen God at any time;" hence we may infer that Christ was the visible agent in all the extraordinary and miraculous interferences which took place both in the patriarchal times and under the law.

Verse 8. *In the evening flesh to eat*— Viz., the quails; and in the morning bread to the full, viz., the manna.

And what are we?— Only his servants, obeying his commands.

Your murmurings are not against us— For we have not brought you up from Egypt; but against the Lord, who, by his own miraculous power and goodness, has brought you out of your slavery.

Verse 9. *Come near before the Lord*— This has been supposed to refer to some particular place, where the Lord manifested his presence. The great tabernacle was not yet built, but there appears to have been a small tabernacle or tent called the Tabernacle of the Congregation, which, after the sin of the golden calf, was always placed without the camp; see Exodus 33:7: And Moses took the Tabernacle and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it The Tabernacle of the Congregation; and it came to pass that every one that sought the Lord went out unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation, which was without the camp. This could not be that portable temple which is described chap. 26., etc., and which was not set up till the first day of the first month of the second year, after their departure from Egypt, (chap. 40.,) which was upwards of ten months after the time mentioned in this chapter; and notwithstanding this, the Israelites are commanded (Exodus 16:34) to lay up an omer of the manna before the testimony, which certainly refers to an ark, tabernacle, or some

such portable shrine, already in existence. If the great tabernacle be intended, the whole account of laying up the manna must be introduced here by anticipation, Moses finishing the account of what was afterwards done, because the commencement of those circumstances which comprehended the reasons of the fact itself took place now. See Clarke note on “Exodus 16:34”.

But from the reasonings in the preceding verses it appears that much infidelity still reigned in the hearts of the people; and in order to convince them that it was God and not Moses that had brought them out of Egypt, he (Moses) desired them to come near, or pay particular attention to some extraordinary manifestation of the Lord. And we are told in the tenth verse, that “as Aaron spake unto them, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold the glory of the Lord appeared, and the Lord spake unto Moses,” etc. Is not this passage explained by Exodus 19:9, “And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear, when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever?” May we not conclude that Moses invited them to come near before the Lord, and so witness his glory, that they might be convinced it was God and not he that led them out of Egypt, and that they ought to submit to him, and cease from their murmurings? It is said, Exodus 19:17, that Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God. And in this instance there might have been a similar though less awful manifestation of the Divine presence.

Verse 10. *As Aaron spake*— So he now became the spokesman or minister of Moses to the Hebrews, as he had been before unto Pharaoh; according to what is written, Exodus 7:1, etc.

Verse 13. *At even the quails came*— **שלו** selav, from **שלה** salah, to be quiet, easy, or secure; and hence the quail, from their remarkably living at ease and plenty among the corn. “An amazing number of these birds,” says Hasselquist, Travels, p. 209, “come to Egypt at this time, (March,) for in this month the wheat ripens. They conceal themselves among the corn, but the Egyptians know that they are thieves, and when they imagine the field to be full of them they spread a net over the corn and make a noise, by which the birds, being frightened, and endeavoring to rise, are caught in the net in great numbers, and make a most delicate and agreeable dish.” The

AbbÇ Pluche tells us, in his *Histoire du Ciel*, that the quail was among the ancient Egyptians the emblem of safety and security. “Several learned men, particularly the famous Ludolf, Bishop Patrick, and Scheuchzer, have supposed that the שלוים selavim eaten by the Israelites were locusts. But not to insist on other arguments against this interpretation, they are expressly called שׂאֵר sheer, flesh, Psalm 78:27, which surely locusts are not; and the Hebrew word is constantly rendered by the Septuagint ορτυγομητρα, a large kind of quail, and by the Vulgate coturnices, quails. Compare Wisdom 16:2, 19:12; Numbers 11:31, 32; Psalm 105:40; and on Numbers xi. observe that כַּאֲמָתַיִם keamathayim should be rendered, not two cubits high, but as Mr. Bate translates it, ‘two cubits distant, (i.e., one from the other,) for quails do not settle like the locusts one upon another, but at small distances.’ And had the quails lain for a day’s journey round the camp, to the great height of two cubits, upwards of three feet, the people could not have been employed two days and a night in gathering them. The spreading them round the camp was in order to dry them in the burning sands for use, which is still practiced in Egypt.” See Parkhurst, sub voce שלה salah.

The difficulties which encumber the text, supposing these to be quails, led Bishop Patrick to imagine them to be locusts. The difficulties are three: “1. Their coming by a wind. 2. Their immense quantities, covering a circle of thirty or forty miles, two cubits thick. 3. Their being spread in the sun for drying, which would have been preposterous had they been quails, for it would have made them corrupt the sooner; but this is the principal way of preparing locusts to keep for a month or more, when they are boiled or otherwise dressed.” This difficulty he thinks interpreters pass over, who suppose quails to be intended in the text. Mr. Harmer takes up the subject, removes the bishop’s difficulties, and vindicates the common version.

“These difficulties appear pressing, or at least the two last; nevertheless, I have met with several passages in books of travels, which I shall here give an account of, that they may soften them; perhaps my reader may think they do more.

“No interpreters, the bishop complains, supposing they were quails, account for the spreading them out in the sun. Perhaps they have not. Let me then translate a passage of Maillet, which relates to a little island which

covers one of the ports of Alexandria: 'It is on this island, which lies farther into the sea than the main land of Egypt, that the birds annually alight which come hither for refuge in autumn, in order to avoid the severity of the cold of our winters in Europe. There is so large a quantity of all sorts taken there, that after these little birds have been stripped of their feathers, and buried in the burning sands for about half a quarter of an hour, they are worth but two sols the pound. The crews of those vessels which in that season lie in the harbour of Alexandria, have no other meat allowed them.' Among other refugees of that time, Maillet elsewhere expressly mentions quails, which are, therefore, I suppose, treated after this manner. This passage then does what, according to the bishop, no commentator has done; it explains the design of spreading these creatures, supposing they were quails, round about the camp; it was to dry them in the burning sands in order to preserve them for use. So Maillet tells us of their drying fish in the sun of Egypt, as well as of their preserving others by means of pickle. Other authors speak of the Arabs drying camel's flesh in the sun and wind, which, though it be not at all salted, will if kept dry remain good a long while, and which oftentimes, to save themselves the trouble of dressing, they will eat raw. This is what St. Jerome may be supposed to refer to, when he calls the food of the Arabs *carnes semicrudae*. This drying then of flesh in the sun is not so preposterous as the bishop imagined. On the other hand, none of the authors that speak of their way of preserving locusts in the east, so far as I at present recollect, give any account of drying them in the sun. They are, according to Pellow, first purged with water and salt, boiled in new pickle, and then laid up in dry salt. So, Dr. Russel says, the Arabs eat these insects when fresh, and also salt them up as a delicacy. Their immense quantities also forbid the bishop's believing they were quails; and in truth he represents this difficulty in all its force, perhaps too forcibly. A circle of forty miles in diameter, all covered with quails to the depth of more than forty-three inches, without doubt is a startling representation of this matter: and I would beg leave to add that the like quantity of locusts would have been very extraordinary: but then this is not the representation of Scripture; it does not even agree with it; for such a quantity of either quails or locusts would have made the clearing of places for spreading them out, and the passing of Israel up and down in the neighborhood of the camp, very fatiguing, which is not supposed.

“Josephus supposed they were quails, which he says are in greater numbers thereabouts than any other kinds of birds; and that, having crossed the sea to the camp of Israel, they who in common fly nearer the ground than most other birds, flew so low through the fatigue of their passage as to be within reach of the Israelites. This explains what he thought was meant by the two cubits from the face of the earth — their flying within three or four feet of the ground.

“And when I read Dr. Shaw’s account of the way in which the Arabs frequently catch birds that they have tired, that is, by running in upon them and knocking them down with their zerwattys, or bludgeons, as we should call them, I think I almost see the Israelites before me pursuing the poor, fatigued, and languid quails.

“This is indeed a laborious method of catching these birds, and not that which is now used in Egypt; for Egmont and Heyman tell us, that in a walk on the shore of Egypt they saw a sandy plain several leagues in extent, and covered with reeds without the least verdure; between which reeds they saw many nets laid for catching quails, which come over in large flights from Europe during the month of September. If the ancient Egyptians made use of the same method of catching quails that they now practice on those shores, yet Israel in the wilderness, without these conveniences, must of course make use of that more inartificial and laborious way of catching them. The Arabs of Barbary, who have not many conveniences, do the same thing still.

“Bishop Patrick supposes a day’s journey to be sixteen or twenty miles, and thence draws his circle with a radius of that length; but Dr. Shaw, on another occasion, makes a day’s journey but ten miles, which would make a circle but of twenty miles in diameter: and as the text evidently designs to express it very indeterminately, as it were a day’s journey, it might be much less.

“But it does not appear to me at all necessary to suppose the text intended their covering a circular or nearly a circular spot of ground, but only that these creatures appeared on both sides of the camp of Israel, about a day’s journey. The same word is used Exodus 7:24, where round about can mean only on each side of the Nile. And so it may be a little illustrated by what Dr. Shaw tells us of the three flights of storks which he saw, when at

anchor under the Mount Carmel, some of which were more scattered, others more compact and close, each of which took up more than three hours in passing, and extended itself more than half a mile in breadth. Had this flight of quails been no greater than these, it might have been thought, like them, to have been accidental; but so unusual a flock as to extend fifteen or twenty miles in breadth, and to be two days and one night in passing, and this, in consequence of the declaration of Moses, plainly determined that the finger of God was there.

“A third thing which was a difficulty with the bishop was their being brought with the wind. A hot southerly wind, it is supposed, brings the locusts; and why quails might not be brought by the instrumentality of a like wind, or what difficulty there is in that supposition, I cannot imagine. As soon as the cold is felt in Europe, Maillet tells us, turtles, quails, and other birds come to Egypt in great numbers; but he observed that their numbers were not so large in those years in which the winters were favorable in Europe; from whence he conjectured that it is rather necessity than habit which causes them to change their climate: if so, it appears that it is the increasing heat that causes their return, and consequently that the hot sultry winds from the south must have a great effect upon them, to direct their flight northwards.

“It is certain that it is about the time that the south wind begins to blow in Egypt, which is in April, that many of these migratory birds return. Maillet, who joins quails and turtles together, and says that they appear in Egypt when the cold begins to be felt in Europe, does not indeed tell us when they return: but Theve-not may be said to do it; for after he had told his reader that they catch snipes in Egypt from January to March, he adds that in May they catch turtles, and that the turtles return again in September; now as they go together southward in September, we may believe they return again northward much about the same time. Agreeably to which, Russel tells us that quails appear in abundance about Aleppo in spring and autumn.

“If natural history were more perfect we might speak to this point with great distinctness; at present, however, it is so far from being an objection to their being quails that their coming was caused by a wind, that nothing is more natural. The same wind would in course occasion sickness and

mortality among the Israelites, at least it does so in Egypt. The miraculousness then in this story does not lie in their dying, but the prophet's foretelling with exactness the coming of that wind, and in the prodigious numbers of the quails that came with it, together with the unusualness of the place, perhaps, where they alighted.

“Nothing more remains to be considered but the gathering so large a quantity as ten omers by those that gathered fewest. But till that quantity is more precisely ascertained, it is sufficient to remark that this is only affirmed of those expert sportsmen among the people, who pursued the game two whole days and a whole night without intermission; and of them, and of them only, I presume it is to be understood that he that gathered fewest gathered ten omers. Hasselquist, who frequently expresses himself in the most dubious manner in relation to these animals, at other times is very positive that, if they were birds at all, they were a species of the quail different from ours, which he describes as very much resembling the ‘red partridge, but as not being larger than the turtledove.’ To this he adds, that ‘the Arabians carry thousands of them to Jerusalem about Whitsuntide, to sell there,’ p. 442. In another place he tells us ‘It is found in Judea as well as in Arabia Petraea, and that he found it between Jordan and Jericho,’ p. 203. One would imagine that Hasselquist means the scata, which is described by Dr. Russel, vol. ii., p. 194, and which he represents as brought to market at Aleppo in great numbers in May and June, though they are to be met with in all seasons.

“A whole ass-load of them, he informs us, has often been taken at once shutting a clasping net, in the abovementioned months, they are in such plenty.”-Harmer vol. iv., p. 367.

Verse 14. *Behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing*— It appears that this small round thing fell with the dew, or rather the dew fell first, and this substance fell on it. The dew might have been intended to cool the ground, that the manna on its fall might not be dissolved; for we find from Exodus 16:21, that the heat of the sun melted it. The ground therefore being sufficiently cooled by the dew, the manna lay unmelted long enough for the Israelites to collect a sufficient quantity for their dally use.

Verse 15. *They said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was.*— This is a most unfortunate translation, because it not only gives no sense, but it contradicts itself. The Hebrew מַן הוּא man hu, literally signifies, What is this? for, says the text, they wist not what it was, and therefore they could not give it a name. Moses immediately answers the question, and says, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. From Exodus 16:31 we learn that this substance was afterwards called מַן man, probably in commemoration of the question they had asked on its first appearance. Almost all our own ancient versions translate the words, What is this?

What this substance was we know not. It was nothing that was common to the wilderness. It is evident the Israelites never saw it before, for Moses says, Deuteronomy 8:3, 16: He fed thee with manna which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; and it is very likely that nothing of the kind had ever been seen before; and by a pot of it being laid up in the ark, it is as likely that nothing of the kind ever appeared more, after the miraculous supply in the wilderness had ceased. It seems to have been created for the present occasion, and, like Him whom it typified, to have been the only thing of the kind, the only bread from heaven, which God ever gave to preserve the life of man, as Christ is the true bread that came down from heaven, and was given for the life of the world. See John 6:31-58.

Verse 16. *An omer for every man*— I shall here once for all give a short account of the measures of capacity among the Hebrews.

OMER, עֹמֶר from the root amar, to press, squeeze, collect, and bind together; hence a sheaf of corn — a multitude of stalks pressed together. It is supposed that the omer, which contained about three quarts English, had its name from this circumstance; that it was the most contracted or the smallest measure of things dry known to the ancient Hebrews; for the קַב kab, which was less, was not known till the reign of Jehoram, king of Israel, 2 Kings 6:25. — Parkhurst.

The EPHAH, אֶפָה or אִיפָה eiphah, from אָפָה aphah, to bake, because this was probably the quantity which was baked at one time. According to Bishop Cumberland the ephah contained seven gallons, two quarts, and

about half a pint, wine measure; and as the omer was the tenth part of the ephah, Exodus 16:36, it must have contained about six pints English.

The KAB, קב, is said to have contained about the sixth part of a seah, or three pints and one third English.

The HOMER, חמר, chomer, mentioned Leviticus 27:16, was quite a different measure from that above, and is a different word in the Hebrew. The chomer was the largest measure of capacity among the Hebrews, being equal to ten baths or ephahs, amounting to about seventy-five gallons, three pints, English. See Ezekiel 45:11, 13, 14. Goodwin supposes that this measure derived its name from חמר chamor, an ass, being the ordinary load of that animal.

The BATH, בת, was the largest measure of capacity next to the homer, of which it was the tenth part. It was the same as the ephah, and consequently contained about seven gallons, two quarts, and half a pint, and is always used in Scripture as a measure of liquids.

The SEAH, סאה, was a measure of capacity for things dry, equal to about two gallons and a half English. See 2 Kings 7:1, 16, 18.

The HIN, הי, according to Bishop Cumberland, was the one-sixth part of an ephah, and contained a little more than one gallon and two pints. See Exodus 29:40.

The LOG, לוג, was the smallest measure of capacity for liquids among the Hebrews: it contained about three quarters of a pint. See Leviticus 14:10, 12.

Take ye — for them which are in his tents.— Some might have been confined in their tents through sickness or infirmity, and charity required that those who were in health should gather a portion for them. For though the psalmist says, Psalm 105:37, There was not one feeble person among their tribes, this must refer principally to their healthy state when brought out of Egypt; for it appears that there were many infirm among them when attacked by the Amalekites. See Clarke note on “Exodus 17:8”.

Verse 17. *Some more, some less.*— According to their respective families, an omer for a man; and according to the number of infirm persons whose wants they undertook to supply.

Verse 18. *He that gathered much had nothing over*— Because his gathering was in proportion to the number of persons for whom he had to provide. And some having fewer, others more in family, and the gathering being in proportion to the persons who were to eat of it, therefore he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack. Probably every man gathered as much as he could; and then when brought home and measured by an omer, if he had a surplus, it went to supply the wants of some other family that had not been able to collect a sufficiency, the family being large, and the time in which the manna might be gathered, before the heat of the day, not being sufficient to collect enough for so numerous a household, several of whom might be so confined as not to be able to collect for themselves. Thus there was an equality, and in this light the words of St. Paul, 2 Corinthians 8:15, lead us to view the passage. Here the 36th verse should come in: Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.

Verse 19. *Let no man leave of it till the morning.*— For God would have them to take no thought for the morrow, and constantly to depend on him for their dally bread. And is not that petition in our Lord's prayer founded on this very circumstance, Give us day by day our daily bread?

Verse 20. *It bred worms*— Their sinful curiosity and covetousness led them to make the trial; and they had a mass of the most loathsome putrefaction for their pains. How gracious is God! He is continually rendering disobedience and sin irksome to the transgressor; that finding his evil ways to be unprofitable, he may return to his Maker, and trust in God alone.

Verse 22. *On the sixth day they gathered twice as much*— This they did that they might have a provision for the Sabbath, for on that day no manna fell, Exodus 16:26, 27. What a convincing miracle was this! No manna fell on the Sabbath! Had it been a natural production it would have fallen on the Sabbath as at other times; and had there not been a supernatural influence to keep it sweet and pure, it would have been corrupted on the Sabbath as well as on other days. By this series of miracles God showed

his own power, presence, and goodness, 1. In sending the manna on each of the six days; 2. In sending none on the seventh, or Sabbath; 3. In preserving it from putrefaction when laid up for the use of that day, though it infallibly corrupted if kept over night on any other day.

Verse 23. *To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath*— There is nothing either in the text or context that seems to intimate that the Sabbath was now first given to the Israelites, as some have supposed: on the contrary, it is here spoken of as being perfectly well known, from its having been generally observed. The commandment, it is true, may be considered as being now renewed; because they might have supposed that in their unsettled state in the wilderness they might have been exempted from the observance of it. Thus we find, 1. That when God finished his creation, he instituted the Sabbath; 2. When he brought the people out of Egypt, he insisted on the strict observance of it; 3. When he gave the LAW, he made it a tenth part of the whole, such importance has this institution in the eyes of the Supreme Being! On the supposed change of the Sabbath from what we call Sunday to Saturday, effected on this occasion, See Clarke's note on "Deuteronomy 5:15".

Verse 29. *Abide ye every man in his place*— Neither go out to seek manna nor for any other purpose; rest at home and devote your time to religious exercises. Several of the Jews understood by place in the text, the camp, and have generally supposed that no man should go out of the place, i.e., the city, town, or village in which he resides, any farther than one thousand cubits, about an English mile, which also is called a Sabbath day's journey, Acts 1:12; and so many cubits they consider the space round the city that constitutes its suburbs, which they draw from Numbers 35:3, 4. Some of the Jews have carried the rigorous observance of the letter of this law to such a length, that in whatever posture they find themselves on the Sabbath morning when they awake, they continue in the same during the day; or should they be up and happen to fall, they refuse even to rise till the Sabbath be ended! Mr. Stapleton tells a story of one Rabbi Solomon, who fell into a slough on the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, and refused to be pulled out, giving his reason in the following Leonine couplet:—

Sabbatha sancta colo De stereore surgere nolo.

*“Out of this slough I will not rise
For holy Sabbath day I prize.”*

The Christians, finding him thus disposed determined he should honor their Sabbath in the same place, and actually kept the poor man in the slough all Sunday, giving their reasons in nearly the same way:- Sabbath nostra quidem, Solomon, celebrabis ibidem.

*“In the same slough, thou stubborn Jew,
Our Sabbath day thou shalt spend too.”*

This might have served to convince him of his folly, but certainly was not the likeliest way to convert him to Christianity.

FABYAN, in his Chronicles, tells the following story of a case of this kind. “In this yere also (1259) fell that happe of the Iewe of Tewkysbury, which fell into a gonge upon the Satyrday, and wolde not for reverence of his sabbot day be pluckyd out; whereof heryng the Erle of Gloucetyr, that the Iewe dyd so great reverence to his sabbot daye, thought he wolde doo as moche unto his holy day, which was Sunday, and so kepte hym there tyll Monday, at whiche season he was foundyn dede.” Then the earl of Gloucester murdered the poor man.

Verse 31. Called the name thereof Manna— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 16:15”.

Verse 32. To be kept for your generations— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 16:9”.

Verse 34. Laid it up before the testimony— The עדות eduth or testimony belonged properly to the tabernacle, but that was not yet built. Some are of opinion that the tabernacle, built under the direction of Moses, was only a renewal of one that had existed in the patriarchal times. See Clarke note on “Exodus 16:9”. The word signifies reference to something beyond itself; thus the tabernacle, the manna, the tables of stone, Aaron’s rod, etc., all bore reference and testimony to that spiritual good which was yet to come, viz., JESUS CHRIST and his salvation.

Verse 35. The children of Israel did eat manna forty years— From this verse it has been supposed that the book of Exodus was not written till after the miracle of the manna had ceased. But these words might have

been added by Ezra, who under the direction of the Divine Spirit collected and digested the different inspired books, adding such supplementary, explanatory, and connecting sentences, as were deemed proper to complete and arrange the whole of the sacred canon. For previously to his time, according to the universal testimony of the Jews, all the books of the Old Testament were found in an unconnected and dispersed state.

Verse 36. *Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.*— About six pints, English. See Clarke note on “Exodus 16:16”. The true place of this verse seems to be immediately after Exodus 16:18, for here it has no connection.

1. ON the miracle of the manna, which is the chief subject in this chapter, a good deal has already been said in the preceding notes. The sacred historian has given us the most circumstantial proofs that it was a supernatural and miraculous supply; that nothing of the kind had ever been seen before, and probably nothing like it had ever afterwards appeared. That it was a type of our blessed Redeemer, and of the salvation which he has provided for man, there can be no doubt, for in this way it is applied by Christ himself; and from it we may gather this general conclusion, that salvation is of the Lord. The Israelites must have perished in the wilderness, had not God fed them with bread from heaven; and every human soul must have perished, had not Jesus Christ come down from heaven, and given himself for the life of the world.

2. God would have the Israelites continually dependent on himself for all their supplies; but he would make them, in a certain way, workers with him. He provided the manna; they gathered and ate it. The first was God’s work; the latter, their own. They could not produce the manna, and God would not gather it for them. Thus the providence of God appears in such a way as to secure the co-operation of man. Though man should plant and water, yet it is God who giveth the increase. But if man neither plant nor water, God will give no increase. We cannot do God’s work, and he will not do ours. Let us, therefore, both in things spiritual and temporal, be workers together with HIM.

3. This daily supply of the manna probably gave rise to that petition, Give us to-day our daily bread. It is worthy of remark, 1. That what was left over night contrary to the command of God bred worms and stank; 2. That a double portion was gathered on the day preceding the Sabbath; 3. That

this alone continued wholesome on the following day; and, 4. That none fell on the Sabbath! Hence we find that the Sabbath was considered a Divine institution previously to the giving of the Mosaic law; and that God continued to honor that day by permitting no manna to fall during its course. Whatever is earned on the Sabbath is a curse in a man's property. They who WILL be rich, fall into temptation and into a snare, etc.; for, using illicit means to acquire lawful things, they bring God's curse upon themselves, and are drowned in destruction and perdition. Reader, dost thou work on the Sabbath to increase thy property? See thou do it not! Property acquired in this way will be a curse both to thee and to thy posterity.

4. To show their children and children's children what God had done for their fathers, a pot of manna was laid up before the testimony. We should remember our providential and gracious deliverances in such a way as to give God the praise of his own grace. An ungrateful heart is always associated with an unbelieving mind and an unholy life. Like Israel, we should consider with what bread God has fed our fathers, and see that we have the same; the same Christ-the bread of life, the same doctrines, the same ordinances, and the same religious experience. How little are we benefited by being Protestants, if we be not partakers of the Protestant faith! And how useless will even that faith be to us, if we hold the truth in unrighteousness. Our fathers had religion enough to enable them to burn gloriously for the truth of God! Reader, hast thou so much of the life of God in thy soul, that thou couldst burn to ashes at the stake rather than lose it? In a word, couldst thou be a martyr? Or hast thou so little grace to lose, that thy life would be more than an equivalent for thy loss? Where is the manna on which thy fathers fed?

CHAPTER 17

The Israelites journey from the wilderness of Sin to Rephidim, 1, where they murmur for lack of water, 2, 3. Moses asks counsel of God, 4, who commands him to take his rod and smite the rock, 5, and promises that water should proceed from it for the people to drink, 6. The place is called Massah and Meribah, 7. The Amalekites attack Israel in Rephidim, 8. Joshua is commanded to fight with them, 9. Moses, Aaron, and Hur go to the top of a hill, and while Moses holds up his hands, the Israelites prevail; when he lets them down, Amalek prevails, 10, 11. Moses, being weary, sits down, and Aaron and Hur hold up his hands, 12. The Amalekites are totally routed, 13, and the event commanded to be recorded, 14. Moses builds an altar, and calls it JEHOVAH-NISSI, 15. Amalek is threatened with continual wars, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. *Pitched in Rephidim*— In Numbers 33:12-14 it is said, that when the Israelites came from Sin they encamped in Dophkah, and next in Alush, after which they came to Rephidim. Here, therefore, two stations are omitted, probably because nothing of moment took place at either. See the notes on Numbers 33.

Verse 2. *Why chide ye with me?*— God is your leader, complain to him; Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord? As he is your leader, all your murmurings against me he considers as directed against himself; why therefore do ye tempt him? Has he not given you sufficient proofs that he can destroy his enemies and support his friends? And is he not among you to do you good? Exodus 17:7. Why therefore do ye doubt his power and goodness, and thus provoke him to treat you as his enemies?

Verse 3. *And the people murmured*— The reader must not forget what has so often been noted relating to the degraded state of the minds of the Israelites. A strong argument however may be drawn from this in favor of their supernatural escape from Egypt. Had it been a scheme concerted by the heads of the people, provision would necessarily have been made for

such exigencies as these. But as God chose to keep them constantly dependent upon himself for every necessary of life, and as they had Moses alone as their mediator to look to, they murmured against him when brought into straits and difficulties, regretted their having left Egypt, and expressed the strongest desire to return. This shows that they had left Egypt reluctantly; and as Moses and Aaron never appear to have any resources but those which came most evidently in a supernatural way, therefore the whole exodus or departure from Egypt proves itself to have been no human contrivance, but a measure concerted by God himself.

Verse 6. *I will stand before thee there, upon the rock in Horeb*— THE rock, הַצֹּרֶר hatstsur. It seems as if God had directed the attention of Moses to a particular rock, with which he was well acquainted; for every part of the mount and its vicinity must have been well known to Moses during the time he kept Jethro's flocks in those quarters. Dr. Priestley has left the following sensible observations upon this miracle:—

“The luminous cloud, the symbol of the Divine presence, would appear on the rock, and Horeb was probably a part of the same mountain with Sinai. This supply of water, on Moses only striking the rock, where no water had been before nor has been since, was a most wonderful display of the Divine power. The water must have been in great abundance to supply two millions of persons, which excluded all possibility of artifice or imposture in the case. The miracle must also have been of some continuance, no doubt so long as they continued in that neighborhood, which was more than a year. There are sufficient traces of this extraordinary miracle remaining at this day. This rock has been visited, drawn, and described by Dr. Shaw, Dr. Pocock, and others; and holes and channels appear in the stone, which could only have been formed by the bursting out and running of the water. No art of man could have done it, if any motive could be supposed for the undertaking in such a place as this.”

This miracle has not escaped the notice of the ancient Greek poets. Callimachus represents Rhea bringing forth water from a rock in the same way, after the birth of Jupiter.

πληξεν ορος σκηπτρω,
 το δε οι δεχα πουλυ διεστη.
 εκ δ' εχεεν μεγα χευμα.

Hymn ad Jov., ver. 31.

—*With her scepter struck
 The yawning cliff; from its disparted height
 Adown the mount the gushing torrent ran.*

PRIOR.

The rock mentioned above has been seen and described by Norden, p. 144, 8vo.; Dr. Shaw, p. 314, 4to., where there is an accurate drawing of it; Dr. Pocock, vol. i., p. 143, etc., where the reader may find some fine plates of Mount Horeb and Sinai, and four different views of the wonderful rock of Meribah. It is a vast block of red granite, fifteen feet long, ten broad, and twelve high. See Dr. Shaw's account at the end of Exodus. My nephew, who visited this rock in 1823, confirms the account of the preceding travelers, and has brought a piece of this wonderful stone. The granite is fine, and the quartz mica, and feldspar equally mixed in it. This rock or block of granite is the only type of Christ now existing.

Verse 7. *He called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah*— מַסָּה

Massah signifies temptation or trial; and מְרִיבָה Meribah, contention or litigation. From 1 Corinthians 10:4, we learn that this rock was a type of Christ, and their drinking of it is represented as their being made partakers of the grace and mercy of God through Christ Jesus; and yet many who drank fell and perished in the wilderness in the very act of disobedience! Reader, be not high minded, but fear!

On the smiting of the rock by the rod of Moses, Mr. Ainsworth has the following pious note: "This rock signified Christ, and is therefore called a spiritual Rock, 1 Corinthians 10:4. He being smitten with Moses's rod, and bearing the curse of the law for our sins, and by the preaching of the Gospel crucified among his people, Galatians 3:1, from him floweth the spiritual drink wherewith all believing hearts are refreshed." John 7:37, and Isaiah 53:1-3.

Verse 8. *Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel*— The Amalekites seem to have attacked the Israelites in the same way and through the same motives that the wandering Arabs attack the caravans which annually pass through the same desert. It does not appear that the Israelites gave them any kind of provocation, they seem to have attacked them merely through the hopes of plunder. The Amalekites were the posterity of Amalek, one of the dukes of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, and consequently Israel's brother, Genesis 36:15, 16.

Fought with Israel— In the most treacherous and dastardly manner; for they came at the rear of the camp, smote the hindmost of the people, even all that were feeble behind, when they were faint and weary; see Deuteronomy 25:18. The baggage, no doubt, was the object of their avarice; but finding the women, children, aged and infirm persons, behind with the baggage, they smote them and took away their spoils.

Verse 9. *Moses said unto Joshua*— This is the first place in which Joshua the son of Nun is mentioned: the illustrious part which he took in Jewish affairs, till the settlement of his countrymen in the promised land, is well known. He was captain-general of the Hebrews under Moses; and on this great man's death he became his successor in the government. Joshua was at first called Hoshea, Numbers 13:16, and afterwards called Joshua by Moses. Both in the Septuagint and Greek Testament he is called Jesus: the name signifies Savior; and he is allowed to have been a very expressive type of our blessed Lord. He fought with and conquered the enemies of his people, brought them into the promised land, and divided it to them by lot. The parallel between him and the Savior of the world is too evident to require pointing out.

Top of the hill— Probably some part of Horeb or Sinai, to which they were then near.

Verse 10. *Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up*— It is likely that the Hur mentioned here is the same with that Hur mentioned 1 Chronicles 2:19, who appears from the chronology in that chapter to have been the son of Caleb, the son of Ezron, the son of Pharez, the son of Judah. The rabbins and Josephus say he was the brother-in-law of Moses, having married his sister Miriam. He was a person in whom Moses put much confidence; for he left him conjoint governor of the people with Aaron, when he went to

confer with God on the mount, Exodus 24:14. His grandson Bezaleel was the chief director in the work of the tabernacle; see Exodus 31:2-5.

Verse 11. *When Moses held up his hand*— We cannot understand this transaction in any literal way; for the lifting up or letting down the hands of Moses could not, humanly speaking, influence the battle. It is likely that he held up the rod of God in his hand, Exodus 17:9, as an ensign to the people. We have already seen that in prayer the hands were generally lifted up and spread out, (See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 9:29”,) and therefore it is likely that by this act prayer and supplication are intended. The Jerusalem Targum says, “When Moses held up his hands in prayer, the house of Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hands from prayer, the house of Amalek prevailed.” We may therefore conclude, that by holding up the hands in this case these two things were intended: 1. That hereby a reference was made to God, as the source whence all help and protection must come, and that on him alone they must depend. 2. That prayer and supplication to God are essentially necessary to their prevalence over all their enemies. It is indisputably true that, while the hands are stretched out, that is, while the soul exerts itself in prayer and supplication to God, we are sure to conquer our spiritual adversaries; but if our hands become heavy—if we restrain prayer before God, Amalek will prevail—every spiritual foe, every internal corruption, will gain ground. Several of the fathers consider Moses, with his stretched-out hands, as a figure of Christ on the cross, suffering for mankind, and getting a complete victory over sin and Satan.

Verse 13. *Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people*— Amalek might have been the name of the ruler of this people continued down from their ancestor, (see Clarke on “Exodus 17:8”,) as Pharaoh was the name of all succeeding kings in Egypt. If this were the case, then Amalek and his people mean the prince and the army that fought under him. But if Amalek stand here for the Amalekites, then his people must mean the confederates he had employed on this occasion.

Verse 14. *Write this for a memorial in a book*— This is the first mention of writing on record: what it signified, or how it was done, we cannot tell. But it is evident that either this passage is introduced here instead of Deuteronomy 25:17, by way of anticipation, or that by the words שפר

כתב kethob and sepher was intended only a monumental declaration of the defeat of Amalek by Joshua, by some action or symbolical representation; for it is immediately subjoined, “And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi.” See Dr. A. Bayley, and see the note on chap. xxx. It is very likely that the first regular alphabetical writing in the world was that written by the finger of God himself on the two tables of stone. What is said here was probably by way of anticipation, or means some other method of registering events than by alphabetical characters, if we allow that God gave the first specimen of regular writing on the tables of stone, which did not take place till some time after this.

Rehearse it in the ears of Joshua— Thus showing that Joshua was to succeed Moses, and that this charge should be given to every succeeding governor.

I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek— This threatening was accomplished by SAUL, 1 Samuel 15:3, etc.; four hundred and twelve years after. Judgment is God’s strange work; but it must take place when the sins which incensed it are neither repented of nor forsaken. This people, by their continued transgressions, proved themselves totally unworthy of a political existence; and therefore said God to Saul, Go, and utterly destroy the SINNERS the Amalekites; 1 Samuel 15:18. So their continuance in sin was the cause of their final destruction.

Verse 15. *Jehovah-nissi*— Jehovah is my ensign or banner. The hands and rod of Moses were held up as soldiers are wont to hold up their standards in the time of battle; and as these standards bear the arms of the country, the soldiers are said to fight under that banner, i.e., under the direction and in the defense of that government. Thus the Israelites fought under the direction of God, and in the defense of his truth; and therefore the name of JEHOVAH became the armorial bearing of the whole congregation. By his direction they fought, and in his name and strength they conquered; each one feeling himself, not his own, but the Lord’s soldier.

Verse 16. *The Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek, etc.*— This is no translation of the words **מלחמה כי יד על כס יה** ki yad al kes yah milckamah, which have been variously rendered by different

translators and critics; the most rational version of which is the following: Because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of God, therefore will I have war with Amalek from generation to generation. This gives a tolerably consistent sense, yet still there is considerable obscurity in the passage. Houbigant, a most judicious though bold critic, supposes that, as נִסִּי יהוה Jehovah-nissi, Jehovah my ensign, was spoken of immediately before, כֶּסֶס kes, a throne, in this verse, is an error of some transcriber for נֶס nes, an ensign, which might be readily occasioned by the great similarity between the כ caph and the נ nun. He thinks farther that the two letters יה yah, which are supposed to be here a contraction of the word יהוה Yehovah, are separated, the י yod from the נֶס nes, which should be written נִשִּי nissi, and the ה he, from מִלְחָמָה milchamah, which should be written הַמִּלְחָמָה hammilchamah, and then the whole verse will run thus: For the hand shall be upon the ensigns of war unto the Lord, against Amalek for ever, i.e., God makes now a declaration of war against the Amalekites, which shall continue till their final destruction. The conjecture of Mr. Julius Bate, in his *Literal Translation of the Pentateuch*, deserves attention. He supposes that, as כֶּסֶס cos signifies a cup, and a cup is emblematically used for wrath, on one of the stones of the altar, mentioned in the preceding verse, a hand holding a cup was sculptured, this being a memorial, according to the custom of hieroglyphical writing, that the Lord would continue the cup of wrath, portending continual war, against Amalek for ever. I prefer Houbigant's exposition.

1. THIS first victory of Israel must have inspired them with a considerable measure of confidence in God, and in his servant Moses. Though God alone could give them the victory, yet it was necessary to show them that it was by the influence of Moses they got it. Moses could not deliver Amalek into their hands; yet if Moses did not continue to hold up his hands, i.e., to pray, Amalek must prevail. God, therefore, wrought this work in such a way as to instruct the people, promote his own glory, and secure the true honor of his servant. The Divine Being always performs the greatest number possible of ends, by the fewest and simplest means. In every work of God there is as much of wisdom and economy, as there is of sovereign uncontrolled power.

2. It is not probable that the people whom Joshua chose out to lead against Amalek were unarmed; and we have already seen that it is not at all likely that they came armed out of Egypt. And as the whole circumstances of this case show that those who fought against the Amalekites were properly equipped for the fight, we may then safely presume that they got their arms from the Egyptians, whose bodies were thrown on the shore after having been overwhelmed in the Red Sea. Thus, what was a judgment in the one case, was a most gracious providence in the other. Judgment on God's foes is mercy to his friends.

3. Of the efficacy of prayer we have already had the most striking examples. He who has the spirit of prayer, has the highest interest in the court of heaven; and the only way to retain it, is to keep it in constant employment. Apostasy begins in the closet: no man ever backslid from the life and power of Christianity who continued constant and fervent, especially in private prayer. He who prays without ceasing is likely to rejoice evermore.

CHAPTER 18

Jethro, called the father-in-law of Moses, hearing of the deliverance which God had granted to Israel, 1, took Zipporah and her two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, and brought them to Moses, when the Israelites were encamped near Horeb, 2-5. He sends to Moses, announcing his arrival, 6. Moses goes out to meet him, 7, and gives him a history of God's dealings with the Israelites, 8. Jethro greatly rejoices, and makes striking observations on the power and goodness of God, 9-11. He offers burnt-offerings and sacrifices to Jehovah, and Aaron and all the elders of Israel feast with him, 12. The next day Jethro, observing how much Moses was fatigued by being obliged to sit as judge and hear causes from morning to evening, 13, inquires why he did so, 14. Moses answers, and shows that he is obliged to determine causes between man and man, and to teach them the statutes and laws of God, 15, 16. Jethro finds fault, and counsels him to appoint men who fear God, love truth, and hate covetousness, to be judges over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, to judge and determine in all smaller matters, and refer only the greater and most important to himself, 17-22; and shows that this plan will be advantageous both to himself and to the people, 23. Moses hearkens to the counsel of Jethro, and appoints proper officers over the people, who enter upon their functions, determine all minor causes, and refer only the most difficult to Moses, 24-26. Moses dismisses Jethro, who returns to his own country, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. When Jethro, the priest of Midian, etc.— Concerning this person and his several names, See Clarke's note on "Exodus 2:15", See Clarke's note on "Exodus 2:16", See Clarke's note on "Exodus 2:18", See Clarke's note on "Exodus 3:1", See Clarke's note on "Exodus 4:20", See Clarke's note on "Exodus 4:24". Jethro was probably the son of Reuel, the father-in-law of Moses, and consequently the brother-in-law of Moses; for

the word **יָחַד** chothen, which we translate father-in-law, in this chapter means simply a relative by marriage. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 3:1".

Verse 2. *After he had sent her back*— Why Zipporah and her two sons returned to Midian, is not certainly known. From the transaction recorded Exodus 4:20, 24, it seems as if she had been alarmed at the danger to which the life of one of her sons had been exposed, and fearing worse evils, left her husband and returned to her father. It is however possible that Moses, foreseeing the troubles to which his wife and children were likely to be exposed had he taken them down to Egypt, sent them back to his father-in-law till it should please God to deliver his people.

Jethro, now finding that God had delivered them, and totally discomfited the Egyptians, their enemies, thought it proper to bring Zipporah and her sons to Moses, while he was in the vicinity of Horeb.

Verse 3. *The name of the one was Gershom*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 2:22".

Verse 5. *Jethro-came with his sons*— There are several reasons to induce us to believe that the fact related here is out of its due chronological order, and that Jethro did not come to Moses till the beginning of the second year of the exodus, (see Numbers 10:11,) some time after the tabernacle had been erected, and the Hebrew commonwealth established, both in things civil and ecclesiastical. This opinion is founded on the following reasons:—

1. On this verse, where it is said that Jethro came to Moses while he was encamped at the mount of God. Now it appears, from Exodus 19:1, 2, that they were not yet come to Horeb, the mount of God, and that they did not arrive there till the third month after their departure from Egypt; and the transactions with which this account is connected certainly took place in the second month; see Exodus 16:1.

2. Moses, in Deuteronomy 1:6, 9, 10, 12-15, relates that when they were about to depart from Horeb, which was on the 20th day of the second month of the second year from their leaving Egypt, that he then complained that he was not able to bear the burden alone of the government of a people so numerous; and that it was at that time that he established judges and captains over thousands and hundreds and fifties and tens, which appears to be the very transaction recorded in this place;

the measure itself being recommended by Jethro, and done in consequence of his advice.

3. From Numbers 10:11, 29, etc., we find that when the cloud was taken up, and the Israelites were about to depart from Horeb, that Moses addressed Hobab, who is supposed to have been the same as Jethro, and who then was about to return to Midian, his own country, entreating him to stay with them as a guide while they traveled through the wilderness. It therefore seems necessary that the transaction recorded in this chapter should be inserted Numbers 10. between the 10th and 11th verses.

Numbers 10:10-11.

4. It has been remarked, that shortly after they had departed from Sinai the dispute took place between Miriam, Aaron, and Moses, concerning the Aethiopian woman Zipporah whom he had married, (see Numbers 12:1, etc. ;) and this is supposed to have taken place shortly after she had been brought back by Jethro.

5. In the discourse between Moses and Jethro, mentioned in this chapter, we find that Moses speaks of the statutes and laws of the Lord as things already revealed and acknowledged, which necessarily implies that these laws had already been given, (Exodus 18:16,) which we know did not take place till several months after the transactions mentioned in the preceding chapters.

6. Jethro offers burnt-offerings and sacrifices to God apparently in that way in which they were commanded in the law. Now the law respecting burnt-offerings was not given till after the transactions mentioned here, unless we refer this chapter to a time posterior to that in which it appears in this place. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 18:12".

From all these reasons, but particularly from the two first and the two last, it seems most likely that this chapter stands out of its due chronological order, and therefore I have adjusted the chronology in the margin to the time in which, from the reasons above alleged, I suppose these transactions to have taken place; but the matter is not of much importance, and the reader is at liberty to follow the common opinion. As Moses had in the preceding chapter related the war with Amalek and the curse under which they were laid, he may be supposed to have introduced here the account

concerning Jethro the Midianite, to show that he was free from that curse, although the Midianites and the Kenites, the family of Jethro, were as one people, dwelling with the Amalekites. See Judges 1:16; 1 Chronicles 2:55; 1 Samuel 15:6. For although the Kenites were some of those people whose lands God had promised to the descendants of Abraham, (see Genesis 15:18, 19,) yet, in consideration of Jethro, the relative of Moses, all of them who submitted to the Hebrews were suffered to live in their own country; the rest are supposed to have taken refuge among the Edomites and Amalekites. See Calmet, Locke, etc.

Verse 6. *And he said unto Moses*— That is, by a messenger; in consequence of which Moses went out to meet him, as is stated in the next verse, for an interview had not yet taken place. This is supported by reading **הִנֵּה** hinneh, behold, for **אֲנִי** ani, I, which is the reading of the Septuagint and Syriac, and several Samaritan MSS.; instead therefore of I, thy father, we should read, Behold thy father, etc. — Kennicott's Remarks.

Verse 7. *And did obeisance*— **וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ** vaiyishtachu, he bowed himself down, (See Clarke's note on "Genesis 17:3", and See Clarke's note on "Exodus 4:31";) this was the general token of respect. And kissed him; the token of friendship. And they asked each other of their welfare; literally, and they inquired, each man of his neighbor, concerning peace or prosperity; the proof of affectionate intercourse. These three things constitute good breeding and politeness, accompanied with sincerity.

And they came into the tent.— Some think that the tabernacle is meant, which it is likely had been erected before this time; see Clarke's note on "Exodus 18:5". Moses might have thought proper to take his relative first to the house of God, before he brought him to his own tent.

Verse 9. *And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness*— Every part of Jethro's conduct proves him to have been a religious man and a true believer. His thanksgiving to Jehovah (Exodus 18:10) is a striking proof of it; he first blesses God for the preservation of Moses, and next for the deliverance of the people from their bondage.

Verse 11. *Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods*— Some think that Jethro was now converted to the true God; but it is very

probable that he enjoyed this blessing before he knew any thing of Moses, for it is not likely that Moses would have entered into an alliance with this family had they been heathens. Jethro no doubt had the true patriarchal religion.

Wherein they dealt proudly— Acting as tyrants over the people of God; enslaving them in the most unprincipled manner, and still purposing more tyrannical acts. He was above them — he showed himself to be infinitely superior to all their gods, by the miracles which he wrought. Various translations have been given of this clause; the above I believe to be the sense.

Verse 12. Jethro-took a burnt-offering— **עלה** olah. Though it be true that in the patriarchal times we read of a burnt-offering, (see Genesis 22:2, etc.,) yet we only read of one in the case of Isaac, and therefore, though this offering made by Jethro is not a decisive proof that the law relative to burnt-offerings, etc., had already been given, yet, taken with other circumstances in this account, it is a presumptive evidence that the meeting between Moses and Jethro took place after the erection of tabernacle. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 18:5".

Sacrifices for God— **זבחים** zebachim, slain beasts, as the word generally signifies. We have already seen that sacrifices were instituted by God himself as soon as sin entered into our world; and we see that they were continued and regularly practiced among all the people who had the knowledge of the only true God, from that time until they became a legal establishment. Jethro, who was a priest, (Exodus 2:16,) had a right to offer these sacrifices; nor can there be a doubt of his being a worshipper of the true God, for those Kenites, from whom the Rechabites came, were descended from him; 1 Chronicles 2:55. See also Jeremiah 35.

And Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel to eat bread— The burnt-offering was wholly consumed; every part was considered as the Lord's portion, and therefore it was entirely burnt up. The other sacrifices mentioned here were such that, after the blood had been poured out before God, the officers and assistants might feed on the flesh. Thus, in ancient times, contracts were made and covenants sealed; See Clarke note on "Genesis 15:13", etc. It is very likely, therefore, that the sacrifices offered

on this occasion, were those on the flesh of which Aaron and the elders of Israel feasted with Jethro.

Before God.— Before the tabernacle, where God dwelt; for it is supposed that the tabernacle was now erected. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 18:5”; and see Deuteronomy 12:5-7, and 1 Chronicles 29:21, 22, where the same form of speech, before the Lord, is used, and plainly refers to his manifested presence in the tabernacle.

Verse 13. To judge the people— To hear and determine controversies between man and man, and to give them instruction in things appertaining to God.

From the morning unto the evening.— Moses was obliged to sit all day, and the people were continually coming and going.

Verse 15. The people come unto me to inquire of God— To know the mind and will of God on the subject of their inquiries. Moses was the mediator between God and the people; and as they believed that all justice and judgment must come from him, therefore they came to Moses to know what God had spoken.

Verse 16. I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.— These words are so very particular that they leave little room for doubt that the law had been given. Such words would scarcely have been used had not the statutes and laws been then in existence. And this is one of the proofs that the transaction mentioned here stands out of its due chronological order; See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 18:5”.

Verse 18. Thou wilt surely wear away— מבל תבל nabol tibbol, in wearing way, thou wilt wear away — by being thus continually employed, thou wilt soon become finally exhausted. And this people that is with thee; as if he had said, “Many of them are obliged to wait so long for the determination of their suit that their patience must be soon necessarily worn out, as there is no one to hear every cause but thyself.”

Verse 19. I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee— Jethro seems to have been a man of great understanding and prudence. His advice to Moses was most appropriate and excellent; and it was probably given under the immediate inspiration of God, for after such sacrificial rites, and

public acknowledgment of God, the prophetic spirit might be well expected to descend and rest upon him. God could have showed Moses the propriety and necessity of adopting such measures before, but he chose in this case to help man by man, and in the present instance a permanent basis was laid to consolidate the union of the two families, and prevent all future misunderstandings.

Verse 20. *Thou shalt teach them ordinances*— חֻקִּים *chukkim*, all such precepts as relate to the ceremonies of religion and political economy. And laws, הַתּוֹרָה *hattoroth*, the instructions relative to the whole system of morality.

And shalt show them the way— אֵת הַדֶּרֶךְ *eth hadderech*, THAT very WAY, that only way, which God himself has revealed, and in which they should walk in order to please him, and get their souls everlastingly saved.

And the work that they must do.— For it was not sufficient that they should know their duty both to God and man, but they must DO it too; יַעֲשׂוּ *yaasun*, they must do it diligently, fervently, effectually; for the paragogic nun deepens and extends the meaning of the verb.

What a very comprehensive form of a preacher's duty does this verse exhibit! 1. He must instruct the people in the nature, use, and importance of the ordinances of religion. 2. He must lay before them the whole moral law, and their obligations to fulfill all its precepts. 3. He must point out to each his particular duty, and what is expected of him in his situation, connections, etc. And, 4. He must set them all their work, and see that they do it. On such a plan as this he will have full opportunity to show the people, 1. Their sin, ignorance, and folly; 2. The pure and holy law which they have broken, and by which they are condemned; 3. The grace of God that bringeth salvation, by which they are to be justified and finally saved; and, 4. The necessity of showing their faith by their works; not only denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, but living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Verse 21. *Able men*— Persons of wisdom, discernment, judgment, prudence, and fortitude; for who can be a ruler without these qualifications?

Such as fear God— Who are truly religious, without which they will feel little concerned either for the bodies or souls of the people.

Men of truth— Honest and true in their own hearts and lives; speaking the truth, and judging according to the truth.

Hating covetousness— Doing all for God's sake, and love to man; laboring to promote the general good; never perverting judgment, or suppressing the testimonies of God, for the love of money or through a base, man-pleasing spirit, but expecting their reward from the mercy of God in the resurrection of the just.

Rulers of thousands, etc.— Millenaries, centurions, quinquagenaries, and decurions; each of these, in all probability, dependent on that officer immediately above himself. So the decurion, or ruler over ten, if he found a matter too hard for him, brought it to the quinquagenary, or ruler of fifty; if, in the course of the exercise of his functions, he found a cause too complicated for him to decide on, he brought it to the centurion, or ruler over a hundred. In like manner the centurion brought his difficult case to the millenary, or ruler over a thousand; the case that was too hard for him to judge, he brought to Moses; and the case that was too hard for Moses, he brought immediately to GOD. It is likely that each of these classes had a court composed of its own members, in which causes were heard and tried. Some of the rabbins have supposed that there were 600 rulers of thousands, 6000 rulers of hundreds, 12, 000 rulers of fifties and 60, 000 rulers of tens; making in the whole 78, 600 officers. But Josephus says (*Antiq.*, lib. iii., chap. 4) that Moses, by the advice of Jethro, appointed rulers over myriads, and then over thousands; these he divided into five hundreds, and again into hundreds, and into fifties; and appointed rulers over each of these, who divided them into thirties, and at last into twenties and tens; that each of these companies had a chief, who took his name from the number of persons who were under his direction and government. Allowing what Josephus states to be correct, some have supposed that there could not have been less than 129, 860 officers in the Israelitish camp. But such computations are either fanciful or absurd. That the people were divided into thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens, we know, for the text states it, but we cannot tell precisely how many of such divisions there were, nor, consequently, the number of officers.

Verse 23. *If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee*— Though the measure was obviously of the utmost importance, and plainly recommended itself by its expediency and necessity; yet Jethro very modestly leaves it to the wisdom of Moses to choose or reject it; and, knowing that in all things his relative was now acting under the immediate direction of God, intimates that no measure can be safely adopted without a positive injunction from God himself. As the counsel was doubtless inspired by the Divine Spirit, we find that it was sanctioned by the same, for Moses acted in every respect according to the advice he had received.

Verse 27. *And Moses let his father-in-law depart*— But if this be the same transaction with that mentioned Numbers 10:29, etc., we find that it was with great reluctance that Moses permitted so able a counsellor to leave him; for, having the highest opinion of his judgment, experience, and discretion, he pressed him to stay with them, that he might be instead of eyes to them in the desert. But Jethro chose rather to return to his own country, where probably his family were so settled and circumstanced that they could not be conveniently removed, and it was more his duty to stay with them, to assist them with his counsel and advice, than to travel with the Israelites. Many others might be found that could be eyes to the Hebrews in the desert, but no man could be found capable of being a father to his family, but himself. It is well to labor for the public good, but our own families are the first claimants on our care, attention, and time. He who neglects his own household on pretense of laboring even for the good of the public, has surely denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

IT is strange that after this we hear no more of Zipporah! Why is she forgotten? Merely because she was the wife of Moses; for he chose to conduct himself so that to the remotest ages there should be the utmost proofs of his disinterestedness. While multitudes or the families of Israel are celebrated and dignified, his own he writes in the dust. He had no interest but that of God and his people; to promote this, he employed his whole time and his uncommon talents. His body, his soul, his whole life, were a continual offering to God. They were always on the Divine altar; and God had from his creature all the praise, glory, and honor that a creature could possibly give. Like his great antitype, he went about doing good; and God was with him. The zeal of God's house consumed him, for in that house, in all its concerns, we have the testimony of God himself

that he was faithful, Hebrews 3:2; and a higher character was never given, nor can be given of any governor, sacred or civil. He made no provision even for his own sons, Gershom and Eliezer; they and their families were incorporated with the Levites, 1 Chronicles 23:14; and had no higher employment than that of taking care of the tabernacle and the tent, Numbers 3:21-26, and merely to serve at the tabernacle and to carry burdens, Numbers 4:24-28. No history, sacred or profane, has been able to produce a complete parallel to the disinterestedness of Moses. This one consideration is sufficient to refute every charge of imposture brought against him and his laws. There never was an imposture in the world (says Dr. PRIDEAUX, Letter to the Deists) that had not the following characters:—

1. It must always have for its end some carnal interest.
 2. It can have none but wicked men for its authors.
 3. Both of these must necessarily appear in the very contexture of the imposture itself.
 4. That it can never be so framed, that it will not contain some palpable falsities, which will discover the falsity of all the rest.
 5. That wherever it is first propagated, it must be done by craft and fraud.
 6. That when intrusted to many persons, it cannot be long concealed.
1. The keenest-eyed adversary of Moses has never been able to fix on him any carnal interest. No gratification of sensual passions, no accumulation of wealth, no aggrandizement of his family or relatives, no pursuit of worldly honor, has ever been laid to his charge.
 2. His life was unspotted, and all his actions the offspring of the purest benevolence.
 3. As his own hands were pure, so were the hands of those whom he associated with himself in the work.
 4. No palpable falsity has ever been detected in his writings, though they have for their subject the most complicate, abstruse, and difficult topics that ever came under the pen of man.

5. No craft, no fraud, not even what one of his own countrymen thought he might lawfully use, innocent guile, because he had to do with a people greatly degraded and grossly stupid, can be laid to his charge. His conduct was as open as the day; and though continually watched by a people who were ever ready to murmur and rebel, and industrious to find an excuse for their repeated seditious conduct, yet none could be found either in his spirit, private life, or public conduct.

6. None ever came after to say, "We have joined with Moses in a plot, we have feigned a Divine authority and mission, we have succeeded in our innocent imposture, and now the mask may be laid aside." The whole work proved itself so fully to be of God that even the person who might wish to discredit Moses and his mission, could find no ground of this kind to stand on. The ten plagues of Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the destruction of the king of Egypt and his immense host, the quails, the rock of Horeb, the supernatural supply by the forty years' manna, the continual miracle of the Sabbath, on which the preceding day's manna kept good, though, if thus kept, it became putrid on any other day, together with the constantly attending supernatural cloud, in its threefold office of a guide by day, a light by night, and a covering from the ardours of the sun, all invincibly proclaim that God brought out this people from Egypt; that Moses was the man of God, chosen by him, and fully accredited in his mission; and that the laws and statutes which he gave were the offspring of the wisdom and goodness of Him who is the Father of Lights, the fountain of truth and justice, and the continual and unbounded benefactor of the human race.

CHAPTER 19

The children of Israel, having departed from Rephidim, come to the wilderness of Sinai in the third month, 1, 2. Moses goes up into the mount to God, and receives a message which he is to deliver to the people, 3-6. He returns and delivers it to the people before the elders, 7. The people promise obedience, 8. The Lord proposes to meet Moses in the cloud, 9. He commands him to sanctify the people, and promises to come down visibly on Mount Sinai on the third day, 10, 11. He commands him also to set bounds, to prevent the people or any of the cattle from touching the mount, on pain of being stoned or shot through with a dart, 12, 13. Moses goes down and delivers this message, 14, 15. The third day is ushered in with the appearance of the thick cloud upon the mount, and with thunders, lightning, and the sound of a trumpet! at which the people are greatly terrified, 16

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. *In the third month*— This was called Sivan, and answers to our May. For the Jewish months, years, etc., see the tables at the end of Deuteronomy.

The same day— There are three opinions concerning the meaning of this place, which are supported by respectable arguments. 1. The same day means the same day of the third month with that, viz., the 15th, on which the Israelites had left Egypt. 2. The same day signifies here a day of the same number with the month to which it is applied, viz., the third day of the third month. 3. By the same day, the first day of the month is intended. The Jews celebrate the feast of pentecost fifty days after the passover: from the departure out of Egypt to the coming to Sinai were forty-five days; for they came out the fifteenth day of the first month, from which day to the first of the third month forty-five days are numbered. On the 2d day of this third month Moses went up into the mountain, when three days were given to the people to purify themselves; this gives the fourth day of the third month, or the forty-ninth from the

departure out of Egypt. On the next day, which was the fiftieth from the celebration of the passover, the glory of God appeared on the mount; in commemoration of which the Jews celebrate the feast of pentecost. This is the opinion of St. Augustine and of several moderns, and is defended at large by Houbigant. As the word חֹדֶשׁ chodesh, month, is put for new moon, which is with the Jews the first day of the month, this may be considered an additional confirmation of the above opinion.

The wilderness of Sinai.— Mount Sinai is called by the Arabs Jibel Mousa or the Mount of Moses, or, by way of eminence, El Tor, THE Mount. It is one hill, with two peaks or summits; one is called Horeb, the other Sinai. Horeb was probably its most ancient name, and might designate the whole mountain; but as the Lord had appeared to Moses on this mountain in a bush סֵנֶה seneh, Exodus 3:2, from this circumstance it might have received the name of Sinai or הַר סִינַי har Sinai, the mount of the bush or the mount of bushes; for it is possible that it was not in a single bush, but in a thicket of bushes, that the Angel of God made his appearance. The word bush is often used for woods or forests.

Verse 3. Moses went up unto God— It is likely that the cloud which had conducted the Israelitish camp had now removed to the top of Sinai; and as this was the symbol of the Divine presence, Moses went up to the place, there to meet the Lord.

The Lord called unto him— This, according to St. Stephen, was the Angel of the Lord, Acts 7:38. And from several scriptures we have seen that the Lord Jesus was the person intended; see Clarke note on “Genesis 16:7”; see Clarke note on “Genesis 18:13”; see Clarke note on “Exodus 3:2”.

Verse 4. How I bare you on eagles’ wings— Mr. Bruce contends that the word נֶשֶׁר nesher does not mean the bird we term eagle; but a bird which the Arabs, from its kind and merciful disposition, call rachama, which is noted for its care of its young, and its carrying them upon its back. See his Travels, vol. vii., pl. 33. It is not unlikely that from this part of the sacred history the heathens borrowed their fable of the eagle being a bird sacred to Jupiter, and which was employed to carry the souls of departed heroes, kings, etc., into the celestial regions. The Romans have struck several medals with this device, which may be seen in different cabinets, among

which are the following: one of Faustina, daughter of Antoninus Pius, on the reverse of which she is represented ascending to heaven on the back of an eagle; and another of Salonia, daughter of the Emperor Galienus, on the reverse of which she is represented on the back of an eagle, with a scepter in her hand, ascending to heaven. Jupiter himself is sometimes represented on the back of an eagle also, with his thunder in his hand, as on a medal of Licinus. This brings us nearer to the letter of the text, where it appears that the heathens confounded the figure made use of by the sacred penman, I bare you on eagles' wings, with the manifestation of God in thunder and lightning on Mount Sinai. And it might be in reference to all this that the Romans took the eagle for their ensign. See Scheuchzer, Fusellius, etc.

Brought you unto myself.— In this and the two following verses, we see the design of God in selecting a people for himself. 1. They were to obey his voice, Exodus 19:5, to receive a revelation from him, and to act according to that revelation, and not according to their reason or fancy, in opposition to his declarations. 2. They were to obey his voice indeed, **שמוע תשמעו** shamoah tishmeu, in hearing they should hear; they should consult his testimonies, hear them whenever read or proclaimed, and obey them as soon as heard, affectionately and steadily. 3. They must keep his covenant — not only copy in their lives the ten commandments, but they must receive and preserve the grand agreement made between God and man by sacrifice, in reference to the incarnation and death of Christ; for from the foundation of the world the covenant of God ratified by sacrifices referred to this, and now the sacrificial system was to be more fully opened by the giving of the law. 4. They should then be God's peculiar treasure, **סגולה** segullah, his own patrimony, a people in whom he should have all right, and over whom he should have exclusive authority above all the people of the earth; for though all the inhabitants of the world were his by his right of creation and providence, yet these should be peculiarly his, as receiving his revelation and entering into his covenant. 5. They should be a kingdom of priests, Exodus 19:6. Their state should be a theocracy; and as God should be the sole governor, being king in Jeshurun, so all his subjects should be priests, all worshippers, all sacrificers, every individual offering up the victim for himself. A beautiful representation of the Gospel dispensation, to which the Apostles Peter and John apply it, 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10, and Revelation 20:6; under which

dispensation every believing soul offers up for himself that Lamb of God which was slain for and which takes away the sin of the world, and through which alone a man can have access to God.

Verse 6. *And a holy nation*.— They should be a nation, one people; firmly united among themselves, living under their own laws; and powerful, because united, and acting under the direction and blessing of God. They should be a holy nation, saved from their sins, righteous in their conduct, holy in their hearts; every external rite being not only a significant ceremony, but also a means of conveying light and life, grace and peace, to every person who conscientiously used it. Thus they should be both a kingdom, having God for their governor; and a nation, a multitude of peoples connected together; not a scattered, disordered, and disorganized people, but a royal nation, using their own rites, living under their own laws, subject in religious matters only to God, and in things civil, to every ordinance of man for God's sake.

This was the spirit and design of this wonderful institution, which could not receive its perfection but under the Gospel, and has its full accomplishment in every member of the mystical body of Christ.

Verse 7. *The elders of the people*— The head of each tribe, and the chief of each family, by whose ministry this gracious purpose of God was speedily communicated to the whole camp.

Verse 8. *And all the people answered, etc.*— The people, having such gracious advantages laid before them, most cheerfully consented to take God for their portion; as he had graciously promised to take them for his people. Thus a covenant was made, the parties being mutually bound to each other.

Moses returned the words— When the people had on their part consented to the covenant, Moses appears to have gone immediately up to the mountain and related to God the success of his mission; for he was now on the mount, as appears from Exodus 19:14.

Verse 9. *A thick cloud*— This is interpreted by Exodus 19:18: And Mount Sinai was altogether on a SMOKE-and the SMOKE thereof ascended as the SMOKE of a furnace; his usual appearance was in the cloudy pillar, which we may suppose was generally clear and luminous.

That the people may hear— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 15:9”. The Jews consider this as the fullest evidence their fathers had of the Divine mission of Moses; themselves were permitted to see this awfully glorious sight, and to hear God himself speak out of the thick darkness: for before this, as Rabbi Maymon remarks, they might have thought that Moses wrought his miracles by sorcery or enchantment; but now, hearing the voice of God himself, they could no longer disbelieve nor even doubt.

Verse 10. *Sanctify them*— See the meaning of this term, Exodus 13:2.

Let them wash their clothes— And consequently bathe their bodies; for, according to the testimony of the Jews, these always went together.

It was necessary that, as they were about to appear in the presence of God, every thing should be clean and pure about them; that they might be admonished by this of the necessity of inward purity, of which the outward washing was the emblem.

From these institutions the heathens appear to have borrowed their precepts relative to washings and purifications previously to their offering sacrifice to their gods, examples of which abound in the Greek and Latin writers. They washed their hands and clothes, and bathed their bodies in pure water, before they performed any act of religious worship; and in a variety of cases, abstinence from all matrimonial connections was positively required, before a person was permitted to perform any religious rite, or assist at the performance.

Verse 12. *Thou shalt set bounds*— Whether this was a line marked out on the ground, beyond which they were not to go, or whether a fence was actually made to keep them off, we cannot tell; or whether this fence was made all round the mountain, or only at that part to which one wing of the camp extended, is not evident.

This verse strictly forbids the people from coming near and touching Mount Sinai, which was burning with FIRE. The words therefore in Exodus 19:15, **אל תגשו אל אשה**, *al tiggeshu el ishshah*, come not at your wives, seem rather to mean, come not near unto the FIRE; especially as the other phrase is not at all probable: but the fire is, on this occasion, spoken of so emphatically (see Deuteronomy 5:4, 5, 22-25) that we are naturally led to

consider **אִשָּׁה** ishshah here as **הָאֵשׁ** ha-esh transposed, or to say, with Simon in his Lexicon, **אִשָּׁה** faem, idem quod masc. **אֵשׁ** ignis. So among other instances, we have **אֵבֶר** and **אֲבֵרָה** a wing; **אֹר** and **אֹרֶה** light; **אֲמִץ** and **אֲמִצָּה** strength; and **אָמַר** and **אֲמָרָה** a speech. — Burt. See KENNICOTT'S Remarks.

Whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death— The place was awfully sacred, because the dreadful majesty of God was displayed on it. And this taught them that God is a consuming fire, and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Verse 13. There shall not a hand touch it— **בּוֹ** bo, HIM, not the mountain, but the man who had presumed to touch the mountain. He should be considered altogether as an unclean and accursed thing, not to be touched for fear of conveying defilement; but should be immediately stoned or pierced through with a dart, Hebrews 12:20.

Verse 16. Thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud—and the voice of the trumpet— The thunders, lightnings, etc., announced the coming, as they proclaimed the majesty, of God. Of the thunders and lightnings, and the deep, dark, dismal, electric cloud, from which the thunders and lightnings proceeded, we can form a tolerable apprehension; but of the loud, longsounding trumpet, we can scarcely form a conjecture. Such were the appearances and the noise that all the people in the camp trembled, and Moses himself was constrained to say, “I exceedingly fear and quake,” Hebrews 12:21. Probably the sound of the trumpet was something similar to that which shall be blown by the angel when he sweareth, by Him that liveth for ever, There shall be time no longer!

Verse 17. And Moses brought forth the people-to meet with God— For though they might not touch the mount till they had permission, yet when the trumpet sounded long, it appears they might come up to the nether part of the mount, (see Exodus 19:13, and Deuteronomy 4:11;) and when the trumpet had ceased to sound, they might then go up unto the mountain, as to any other place.

It was absolutely necessary that God should give the people at large some particular evidence of his being and power, that they might be saved from idolatry, to which they were most deplorably prone; and that they might

the more readily credit Moses, who was to be the constant mediator between God and them. God, therefore, in his indescribable majesty, descended on the mount; and, by the thick dark cloud, the violent thunders, the vivid lightnings, the long and loud blasts of the trumpet, the smoke encompassing the whole mountain, and the excessive earthquake, proclaimed his power, his glory, and his holiness; so that the people, however unfaithful and disobedient afterwards, never once doubted the Divine interference, or suspected Moses of any cheat or imposture. Indeed, so absolute and unequivocal were the proofs of supernatural agency, that it was impossible these appearances could be attributed to any cause but the unlimited power of the author of Nature.

It is worthy of remark that the people were informed three days before, Exodus 19:9-11, that such an appearance was to take place; and this answered two excellent purposes: 1. They had time to sanctify and prepare themselves for this solemn transaction; and, 2. Those who might be skeptical had sufficient opportunity to make use of every precaution to prevent and detect an imposture; so this previous warning strongly serves the cause of Divine revelation.

Their being at first prohibited from touching the mount on the most awful penalties, and secondly, being permitted to see manifestations of the Divine majesty, and hear the words of God, subserved the same great purposes. Their being prohibited in the first instance would naturally whet their curiosity, make them cautious of being deceived, and ultimately impress them with a due sense of God's justice and their own sinfulness; and their being permitted afterwards to go up to the mount, must have deepened the conviction that all was fair and real, that there could be no imposture in the case, and that though the justice and purity of God forbade them to draw nigh for a time, yet his mercy, which had prescribed the means of purification, had permitted an access to his presence. The directions given from Exodus 19:10-15 inclusive show, not only the holiness of God, but the purity he requires in his worshippers.

Besides, the whole scope and design of the chapter prove that no soul can possibly approach this holy and terrible Being but through a mediator; and this is the use made of this whole transaction by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Hebrews 12:18-24.

Verse 20. *The Lord came down*— This was undoubtedly done in a visible manner, that the people might witness the awful appearance. We may suppose that every thing was arranged thus: the glory of the Lord occupied the top of the mountain, and near to this Moses was permitted to approach. Aaron and the seventy elders were permitted to advance some way up the mountain, while the people were only permitted to come up to its base. Moses, as the lawgiver, was to receive the statutes and judgments from God's mouth; Aaron and the elders were to receive them from Moses, and deliver them to the people; and the people were to act according to the direction received. Nothing can be imagined more glorious, terrible, majestic, and impressive, than the whole of this transaction; but it was chiefly calculated to impress deep reverence, religious fear, and sacred awe; and he who attempts to worship God uninfluenced by these, has neither a proper sense of the Divine majesty, nor of the sinfulness of sin. It seems in reference to this that the apostle says, Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with REVERENCE and GODLY FEAR: for our God is a CONSUMING FIRE; Hebrews 12:28, 29. Who then shall dare to approach him in his own name and without a mediator?

Verse 22. *Let the priests also-sanctify themselves*— That there were priests among the Hebrews before the consecration of Aaron and his sons, cannot be doubted; though their functions might be in a considerable measure suspended while under persecution in Egypt, yet the persons existed whose right and duty it was to offer sacrifices to God. Moses requested liberty from Pharaoh to go into the wilderness to sacrifice; and had there not been among the people both sacrifices and priests, the request itself must have appeared nugatory and absurd. Sacrifices from the beginning had constituted an essential part of the worship of God, and there certainly were priests whose business it was to offer them to God before the giving of the law; though this, for especial reasons, was restricted to Aaron and his sons after the law had been given. As sacrifices had not been offered for a considerable time, the priests themselves were considered in a state of impurity; and therefore God requires that they also should be purified for the purpose of approaching the mountain, and hearing their Maker promulgate his laws. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 28:1".

Verse 23. *The people cannot come up*— Either because they had been so solemnly forbidden that they would not dare, with the penalty of instant death before their eyes, to transgress the Divine command; or the bounds which were set about the mount were such as rendered their passing them physically impossible.

And sanctify it.— **קִדְּשׁוּהָ** vekiddashio. Here the word **קִדְּשׁ** kadash is taken in its proper literal sense, signifying the separating of a thing, person or place, from all profane or common uses, and devoting it to sacred purposes.

Verse 24. *Let not the priests and the people break through*— God knew that they were heedless, criminally curious, and stupidly obstinate; and therefore his mercy saw it right to give them line upon line, that they might not transgress to their own destruction.

FROM the very solemn and awful manner in which the LAW was introduced, we may behold it as the ministration of terror and death, 2 Corinthians 3:7, appearing rather to exclude men from God than to bring them nigh; and from this we may learn that an approach to God would have been for ever impossible, had not infinite mercy found out the Gospel scheme of salvation. By this, and this alone, we draw nigh to God; for we have an entrance into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, Hebrews 10:19. “For,” says the apostle, “ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire; nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and to the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, (for they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) but ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God, the Judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the MEDIATOR of the NEW COVENANT; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel;” Hebrews 12:18-24.

Reader, art thou still under the influence and condemning power of that fiery law which proceeded from his right hand? Art thou yet afar off? Remember, thou canst only come nigh by the blood of sprinkling; and till justified by his blood, thou art under the curse. Consider the terrible majesty of God. If thou have his favor thou hast life; if his frown, death. Be instantly reconciled to God, for though thou hast deeply sinned, and he is just, yet he is the justifier of him that believeth in Christ Jesus. Believe on him, receive his salvation, OBEY his voice indeed, and KEEP his covenant, and THEN shalt thou be a king and a priest unto God and the Lamb, and be finally saved with all the power of an endless life. Amen.

CHAPTER 20

The preface to the ten commandments, 1, 2. The FIRST commandment, against mental or theoretic idolatry, 3. The SECOND, against making and worshipping images, or practical idolatry, 4-6. The THIRD, against false swearing, blasphemy, and irreverent use of the name of God, 7. The FOURTH, against profanation of the Sabbath, and idleness on the other days of the week, 8-11. The FIFTH, against disrespect and disobedience to parents, 12. The SIXTH, against murder and cruelty, 13. The SEVENTH, against adultery and uncleanness, 14. The EIGHTH, against stealing and dishonesty, 15. The NINTH, against false testimony, perjury, etc., 16. The TENTH, against covetousness, 17. The people are alarmed at the awful appearance of God on the mount, and stand afar off, 18. They pray that Moses may be mediator between God and them, 19. Moses encourages them, 20. He draws near to the thick darkness, and God communes with him, 21, 22. Farther directions against idolatry, 23. Directions concerning making an altar of earth, 24; and an altar of hewn stone, 25. None of these to be ascended by steps, and the reason given, 26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. *All these words*— Houbigant supposes, and with great plausibility of reason, that the clause **את כל הדברים האלה** eth col haddebarim haelleh, “all these words,” belong to the latter part of the concluding verse of chap. 19., which he thinks should be read thus: And Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them ALL THESE WORDS; i.e., delivered the solemn charge relative to their not attempting to come up to that part of the mountain on which God manifested himself in his glorious majesty, lest he should break forth upon them and consume them. For how could Divine justice and purity suffer a people so defiled to stand in his immediate presence? When Moses, therefore, had gone down and spoken all these words, and he and Aaron had reascended the mount, then the Divine Being, as supreme legislator, is majestically introduced thus: And God spake, saying. This gives a dignity to the commencement

of this chapter of which the clause above mentioned, if not referred to the speech of Moses, deprives it. The Anglo-Saxon favors this emendation: [AS], God spoke THUS, which is the whole of the first verse as it stands in that version.

Some learned men are of opinion that the TEN COMMANDMENTS were delivered on May 30, being then the day of pentecost.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The laws delivered on Mount Sinai have been variously named. In Deuteronomy 4:13, they are called עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים asereth haddebarim, THE TEN WORDS. In the preceding chapter, Exodus 19:5, God calls them אֵת בְּרִיתִי eth berithi, my COVENANT, i.e., the agreement he entered into with the people of Israel to take them for his peculiar people, if they took him for their God and portion. IF ye will obey my voice indeed, and KEEP my COVENANT, THEN shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me. And the word covenant here evidently refers to the laws given in this chapter, as is evident from Deuteronomy 4:13: And he declared unto you his COVENANT, which he commanded you to perform, even TEN COMMANDMENTS. They have been also termed the moral law, because they contain and lay down rules for the regulation of the manners or conduct of men. Sometimes they have been termed the LAW, הַתּוֹרָה hattorah, by way of eminence, as containing the grand system of spiritual instruction, direction, guidance, etc. See on the word LAW, Exodus 12:49. See Clarke note on "Exodus 12:49". And frequently the DECALOGUE, δεκαλογος, which is a literal translation into Greek of the עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים asereth haddebarim, or TEN WORDS, of Moses.

Among divines they are generally divided into what they term the first and second tables. The FIRST table containing the first, second, third, and fourth commandments, and comprehending the whole system of theology, the true notions we should form of the Divine nature, the reverence we owe and the religious service we should render to him. The SECOND, containing the six last commandments, and comprehending a complete system of ethics, or moral duties, which man owes to his fellows, and on the due performance of which the order, peace and happiness of society depend. By this division, the FIRST table contains our duty to GOD; the

SECOND our duty to our NEIGHBOR. This division, which is natural enough, refers us to the grand principle, love to God and love to man, through which both tables are observed. 1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength. 2. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two hang all the law and the prophets. See Clarke note on “Matthew 22:37”. See Clarke note on “Matthew 22:38”. See Clarke note on “Matthew 22:39”. See Clarke note on “Matthew 22:40”.

**THE FIRST COMMANDMENT — AGAINST MENTAL OR THEORETIC
IDOLATRY.**

Verse 2. *I am the LORD thy God*— יהוה אלהיך Yehovah eloheycha. On the word JEHOVAH, which we here translate LORD, see Clarke note on “Genesis 2:4”, and see Clarke note on “Exodus 6:3”. And on the word Elohim, here translated GOD, see Clarke note on “Genesis 1:1”. It is worthy of remark that each individual is addressed here, and not the people collectively, though they are all necessarily included; that each might feel that he was bound for himself to hear and do all these words. Moses labored to impress this personal interest on the people’s minds, when he said, Deuteronomy 5:3, 4: “The Lord made this covenant with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.”

Brought thee out of the land of Egypt, etc.— And by this very thing have proved myself to be superior to all gods, unlimited in power, and most gracious as well as fearful in operation. This is the preface or introduction, but should not be separated from the commandment. Therefore,—

Verse 3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*— אלהים אחרים
elohim acherim, no strange gods — none that thou art not acquainted with, none who has not given thee such proofs of his power and godhead as I have done in delivering thee from the Egyptians, dividing the Red Sea, bringing water out of the rock, quails into the desert, manna from heaven to feed thee, and the pillar of cloud to direct, enlighten, and shield thee. By these miracles God had rendered himself familiar to them, they were intimately acquainted with the operation of his hands; and therefore with great propriety he says, Thou shalt have no strange gods before me; פני

על al panai, before or in the place of those manifestations which I have made of myself.

This commandment prohibits every species of mental idolatry, and all inordinate attachment to earthly and sensible things. As God is the fountain of happiness, and no intelligent creature can be happy but through him, whoever seeks happiness in the creature is necessarily an idolater; as he puts the creature in the place of the Creator, expecting that from the gratification of his passions, in the use or abuse of earthly things, which is to be found in God alone. The very first commandment of the whole series is divinely calculated to prevent man's misery and promote his happiness, by taking him off from all false dependence, and leading him to God himself, the fountain of all good.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT AGAINST MAKING AND WORSHIPPING IMAGES.

Verse 4. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image*— As the word פסל pasal signifies to hew, carve, grave, etc., פסל pesel may here signify any kind of image, either of wood, stone, or metal, on which the axe, the chisel, or the graving tool has been employed. This commandment includes in its prohibitions every species of idolatry known to have been practiced among the Egyptians. The reader will see this the more plainly by consulting the notes on the ten plagues, particularly those on chap. 12.

Or any likeness, etc.— To know the full spirit and extent of this commandment, this place must be collated with Deuteronomy 4:15, etc.: Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves-lest ye corrupt yourselves-and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of MALE or FEMALE. All who have even the slightest acquaintance with the ancient history of Egypt, know that Osiris and his wife Isis were supreme divinities among that people.

The likeness of any beast. — בהמה behemah, such as the ox and the heifer. Among the Egyptians the ox was not only sacred but adored, because they supposed that in one of these animals Osiris took up his residence: hence they always had a living ox, which they supposed to be the habitation of this deity; and they imagined that on the death of one he

entered into the body of another, and so on successively. This famous ox-god they called Apis and Mnevis.

The likeness of any winged fowl. — The ibis, or stork, or crane, and hawk, may be here intended, for all these were objects of Egyptian idolatry.

The likeness of any thing that CREEPETH. The crocodile, serpents, the scarabeus or beetle, were all objects of their adoration; and Mr. Bryant has rendered it very probable that even the frog itself was a sacred animal, as from its inflation it was emblematic of the prophetic influence, for they supposed that the god inflated or distended the body of the person by whom he gave oracular answers.

The likeness of any FISH. — All fish were esteemed sacred animals among the Egyptians. One called Oxurunchus had, according to Strabo, lib. xvii., a temple, and divine honors paid to it. Another fish, called Phagrus, was worshipped at Syene, according to Clemens Alexandrinus in his *Cohortatio*. And the *Lepidotus* and eel were objects of their adoration, as we find from Herodotus, lib. ii., cap. 72. In short, oxen, heifers, sheep, goats, lions, dogs, monkeys, and cats; the ibis, the crane, and the hawk; the crocodile, serpents, frogs, flies, and the scarabeus or beetle; the Nile and its fish; the sun, moon, planets, and stars; fire, light, air, darkness, and night, were all objects of Egyptian idolatry, and all included in this very circumstantial prohibition as detailed in Deuteronomy, and very forcibly in the general terms of the text: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in the HEAVENS above, or that is in the EARTH beneath, or that is in the WATER under the earth. And the reason of this becomes self-evident, when the various objects of Egyptian idolatry are considered.

To countenance its image worship, the Roman Catholic Church has left the whole of this second commandment out of the decalogue, and thus lost one whole commandment out of the ten; but to keep up the number they have divided the tenth into two. This is totally contrary to the faith of God's elect and to the acknowledgment of that truth which is according to godliness. The verse is found in every MS. of the Hebrew Pentateuch that has ever yet been discovered. It is in all the ancient versions, Samaritan, Chaldee, Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, Coptic, and Arabic; also in the Persian, and in all modern versions. There is not one word of the whole

verse wanting in the many hundreds of MSS. collected by Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi. This corruption of the word of God by the Roman Catholic Church stamps it, as a false and heretical Church, with the deepest brand of ever-during infamy!

This commandment also prohibits every species of external idolatry, as the first does all idolatry that may be called internal or mental. All false worship may be considered of this kind, together with all image worship, and all other superstitious rites and ceremonies. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 20:23".

Verse 5. *Jealous God*— This shows in a most expressive manner the love of God to this people. He felt for them as the most affectionate husband could do for his spouse; and was jealous for their fidelity, because he willed their invariable happiness.

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children— This necessarily implies-IF the children walk in the steps of their fathers; for no man can be condemned by Divine justice for a crime of which he was never guilty; see Ezekiel 18. Idolatry is however particularly intended, and visiting sins of this kind refers principally to national judgments. By withdrawing the Divine protection the idolatrous Israelites were delivered up into the hands of their enemies, from whom the gods in whom they had trusted could not deliver them. This God did to the third and fourth generations, i.e., successively; as may be seen in every part of the Jewish history, and particularly in the book of Judges. And this, at last, became the grand and the only effectual and lasting means in his hand of their final deliverance from idolatry; for it is well known that after the Babylonish captivity the Israelites were so completely saved from idolatry, as never more to have disgraced themselves by it as they had formerly done. These national judgments, thus continued from generation to generation, appear to be what are designed by the words in the text, Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, etc.

Verse 6. *And showing mercy unto thousands*— Mark; even those who love God and keep his commandments merit nothing from him, and therefore the salvation and blessedness which these enjoy come from the mercy of God: Showing mercy, etc. What a disproportion between the

works of justice and mercy! Justice works to the third or fourth, mercy to thousands of generations!

The heathen had maxims like these. Theocritus also teaches that the children of the good shall be blessed because of their parents' piety, and that evil shall come upon the offspring of the wicked:—

ευσεβειων παιδεσσι τα λωια,
δυσσεβειων δ' ου.

Idyll. 26, v. 32.

Upon the children of the righteous fall The choicest blessings; on the wicked, wo. That love me, and keep my commandments.— It was this that caused Christ to comprise the fulfillment of the whole law in love to God and man; see Clarke's note on "Exodus 20:1". And as love is the grand principle of obedience, and the only incentive to it, so there can be no obedience without it. It would be more easy even in Egyptian bondage to make brick without straw, than to do the will of God unless his love be shed abroad in the heart of the Holy Spirit. Love, says the apostle, is the fulfilling of the law; Romans 13:10.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT AGAINST FALSE SWEARING, BLASPHEMY, AND IRREVERENT USE OF THE NAME OF GOD.

Verse 7. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*— This precept not only forbids all false oaths, but all common swearing where the name of God is used, or where he is appealed to as a witness of the truth. It also necessarily forbids all light and irreverent mention of God, or any of his attributes; and this the original word **לִשְׁוֹא** *lashshav* particularly imports: and we may safely add to all these, that every prayer, ejaculation, etc., that is not accompanied with deep reverence and the genuine spirit of piety, is here condemned also. In how many thousands of instances is this commandment broken in the prayers, whether read or extempore, of inconsiderate, bold, and presumptuous worshippers! And how few are there who do not break it, both in their public and private devotions! How low is piety when we are obliged in order to escape damnation, to pray to God to "pardon the sins of our holy things!"

Even heathens thought that the names of their gods should be treated with reverence. παντως μεν δη καλον επι ηδευμα, θεων ονοματα μη χραινειν ραδιως, εχοντα ως εχουσιν ημων εκαστοτε τα πολλα οι πλειστοι καθαροτητος τε και αγνειας τα περι τους θεους. “It is most undoubtedly right not easily to pollute the names of the gods, using them as we do common names; but to watch with purity and holiness all things belonging to the gods.”

The Lord will not hold him guiltless, etc.— Whatever the person himself may think or hope, however he may plead in his own behalf, and say he intends no evil, etc.; if he in any of the above ways, or in any other way, takes the name of God in vain, God will not hold him guiltless — he will account him guilty and punish him for it. Is it necessary to say to any truly spiritual mind, that all such interjections as O God! my God! good God! good Heavens! etc., etc., are formal positive breaches of this law? How many who pass for Christians are highly criminal here!

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT AGAINST PROFANATION OF THE SABBATH, AND IDLENESS ON THE OTHER DAYS OF THE WEEK.

Verse 8. *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*— See what has been already said on this precept, Genesis 2:2, and elsewhere. See Clarke note on “Genesis 2:2”. As this was the most ancient institution, God calls them to remember it; as if he had said, Do not forget that when I had finished my creation I instituted the Sabbath, and remember why I did so, and for what purposes. The word שבת shabbath signifies rest or cessation from labor; and the sanctification of the seventh day is commanded, as having something representative in it; and so indeed it has, for it typifies the rest which remains for the people of God, and in this light it evidently appears to have been understood by the apostle, Hebrews 4. Because this commandment has not been particularly mentioned in the New Testament as a moral precept binding on all, therefore some have presumptuously inferred that there is no Sabbath under the Christian dispensation. The truth is, the Sabbath is considered as a type: all types are of full force till the thing signified by them takes place; but the thing signified by the Sabbath is that rest in glory which remains for the people of God, therefore the moral obligation of the Sabbath must continue till time be swallowed up in eternity.

Verse 9. *Six days shalt thou labor*— Therefore he who idles away time on any of the six days, is as guilty before God as he who works on the Sabbath. No work should be done on the Sabbath that can be done on the preceding days, or can be deferred to the succeeding ones. Works of absolute necessity and mercy are alone excepted. He who works by his servants or cattle is equally guilty as if he worked himself. Hiring out horses, etc., for pleasure or business, going on journeys, paying worldly visits, or taking jaunts on the Lord's day, are breaches of this law. The whole of it should be devoted to the rest of the body and the improvement of the mind. God says he has hallowed it — he has made it sacred and set it apart for the above purposes. It is therefore the most proper day for public religious worship.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT AGAINST DISRESPECT AND DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.

Verse 12. *Honor thy father and thy mother*— There is a degree of affectionate respect which is owing to parents, that no person else can properly claim. For a considerable time parents stand as it were in the place of God to their children, and therefore rebellion against their lawful commands has been considered as rebellion against God. This precept therefore prohibits, not only all injurious acts, irreverent and unkind speeches to parents, but enjoins all necessary acts of kindness, filial respect, and obedience. We can scarcely suppose that a man honors his parents who, when they fall weak, blind, or sick, does not exert himself to the uttermost in their support. In such cases God as truly requires the children to provide for their parents, as he required the parents to feed, nourish, support, instruct, and defend the children when they were in the lowest state of helplessness in fancy. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 48:12". The rabbins say, Honor the Lord with thy substance, Proverbs 3:9; and, Honor thy father and mother. The LORD is to be honored thus if thou have it; thy father and mother, whether thou have it or not; for if thou have nothing, thou art bound to beg for them. See Ainsworth.

That thy days may be long— This, as the apostle observes, Ephesians 6:2, is the first commandment to which God has annexed a promise; and therefore we may learn in some measure how important the duty is in the sight of God. In Deuteronomy 5:16 it is said, And that it may go well with

thee; we may therefore conclude that it will go ill with the disobedient; and there is no doubt that the untimely deaths of many young persons are the judicial consequence of their disobedience to their parents. Most who come to an untimely end are obliged to confess that this, with the breach of the Sabbath, was the principal cause of their ruin. Reader, art thou guilty? Humble thyself therefore before God, and repent. 1. As children are bound to succor their parents, so parents are bound to educate and instruct their children in all useful and necessary knowledge, and not to bring them up either in ignorance or idleness. 2. They should teach their children the fear and knowledge of God, for how can they expect affection or dutiful respect from those who have not the fear of God before their eyes? Those who are best educated are generally the most dutiful. Heathens also inculcated respect to parents.

ουδεν προς θεων τιμιωτερον αγαλμα αν κτησαιμεθα
 πατρος και προπατορος παρειμενων γηρα,
 και μητερων την αυτην δυναμιν εχουσων·
 ους ουθαν αγαλλη τις, τιμαις γεγηθεν ο θεος.
 πασ δη νουν εχων φοβειται και τιμα, γονεων
 ευχας ειδες πολλοις και πολλακις επιτελεις γενομενας.

Plato de Leg., lib. xi., vol. ix, p. 160. Ed. Bipont.

“We can obtain no more honorable possession from the gods than fathers and forefathers worn down with age, and mothers who have undergone the same change, whom when we delight, God is pleased with the honor; and every one that is governed by right understanding fears and reverences them, well knowing that the prayers of parents oftentimes, and in many particulars, have received full accomplishment.”

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT AGAINST MURDER AND CRUELTY.

Verse 13. *Thou shalt not kill.*— This commandment, which is general, prohibits murder of every kind. 1. All actions by which the lives of our fellow creatures may be abridged. 2. All wars for extending empire, commerce, etc. 3. All sanguinary laws, by the operation of which the lives of men may be taken away for offenses of comparatively trifling demerit. 4. All bad dispositions which lead men to wish evil to, or meditate mischief against, one another; for, says the Scripture, He that hateth his brother in his heart is a murderer. 5. All want of charity to the helpless and

distressed; for he who has it in his power to save the life of another by a timely application of succor, food, raiment, etc., and does not do it, and the life of the person either falls or is abridged on this account, is in the sight of God a murderer. He who neglects to save life is, according to an incontrovertible maxim in law, the SAME as he who takes it away. 6. All riot and excess, all drunkenness and gluttony, all inactivity and slothfulness, and all superstitious mortifications and self-denials, by which life may be destroyed or shortened; all these are point-blank sins against the sixth commandment.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT AGAINST ADULTERY AND UNCLEANNES.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*— Adultery, as defined by our laws, is of two kinds; double, when between two married persons; single, when one of the parties is married, the other single. One principal part of the criminality of adultery consists in its injustice. 1. It robs a man of his right by taking from him the affection of his wife. 2. It does him a wrong by fathering on him and obliging him to maintain as his own a spurious offspring—a child which is not his. The act itself, and every thing leading to the act, is prohibited by this commandment; for our Lord says, Even he who looks on a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart. And not only adultery (the unlawful commerce between two married persons) is forbidden here, but also fornication and all kinds of mental and sensual uncleanness. All impure books, songs, paintings, etc., which tend to inflame and debauch the mind, are against this law, as well as another species of impurity, for the account of which the reader is referred to; See Clarke note on “Genesis 38:30”. That fornication was included under this command we may gather from St. Matthew, Matthew 15:19, where our Savior expresses the sense of the different commandments by a word for each, and mentions them in the order in which they stand; but when he comes to the seventh he uses two words, **μοιχεῖται πορνείαι**, to express its meaning, and then goes on to the eighth, etc.; thus evidently showing that fornication was understood to be comprehended under the command, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” As to the word adultery, adulterium, it has probably been derived from the words ad alterius torum, to another’s bed; for it is going to the bed of

another man that constitutes the act and the crime. Adultery often means idolatry in the worship of God.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT AGAINST STEALING AND DISHONESTY.

Verse 15. *Thou shalt not steal.*— All rapine and theft are forbidden by this precept; as well national and commercial wrongs as petty larceny, highway robberies, and private stealing: even the taking advantage of a seller's or buyer's ignorance, to give the one less and make the other pay more for a commodity than its worth, is a breach of this sacred law. All withholding of rights and doing of wrongs are against the spirit of it. But the word is principally applicable to clandestine stealing, though it may undoubtedly include all political injustice and private wrongs. And consequently all kidnapping, crimping, and slave-dealing are prohibited here, whether practiced by individuals or by the state. Crimes are not lessened in their demerit by the number, or political importance of those who commit them. A state that enacts bad laws is as criminal before God as the individual who breaks good ones.

It has been supposed that under the eighth commandment, injuries done to character, the depriving a man of his reputation or good name, are included, hence those words of one of our poets:—

*Good name in man or woman
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my purse steals trash, —*

*But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.*

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT AGAINST FALSE TESTIMONY, PERJURY, ETC.

Verse 16. *Thou shalt not bear false witness, etc.*— Not only false oaths, to deprive a man of his life or of his right, are here prohibited, but all whispering, tale-bearing, slander, and calumny; in a word, whatever is deposed as a truth, which is false in fact, and tends to injure another in his goods, person, or character, is against the spirit and letter of this law. Suppressing the truth when known, by which a person may be defrauded of his property or his good name, or lie under injuries or disabilities which

a discovery of the truth would have prevented, is also a crime against this law. He who bears a false testimony against or belies even the devil himself, comes under the curse of this law, because his testimony is false. By the term neighbor any human being is intended, whether he rank among our enemies or friends.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT AGAINST COVETOUSNESS.

Verse 17. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house-wife, etc.*—Covet signifies to desire or long after, in order to enjoy as a property the person or thing coveted. He breaks this command who by any means endeavors to deprive a man of his house or farm by taking them over his head, as it is expressed in some countries; who lusts after his neighbor's wife, and endeavors to ingratiate himself into her affections, and to lessen her husband in her esteem; and who endeavors to possess himself of the servants, cattle, etc., of another in any clandestine or unjustifiable manner. "This is a most excellent moral precept, the observance of which will prevent all public crimes; for he who feels the force of the law that prohibits the inordinate desire of any thing that is the property of another, can never make a breach in the peace of society by an act of wrong to any of even its feeblest members."

Verse 18. *And all the people saw the thunderings, etc.*—They had witnessed all these awful things before, (see Exodus 19:16,) but here they seem to have been repeated; probably at the end of each command, there was a peal of thunder, a blast of the trumpet, and a gleam of lightning, to impress their hearts the more deeply with a due sense of the Divine Majesty, of the holiness of the law which was now delivered, and of the fearful consequences of disobedience. This had the desired effect; the people were impressed with a deep religious fear and a terror of God's judgments; acknowledged themselves perfectly satisfied with the discoveries God had made of himself; and requested that Moses might be constituted the mediator between God and them, as they were not able to bear these tremendous discoveries of the Divine Majesty. "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die;" Exodus 20:19. This teaches us the absolute necessity of that great Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, as no man can come unto the Father but by him.

Verse 20. *And Moses said-Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces*— The maxim contained in this verse is, Fear not, that he may fear — do not fear with such a fear as brings consternation into the soul, and produces nothing but terror and confusion; but fear with that fear which reverence and filial affection inspire, that ye sin not — that, through the love and reverence ye feel to your Maker and Sovereign, ye may abstain from every appearance of evil, lest you should forfeit that love which is to you better than life. He who fears in the first sense can neither love nor obey; he who fears not in the latter sense is sure to fall under the first temptation that may occur. Blessed is the man who thus feareth always.

Verse 22. *I have talked with you from heaven*.— Though God manifested himself by the fire, the lightning, the earthquake, the thick darkness, etc., yet the ten words, or commandments were probably uttered from the higher regions of the air, which would be an additional proof to the people that there was no imposture in this case; for though strange appearances and voices might be counterfeited on earth, as was often, no doubt, done by the magicians of Egypt; yet it would be utterly impossible to represent a voice, in a long continued series of instruction, as proceeding from heaven itself, or the higher regions of the atmosphere. This, with the earthquake and repeated thunders, (see on Exodus 20:18,) would put the reality of this whole procedure beyond all doubt; and this enabled Moses, Deuteronomy 5:26, to make such an appeal to the people on a fact incontrovertible and of infinite importance, that God had indeed talked with them face to face.

Verse 23. *Ye shall not make with me gods of silver*— The expressions here are very remarkable. Before it was said, Ye shall have no other gods BEFORE me, אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי al panai, Exodus 20:3. Here they are commanded, ye shall not make gods of silver or gold אֱלֹהִים אִתִּי itti WITH me, as emblems or representatives of God, in order, as might be pretended, to keep these displays of his magnificence in memory; on the contrary, he would have only an altar of earth — of plain turf, on which they should offer those sacrifices by which they should commemorate their own guilt and the necessity of an atonement to reconcile themselves to God. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 20:4".

Verse 24. *Thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings*— The law concerning which was shortly to be given, though sacrifices of this kind were in use from the days of Abel.

In all places where I record my name— Wherever I am worshipped, whether in the open wilderness, at the tabernacle, in the temple, the synagogues, or elsewhere, I will come unto thee and bless thee. These words are precisely the same in signification with those of our Lord, Matthew 18:20: For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. And as it was JESUS who was the angel that spoke to them in the wilderness, Acts 7:38, from the same mouth this promise in the law and that in the Gospel proceeded.

Verse 25. *Thou shalt not build it of hewn stone*— Because they were now in a wandering state, and had as yet no fixed residence; and therefore no time should be wasted to rear costly altars, which could not be transported with them, and which they must soon leave. Besides, they must not lavish skill or expense on the construction of an altar; the altar of itself, whether costly or mean, was nothing in the worship; it was only the place on which the victim should be laid, and their mind must be attentively fixed on that God to whom the sacrifice was offered, and on the sacrifice itself, as that appointed by the Lord to make an atonement for their sins.

Verse 26. *Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar*— The word altar comes from altus, high or elevated, though the Hebrew word מִזְבֵּחַ mizbach, from זָבַח zabach, to slay, kill, etc., signifies merely a place for sacrifice; see Genesis 8:20. But the heathens, who imitated the rites of the true God in their idolatrous worship, made their altars very high; whence they derived their name altaria, altars, i.e., very high or elevated places; which they built thus, partly through pride and vain glory, and partly that their gods might the better hear them. Hence also the high places or idolatrous altars so often and so severely condemned in the Holy Scriptures. The heathens made some of their altars excessively high; and some imagine that the pyramids were altars of this kind, and that the inspired writer refers to those in these prohibitions. God therefore ordered his altars to be made, 1. either of simple turf, that there might be no unnecessary expense, which, in their present circumstances, the people

could not well afford; and that they might be no incentives to idolatry from their costly or curious structure; or 2. of unhewn stone, that no images of animals or of the celestial bodies might be sculptured on them, as was the case among the idolaters, and especially among the Egyptians, as several of their ancient altars which remain to the present day amply testify; which altars themselves, and the images carved on them, became in process of time incentives to idolatry, and even objects of worship. In short, God formed every part of his worship so that every thing belonging to it might be as dissimilar as possible from that of the surrounding heathenish nations, and especially the Egyptians, from whose land they had just now departed. This seems to have been the whole design of those statutes on which many commentators have written so largely and learnedly, imagining difficulties where probably there are none. The altars of the tabernacle were of a different kind.

IN this and the preceding chapter we have met with some of the most awful displays of the Divine Majesty; manifestations of justice and holiness which have no parallel, and can have none till that day arrive in which he shall appear in his glory, to judge the quick and the dead. The glory was truly terrible, and to the children of Israel insufferable; and yet how highly privileged to have God himself speaking to them from the midst of the fire, giving them statutes and judgments so righteous, so pure, so holy, and so truly excellent in their operation and their end, that they have been the admiration of all the wise and upright in all countries and ages of the world, where their voice has been heard! Mohammed defied all the poets and literati of Arabia to match the language of the Koran; and for purity, elegance, and dignity it bore away the palm, and remained unrivaled. This indeed was the only advantage which the work derived from its author; for its other excellences it was indebted to Moses and the prophets, to Christ and the apostles; as there is scarcely a pure, consistent, theologic notion in it, that has not been borrowed from our sacred books. Moses calls the attention of the people, not to the language in which these Divine laws were given, though that is all that it should be, and every way worthy of its author; compressed yet perspicuous; simple yet dignified; in short, such as God should speak if he wished his creatures to comprehend; but he calls their attention to the purity, righteousness, and usefulness of the grand revelation which they had just received. For

what nation, says he, is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is, in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day? And that which was the sum of all excellence in the present case was this, that the GOD who gave these laws dwelt among his people; to him they had continual access, and from him received that power without which obedience so extensive and so holy would have been impossible; and yet not one of these laws exacted more than eternal reason, the nature and fitness of things, the prosperity of the community, and the peace and happiness of the individual, required. The LAW is holy, and the COMMANDMENT is HOLY, JUST, and GOOD.

To show still more clearly the excellence and great utility of the ten commandments, and to correct some mistaken notions concerning them, it may be necessary to make a few additional observations. And 1. It is worthy of remark that there is none of these commandments, nor any part of one, which can fairly be considered as merely ceremonial. All are moral, and consequently of everlasting obligation. 2. When considered merely as to the letter, there is certainly no difficulty in the moral obedience required to them. Let every reader take them up one by one, and ask his conscience before God, which of them he is under a fatal and uncontrollable necessity to break? 3. Though by the incarnation and death of Christ all the ceremonial law which referred to him and his sacrifice is necessarily abrogated, yet, as none of these ten commandments refer to any thing properly ceremonial, therefore they are not abrogated. 4. Though Christ came into the world to redeem them who believe from the curse of the law, he did not redeem them from the necessity of walking in that newness of life which these commandments so strongly inculcate. 5. Though Christ is said to have fulfilled the law for us, yet it is nowhere intimated in the Scripture that he has so fulfilled these TEN LAWS, as to exempt us from the necessity and privilege of being no idolaters, swearers, Sabbath-breakers, disobedient and cruel children, murderers, adulterers, thieves, and corrupt witnesses. All these commandments, it is true, he punctually fulfilled himself; and all these he writes on the heart of every soul redeemed by his blood. 6. Do not those who scruple not to insinuate that the proper observation of these laws is impossible in this life, and that every man since the fall does daily break them in thought, word, and deed, bear false

witness against God and his truth? and do they not greatly err, not knowing the Scripture, which teaches the necessity of such obedience, nor the power of God, by which the evil principle of the heart is destroyed, and the law of purity written on the soul? If even the regenerate man, as some have unwarily asserted, does daily break these commands, these ten words, in thought, word, and deed, he may be as bad as Satan for aught we know; for Satan himself cannot transgress in more forms than these, for sin can be committed in no other way, either by bodied or disembodied spirits, than by thought, or word, or deed. Such sayings as these tend to destroy the distinction between good and evil, and leave the infidel and the believer on a par as to their moral state. The people of God should be careful how they use them. 7. It must be granted, and indeed has sufficiently appeared from the preceding exposition of these commandments, that they are not only to be understood in the letter but also in the spirit, and that therefore they may be broken in the heart while outwardly kept inviolate; yet this does not prove that a soul influenced by the grace and spirit of Christ cannot most conscientiously observe them; for the grace of the Gospel not only saves a man from outward but also from inward sin; for, says the heavenly messenger, his name shall be called JESUS, (i.e., Savior,) because he shall save, (i.e., DELIVER) his people FROM their sins. Therefore the weakness or corruption of human nature forms no argument here, because the blood of Christ cleanses from all unrighteousness; and he saves to the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him. It is therefore readily granted that no man unassisted and uninfluenced by the grace of Christ can keep these commandments, either in the letter or in the spirit; but he who is truly converted to God, and has Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, can, in the letter and in the spirit, do all these things, BECAUSE CHRIST STRENGTHENS him. — Reader, the following is a good prayer, and oftentimes thou hast said it; now learn to pray it: “Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep these laws! Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee!”-Com. Service.

CHAPTER 21

Laws concerning servants. They shall serve for only seven years, 1, 2. If a servant brought a wife to servitude with him, both should go out free on the seventh year, 3. If his master had given him a wife, and she bore him children, he might go out free on the seventh year, but his wife and children must remain, as the property of the master, 4. If, through love to his master, wife, and children, he did not choose to avail himself of the privilege granted by the law, of going out free on the seventh year, his ear was to be bored to the door post with an awl, as an emblem of his being attached to the family for ever, 5, 6. Laws concerning maid-servants, betrothed to their masters or to the sons of their masters, 7-11. Laws concerning battery and murder, 12-15. Concerning men-stealing, 16. Concerning him that curses his parents, 17. Of strife between man and man, 18, 19; between a master and his servants, 20, 21. Of injuries done to women in pregnancy, 22. The LEX TALIONIS, or law of like, 23-25. for injuries done to servants, by which they gain the right of freedom, 26, 27. Laws concerning the ox which has gored men, 28-32. Of the pit left uncovered, into which a man or a beast has fallen, 33, 34. Laws concerning the ox that kills another, 35, 36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. Now these are the judgments— There is so much good sense, feeling, humanity, equity, and justice in the following laws, that they cannot but be admired by every intelligent reader; and they are so very plain as to require very little comment. The laws in this chapter are termed political, those in the succeeding chapter judicial, laws; and are supposed to have been delivered to Moses alone, in consequence of the request of the people, Exodus 20:19, that God should communicate his will to Moses, and that Moses should, as mediator, convey it to them.

Verse 2. If thou buy a Hebrew servant— Calmet enumerates six different ways in which a Hebrew might lose his liberty: 1. In extreme poverty they might sell their liberty. Leviticus 25:39: If thy brother be waxen poor, and

be sold unto thee, etc. 2. A father might sell his children. If a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant; see Exodus 21:7. 3. Insolvent debtors became the slaves of their creditors. My husband is dead-and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen, 2 Kings 4:1. 4. A thief, if he had not money to pay the fine laid on him by the law, was to be sold for his profit whom he had robbed. If he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft; Exodus 22:3, 4. 5. A Hebrew was liable to be taken prisoner in war, and so sold for a slave. 6. A Hebrew slave who had been ransomed from a Gentile by a Hebrew might be sold by him who ransomed him, to one of his own nation.

Six years he shall serve— It was an excellent provision in these laws, that no man could finally injure himself by any rash, foolish, or precipitate act. No man could make himself a servant or slave for more than seven years; and if he mortgaged the family inheritance, it must return to the family at the jubilee, which returned every fiftieth year.

It is supposed that the term six years is to be understood as referring to the sabbatical years; for let a man come into servitude at whatever part of the interim between two sabbatical years, he could not be detained in bondage beyond a sabbatical year; so that if he fell into bondage the third year after a sabbatical year, he had but three years to serve; if the fifth, but one. See Clarke note on “Exodus 23:11”, etc. Others suppose that this privilege belonged only to the year of jubilee, beyond which no man could be detained in bondage, though he had been sold only one year before.

Verse 3. If he came in by himself— If he and his wife came in together, they were to go out together: in all respects as he entered, so should he go out. This consideration seems to have induced St. Jerome to translate the passage thus: Cum quali veste intraverat, cum tali exeat. “He shall have the same coat in going out, as he had when he came in,” i.e., if he came in with a new one, he shall go out with a new one, which was perfectly just, as the former coat must have been worn out in his master’s service, and not his own.

Verse 4. The wife and her children shall be her master’s— It was a law among the Hebrews, that if a Hebrew had children by a Canannitish woman, those children must be considered as Canaanitish only, and might

be sold and bought, and serve for ever. The law here refers to such a case only.

Verse 6. Shall bring him unto the judges—אל האלהים el haelohim, literally, to God; or, as the Septuagint have it, προς το κριτηριον θεου, to the judgment of God; who condescended to dwell among his people; who determined all their differences till he had given them laws for all cases, and who, by his omniscience, brought to light the hidden things of dishonesty. See Exodus 22:8.

Bore his ear through with an awl— This was a ceremony sufficiently significant, as it implied, 1. That he was closely attached to that house and family. 2. That he was bound to hear all his master's orders, and to obey them punctually. Boring of the ear was an ancient custom in the east. It is referred to by Juvenal: —

*Prior, inquit, ego adsum.
Cur timeam, dubitemve locum defendere? Quamvis
Natus ad Euphraten, MOLLES quod in AURE FENESTRAE
Arguerint, licet ipse negem.*

Sat. i. 102.

*“First come, first served, he cries; and I, in spite
Of your great lordships, will maintain my right:
Though born a slave, though my torn EARS are BORED,
‘Tis not the birth, ‘tis money makes the lord.”*

DRYDEN.

Calmet quotes a saying from Petronius as attesting the same thing; and one from Cicero, in which he rallies a Libyan who pretended he did not hear him: “It is not,” said he, “because your ears are not sufficiently bored;” alluding to his having been a slave.

Verse 7. If a man sell his daughter— This the Jews allowed no man to do but in extreme distress-when he had no goods, either movable or immovable left, even to the clothes on his back; and he had this permission only while she was unmarriageable. It may appear at first view strange that such a law should have been given; but let it be remembered, that this servitude could extend, at the utmost, only to six years; and that it was nearly the same as in some cases of apprenticeship among us, where the

parents bind the child for seven years, and have from the master so much per week during that period.

Verse 9. *Betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her*— He shall give her the same dowry he would give to one of his own daughters. From these laws we learn, that if a man's son married his servant, by his father's consent, the father was obliged to treat her in every respect as a daughter; and if the son married another woman, as it appears he might do, Exodus 21:10, he was obliged to make no abatement in the privileges of the first wife, either in her food, raiment, or duty of marriage. The word **עֲנָתָהּ** onathah, here, is the same with St. Paul's **οφειλομενην ευνοιαν**, the marriage debt, and with the **ομιλιαν** of the Septuagint, which signifies the cohabitation of man and wife.

Verse 11. *These three*— 1. Her food, **שֶׂרָה** sheerah, her flesh, for she must not, like a common slave, be fed merely on vegetables. 2. Her raiment — her private wardrobe, with all occasional necessary additions. And, 3. The marriage debt — a due proportion of the husband's time and company.

Verse 13. *I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.*— From the earliest times the nearest akin had a right to revenge the murder of his relation, and as this right was universally acknowledged, no law was ever made on the subject; but as this might be abused, and a person who had killed another accidentally, having had no previous malice against him, might be put to death by the avenger of blood, as the nearest kinsman was termed, therefore God provided the cities of refuge to which the accidental manslayer might flee till the affair was inquired into, and settled by the civil magistrate.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt take him from mine altar*— Before the cities of refuge were assigned, the altar of God was the common asylum.

Verse 15. *That smiteth his father, or his mother*— As such a case argued peculiar depravity, therefore no mercy was to be shown to the culprit.

Verse 16. *He that stealeth a man*— By this law every man-stealer, and every receiver of the stolen person, should lose his life; no matter whether

the latter stole the man himself, or gave money to a slave captain or negro-dealer to steal him for him.

Verse 19. *Shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.*— This was a wise and excellent institution, and most courts of justice still regulate their decisions on such cases by this Mosaic precept.

Verse 21. If the slave who had been beaten by his master died under his hand, the master was punished with death; see Genesis 9:5, 6. But if he survived the beating a day or two the master was not punished, because it might be presumed that the man died through some other cause. And all penal laws should be construed as favourably as possible to the accused.

Verse 22. *And hurt a woman with child*— As a posterity among the Jews was among the peculiar promises of their covenant, and as every man had some reason to think that the Messiah should spring from his family, therefore any injury done to a woman with child, by which the fruit of her womb might be destroyed, was considered a very heavy offense; and as the crime was committed principally against the husband, the degree of punishment was left to his discretion. But if mischief followed, that is, if the child had been fully formed, and was killed by this means, or the woman lost her life in consequence, then the punishment was as in other cases of murder—the person was put to death; Exodus 21:23.

Verse 24. *Eye for eye*— This is the earliest account we have of the *lex talionis*, or law of like for like, which afterwards prevailed among the Greeks and Romans. Among the latter, it constituted a part of the twelve tables, so famous in antiquity; but the punishment was afterwards changed to a pecuniary fine, to be levied at the discretion of the praetor. It prevails less or more in most civilized countries, and is fully acted upon in the canon law, in reference to all calumniators: Calumniator, si in accusatione defecerit, talionem recipiat. “If the calumniator fall in the proof of his accusation, let him suffer the same punishment which he wished to have inflicted upon the man whom he falsely accused.” Nothing, however, of this kind was left to private revenge; the magistrate awarded the punishment when the fact was proved, otherwise the *lex talionis* would have utterly destroyed the peace of society, and have sown the seeds of hatred, revenge, and all uncharitableness.

Verse 26. *If a man smite the eye, etc.*— See the following verse.

Verse 27. *If he smite out his-tooth*— It was a noble law that obliged the unmerciful slaveholder to set the slave at liberty whose eye or tooth he had knocked out. If this did not teach them humanity, it taught them caution, as one rash blow might have deprived them of all right to the future services of the slave; and thus self-interest obliged them to be cautious and circumspect.

Verse 28. *If an ox gore a man*— It is more likely that a bull is here intended, as the word signifies both, see Exodus 22:1; and the Septuagint translate the שׁוֹר shor of the original by ταυρος, a bull. Mischief of this kind was provided against by most nations. It appears that the Romans twisted hay about the horns of their dangerous cattle, that people seeing it might shun them; hence that saying of Horace. Sat., lib. i., sat. 4, ver. 34: Faenum habet in cornu, longe fuge. “He has hay on his horns; fly for life!” The laws of the twelve tables ordered, That the owner of the beast should pay for what damages he committed, or deliver him to the person injured. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 22:1”.

His flesh shall not be eaten— This served to keep up a due detestation of murder, whether committed by man or beast; and at the same time punished the man as far as possible, by the total loss of the beast.

Verse 30. *If there be laid on him a sum of money-the ransom of his life*— So it appears that, though by the law he forfeited his life, yet this might be commuted for a pecuniary mulct, at which the life of the deceased might be valued by the magistrates.

Verse 32. *Thirty shekels*— Each worth about three shillings English; see Genesis 20:16; 23:15. So, counting the shekel at its utmost value, the life of a slave was valued at four pounds ten shillings. And at this price these same vile people valued the life of our blessed Lord; see Zechariah 11:12, 13; Matthew 26:15. And in return, the justice of God has ordered it so, that they have been sold for slaves into every country of the universe. And yet, strange to tell, they see not the hand of God in so visible a retribution!

Verse 33. *And if a man shall open a pit, or-dig a pit*— That is, if a man shall open a well or cistern that had been before closed up, or dig a new one; for these two cases are plainly intimated: and if he did this in some

public place where there was danger that men or cattle might fall into it; for a man might do as he pleased in his own grounds, as those were his private right. In the above case, if he had neglected to cover the pit, and his neighbor's ox or ass was killed by falling into it, he was to pay its value in money. Exodus 21:33 and Exodus 21:34 seem to be out of their places. They probably should conclude the chapters, as, where they are, they interrupt the statutes concerning the goring ox, which begin at Exodus 21:28.

THESE different regulations are as remarkable for their justice and prudence as for their humanity. Their great tendency is to show the valuableness of human life, and the necessity of having peace and good understanding in every neighborhood; and they possess that quality which should be the object of all good and wholesome laws-the prevention of crimes. Most criminal codes of jurisprudence seem more intent on the punishment of crimes than on preventing the commission of them. The law of God always teaches and warns, that his creatures may not fall into condemnation; for judgment is his strange work, i.e., one reluctantly and seldom executed, as this text is frequently understood.

CHAPTER 22

Laws concerning theft, 1-4; concerning trespass, 5; concerning casualties, 6. Laws concerning deposits, or goods left in custody of others, which may have been lost, stolen, or damaged, 7-13. Laws concerning things borrowed or let out on hire, 14, 15. Laws concerning seduction, 16, 17. Laws concerning witchcraft, 18; bestiality, 19; idolatry, 20. Laws concerning strangers, 21; concerning widows, 22-24; lending money to the poor, 25; concerning pledges, 26; concerning respect to magistrates, 28; concerning the first ripe fruits, and the first-born of man and beast, 29, 30. Directions concerning carcasses found torn in the field, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. *If a man shall steal*— This chapter consists chiefly of judicial laws, as the preceding chapter does of political; and in it the same good sense, and well-marked attention to the welfare of the community and the moral improvement of each individual, are equally evident.

In our translation of this verse, by rendering different Hebrew words by the same term in English, we have greatly obscured the sense. I shall produce the verse with the original words which I think improperly translated, because one English term is used for two Hebrew words, which in this place certainly do not mean the same thing. If a man shall steal an ox (שׁוֹר shor) or a sheep, (שֶׁה seh,) and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen (בָּקָר bakar) for an ox, (שׁוֹר shor,) and four sheep (צֹאֵן tson) for a sheep (שֶׁה seh.) I think it must appear evident that the sacred writer did not intend that these words should be understood as above. A shor certainly is different from a bakar, and a seh from a tson. Where the difference in every case lies, wherever these words occur, it is difficult to say. The shor and the bakar are doubtless creatures of the beeve kind, and are used in different parts of the sacred writings to signify the bull, the ox, the heifer, the steer, and the calf. The seh and the tson are used to signify the ram, the wether, the ewe, the lamb, the he-goat, the she-goat, and the

kid. And the latter word **טון** tson seems frequently to signify the flock, composed of either of these lesser cattle, or both sorts conjoined.

As **שור** shor is used, Job 21:10, for a bull probably it may mean so here. If a man steal a BULL he shall give five OXEN for him, which we may presume was no more than his real value, as very few bulls could be kept in a country destitute of horses, where oxen were so necessary to till the ground. For though some have imagined that there were no castrated cattle among the Jews, yet this cannot be admitted on the above reason; for as they had no horses, and bulls would have been unmanageable and dangerous, they must have had oxen for the purposes of agriculture. Tson **טון** is used for a flock either of sheep or goats, and seh **שׂה** for an individual of either species. For every seh, four, taken indifferently from the tson or flock must be given; i.e., a sheep stolen might be recompensed with four out of the flock, whether of sheep or goats: so that a goat might be compensated with four sheep, or a sheep with four goats.

Verse 2. *If a thief be found*— If a thief was found breaking into a house in the night season, he might be killed; but not if the sun had risen, for then he might be known and taken, and the restitution made which is mentioned in the succeeding verse. So by the law of England it is a burglary to break and enter a house by night; and “anciently the day was accounted to begin only from sunrising, and to end immediately upon sunset: but it is now generally agreed that if there be daylight enough begun or left, either by the light of the sun or twilight, whereby the countenance of a person may reasonably be discerned, it is no burglary; but that this does not extend to moonlight, for then many midnight burglaries would go unpunished. And besides, the malignity of the offense does not so properly arise, as Mr. Justice Blackstone observes, from its being done in the dark, as at the dead of night when all the creation except beasts of prey are at rest; when sleep has disarmed the owner, and rendered his castle defenceless.”-East’s Pleas of the Crown, vol. ii., p. 509.

Verse 4. *He shall restore double*.— In no case of theft was the life of the offender taken away; the utmost that the law says on this point is, that, if when found breaking into a house, he should be smitten so as to die, no blood should be shed for him; Exodus 22:2. If he had stolen and sold the

property, then he was to restore four or fivefold, Exodus 22:1; but if the animal was found alive in his possession, he was to restore double.

Verse 6. *If fire break out*— Mr. Harmer observes that it is a common custom in the east to set the dry herbage on fire before the autumnal rains, which fires, for want of care, often do great damage: and in countries where great drought prevails, and the herbage is generally parched, great caution was peculiarly necessary; and a law to guard against such evils, and to punish inattention and neglect, was highly expedient. See Harmer's *Observat.*, vol. iii., p. 310, etc.

Verse 7. *Deliver unto his neighbor*— This is called pledging in the law of bailments; it is a deposit of goods by a debtor to his creditor, to be kept till the debt be discharged. Whatever goods were thus left in the hands of another person, that person, according to the Mosaic law, became responsible for them; if they were stolen, and the thief was found, he was to pay double; if he could not be found, the oath of the person who had them in keeping, made before the magistrates, that he knew nothing of them, was considered a full acquittance. Among the Romans, if goods were lost which a man had intrusted to his neighbor, the depositary was obliged to pay their full value. But if a man had been driven by necessity, as in case of fire, to lodge his goods with one of his neighbors, and the goods were lost, the depositary was obliged to pay double their value, because of his unfaithfulness in a case of such distress, where his dishonesty, connected with the destruction by the fire, had completed the ruin of the sufferer. To this case the following law is applicable: *Cum quis fidem elegit, nec depositum redditur, contentus esse debet simplo: cum vero extante necessitate deponat, crescit perfidia crimen, etc.* — *Digest.*, lib. xvi., tit. 3, 1. 1.

Verse 8. *Unto the judges*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 21:6".

Verse 9. *Challengeth to be his*— It was necessary that such a matter should come before the judges, because the person in whose possession the goods were found might have had them by a fair and honest purchase; and, by sifting the business, the thief might be found out, and if found, be obliged to pay double to his neighbor.

Verse 11. *An oath of the Lord be between them*— So solemn and awful were all appeals to God considered in those ancient times, that it was taken for granted that the man was innocent who could by an oath appeal to the omniscient God that he had not put his hand to his neighbor's goods. Since oaths have become multiplied, and since they have been administered on the most trifling occasions, their solemnity is gone, and their importance little regarded. Should the oath ever reacquire its weight and importance, it must be when administered only in cases of peculiar delicacy and difficulty, and as sparingly as in the days of Moses.

Verse 13. *If it be torn in pieces-let him bring it for witness*— Rather, Let him bring **עד הטרפה** ed hatterephah, a testimony or evidence of the torn thing, such as the horns, hoofs, etc. This is still a law in some countries among graziers: if a horse, cow, sheep, or goat, intrusted to them, be lost, and the keeper asserts it was devoured by dogs, etc., the law obliges him to produce the horns and hoofs, because on these the owner's mark is generally found. If these can be produced, the keeper is acquitted by the law. The ear is often the place marked, but this is not absolutely required, because a ravenous beast may eat the ear as well as any other part, but he cannot eat the horns or the hoofs. It seems however that in after times two of the legs and the ear were required as evidences to acquit the shepherd of all guilt. See Amos 3:12.

Verse 16. *If a man entice a maid*— This was an exceedingly wise and humane law, and must have operated powerfully against seduction and fornication; because the person who might feel inclined to take the advantage of a young woman knew that he must marry her, and give her a dowry, if her parents consented; and if they did not consent that their daughter should wed her seducer, in this case he was obliged to give her the full dowry which could have been demanded had she been still a virgin. According to the Targumist here, and to Deuteronomy 22:29, the dowry was fifty shekels of silver, which the seducer was to pay to her father, and he was obliged to take her to wife; nor had he authority, according to the Jewish canons, ever to put her away by a bill of divorce. This one consideration was a powerful curb on disorderly passions, and must tend greatly to render marriages respectable, and prevent all crimes of this nature.

Verse 18. *Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*— If there had been no witches, such a law as this had never been made. The existence of the law, given under the direction of the Spirit of God, proves the existence of the thing. It has been doubted whether **מכשפה** *mecash-shephah*, which we translate witch, really means a person who practiced divination or sorcery by spiritual or infernal agency. Whether the persons thus denominated only pretended to have an art which had no existence, or whether they really possessed the power commonly attributed to them, are questions which it would be improper to discuss at length in a work of this kind; but that witches, wizards, those who dealt with familiar spirits, etc., are represented in the sacred writings as actually possessing a power to evoke the dead, to perform, supernatural operations, and to discover hidden or secret things by spells, charms, incantations, etc., is evident to every unprejudiced reader of the Bible. Of Manasseh it is said: He caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times **ויעונו** [*veonen*, he used divination by clouds] and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, **וכשפ** [*vechishsheph*,] and dealt with a familiar spirit, **ועשה אוב** [*veasah ob*, performed a variety of operations by means of what was afterwards called the **πνευμα πυθωνος**, the spirit of Python,] and with wizards, **ידעוני** [*yiddeoni*, the wise or knowing ones;] and he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord; 2 Chronicles 33:6. It is very likely that the Hebrew **כשפ** *cashaph*, and the Arabic [A] *cashafa*, had originally the same meaning, to uncover, to remove a veil, to manifest, reveal, make bare or naked; and [A] *mecashefat* is used to signify commerce with God. See Wilmet and Giggeius. The *mecashshephah* or witch, therefore, was probably a person who professed to reveal hidden mysteries, by commerce with God, or the invisible world.

From the severity of this law against witches, etc., we may see in what light these were viewed by Divine justice. They were seducers of the people from their allegiance to God, on whose judgment alone they should depend; and by impiously prying into futurity, assumed an attribute of God, the foretelling of future events, which implied in itself the grossest blasphemy, and tended to corrupt the minds of the people, by leading them away from God and the revelation he had made of himself. Many of the Israelites had, no doubt, learned these curious arts from their long residence with the Egyptians; and so much were the Israelites attached to

them, that we find such arts in repute among them, and various practices of this kind prevailed through the whole of the Jewish history, notwithstanding the offense was capital, and in all cases punished with death.

Verse 19. *Lieth with a beast*— If this most abominable crime had not been common, it never would have been mentioned in a sacred code of laws. It is very likely that it was an Egyptian practice; and it is certain, from an account in Sonnini's Travels, that it is practiced in Egypt to the present day.

Verse 20. *Utterly destroyed*.— The word **חֶרֶם** cherem denotes a thing utterly and finally separated from God and devoted to destruction, without the possibility of redemption.

Verse 21. *Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him*— This was not only a very humane law, but it was also the offspring of a sound policy: "Do not vex a stranger; remember ye were strangers. Do not oppress a stranger; remember ye were oppressed. Therefore do unto all men as ye would they should do to you." It was the produce of a sound policy: "Let strangers be well treated among you, and many will come to take refuge among you, and thus the strength of your country will be increased. If refugees of this kind be treated well, they will become proselytes to your religion, and thus their souls may be saved." In every point of view, therefore, justice, humanity, sound policy, and religion, say. Neither vex nor oppress a stranger.

Verse 22. *Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child*.— It is remarkable that offenses against this law are not left to the discretion of the judges to be punished; God reserves the punishment to himself, and by this he strongly shows his abhorrence of the crime. It is no common crime, and shall not be punished in a common way; the wrath of God shall wax hot against him who in any wise afflicts or wrongs a widow or a fatherless child: and we may rest assured that he who helps either does a service highly acceptable in the sight of God.

Verse 25. *Neither shalt thou lay upon him usury*.— **נֶשֶׁח** neshech, from nashach, to bite, cut, or pierce with the teeth; biting usury. So the Latins call it usura vorax, devouring usury. "The increase of usury is called **נֶשֶׁךְ**

neshech, because it resembles the biting of a serpent; for as this is so small as scarcely to be perceptible at first, but the venom soon spreads and diffuses itself till it reaches the vitals, so the increase of usury, which at first is not perceived nor felt, at length grows so much as by degrees to devour another's substance."-Leigh.

It is evident that what is here said must be understood of accumulated usury, or what we call compound interest only; and accordingly נשך neshech is mentioned with and distinguished from תרביה tarbith and מרביה marbith, interest or simple interest, Leviticus 25:36, 37; Proverbs 28:8; Ezekiel 18:8, 13, 17, and Exodus 22:12. — Parkhurst.

Perhaps usury may be more properly defined unlawful interest, receiving more for the loan of money than it is really worth, and more than the law allows. It is a wise regulation in the laws of England, that if a man be convicted of usury — taking unlawful interest, the bond or security is rendered void, and he forfeits treble the sum borrowed. Against such an oppressive practice the wisdom of God saw it essentially necessary to make a law to prevent a people, who were naturally what our Lord calls the Pharisees, φιλαργυροι, lovers of money, (Luke 16:14,) from oppressing each other; and who, notwithstanding the law in the text, practice usury in all places of their dispersion to the present day.

Verse 26. *If thou take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge*— It seems strange that any pledge should be taken which must be so speedily restored; but it is very likely that the pledge was restored by night only, and that he who pledged it brought it back to his creditor next morning. The opinion of the rabbins is, that whatever a man needed for the support of life, he had the use of it when absolutely necessary, though it was pledged. Thus he had the use of his working tools by day, but he brought them to his creditor in the evening. His hyke, which serves an Arab as a plaid does a Highlander, (See Clarke note "Exodus 12:34",) was probably the raiment here referred to: it is a sort of coarse blanket, about six yards long, and five or six feet broad, which an Arab always carries with him, and on which he sleeps at night, it being his only substitute for a bed. As the fashions in the east scarcely ever change, it is very likely that the raiment of the Israelites was precisely the same with that of the modern Arabs, who live in the very same desert in which the Hebrews were when this law

was given. How necessary it was to restore the hyke to a poor man before the going down of the sun, that he might have something to repose on, will appear evident from the above considerations. At the same time, the returning it daily to the creditor was a continual acknowledgment of the debt, and served instead of a written acknowledgment or bond; as we may rest assured that writing, if practiced at all before the giving of the law, was not common: but it is most likely that it did not exist.

Verse 28. *Thou shalt not revile the gods*— Most commentators believe that the word gods here means magistrates. The original is אֱלֹהִים Elohim, and should be understood of the true God only: Thou shalt not blaspheme or make light of [תְּקַלֵּל tekallel] God, the fountain of justice and power, nor curse the ruler of thy people, who derives his authority from God. We shall ever find that he who despises a good civil government, and is disaffected to that under which he lives, is one who has little fear of God before his eyes. The spirit of disaffection and sedition is ever opposed to the religion of the Bible. When those who have been pious get under the spirit of misrule, they infallibly get shorn of their spiritual strength, and become like salt that has lost its savor. He who can indulge himself in speaking evil of the civil ruler, will soon learn to blaspheme God. The highest authority says, Fear God: honor the king.

Verse 29. *The first of thy ripe fruits*— This offering was a public acknowledgment of the bounty and goodness of God, who had given them their proper seed time, the first and the latter rain, and the appointed weeks of harvest.

From the practice of the people of God the heathens borrowed a similar one, founded on the same reason. The following passage from Censorinus, Deuteronomy Die Natali, is beautiful, and worthy of the deepest attention:—

Illi enim (majores nostri) qui alimenta, patriam, lucem, se denique ipsos deorum dono habebant, ex omnibus aliquid diis sacrabant, magis adeo, ut se gratos approbarent, quam quod deos arbitrarentur hoc indigere. Itaque cum perceperant fruges, antequam vescerentur, Diis libare instituerunt: et cum agros atque urbes, deorum munera, possiderent, partem quandam templis sacellisque, ubi eos colerent, dicavere.

“Our ancestors, who held their food, their country, the light, and all that they possessed, from the bounty of the gods, consecrated to them a part of all their property, rather as a token of their gratitude, than from a conviction that the gods needed any thing. Therefore as soon as the harvest was got in, before they had tasted of the fruits, they appointed libations to be made to the gods. And as they held their fields and cities as gifts from their gods, they consecrated a certain part for temples and shrines, where they might worship them.”

Pliny is express on the same point, who attests that the Romans never tasted either their new corn or wine, till the priests had offered the FIRST-FRUITS to the gods. *Acts ne degustabant quidem, novas fruges aut vina, antequam sacerdotes PRIMITIAS LIBASSENT.* *Hist. Nat., lib. xviii., c. 2.*

Horace bears the same testimony, and shows that his countrymen offered, not only their first-fruits, but the choicest of all their fruits, to the Lares or household gods; and he shows also the wickedness of those who sent these as presents to the rich, before the gods had been thus honored: —

*Dulcia poma,
Et quoscumque feret cultus tibi fundus honores,
Ante Larem gustet venerabilior Lare dives.*
Sat., lib. ii., s. v., ver. 12.

*“What your garden yields,
The choicest honors of your cultured fields,
To him be sacrificed, and let him taste,
Before your gods, the vegetable feast.”*

DUNKIN.

And to the same purpose Tibullus, in one of the most beautiful of his elegies: —

*Et quodcumque mihi pomum novus educat annus,
Libatum agricolae ponitur ante deo.
Flava Ceres, tibi sit nostro de rure corona
Spicea, quae templi pendeat ante fores.*
Eleg., lib. i., eleg. i. ver. 13.

*“My grateful fruits, the earliest of the year,
Before the rural god shall daily wait.
From Ceres’ gifts I’ll cull each browner ear,
And hang a wheaten wreath before her gate.”* GRAINGER.

The same subject he touches again in the fifth elegy of the same book, where he specifies the different offerings made for the produce of the fields, of the flocks, and of the vine, ver. 27: —

*Illa deo sciet agricolae pro vitibus uvam,
Pro segete spicas, pro grege ferre dapem.*

*“With pious care will load each rural shrine,
For ripen’d crops a golden sheaf assign,
Cates for my fold, rich clusters for my wine.
Id.*

See Calmet.

These quotations will naturally recall to our memory the offerings of Cain and Abel, mentioned Genesis 4:3, 4.

The rejoicings at our harvest-home are distorted remains of that gratitude which our ancestors, with all the primitive inhabitants of the earth, expressed to God with appropriate signs and ceremonies. Is it not possible to restore, in some goodly form, a custom so pure, so edifying, and so becoming? There is a laudable custom, observed by some pious people, of dedicating a new house to God by prayer, etc., which cannot be too highly commended.

Verse 30. *Seven days it shall be with his dam*— For the mother’s health it was necessary that the young one should suck so long; and prior to this time the process of nutrition in a young animal can scarcely be considered as completely formed. Among the Romans lambs were not considered as pure or clean before the eighth day; nor calves before the thirtieth: *Pecoris faetus die octavo purus est, bovis trigesimo.* — Plin. Hist. Nat., lib. viii.

Verse 31. *Neither shall ye eat-flesh-torn of beasts in the field*— This has been supposed to be an ordinance against eating flesh cut off the animal while alive, and so the Syriac seems to have understood it. If we can credit Mr. Bruce, this is a frequent custom in Abyssinia; but human nature revolts from it. The reason of the prohibition against eating the flesh of animals that had been torn, or as we term it worried in the field, appears to have been simply this: That the people might not eat the blood, which in this case must be coagulated in the flesh; and the blood, being the life of the beast, and emblematical of the blood of the covenant, was ever to be held

sacred, and was prohibited from the days of Noah. See Clarke note on “Genesis 9:4”.

IN the conclusion of this chapter we see the grand reason of all the ordinances and laws which it contains. No command was issued merely from the sovereignty of God. He gave them to the people as restraints on disorderly passions, and incentives to holiness; and hence he says, Ye shall be holy men unto me. Mere outward services could neither please him nor profit them; for from the very beginning of the world the end of the commandment was love out of a pure heart and good conscience, and faith unfeigned, 1 Timothy 1:5. And without these accompaniments no set of religious duties, however punctually performed, could be pleasing in the sight of that God who seeks truth in the inward parts, and in whose eyes the faith that worketh by love is alone valuable. A holy heart and a holy, useful life God invariably requires in all his worshippers. Reader, how standest thou in his sight?

CHAPTER 23

Laws against evil-speaking, 1. Against bad company, 2. Against partiality, 3. Laws commanding acts of kindness and humanity, 4, 5. Against oppression, 6. Against unrighteous decisions, 7. Against bribery and corruption, 8. Against unkindness to strangers, 9. The ordinance concerning the Sabbatical year, 10, 11. The Sabbath a day of rest, 12. General directions concerning circumcision, etc., 13. The three annual festivals, 14. The feast of unleavened bread, 15. The feast of harvest, and the feast of ingathering, 16. All the males to appear before God thrice in a year, 17. Different ordinances-no blood to be offered with leavened bread-no fat to be left till the next day-the first fruits to be brought to the house of God-and a kid not to be seethed in its mother's milk, 18, 19. Description of the Angel of God, who was to lead the people into the promised land, and drive out the Amorites, etc., 20-23. Idolatry to be avoided, and the images of idols destroyed, 24. Different promises to obedience, 25-27. Hornets shall be sent to drive out the Canaanites, etc., 28. The ancient inhabitants to be driven out by little and little, and the reason why, 29, 30. The boundaries of the promised land, 31. No league or covenant to be made with the ancient inhabitants, who are all to be utterly expelled, 32, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23.

Verse 1. *Thou shalt not raise a false report*— Acting contrary to this precept is a sin against the ninth commandment. And the inventor and receiver of false and slanderous reports, are almost equally criminal. The word seems to refer to either, and our translators have very properly retained both senses, putting raise in the text, and receive in the margin. The original **לֹא תִשָּׂא לְשׁוֹן** lo tissa has been translated, thou shalt not publish. Were there no publishers of slander and calumny, there would be no receivers; and were there none to receive them, there would be none to raise them; and were there no raisers, receivers, nor propagators of calumny, lies, etc., society would be in peace.

Verse 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil*— Be singular. Singularity, if in the right, can never be criminal. So completely disgraceful is the way of sin, that if there were not a multitude walking in that way, who help to keep each other in countenance, every solitary sinner would be obliged to hide his head. But רַבִּים rabbim, which we translate multitude, sometimes signifies the great, chiefs, or mighty ones; and is so understood by some eminent critics in this place: “Thou shalt not follow the example of the great or rich, who may so far disgrace their own character as to live without God in the world, and trample under foot his laws.” It is supposed that these directions refer principally to matters which come under the eye of the civil magistrate; as if he had said, “Do not join with great men in condemning an innocent or righteous person, against whom they have conceived a prejudice on the account of his religion,” etc.

Verse 3. *Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.*— The word דַּל dal, which we translate poor man, is probably put here in opposition to רַבִּים rabbim, the great, or noble men, in the preceding verse: if so, the meaning is, Thou shalt neither be influenced by the great to make an unrighteous decision, nor by the poverty or distress of the poor to give thy voice against the dictates of justice and truth. Hence the ancient maxim, FIAT JUSTITIA, RUAT COELUM. “Let justice be done, though the heavens should be dissolved.”

Verse 4. *If thou meet thine enemy’s ox-going astray*— From the humane and heavenly maxim in this and the following verse, our blessed Lord has formed the following precept: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you;” Matthew 5:44. A precept so plain, wise, benevolent, and useful, can receive no other comment than that which its influence on the heart of a kind and merciful man produces in his life.

Verse 6. *Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor*— Thou shalt neither countenance him in his crimes, nor condemn him in his righteousness. See Exodus 23:5, 7.

Verse 8. *Thou shalt take no gift*— A strong ordinance against selling justice, which has been the disgrace and ruin of every state where it has been practiced. In the excellent charter of British liberties called Magna

Charta, there is one article expressly on this head: *Nulli vendemus, nulli negabimus aut differemus, rectum aut justitiam.* — Art. xxxiii. “To none will we sell, to none will we deny or defer, right or justice.” This was the more necessary in those early and corrupt times, as he who had most money, and gave the largest presents (called then *oblata*) to the king or queen, was sure to gain his cause in the king’s court; whether he had right and justice on his side or not.

Verse 9. *Ye know the heart of a stranger*— Having been strangers yourselves, under severe, long continued, and cruel oppression, ye know the fears, cares, anxieties, and dismal forebodings which the heart of a stranger feels. What a forcible appeal to humanity and compassion!

Verse 11. *The seventh year thou shalt let it rest*— As, every seventh day was a Sabbath day, so every seventh year was to be a Sabbath year. The reasons for this ordinance Calmet gives thus:—

“1. To maintain as far as possible an equality of condition among the people, in setting the slaves at liberty, and in permitting all, as children of one family, to have the free and indiscriminate use of whatever the earth produced.

“2. To inspire the people with sentiments of humanity, by making it their duty to give rest, and proper and sufficient nourishment, to the poor, the slave, and the stranger, and even to the cattle.

“3. To accustom the people to submit to and depend on the Divine providence, and expect their support from that in the seventh year, by an extraordinary provision on the sixth.

“4. To detach their affections from earthly and perishable things, and to make them disinterested and heavenly-minded.

“5. To show them God’s dominion over the country, and that HE, not they, was lord of the soil and that they held it merely from his bounty.” See this ordinance at length, Lev. xxv.

That God intended to teach them the doctrine of providence by this ordinance, there can be no doubt; and this is marked very distinctly, Leviticus 25:20, 21: “And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: then I will

command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.” That is, There shall be, not three crops in one year, but one crop equal in its abundance to three, because it must supply the wants of three years. 1. For the sixth year, supplying fruit for its own consumption; 2. For the seventh year, in which they were neither to sow nor reap; and 3. For the eighth year, for though they ploughed, sowed, etc., that year, yet a whole course of its seasons was requisite to bring all these fruits to perfection, so that they could not have the fruits of the eighth year till the ninth, (see Leviticus 25:22,) till which time God promised that they should eat of the old store. What an astonishing proof did this give of the being, power, providence, mercy, and goodness of God! Could there be an infidel in such a land, or a sinner against God and his own soul, with such proofs before his eyes of God and his attributes as one sabbatical year afforded?

It is very remarkable that the observance of this ordinance is nowhere expressly mentioned in the sacred writings; though some suppose, but without sufficient reason, that there is a reference to it in Jeremiah 34:8, 9. Perhaps the major part of the people could not trust God, and therefore continued to sow and reap on the seventh year, as on the preceding. This greatly displeased the Lord, and therefore he sent them into captivity; so that the land enjoyed those Sabbaths, through lack of inhabitants, of which their ungodliness had deprived it. See Leviticus 18:24, 25, 28; 26:34, 35, 43; 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21. Commentators have been much puzzled to ascertain the time in which the sabbatical year began; because, if it began in Abib or March, they must have lost two harvests; for they could neither reap nor plant that year, and of course they could have no crop the year following; but if it began with what was called the civil year, or in Tisri or Marcheshvan, which answers to the beginning of our autumn, they would then have had that year’s produce reaped and gathered in.

Verse 12. *Six days thou shalt do thy work*— Though they were thus bound to keep the sabbatical year, yet they must not neglect the seventh day’s rest or weekly Sabbath; for that was of perpetual obligation, and was paramount to all others. That the sanctification of the Sabbath was of great consequence in the sight of God, we may learn from the various repetitions of this law; and we may observe that it has still for its object, not only the benefit of the soul, but the health and comfort of the body

also. Doth God care for oxen? Yes; and he mentions them with tenderness, that thine ox and thine ass may rest. How criminal to employ the laboring cattle on the Sabbath, as well as upon the other days of the week! More cattle are destroyed in England than in any other part of the world, in proportion, by excessive and continued labor. The noble horse in general has no Sabbath! Does God look on this with an indifferent eye? Surely he does not. “England,” said a foreigner, “is the paradise of women, the purgatory of servants, and the hell of horses.

The son of thy handmaid, and the stranger—be refreshed.— יִנָּפֶשׁ

yinnaphesh may be respirited or new-souled; have a complete renewal both of bodily and spiritual strength. The expression used by Moses here is very like that used by St. Paul, Acts 3:19: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing (καίροι ἀναψυξέως, the times of re-souling) shall come from the presence of the Lord;” alluding, probably, to those times of refreshing and rest for body and soul originally instituted under the law.

Verse 14. *Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.*— The three feasts here referred to were, 1. The feast of the PASSOVER; 2. The feast of PENTECOST; 3. The feast of TABERNACLES.

1. The feast of the Passover was celebrated to keep in remembrance the wonderful deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt. 2. The feast of Pentecost, called also the feast of harvest and the feast of weeks, Exodus 34:22, was celebrated fifty days after the Passover to commemorate the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, which took place fifty days after, and hence called by the Greeks Pentecost. 3. The feast of Tabernacles, called also the feast of the ingathering, was celebrated about the 15th of the month Tisri to commemorate the Israelites’ dwelling in tents for forty years, during their stay in the wilderness. See on Lev. xxiii.

“God, out of his great wisdom,” says Calmet, “appointed several festivals among the Jews for many reasons: 1. To perpetuate the memory of those great events, and the wonders he had wrought for the people; for example, the Sabbath brought to remembrance the creation of the world; the Passover, the departure out of Egypt; the Pentecost, the giving of the law; the feast of Tabernacles, the sojourning of their fathers in the wilderness, etc. 2. To keep them faithful to their religion by appropriate ceremonies,

and the splendor of Divine service. 3. To procure them lawful pleasures, and necessary rest. 4. To give them instruction; for in their religious assemblies the law of God was always read and explained. 5. To consolidate their social union, by renewing the acquaintance of their tribes and families; for on these occasions they come together from different parts of the land to the holy city.”

Besides the feasts mentioned above, the Jews had, 1. The feast of the Sabbath, which was a weekly feast. 2. The feast of the Sabbatical Year, which was a septennial feast. 3. The feast of Trumpets, which was celebrated on the first day of what was called their civil year, which was ushered in by the blowing of a trumpet; Leviticus 23:24, etc. 4. The feast of the New Moon, which was celebrated on the first day the moon appeared after her change. 5. The feast of Expiation, which was celebrated annually on the tenth day of Tisri or September, on which a general atonement was made for all the sins, negligences, and ignorances, throughout the year. 6. The feast of Lots or Purim, to commemorate the preservation of the Jews from the general massacre projected by Haman. See the book of Esther. 7. The feast of the Dedication, or rather the Restoration of the temple, which had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes. This was also called the feast of Lights. Besides these, the Jews have had several other feasts, such as the feast of Branches, to commemorate the taking of Jericho.

The feast of Collections, on the 10th of September, on which they make contributions for the service of the temple and synagogue.

The feast for the death of Nicanor. 1Mac 7:48, etc.

The feast for the discovery of the sacred fire, 2Mac 1:18, etc.

The feast of the carrying of wood to the temple, called Xylophoria, mentioned by Josephus. — WAR, b. ii. c. 17.

Verse 17. *All thy males*— Old men, sick men, male idiots, and male children under thirteen years of age, excepted; for so the Jewish doctors understand this command.

Verse 18. *The blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread*— The sacrifice here mentioned is undoubtedly the Passover; (see Exodus 34:25;) this is

called by way of eminence MY sacrifice, because God had instituted it for that especial purpose, the redemption of Israel from the Egyptian bondage, and because it typified THE LAMB OF GOD, who taketh away the sin of the world. We have already seen how strict the prohibition against leaven was during this festival, and what was signified by it. See on chap. xii. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 12:19".

Verse 19. *Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.*— This passage has greatly perplexed commentators; but Dr. Cudworth is supposed to have given it its true meaning by quoting a MS. comment of a Karaite Jew, which he met with, on this passage. "It was a custom of the ancient heathens, when they had gathered in all their fruits, to take a kid and boil it in the milk of its dam; and then, in a magical way, to go about and besprinkle with it all their trees and fields, gardens and orchards; thinking by these means to make them fruitful, that they might bring forth more abundantly in the following year."—Cudworth on the Lord's Supper, 4to.

I give this comment as I find it, and add that Spenser has shown that the Zabii used this kind of magical milk to sprinkle their trees and fields, in order to make them fruitful. Others understand it of eating flesh and milk together; others of a lamb or a kid while it is sucking its mother, and that the paschal lamb is here intended, which it was not lawful to offer while sucking.

After all the learned labor which critics have bestowed on this passage, and by which the obscurity in some cases is become more intense, the simple object of the precept seems to be this: "Thou shalt do nothing that may have any tendency to blunt thy moral feelings, or teach thee hardness of heart." Even human nature shudders at the thought of causing the mother to lend her milk to seethe the flesh of her young one! We need go no farther for the delicate, tender, humane, and impressive meaning of this precept.

Verse 20. *Behold, I send an Angel before thee*— Some have thought that this was Moses, others Joshua, because the word מלאך malach signifies an angel or messenger; but as it is said, Exodus 23:21, My name is in him, (בקרבו bekirbo, intimately, essentially in him,) it is more likely that the

great Angel of the Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ, is meant, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. We have had already much reason to believe that this glorious personage often appeared in a human form to the patriarchs, etc.; and of him Joshua was a very expressive type, the names Joshua and Jesus, in Hebrew and Greek, being of exactly the same signification, because radically the same, from **יָשַׁע** yasha, he saved, delivered, preserved, or kept safe. Nor does it appear that the description given of the Angel in the text can belong to any other person.

Calmet has referred to a very wonderful comment on these words given by Philo Judaeus Deuteronomy Agricultura, which I shall produce here at full length as it stands in Dr. Mangey's edition, vol. 1., p. 308: **ως ποιμην και βασιλευς ο θεος αγει κατα δικην και νομον, προσθησαμενος τον ορθον αυτου λογον πρωτογονον υιον, ος την επιμελειαν της ιερας ταυτης αγελης, οια τις μεγαλου βασιλεως υπαρχος, διαδεξεται. και γαρ ειρηται που ιδου εγω ειμι, αποστελω αγγελον μον εις προσωπον σου, του φυλαξαι σε εν τη οδω.** "God, as the Shepherd and King, conducts all things according to law and righteousness, having established over them his right WORD, his ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, who, as the Viceroy of the Great King, takes care of and ministers to this sacred flock. For it is somewhere said, (Exodus 23:20,) Behold, I AM, and I will send my ANGEL before thy face, to keep thee in the way."

This is a testimony liable to no suspicion, coming from a person who cannot be supposed to be even friendly to Christianity, nor at all acquainted with that particular doctrine to which his words seem so pointedly to refer.

Verse 21. He will not pardon your transgressions— He is not like a man, with whom ye may think that ye may trifle; were he either man or angel, in the common acceptance of the term, it need not be said, He will not pardon your transgressions, for neither man nor angel could do it.

My name is in him.— The Jehovah dwells in him; in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and because of this he could either pardon or punish. All power is given unto me in heaven and earth, Matthew 28:18.

Verse 23. *Unto the Amorites*— There are only six of the seven nations mentioned here, but the Septuagint, Samaritan, Coptic, and one Hebrew MS., add Girgashite, thus making the seven nations.

Verse 24. *Break down their images*.— מצבתיהם matstsebotheyhem, from נצב natsab, to stand up; pillars, anointed stones, etc., such as the baitulia. See Clarke on “Genesis 28:18”.

Verse 25. *Shall bless thy bread and thy water*— That is, all thy provisions, no matter of what sort; the meanest fare shall be sufficiently nutritive when God’s blessing is in it.

Verse 26. *There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren*— Hence there must be a very great increase both of men and cattle.

The number of thy days I will fulfill.— Ye shall all live to a good old age, and none die before his time. This is the blessing of the righteous, for wicked men live not out half their days; Psalm 55:23.

Verse 28. *I will send hornets before thee*— הצרעה hatstsirah. The root is not found in Hebrew, but it may be the same with the Arabic [A] saraa, to lay prostrate, to strike down; the hornet, probably so called from the destruction occasioned by the violence of its sting. The hornet, in natural history, belongs to the species crabro, of the genus vespa or wasp; it is a most voracious insect, and is exceedingly strong for its size, which is generally an inch in length, though I have seen some an inch and a half long, and so strong that, having caught one in a small pair of forceps, it repeatedly escaped by using violent contortions, so that at last I was obliged to abandon all hopes of securing it alive, which I wished to have done. How distressing and destructive a multitude of these might be, any person may conjecture; even the bees of one hive would be sufficient to sting a thousand men to madness, but how much worse must wasps and hornets be! No armor, no weapons, could avail against these. A few thousands of them would be quite sufficient to throw the best disciplined army into confusion and rout. From Joshua 24:12, we find that two kings of the Amorites were actually driven out of the land by these hornets, so that the Israelites were not obliged to use either sword or bow in the conquest.

Verse 31. *I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea*— On the south-east, even unto the sea of the Philistines — the Mediterranean, on the north-west; and from the desert — of Arabia, or the wilderness of Shur, on the west, to the river — the Euphrates, on the north-east. Or in general terms, from the Euphrates on the east, to the Mediterranean Sea on the west; and from Mount Libanus on the north, to the Red Sea and the Nile on the south. This promise was not completely fulfilled till the days of David and Solomon. The general disobedience of the people before this time prevented a more speedy accomplishment; and their disobedience afterwards caused them to lose the possession. So, though all the promises of God are YEA and AMEN, yet they are fulfilled but to a few, because men are slow of heart to believe; and the blessings of providence and grace are taken away from several because of their unfaithfulness.

Verse 32. *Thou shalt make no covenant with them*— They were incurable idolaters, and the cup of their iniquity was full. And had the Israelites contracted any alliance with them, either sacred or civil, they would have enticed them into their idolatries, to which the Jews were at all times most unhappily prone; and as God intended that they should be the preservers of the true religion till the coming of the Messiah, hence he strictly forbade them to tolerate idolatry.

Verse 33. *They shall not dwell in thy land*— They must be utterly expelled. The land was the Lord's, and he had given it to the progenitors of this people, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The latter being obliged to leave it because of a famine, God is now conducting back his posterity, who alone had a Divine and natural right to it, and therefore their seeking to possess the inheritance of their fathers can be only criminal in the sight of those who are systematically opposed to the thing, because it is a part of Divine revelation.

WHAT a pity that the Mosaic Law should be so little studied! What a number of just and equal laws, pious and humane institutions, useful and instructive ordinances, does it contain! Everywhere we see the purity and benevolence of God always working to prevent crimes and make the people happy! But what else can be expected from that God who is love, whose tender mercies are over all his works, and who hateth nothing that he has made? Reader, thou art not straitened in him, be not straitened in

thy own bowels. Learn from him to be just, humane, kind, and merciful. Love thy enemy, and do good to him that hates thee. Jesus is with thee; hear and obey his voice; provoke him not, and he will be an enemy to thine enemies, and an adversary to thine adversaries. Believe, love, obey; and the road to the kingdom of God is plain before thee. Thou shalt inherit the good land, and be established in it for ever and ever.

CHAPTER 24

Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders, are commanded to go to the mount to meet the Lord, 1. Moses alone to come near to the Divine presence, 2. He informs the people, and they promise obedience, 3. He writes the words of the Lord, erects an altar at the foot of the hill, and sets up twelve pillars for the twelve tribes, 4. The young priests offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, 5. Moses reads the book of the covenant, sprinkles the people with the blood, and they promise obedience, 6-8. Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel, go up to the mount, and get a striking display of the majesty of God, 9-11. Moses alone is called up into the mount, in order to receive the tables of stone, written by the hand of God, 12. Moses and his servant Joshua go up, and Aaron and Hur are left regents of the people during his absence, 13, 14. The glory of the Lord rests on the mount, and the cloud covers it for six days, and on the seventh God speaks to Moses out of the cloud, 15, 16. The terrible appearance of God's glory on the mount, 17. Moses continues with God on the mount forty days, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. *Come up unto the Lord*— Moses and Aaron were already on the mount, or at least some way up, (Exodus 19:24,) where they had heard the voice of the Lord distinctly speaking to them: and the people also saw and heard, but in a less distinct manner, probably like the hoarse grumbling sound of distant thunder; see Exodus 20:18. Calmet, who complains of the apparent want of order in the facts laid down here, thinks the whole should be understood thus:—"After God had laid before Moses and Aaron all the laws mentioned from the beginning of the 20th chapter to the end of the 23d, before they went down from the mount to lay them before the people, he told them that, when they had proposed the conditions of the covenant to the Israelites, and they had ratified them, they were to come up again unto the mountain accompanied with Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron, and seventy of the principal elders of Israel. Moses accordingly went down, spoke to the people, ratified the covenant, and then, according

to the command of God mentioned here, he and the others reascended the mountain. Tout cela est raconté ici avec assez peu d'ordre.”

Verse 2. *Moses alone shall come near*— The people stood at the foot of the mountain. Aaron and his two sons and the seventy elders went up, probably about half way, and Moses alone went to the summit.

Verse 3. *Moses-told the people all the words of the Lord*— That is, the ten commandments, and the various laws and ordinances mentioned from the beginning of the 20th to the end of the 23d chapter.

Verse 4. *Moses wrote all the words of the Lord*— After the people had promised obedience, (Exodus 24:3,) and so entered into the bonds of the covenant, “it was necessary,” says Calmet, “to draw up an act by which the memory of these transactions might be preserved, and confirm the covenant by authentic and solemn ceremonies.” And this Moses does. 1. As legislator, he reduces to writing all the articles and conditions of the agreement, with the people’s act of consent. 2. As their mediator and the deputy of the Lord, he accepts on his part the resolution of the people; and Jehovah on his part engages himself to Israel, to be their God, their King, and Protector, and to fulfill to them all the promises he had made to their fathers. 3. To make this the more solemn and affecting, and to ratify the covenant, which could not be done without sacrifice, shedding and sprinkling of blood, Moses builds an altar, probably of turf, as was commanded, Exodus 20:24, and erects twelve pillars, no doubt of unhewn stone, and probably set round about the altar. The altar itself represented the throne of God; the twelve stones, the twelve tribes of Israel. These were the two parties, who were to contract, or enter into covenant, on this occasion.

Verse 5. *He sent young men*— Stout, able, reputable young men, chosen out of the different tribes, for the purpose of killing, flaying, and offering the oxen mentioned here.

Burnt-offerings— They generally consisted of sheep and goats, Leviticus 1:10. These were wholly consumed by fire.

Peace-offerings— Bullocks or goats; see Hebrews 9:19. The blood of these was poured out before the Lord, and then the priests and people might feast on the flesh.

Verse 7. *The book of the covenant*— The writing containing the laws mentioned in the three preceding chapters. As this writing contained the agreement made between God and them, it was called the book of the covenant; but as no covenant was considered to be ratified and binding till a sacrifice had been offered on the occasion, hence the necessity of the sacrifices mentioned here.

Half of the blood being sprinkled on the ALTAR, and half of it sprinkled on the PEOPLE, showed that both GOD and THEY were mutually bound by this covenant. GOD was bound to the PEOPLE to support, defend, and save them; the PEOPLE were bound to GOD to fear, love, and serve him. On the ancient method of making covenants, see Clarke on “Genesis 6:18”; and see Clarke on “Genesis 15:18”. Thus the blood of the new covenant was necessary to propitiate the throne of justice on the one hand, and to reconcile men to God on the other. On the nature and various kinds of the Jewish offerings, see Clarke’s note on “Leviticus 7:1”, etc.

Verse 10. *They saw the God of Israel*— The seventy elders, who were representatives of the whole congregation, were chosen to witness the manifestation of God, that they might be satisfied of the truth of the revelation which he had made of himself and of his will; and on this occasion it was necessary that the people also should be favored with a sight of the glory of God; see Exodus 20:18. Thus the certainty of the revelation was established by many witnesses, and by those especially of the most competent kind.

A paved work of a sapphire stone— Or sapphire brick-work. I suppose that something of the Musive or Mosaic pavement is here intended; floors most curiously inlaid with variously coloured stones or small square tiles, disposed in a great variety of ornamental forms. Many of these remain in different countries to the present day. The Romans were particularly fond of them, and left monuments of their taste and ingenuity in pavements of this kind, in most countries where they established their dominion. Some very fine specimens are found in different parts of Britain.

Sapphire is a precious stone of a fine blue color, next in hardness to the diamond. The ruby is considered by most mineralogists of the same genus; so is also the topaz: hence we cannot say that the sapphire is only of a blue color; it is blue, red, or yellow, as it may be called sapphire, ruby, or

topaz; and some of them are blue or green, according to the light in which they are held; and some white. A very large specimen of such a one is now before me. The ancient oriental sapphire is supposed to have been the same with the lapis lazuli. Supposing that these different kinds of sapphires are here intended, how glorious must a pavement be, constituted of polished stones of this sort, perfectly transparent, with an effulgence of heavenly splendor poured out upon them! The red, the blue, the green, and the yellow, arranged by the wisdom of God, into the most beautiful emblematic representations, and the whole body of heaven in its clearness shining upon them, must have made a most glorious appearance. As the Divine glory appeared above the mount, it is reasonable to suppose that the Israelites saw the sapphire pavement over their heads, as it might have occupied a space in the atmosphere equal in extent to the base of the mountain; and being transparent, the intense brightness shining upon it must have greatly heightened the effect.

It is necessary farther to observe that all this must have been only an appearance, unconnected with any personal similitude; for this Moses expressly asserts, Deuteronomy 4:15. And though the feet are here mentioned, this can only be understood of the sapphirine basis or pavement, on which this celestial and indescribable glory of the Lord appeared. There is a similar description of the glory of the Lord in the Book of Revelation, Revelation 4:3: “And he who sat [upon the throne] was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.” In neither of these appearances was there any similitude or likeness of any thing in heaven, earth, or sea. Thus God took care to preserve them from all incentives to idolatry, while he gave them the fullest proofs of his being. In Scheuchzer’s *Physica Sacra*, among his numerous fine engravings, there is one of this glorious manifestation, which cannot be too severely reprehended. The Supreme Being is represented as an old man, sitting on a throne, encompassed with glory, having a crown on his head, and a scepter in his hand, the people prostrate in adoration at the foot of the piece. A print of this kind should be considered as utterly improper, if not blasphemous.

Verse 11. *Upon the nobles of-Israel he laid not his hand*— This laying on of the hand has been variously explained. 1. He did not conceal himself

from the nobles of Israel by covering them with his hand, as he did Moses, Exodus 33:22. 2. He did not endue any of the nobles, i.e., the seventy elders, with the gift of prophecy; for so laying on of the hand has been understood. 3. He did not slay any of them; none of them received any injury; which is certainly one meaning of the phrase: see Nehemiah 13:21; Psalm 55:20. Also they saw God, i.e., although they had this discovery of his majesty, yet they did eat and drink, i.e., were preserved alive and unhurt. Perhaps the eating and drinking here may refer to the peace-offerings on which they feasted, and the libations that were then offered on the ratification of the covenant. But they rejoiced the more because they had been so highly favored, and were still permitted to live; for it was generally apprehended that God never showed his glory in this signal manner but for the purpose of manifesting his justice; and therefore it appeared a strange thing that these should have seen God as it were face to face, and yet live. See Genesis 16:13; 33:10; and Judges 13:22, 23.

Verse 12. *Come up to me into the mount, and be there*— We may suppose Moses to have been, with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders, about midway up the mount; for it plainly appears that there were several stations on it.

Verse 13. *Moses rose up*— In Exodus 24:16 it is said that the glory of the Lord abode on the mount, and the cloud covered it. The glory was probably above the cloud, and it was to the cloud that Moses and his servant Joshua ascended at this time, leaving Aaron and the elders below. After they had been in this region, viz., where the cloud encompassed the mountain, for six days, God appears to have called Moses up higher: compare verses Exodus 24:16 and Exodus 24:18. Moses then ascended to the glory, leaving Joshua in the cloud, with whom he had, no doubt, frequent conferences during the forty days he continued with God on the mount.

Verse 14. *Tarry ye here for us*— Probably Moses did not know that he was to continue so long on the mount, nor is it likely that the elders tarried the whole forty days where they were: they doubtless, after waiting some considerable time, returned to the camp; and their return is supposed to have been the grand cause why the Israelites made the golden calf, as they probably reported that Moses was lost.

Aaron and Hur are with you— Not knowing how long he might be detained on the mount, and knowing that many cases might occur which would require the interference of the chief magistrate, Moses constituted them regents of the people during the time he should be absent.

Verse 16. And the seventh day he called— It is very likely that Moses went up into the mount on the first day of the week; and having with Joshua remained in the region of the cloud during six days, on the seventh, which was the Sabbath, God spake to him, and delivered successively to him, during forty days and forty nights, the different statutes and ordinances which are afterwards mentioned.

Verse 17. The glory of the Lord was like devouring fire— This appearance was well calculated to inspire the people with the deepest reverence and godly fear; and this is the use the apostle makes of it, Hebrews 12:28, 29, where he evidently refers to this place, saying, Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a CONSUMING FIRE. Seeing the glory of the Lord upon the mount like a devouring fire, Moses having tarried long, the Israelites probably supposed that he had been devoured or consumed by it, and therefore the more easily fell into idolatry. But how could they do this, with this tremendous sight of God's glory before their eyes?

Verse 18. Forty days and forty nights.— During the whole of this time he neither ate bread nor drank water; see Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9. Both his body and soul were so sustained by the invigorating presence of God, that he needed no earthly support, and this may be the simple reason why he took none. Elijah fasted forty days and forty nights, sustained by the same influence, 1 Kings 19:8; as did likewise our blessed Lord, when he was about to commence the public ministry of his own Gospel, Matthew 4:2.

1. MOSES, who was the mediator of the Old Covenant, is alone permitted to draw nigh to God; none of the people are suffered to come up to the Divine glory, not even Aaron, nor his sons, nor the nobles of Israel. Moses was a type of Christ, who is the mediator of the New Covenant; and he alone has access to God in behalf of the human race, as Moses had in behalf of Israel.

2. The law can inspire nothing but terror, when viewed unconnected with its sacrifices, and those sacrifices are nothing but as they refer to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who alone by the sacrifice of himself, bears away the sin of the world.

3. The blood of the victims was sprinkled both on the altar and on the people, to show that the death of Christ gave to Divine justice what it demanded, and to men what they needed. The people were sanctified by it unto God, and God was propitiated by it unto the people. By this sacrifice the law was magnified and made honorable, so Divine justice received its due; and those who believe are justified from all guilt, and sanctified from all sin, so they receive all that they need. Thus God is well pleased, and believers eternally saved. This is a glorious economy, highly worthy of God its author.

CHAPTER 25

The Lord addresses Moses out of the Divine glory, and commands him to speak unto the Israelites, that they may give him free-will offerings, 1, 2. The different kinds of offerings, gold, silver, and brass, 3. Purple, scarlet, fine linen, and goats' hair, 4. Rams' skins, badgers' skins, (rather violet-coloured skins,) and shittim wood, 5. Oil and spices, 6. Onyx stones, and stones for the ephod and breastplate, 7. A sanctuary is to be made after the pattern of the tabernacle, 8, 9. The ark and its dimensions, 10. Its crown of gold, 11. Its rings, 12. Its staves, and their use, 13-15. The testimony to be laid up in the ark, 16. The mercy-seat and its dimensions, 17. The cherubim, how made and placed, 18-20. The mercy-seat to be placed on the ark, and the testimony to be put within it, 21. The Lord promises to commune with the people from the mercy-seat, 22. The table of shew-bread, and its dimensions, 23. Its crown and border of gold, 24, 25. Its rings, 26, 27. Staves, 28. Dishes, spoons, and bowls, 29. Its use, 30. The golden candlestick; its branches, bowls, knops, and flowers, 31-36. Its seven lamps, 37. Tongs and snuffers, 38. The weight of the candlestick and its utensils, one talent of gold, 39. All to be made according to the pattern showed to Moses on the mount, 40.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 2. *That they bring me an offering*— The offering here mentioned is the **תְּרוּמָה** *terumah*, a kind of free-will offering, consisting of any thing that was necessary for the occasion. It signifies properly any thing that was lifted up, the heave-offering, because in presenting it to God it was lifted up to be laid on his altar; but see Clarke on “Exodus 29:27”. God requires that they should build him a tent, suited in some sort to his dignity and eminence, because he was to act as their king, and to dwell among them; and they were to consider themselves as his subjects, and in this character to bring him presents, which was considered to be the duty of every subject appearing before his prince. See Exodus 23:15.

Verse 3. *This is the offering*— There were three kinds of metals: 1. **GOLD**, **זָהָב** zahab, which may properly signify wrought gold; what was bright and resplendent, as the word implies. In Job 28:15, 16, 17, 19, gold is mentioned five times, and four of the words are different in the original. 1. **סָגוּר** SEGOR, from **סָגַר** sagar, to shut up; gold in the mine, or shut up in its ore. 2. **כֶּתֶם** KETHEM, from **כָּתַם** catham, to sign, seal, or stamp; gold made current by being coined; standard or sterling gold, exhibiting the stamp expressive of its value. 3. **זָהָב** ZAHAB, wrought gold, pure, highly polished gold; probably what was used for overlaying or gilding. 4. **פַּז** PAZ, denoting solidity, compactness, and strength; probably gold formed into different kinds of plate, as it is joined in Exodus 25:17 of the above chapter with **כֵּלֵי** keley, vessels. The zahab, or pure gold, is here mentioned, because it was in a state that rendered it capable of being variously manufactured for the service of the sanctuary.

2. **SILVER**, **כֶּסֶף** keseph, from casaph, to be pale, wan, or white; so called from its well-known color.

3. **BRASS**, **נְחֹשֶׁת** nechosheth, copper; unless we suppose that the factitious metal commonly called brass is intended: this is formed by a combination of the oxide or ore of zinc, called lapis calaminaris, with copper. Brass seems to have been very anciently in use, as we find it mentioned Genesis 4:22; and the preparation of copper, to transform it into this factitious metal, seems to be very pointedly referred to Job 28:2: Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone; **אֶבֶן יְצוּק נְחֹשֶׁה** eben yatsuk nechushah, translated by the Vulgate, Lapis, solutus calore, in aes vertitur, “The stone, liquefied by heat, is turned into brass.” Is it going too far to say that the stone here may refer to the lapis calaminaris, which was used to turn the copper into brass? Because brass was capable of so fine a polish as to become exceedingly bright, and keep its lustre a considerable time, hence it was used for all weapons of war and defensive armor among ancient nations; and copper seems to have been in no repute, but for its use in making brass.

Verse 4. *Blue*— **תְּכֵלֶת** techeleth, generally supposed to mean an azure or sky color; rendered by the Septuagint **ζακύνθου**, and by the Vulgate hyacinthum, a sky-blue or deep violet.

Purple—**אַרְגָּמָן** argaman, a very precious color, extracted from the purpura or murex, a species of shell-fish, from which it is supposed the famous Tyrian purple came, so costly, and so much celebrated in antiquity. See this largely described, and the manner of dyeing it, in Pliny, Hist. Nat., lib. ix., c. 60-65, edit. Bipont.

Scarlet—**תּוֹלַעַת** tolaath, signifies a worm, of which this colouring matter was made; and, joined with **שְׁנַי** shani, which signifies to repeat or double, implies that to strike this color the wool or cloth was twice dipped: hence the Vulgate renders the original coccum bis tinctum, “scarlet twice dyed;” and to this Horace refers, Odar., lib. ii., od. 16, v. 35:

— *Te BIS Afro Murice*
TINCTAE Vestiunt LANAE.—

“Thy robes the twice dyed purple stains.”

It is the same color which the Arabs call al kermez, whence the French cramoisi, and the English crimson. On this subject much may be seen in Bochart, Calmet, and Scheuchzer.

Fine linen—**שֶׁשׁ** shesh; whether this means linen, cotton, or silk, is not agreed on among interpreters. Because **שֶׁשׁ** shesh signifies six, the rabbins suppose that it always signifies the fine linen of Egypt, in which six folds constituted one thread; and that when a single fold was meant, **בַּד** bad is the term used. See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 41:42”.

Goats’ hair—**עִזִּים** izzim, goats, but used here elliptically for goats’ hair. In different parts of Asia Minor, Syria, Cilicia, and Phrygia, the goats have long, fine, and beautiful hair, in some cases almost as fine as silk, which they shear at proper times, and manufacture into garments. From Virgil, Georg. iii., v. 305-311, we learn that goats’ hair manufactured into cloth was nearly of equal value with that formed from wool.

*Hae quoque non cura nobis leviores tuendae;
Nec minor usus erit: quamvis Milesia magno
Vellera mutantur, Tyrios incocta rubores.
Nec minus interea barbas incanaeque menta
Cinyphii tondent hirci, setasque comantes,
Usum in castrorum, et miseris velamina nautis.*

*“For hairy goats of equal profit are
With woolly sheep, and ask an equal care.
‘Tis true the fleece when drunk with Tyrian juice
Is dearly sold, but not for needful use:
Meanwhile the pastor shears their hoary beards
And eases of their hair the loaden herds.
Their camelots, warm in tents, the soldier hold,
And shield the shivering mariner from the cold.”*

DRYDEN.

Verse 5. Rams’ skins dyed red— עֶרְתַּת אֵילִם מֵאֲדָמִים oroth eylim meoddamim, literally, the skins of red rams. It is a fact attested by many respectable travelers, that in the Levant sheep are often to be met with that have red or violet-coloured fleeces. And almost all ancient writers speak of the same thing. Homer describes the rams of Polyphemus as having a violet-coloured fleece.

αρσενες οιες ησαν ευτρεφεις δασυμαλλοι,
καλοι τε, μεγαλοι τε, ιοδνεφες ειρος εχοντες.

Odyss., lib. ix., ver. 425.

*“Strong were the rams, with native purple fair,
Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.”*

POPE.

Pliny, Aristotle, and others mention the same. And from facts of this kind it is very probable that the fable of the golden fleece had its origin. In the Zetland Isles I have seen sheep with variously coloured fleeces, some white, some black, some black and white, some of a very fine chocolate color. Beholding those animals brought to my recollection those words of Virgil:-

*Ipsæ sed in pratis Arias jam suave rubenti
Murice, jam croceo mutabit vellera luto.
Eclog. iv., ver. 43.*

*“No wool shall in dissembled colors shine;
But the luxurious father of the fold,
With native purple or unborrow’d gold,
Beneath his pompous fleece shall proudly sweat,
And under Tyrian robes the lamb shall bleat.”* *DRYDEN.*

Badgers' skins— עֶרְתַּת תְּחָשִׁים oroth techashim. Few terms have afforded greater perplexity to critics and commentators than this. Bochart has exhausted the subject, and seems to have proved that no kind of animal is here intended, but a color. None of the ancient versions acknowledge an animal of any kind except the Chaldee, which seems to think the badger is intended, and from it we have borrowed our translation of the word. The Septuagint and Vulgate have skins dyed a violet color; the Syriac, azure; the Arabic, black; the Coptic, violet; the modern Persic, ram-skins, etc. The color contended for by Bochart is the hysginus, which is a very deep blue. So Pliny, Coccoque tinctum Tyrio tingere, ut fieret hysginum. "They dip crimson in purple to make the color called hysginus."-Hist. Nat., lib. ix., c. 65, edit. Bipont.

Shittim wood— By some supposed to be the finest species of the cedar; by others, the acacia Nilotica, a species of thorn, solid, light, and very beautiful. This acacia is known to have been plentiful in Egypt, and it abounds in Arabia Deserta, the very place in which Moses was when he built the tabernacle; and hence it is reasonable to suppose that he built it of that wood, which was every way proper for his purpose.

Verse 6. Oil for the light— This they must have brought with them from Egypt, for they could not get any in the wilderness where there were no olives; but it is likely that this and some other directions refer more to what was to be done when in their fixed and settled residence, than while wandering in the wilderness.

Spices— To make a confection for sweet incense, abounded in different parts of these countries.

Verse 7. Onyx stones— We have already met with the stone called שְׁהָם shoham, Genesis 2:12, and acknowledged the difficulty of ascertaining what is meant by it. Some think the onyx, some the sardine, and some the emerald, is meant. We cannot say precisely what it was; possibly it might have been that fine pale pebble, called the Egyptian pebble, several specimens of which now lie before me, which were brought from the coast of the Red Sea, and other parts in Egypt, by a particular friend of mine, on purpose to add to my collection of minerals.

Stones to be set in the ephod— **אבני מלאים** abney milluim, stones of filling up. Stones so cut as to be proper to be set in the gold work of the breastplate.

The **אפוד** ephod. — It is very difficult to tell what this was, or in what form it was made. It was a garment of some kind peculiar to the priests, and ever considered essential to all the parts of Divine worship, for without it no person attempted to inquire of God. As the word itself comes from the root **אפד** aphad, he tied or bound close, Calmet supposes that it was a kind of girdle, which, brought from behind the neck and over the shoulders, and so hanging down before, was put cross upon the stomach, and then carried round the waist, and thus made a girdle to the tunic. Where the ephod crossed on the breast there was a square ornament called **חושן** choshen, the breastplate, in which twelve precious stones were set, each bearing one of the names of the twelve sons of Jacob engraven on it. There were two sorts of ephods, one of plain linen for the priests, the other very much embroidered for the high priest. As there was nothing singular in this common sort, no particular description is given; but that of the high priest is described very much in detail Exodus 28:6-8. It was distinguished from the common ephod by being composed of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, fine twisted linen, and cunning work, i.e., superbly ornamented and embroidered. This ephod was fastened on the shoulders with two precious stones, on which the twelve names of the twelve tribes of Israel were engraved, six names on each stone. These two stones, thus engraved, were different from those on the breastplate, with which they have been confounded. From Calmet's description the ephod seems to have been a series of belts, fastened to a collar, which were intended to keep the garments of the priest closely attached to his body: but there is some reason to believe that it was a sort of garment like that worn by our heralds; it covered the back, breast, and belly, and was open at the sides. A piece of the same kind of stuff with itself united it on the shoulders, where the two stones, already mentioned, were placed, and it was probably without sleeves. See Clarke on "Exodus 28:2", etc.

Verse 8. *Let them make me a sanctuary*— **מקדש** mikdash, a holy place, such as God might dwell in; this was that part of the tabernacle that was

called the most holy place, into which the high priest entered only once a year, on the great day of atonement.

That I may dwell among them.— “This,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “was the main end of all; and to this all the particulars are to be referred, and by this they are to be opened. For this sanctuary, as Solomon’s temple afterwards, was the place of prayer, and of the public service of God, Leviticus 17:4-6; Matthew 21:13; and it signified the Church which is the habitation of God through the Spirit, 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-22; Revelation 21:2, 3; and was a visible sign of God’s presence and protection, Leviticus 26:11, 12; Ezekiel 37:27, 28; 1 Kings 6:12, 13; and of his leading them to his heavenly glory. For as the high priest entered into the tabernacle, and through the veil into the most holy place where God dwelt; so Christ entered into the holy of holies, and we also enter through the veil, that is to say his flesh. See the use made of this by the apostle, Hebrews 9. and 10. Thus the sanctuary is to be applied as a type, 1. To Christ’s person, Hebrews 8:2; 9:11, 12; John 2:19-21. 2. To every Christian, 1 Corinthians 6:19. 3. To the Church; both particular, Hebrews 3:6; 1 Timothy 3:15; and universal, Hebrews 10:21: and it was because of the very extensive signification of this building, that the different things concerning this sanctuary are particularly set down by Moses, and so variously applied by the prophets and by the apostles.”—See Ainsworth. As the dwelling in this tabernacle was the highest proof of God’s grace and mercy towards the Israelites, so it typified Christ’s dwelling by faith in the hearts of believers, and thus giving them the highest and surest proof of their reconciliation to God, and of his love and favor to them; see Ephesians 1:22; 3:17.

Verse 9. *After the pattern of the tabernacle*— It has been supposed that there had been a tabernacle before that erected by Moses, though it probably did not now exist; but the tabernacle which Moses is ordered to make was to be formed exactly on the model of this ancient one, the pattern of which God showed him in the mount, Exodus 25:40. The word **משכן** mishcan signifies literally the dwelling or habitation; and this was so called because it was the dwelling place of God; and the only place on the earth in which he made himself manifest. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 25:40”, and on Exodus 33:7-10.

Verse 10. *They shall make an ark*— אָרוֹן signifies an ark, chest, coffer, or coffin. It is used particularly to designate that chest or coffer in which the testimony or two tables of the covenant was laid up, on the top of which was the propitiatory or mercy-seat, (see on Exodus 25:17,) and at the end of which were the cherubim of gold, (Exodus 25:18-20,) between whom the visible sign of the presence of the supreme God appeared as seated upon his throne. The ark was the most excellent of all the holy things which belonged to the Mosaic economy, and for its sake the tabernacle and the temple were built, Exodus 26:33; 40:18, 21. It was considered as conferring a sanctity wherever it was fixed, 2 Chronicles 8:11; 2 Samuel 6:12.

Two cubits and a half shall be the length, etc.— About four feet five inches in length, taking the cubit as twenty-one inches, and two feet six inches in breadth and in depth. As this ark was chiefly intended to deposit the two tables of stone in, which had been written by the finger of God, we may very reasonably conjecture that the length of those tables was not less than four feet and their breadth not less than two. As to their thickness we can say nothing, as the depth of the ark was intended for other matters besides the two tables, such as Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, etc., etc., though probably these were laid up beside, not in, the ark.

Verse 11. *A crown of gold round about.*— A border, or, as the Septuagint have it, *κυματια χρυσα στεπτα κυκλω*, waves of gold wreathed round about.

Verse 15. *The staves shall not be taken from it.*— Because it should ever be considered as in readiness to be removed, God not having told them at what hour he should command them to strike their tents. If the staves were never to be taken out, how can it be said, as in Numbers 4:6, that when the camp should set forward, they should put in the staves thereof, which intimates that when they encamped, they took out the staves, which appears to be contrary to what is here said? To reconcile these two places, it has been supposed, with great show of probability, that besides the staves which passed through the rings of the ark, and by which it was carried, there were two other staves or poles in the form of a bier or handbarrow, on which the ark was laid in order to be transported in their

journeyings, when it and its own staves, still in their rings, had been wrapped up in the covering of what is called badgers' skins and blue cloth. The staves of the ark itself, which might be considered as its handles simply to lift it by, were never taken out of their rings; but the staves or poles which served as a bier were taken from under it when they encamped.

Verse 16. *The testimony*— The two tables of stone which were not yet given; these tables were called **עֲדוּת** *eduth*, from **עָד** *forward, onward*, to bear witness to or of a person or thing. Not only the tables of stone, but all the contents of the ark, Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, the holy anointing oil, etc., bore testimony to the Messiah in his prophetic, sacerdotal, and regal offices.

Verse 17. *A mercy-seat*— **כַּפֹּרֶת** *capporeth*, from **כָּפַר** *caphar*, to cover or overspread; because by an act of pardon sins are represented as being covered, so that they no longer appear in the eye of Divine justice to displease, irritate, and call for punishment; and the person of the offender is covered or protected from the stroke of the broken law. In the Greek version of the Septuagint the word **ἱλαστήριον**, *hilasterion*, is used, which signifies a propitiatory, and is the name used by the apostle, Hebrews 9:5. This mercy-seat or propitiatory was made of pure gold; it was properly the lid or covering of that vessel so well known by the name of the ark and ark of the covenant. On and before this, the high priest was to sprinkle the blood of the expiatory sacrifices on the great day of atonement: and it was in this place that God promised to meet the people, (see Exodus 25:22;) for there he dwelt, and there was the symbol of the Divine presence. At each end of this propitiatory was a cherub, between whom this glory was manifested; hence in Scripture it is so often said that he dwelleth between the cherubim. As the word **ἱλαστήριον**, propitiatory or mercy-seat, is applied to Christ, Romans 3:25, whom God hath set forth to be a PROPITIATION (**ἱλαστήριον**) through faith in his blood—for the remission of sins that are past; hence we learn that Christ was the true mercy-seat, the thing signified by the capporeth, to the ancient believers. And we learn farther that it was by his blood that an atonement was to be made for the sins of the world. And as God showed himself between the cherubim over this propitiatory or mercy-seat, so it is said, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; 2 Corinthians 5:19, etc. See on Lev. vii.

Verse 18. *Thou shalt make two cherubims*— What these were we cannot distinctly say. It is generally supposed that a cherub was a creature with four heads and one body: and the animals, of which these emblematical forms consisted, were the noblest of their kinds; the lion among the wild beasts, the bull among the tame ones, the eagle among the birds, and man at the head of all; so that they might be, says Dr. Priestley, the representatives of all nature. Concerning their forms and design there is much difference of opinion among divines. It is probable that the term often means a figure of any kind, such as was ordinarily sculptured on stone, engraved on metal, carved on wood, or embroidered on cloth. See on Exodus 37:8. It may be only necessary to add, that cherub is the singular number; cherubim, not cherubims, the plural. See what has been said on this subject in the note on Genesis 3:24. See Clarke's note "Genesis 3:24".

Verse 22. *And there I will meet with thee*— That is, over the mercy-seat, between the cherubim. In this place God chose to give the most especial manifestations of himself; here the Divine glory was to be seen; and here Moses was to come in order to consult Jehovah, relative to the management of the people.

Ainsworth has remarked that the rabbins say, "The heart of man may be likened to God's sanctuary; for as, in the sanctuary, the shechinah or Divine glory dwelt, because there were the ark, the tables, and the cherubim; so, in the heart of man, it is meet that a place be made for the Divine Majesty to dwell in, and that it be the holy of holies." This is a doctrine most implicitly taught by the apostles; and the absolute necessity of having the heart made a habitation of God through the Spirit, is strongly and frequently insisted on through the whole of the New Testament. See the note on the following verse.

Verse 23. *Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood*— The same wood, the acacia, of which the arkstaves, etc., were made. On the subject of the ark, table of shew-bread, etc., Dr. Cudworth, in his very learned and excellent treatise on the Lord's Supper, has the following remarks:—

"When God had brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, resolving to manifest himself in a peculiar manner present among them, he thought good to dwell amongst them in a visible and external manner; and therefore, while they were in the wilderness, and sojourned in tents, he would have a

tent or tabernacle built to sojourn with them also. This mystery of the tabernacle was fully understood by the learned Nachmanides, who, in few words, but pregnant, expresseth himself to this purpose: ‘The mystery of the tabernacle was this, that it was to be a place for the shechinah, or habitation of Divinity, to be fixed in;’ and this, no doubt, as a special type of God’s future dwelling in Christ’s human nature, which was the TRUE SHECHINAH: but when the Jews were come into their land, and had there built them houses, God intended to have a fixed dwelling-house also; and therefore his movable tabernacle was to be turned into a standing temple. Now the tabernacle or temple, being thus as a house for God to dwell in visibly, to make up the notion of dwelling or habitation complete there must be all things suitable to a house belonging to it; hence, in the holy place, there must be a table, and a candlestick, because this was the ordinary furniture of a room, as the fore-commended Nachmanides observes. The table must have its dishes, and spoons, and bowls, and covers belonging to it, though they were never used; and always be furnished with bread upon it. The candlestick must have its lamps continually burning. Hence also there must be a continual fire kept in this house of God upon the altar, as the focus of it; to which notion I conceive the Prophet Isaiah doth allude, Isaiah 31:9: Whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem; and besides all this, to carry the notion still farther, there must be some constant meat and provision brought into this house; which was done in the sacrifices that were partly consumed by fire upon God’s own altar, and partly eaten by the priests, who were God’s family, and therefore to be maintained by him. That which was consumed upon God’s altar was accounted God’s mess, as appeareth from Malachi 1:12, where the altar is called God’s table, and the sacrifice upon it, God’s meat: Ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even HIS MEAT, is contemptible. And often, in the law, the sacrifice is called God’s **לחם** lechem, i.e., his bread or food. Wherefore it is farther observable, that besides the flesh of the beast offered up in sacrifice, there was a minchah, i.e., a meat-offering, or rather bread-offering, made of flour and oil; and a libamen or drink-offering, which was always joined with the daily sacrifice, as the bread and drink which was to go along with God’s meat. It was also strictly commanded that there should be salt in every sacrifice and oblation, because all meat is unsavoury without salt, as Nachmanides hath here also well observed; ‘because it was not honorable that God’s meat

should be unsavoury, without salt.’ Lastly, all these things were to be consumed on the altar only by the holy fire which came down from heaven, because they were God’s portion, and therefore to be eaten or consumed by himself in an extraordinary manner.” See Clarke on “Exodus 25:22”.

Verse 29. *The dishes thereof*— **קֶרְתָּוִי** kearothaiv, probably the deep bowls in which they kneaded the mass out of which they made the shew-bread.

And spoons thereof— **כַּפְתָּוִי** cappothaiu, probably censers, on which they put up the incense; as seems pretty evident from Numbers 7:14, 20, 26, 32, 38, 44, 50, 56, 62, 68, 74, 80, 86, where the same word is used, and the instrument, whatever it was, is always represented as being filled with incense.

Covers thereof— **קְשֹׁתָיו** kesothaiv, supposed to be a large cup or tankard, in which pure wine was kept on the table along with the shewbread for libations, which were poured out before the Lord every Sabbath, when the old bread was removed, and the new bread laid on the table.

Bowls thereof— **מִנְקִיָּתָיו** menakkiyothaiv, from **נָקָה** nakah, to clear away, remove, empty, etc.; supposed by Calmet to mean, either the sieves by which the Levites cleansed the wheat they made into bread, (for it is asserted that the grain, out of which the shew-bread was made, was sowed, reaped, ground, sifted, kneaded, baked, etc., by the Levites themselves,) or the ovens in which the bread was baked. Others suppose they were vessels which they dipped into the kesoth, to take out the wine for libations.

Verse 30. *Shew-bread*— **לֶחֶם פָּנִים** lechem panim literally, bread of faces; so called, either because they were placed before the presence or face of God in the sanctuary, or because they were made square, as the Jews will have it. It is probable that they were in the form of cubes or hexaedrons, each side presenting the same appearance; and hence the Jews might suppose they were called the bread or loaves of faces: but the Hebrew text seems to intimate that they were called the bread of faces,

פנים panim, because, as the Lord says, they were set לפני lephanai, before my FACE. These loaves or cakes were twelve, representing, as is generally supposed, the twelve tribes of Israel. They were in two rows of six each. On the top of each row there was a golden dish with frankincense, which was burned before the Lord, as a memorial, at the end of the week, when the old loaves were removed and replaced by new ones, the priests taking the former for their domestic use.

It is more difficult to ascertain the use of these, or what they represented, than almost any other emblem in the whole Jewish economy. Many have conjectured their meaning, and I feel no disposition to increase their number by any addition of my own. The note on Exodus 25:23, from Dr. Cudworth, appears to me more rational than any thing else I have met with. The tabernacle was God's house, and in it he had his table, his bread, his wine, candlestick, etc., to show them that he had taken up his dwelling among them. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:23.

Verse 31. A candlestick of pure gold— This candlestick or chandelier is generally described as having one shaft or stock, with six branches proceeding from it, adorned at equal distances with six flowers like lilies, with as many bowls and knops placed alternately. On each of the branches there was a lamp, and one on the top of the shaft which occupied the center; thus there were seven lamps in all, Exodus 25:37. These seven lamps were lighted every evening and extinguished every morning.

We are not so certain of the precise form of any instrument or utensil of the tabernacle or temple, as we are of this, the golden table, and the two silver trumpets.

Titus, after the overthrow of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, had the golden candlestick and the golden table of the shew-bread, the silver trumpets, and the book of the law, taken out of the temple and carried in triumph to Rome; and Vespasian lodged them in the temple which he had consecrated to the goddess of Peace. Some plants also of the balm of Jericho are said to have been carried in the procession. At the foot of Mount Palatine there are the ruins of an arch, on which the triumph of Titus for his conquest of the Jews is represented, and on which the several monuments which were carried in the procession are sculptured, and particularly the golden candlestick, the table of the shew-bread and the two silver trumpets. A

correct MODEL of this arch, taken on the spot, now stands before me; and the spoils of the temple, the candlestick, the golden table, and the two trumpets, are represented on the panel on the left hand, in the inside of the arch, in basso-relievo. The candlestick is not so ornamented as it appears in many prints; at the same time it looks much better than it does in the engraving of this arch given by Montfaucon, *Antiq. Expliq.*, vol. iv., pl. 32. It is likely that on the real arch this candlestick is less in size than the original, as it scarcely measures three feet in height. See the *Diarium Italicum*, p. 129. To see these sacred articles given up by that God who ordered them to be made according to a pattern exhibited by himself, gracing the triumph of a heathen emperor, and at last consecrated to an idol, affords melancholy reflections to a pious mind. But these things had accomplished the end for which they were instituted, and were now of no farther use. The glorious personage typified by all this ancient apparatus, had about seventy years before this made his appearance. The true light was come, and the Holy Spirit poured out from on high; and therefore the golden candlestick, by which they were typified, was given up. The ever-during bread had been sent from heaven; and therefore the golden table, which bore its representative, the shew-bread, was now no longer needful. The joyful sound of the everlasting Gospel was then published in the world; and therefore the silver trumpets that typified this were carried into captivity, and their sound was no more to be heard. Strange providence but unutterable mercy of God! The Jews lost both the sign and the thing signified; and that very people, who destroyed the holy city, carried away the spoils of the temple, and dedicated them to the objects of their idolatry, were the first in the universe to receive the preaching of the Gospel, the light of salvation, and the bread of life! There is a sort of coincidence or association here, which is worthy of the most serious observation. The Jews had these significant emblems to lead them to, and prepare them for, the things signified. They trusted in the former, and rejected the latter! God therefore deprived them of both, and gave up their temple to the spoilers, their land to desolation, and themselves to captivity and to the sword. The heathens then carried away the emblems of their salvation, and God shortly gave unto those heathens that very salvation of which these things were the emblems! Thus because of their unbelief and rebellion, the kingdom of heaven, according to the prediction of our blessed Lord, was taken from the Jews, and given to a nation (the Gentiles) that

brought forth the fruits thereof; Matthew 21:43. Behold the GOODNESS and SEVERITY of God!

Verse 39. *Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.*— That is, a talent of gold in weight was used in making the candlestick, and the different vessels and instruments which belonged to it. According to Bishop Cumberland, a talent was three thousand shekels. As the Israelites brought each half a shekel, Exodus 38:26, so that one hundred talents, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, were contributed by six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty persons; by halving the number of the Israelites, he finds they contributed three hundred and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels in all. Now, as we find that this number of shekels made one hundred talents, and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels over, if we subtract one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, the odd shekels, from three hundred and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, we shall have for a remainder three hundred thousand, the number of shekels in one hundred talents: and if this remainder be divided by one hundred, the number of talents, it quotes three thousand, the number of shekels in each talent. A silver shekel of the sanctuary, being equal, according to Dr. Prideaux, to three shillings English, three thousand such shekels will amount to four hundred and fifty pounds sterling; and, reckoning gold to silver as fifteen to one, a talent of gold will amount to six thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling: to which add two hundred and sixty-three pounds for the one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, at three shillings each, and it makes a total of seven thousand and thirteen pounds, which immense sum was expended on the candlestick and its furniture. It is no wonder, then, (if the candlestick in the second temple was equal in value to that in the ancient tabernacle,) that Titus should think it of sufficient consequence to be one of the articles, with the golden table, and silver trumpets, that should be employed to grace his triumph. Their intrinsic worth was a matter of no consequence to Him whose are the silver and gold, the earth and its fullness; they had accomplished their design, and were of no farther use, either in the kingdom of providence, or the kingdom of grace. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:31", and see Clarke's note on "Exodus 38:24".

Verse 40. *And look that thou make, etc.*— This verse should be understood as an order to Moses after the tabernacle, etc., had been described to him; as if he had said: “When thou comest to make all the things that I have already described to thee, with the other matters of which I shall afterwards treat, see that thou make every thing according to the pattern which thou didst see in the mount.” The Septuagint have it, **κατα τον τυτον τον δεδειγμενον σοι**· according to the TYPE-form or fashion, which was shown thee. It appears to me that St. Paul had this command particularly in view when he gave that to his son Timothy which we find in the second epistle, 2 Timothy 1:13: **ὑποτυπωσιν εχε υγιανοντων λογων, ων παρ’ εμου ηκουσας**. “Hold fast the FORM of sound words which thou hast heard of me.” The tabernacle was a type of the Church of God; that Church is built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, Ephesians 2:20-22: the doctrines, therefore, delivered by the prophets, Jesus Christ, and his apostles, are essential to the constitution of this church. As God, therefore, gave the plan or form according to which the tabernacle must be constructed, so he gives the doctrines according to which the Christian Church is to be modelled; and apostles, and subordinate builders, are to have and hold fast that FORM of sound words, and construct this heavenly building according to that form or pattern which has come through the express revelation of God.

IN different parts of this work we have had occasion to remark that the heathens borrowed their best things from Divine revelation, both as it refers to what was pure in their doctrines, and significant in their religious rites. Indeed, they seem in many cases to have studied the closest imitation possible, consistent with the adaptation of all to their preposterous and idolatrous worship. They had their IAO or JOVE, in imitation of the true JEHOVAH; and from different attributes of the Divine Nature they formed an innumerable group of gods and goddesses. They had also their temples in imitation of the temple of God; and in these they had their holy and more holy places, in imitation of the courts of the Lord’s house. The heathen temples consisted of several parts or divisions: 1. The area or porch; 2. The **ναος** or temple, similar to the nave of our churches; 3. The adytum or holy place, called also penetrale and sacrarium; and, 4. The **οπισθοδομος** or the inner temple, the most secret recess, where they had

their mysteria, and which answered to the holy of holies in the tabernacle. And as there is no evidence whatever that there was any temple among the heathens prior to the tabernacle, it is reasonable to conclude that it served as a model for all that they afterwards built. They had even their portable temples, to imitate the tabernacle; and the shrines for Diana, mentioned Acts 19:24, were of this kind. They had even their arks or sacred coffers, where they kept their most holy things, and the mysterious emblems of their religion; together with candlesticks or lamps, to illuminate their temples, which had few windows, to imitate the golden candlestick in the Mosaic tabernacle. They had even their processions, in imitation of the carrying about of the ark in the wilderness, accompanied by such ceremonies as sufficiently show, to an unprejudiced mind, that they borrowed them from this sacred original. Dr. Dodd has a good note on this subject, which I shall take the liberty to extract.

Speaking of the ark, he says, “We meet with imitations of this Divinely instituted emblem among several heathen nations. Thus Tacitus, Deuteronomy Moribus Germanorum, cap. 40, informs us that the inhabitants of the north of Germany, our Saxon ancestors, in general worshipped Herthum or Hertham, i.e., the mother earth: Hertham being plainly derived from אֶרֶץ arets, earth, and אִם am, mother: and they believed her to interpose in the affairs of men, and to visit nations: that to her, in a sacred grove in a certain island of the ocean, a vehicle covered with a vestment was consecrated, and allowed to be touched by the priests only, (compare 2 Samuel 6:6, 7; 1 Chronicles 13:9, 10,) who perceived when the goddess entered into her secret place, penetrale, and with profound veneration attended her vehicle, which was drawn by cows; see 1 Samuel 6:7-10. While the goddess was on her progress, days of rejoicing were kept in every place which she vouchsafed to visit; they engaged in no war, they handled no weapons; peace and quietness were then only known, only relished, till the same priest reconducted the goddess to her temple. Then the vehicle and vestment, and, if you can believe it, the goddess herself, were washed in a sacred lake.”

Apuleius, Deuteronomy Aur. Asin., lib. ii., describing a solemn idolatrous procession, after the Egyptian mode, says, “A chest, or ark, was carried by another, containing their secret things, entirely concealing the mysteries of religion.”

And Plutarch, in his treatise *Deuteronomy Iside*, etc., describing the rites of Osiris, says, “On the tenth day of the month, at night, they go down to the sea; and the stolists, together with the priest, carry forth the sacred chest, in which is a small boat or vessel of gold.”

Pausanius likewise testifies, lib. vii., c. 19, that the ancient Trojans had a sacred ark, wherein was the image of BACCHUS, made by Vulcan, which had been given to Dardanus by Jupiter. As the ark was deposited in the holy of holies, so the heathens had in the inmost part of their temples an adytum or penetrale, to which none had access but the priests. And it is remarkable that, among the Mexicans, Vitzliputzli, their supreme god, was represented under a human shape, sitting on a throne, supported by an azure globe which they called heaven; four poles or sticks came out from two sides of this globe, at the end of which serpents’ heads were carved, the whole making a litter which the priests carried on their shoulders whenever the idol was shown in public. — *Religious Ceremonies*, vol. iii., p. 146.

Calmet remarks that the ancients used to dedicate candlesticks in the temples of their gods, bearing a great number of lamps.

Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. xxxiv., c. 3, mentions one made in the form of a tree, with lamps in the likeness of apples, which Alexander the Great consecrated in the temple of Apollo.

And Athenaeus, lib. xv., c. 19, 20, mentions one that supported three hundred and sixty-five lamps, which Dionysius the younger, king of Syracuse, dedicated in the Prytaneum at Athens. As the Egyptians, according to the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, *Strom.*, lib. i., were the first who used lamps in their temples, they probably borrowed the use from the golden candlestick in the tabernacle and temple.

From the solemn and very particular charge, Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount, it appears plainly that God showed Moses a model of the tabernacle and all its furniture; and to receive instructions relative to this was one part of his employment while on the mount forty days with God. As God designed that this building, and all that belonged to it, should be patterns or representations of good things to come, it was indispensably necessary that Moses should

receive a model and specification of the whole, according to which he might direct the different artificers in their constructing the work. 1. We may observe that the whole tabernacle and its furniture resembled a dwelling-house and its furniture. 2. That this tabernacle was the house of God, not merely for the performance of his worship, but for his residence. 3. That God had promised to dwell among this people, and this was the habitation which he appointed for his glory. 4. That the tabernacle, as well as the temple, was a type of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. See John 1:14, and John 2:19, 21. 5. That as the glory of God was manifested between the cherubim, above the mercy-seat, in this tabernacle, so God was in Christ, and in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. 6. As in the tabernacle were found bread, light, etc., probably all these were emblematical of the ample provision made in Christ for the direction, support, and salvation of the soul of man. Of these, and many other things in the law and the prophets, we shall know more when mortality is swallowed up of life.

CHAPTER 26

The ten curtains of the tabernacle, and of what composed, 1. Their length, 2, 3; their loops, 4, 5; their taches, 6. The curtains of goats' hair for a covering, 7; their length and breadth, 8. Coupled with loops, 9, 10, and taches, 11. The remnant of the curtains, how to be employed, 12, 13. The covering of rams' skins, 14. The boards of the tabernacle for the south side, 15; their length, 16, tenons, 17, number, 18, sockets, 19. Boards, etc., for the north side, 20, 21. Boards, etc., for the west side, 22; for the corners, 23; their rings and sockets, 24, 25. The bars of the tabernacle, 26-30. The veil, its pillars, hooks, and taches, 31-33. How to place the mercy-seat, 34. The table and the candlestick, 35. The hanging for the door of the tent, 36; and the hangings for the pillars, 37.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. Thou shalt make the tabernacle— מִשְׁכָּן *mischan*, from שָׁכַח *shachan*, to dwell, means simply a dwelling place or habitation of any kind, but here it means the dwelling place of Jehovah, who, as a king in his camp, had his dwelling or pavilion among his people, his table always spread, his lamps lighted, and the priests, etc., his attendants, always in waiting. From the minute and accurate description here given, a good workman, had he the same materials, might make a perfect fac simile of the ancient Jewish tabernacle. It was a movable building, and so constructed that it might be easily taken to pieces, for the greater convenience of carriage, as they were often obliged to transport it from place to place, in their various journeyings. For the twined linen, blue, purple, and scarlet, see Clarke note on “Exodus 25:4”, etc.

Cherubims— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 25:18”.

Cunning work— חֹשֶׁב *chosheb* probably means a sort of diaper, in which the figures appear equally perfect on both sides; this was probably formed in the loom. Another kind of curious work is mentioned, Exodus 26:36, רֹקֵם *rokem*, which we term needle-work; this was probably similar to our

embroidery, tapestry, or cloth of arras. It has been thought unlikely that these curious works were all manufactured in the wilderness: what was done in the loom, they might have brought with them from Egypt; what could be done by hand, without the use of complex machinery, the Israelitish women could readily perform with their needles, during their stay in the wilderness. But still it seems probable that they brought even their looms with them. The whole of this account shows that not only necessary but ornamental arts had been carried to a considerable pitch of perfection, both among the Israelites and Egyptians.

The inner curtains of the tabernacle were ten in number, and each in length twenty-eight cubits, and four in breadth; about sixteen yards twelve inches long, and two yards twelve inches broad. The curtains were to be coupled together, five and five of a side, by fifty loops, Exodus 26:5, and as many golden clasps, Exodus 26:6, so that each might look like one curtain, and the whole make one entire covering, which was the first.

Verse 7. *Curtains of goats' hair*— Stuff made of goats' hair. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:4". This was the second covering.

Verse 14. *Rams' skins dyed red*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:5". This was the third covering; and what is called the badgers' skins was the fourth. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:5". Why there should have been four coverings does not appear. They might have been designed partly for respect; and partly to keep off dust and dirt, and the extremely fine sand which in that desert rises as it were on every breeze; and partly to keep off the intense heat of the sun, which would otherwise have destroyed the poles, bars, boards, and the whole of the wood work. As to the conjecture of some that "the four coverings were intended the better to keep off the rain," it must appear unfounded to those who know that in that desert rain was rarely ever seen.

Verse 15. *Thou shalt make boards*— These formed what might be called the walls of the tabernacle, and were made of shittim wood, the acacia Nilotica, which Dr. Shaw says grows here in abundance. To have worked the acacia into these boards or planks, the Israelites must have had sawyers, joiners, etc., among them; but how they got the tools is a question. But as the Israelites were the general workmen of Egypt, and were brought up to every kind of trade for the service of their oppressors,

we may naturally suppose that every artificer brought off some of his tools with him. For though it is not at all likely that they had any armor or defensive weapons in their power, yet for the reason above assigned they must have had the implements which were requisite for their respective trades.

Verse 16. *Ten cubits shall be the length of a board*— Each of these boards or planks was about five yards and two feet and a half long, and thirty-two inches broad; and as they are said to be standing up, this was the HEIGHT of the tabernacle. The length being thirty cubits, twenty boards, one cubit and a half broad each, make about seventeen yards and a half, and the BREADTH was about five yards.

Verse 29. *Thou shalt overlay the boards with gold*— It is not said how thick the gold was by which these boards, etc., were overlaid; it was no doubt done with gold plates, but these must have been very thin, else the boards, etc., must have been insupportably heavy. The gold was probably something like our gold leaf, but not brought to so great a degree of tenuity.

Verse 31. *Thou shalt make a veil.*— פֶּרֶךְ parocheth, from פָּרַךְ parach, to break or rend; the inner veil of the tabernacle or temple, (2 Chronicles 3:14,) which broke, interrupted, or divided between the holy place and the most holy; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was standing. Compare Hebrews 9:8. The Septuagint constantly render it by **καταπετασμα**. Does not the Hebrew name פֶּרֶךְ parocheth moreover intimate the typical correspondence of this veil to the body or flesh of Christ? For this **καταπετασμα** or veil was his flesh, (Hebrews 10:20,) which, being rent, affords us a new and living way into the holiest of all, i.e., into heaven itself. Compare Hebrews 10:19, 20; 9:24. And accordingly when his blessed body was rent upon the cross, this veil also (**το καταπετασμα του ιερου**) **εσχισθη**, was RENT in twain from the top to the bottom; Matthew 27:51. — See Parkhurst, under the word פָּרַךְ.

The veil in the tabernacle was exceedingly costly; it was made of the same materials with the inner covering, blue, purple, scarlet, fine twined linen, embroidered with cherubim, etc. It served to divide the tabernacle into two parts: one, the outermost, called the holy place; the other, or innermost,

called the holy of holies, or the most holy place. In this was deposited the ark of the covenant, and the other things that were laid up by way of memorial. Into this the high priest alone was permitted to enter, and that only once in the year, on the great day of atonement. It was in this inner place that Jehovah manifested himself between the cherubim. The Jews say that this veil was four fingers' breadth in thickness, in order to prevent any person from seeing through it; but for this, as Calmet observes, there was no necessity, as there was no window or place for light in the tabernacle, and consequently the most simple veil would have been sufficient to obstruct the discovery of any thing behind it, which could only be discerned by the light that came in at the door, or by that afforded by the golden candlestick which stood on the outside of this veil.

Verse 32. *Their hooks shall be of gold*—**וַיִּבְנוּ** vaveyhem, which we translate their hooks, is rendered **κεφαλιδες**, capitals, by the Septuagint, and capita by the Vulgate. As the word **וַיִּבְנוּ** vav or vau, plural **וַיִּבְנוּ** vavim, occurs only in this book, Exodus 26:32, 37; 27:10, 11, 17; 36:36, 38; 38:10, 11, 12, 17, 19, 28; and is used in these places in reference to the same subject, it is very difficult to ascertain its precise meaning. Most commentators and lexicographers think that the ideal meaning of the word is to connect, attach, join to, hook; and that the letter **וַיִּבְנוּ** vau has its name from its hooklike form, and its use as a particle in the Hebrew language, because it serves to connect the words and members of a sentence, and the sentences of a discourse together, and that therefore hook must be the obvious meaning of the word in all the above texts. Calmet thinks this reason of no weight, because the **וַיִּבְנוּ** vau of the present Hebrew alphabet is widely dissimilar from the vau of the primitive Hebrew alphabet, as may be seen on the ancient shekels; on these the characters appear as in the word **JEHOVAH**, Exodus 28:36. This form bears no resemblance to a hook; nor does the Samaritan [Samaritan] vau, which appears to have been copied from this ancient character.

Calmet therefore contends, 1. That if Moses does not mean the capitals of the pillars by the **וַיִּבְנוּ** vavim of the text, he mentions them nowhere; and it would be strange that while he describes the pillars, their sockets, bases, fillets, etc., etc., with so much exactness, as will appear on consulting the preceding places, that he should make no mention of the capitals; or that

pillars, every way so correctly formed, should have been destitute of this very necessary ornament.

2. As Moses was commanded to make the hooks, **וַיִּבְרָא** vavim, of the pillars and their fillets of silver, Exodus 27:10, 11, and the hooks, vavim, of the pillars of the veil of gold, Exodus 36:36; and as one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels were employed in making these hooks, vavim, overlaying their chapters, **רִאשֵׁיהֶם** rasheyhem, their heads, and filleting them, Exodus 38:28; it is more reasonable to suppose that all this is spoken of the capitals of the pillars than of any kind of hooks, especially as hooks are mentioned under the word taches or clasps in other places. On the whole it appears much more reasonable to translate the original by capitals than by hooks.

After this verse the Samaritan Pentateuch introduces the ten first verses of chap. xxx., and this appears to be their proper place. Those ten verses are not repeated in the thirtieth chapter in the Samaritan, the chapter beginning with the 11th verse.

Verse 36. A hanging for the door of the tent— This may be called the first veil, as it occupied the door or entrance to the tabernacle; the veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies is called the second veil, Hebrews 9:3. These two veils and the inner covering of the tabernacle were all of the same materials, and of the same workmanship. See Exodus 27:16.

1. FOR the meaning and design of the tabernacle see Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:40": and while the reader is struck with the curious and costly nature of this building, as described by Moses, let him consider how pure and holy that Church should be of which it was a very expressive type; and what manner of person he should be in all holy conversation and godliness, who professes to be a member of that Church for which, it is written, Christ has given himself, that he might sanctify and cleanse it; that he might present it unto himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. See Ephesians 5:25-27.

2. In the Jewish tabernacle almost every thing was placed out of the sight of the people. The holy of holies was inaccessible, the testimony was comparatively hidden, as were also the mercy-seat and the Divine glory.

Under the Gospel all these things are laid open, the way to the holiest is made manifest, the veil is rent, and we have an entrance to the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; Hebrews 10:19, 20. How abundantly has God brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel! The awful distance is abolished, the ministry of reconciliation is proclaimed, the kingdom of heaven is opened to all believers, and the Lord is in his holy temple. Sinner, weary of thyself and thy transgressions, fainting under the load of thy iniquities, look to Jesus; he died for thee, and will save thee. Believer, stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has made thee free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.

CHAPTER 27

The altar of burnt-offerings, and its dimensions, 1; its horns, 2; pans, shovels, etc., 3; its grate and net work, 4, 5; its staves, 6, 7. Court of the tabernacle, with its pillars and hangings, 9-15. Gate of the court, its pillars, hangings, length, breadth, and height, 16-18. All the vessels used in the court of the tabernacle to be of brass, 19. The Israelites to provide pure olive oil for the light, 20. Every thing to be ordered by Aaron and his sons, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 1. *Thou shalt make an altar*— מִזְבֵּחַ *mizbeach*, from זָבַח *zabach*, to slay: Septuagint, *θυσιαστηριον*, from *θυσιαζω*, to sacrifice or from *θυω* to kill, etc. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 8:20".

Four square— As this altar was five cubits long and five broad, and the cubit is reckoned to be twenty-one inches, hence it must have been eight feet nine inches square, and about five feet three inches in height, the amount of three cubits, taken at the same ratio.

Verse 2. *Thou shalt make the horns of it*— The horns might have three uses: 1. For ornament. 2. To prevent carcasses, etc., from falling off. 3. To tie the victim to, previously to its being sacrificed. So David: Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar; Psalm 118:27. Horns were much used in all ancient altars among the heathen, and some of them were entirely constructed of the horns of the beasts that had been offered in sacrifice; but such altars appear to be erected rather as trophies in honor of their gods. On the reverses of several medals we find altars represented with horns at the corners. There is a medal of Antoninus on the reverse of which is an altar, on which a fire burns, consecrated *Divi Pio*, where the horns appear on each of the corners.

There is one of *Faustina*, on which the altar and its horns are very distinct, the legend *Pietas Augusta*. All the following have altars with horns. One of *Valerian*, legend *Consecratio*; one of *Claudius Gothicus*, same legend; one

of Quintillus, same legend; one of Crispina, with the legend Diis Genitalibus; and several others. See Numismatica Antiq., a MUSELLIO, under Consecratio, in the index.

Callimachus, in his Hymn to Apollo, line 60 introduces him constructing an altar of the horns of the animals slain by Diana: — πηξε δε βωμον εκ κερων κ. τ. λ. Martial has these words: Cornibus ara frequens.

Verse 3. *Thou shalt make his pans*— סִירוֹתָיו sirothaiiv, a sort or large brazen dishes, which stood under the altar to receive the ashes that fell through the grating.

His shovels— עֵי yaaiv. Some render this besoms; but as these were brazen instruments, it is more natural to suppose that some kind of fire-shovels are intended, or scuttles, which were used to carry off the ashes that fell through the grating into the large pan or siroth.

His basins— מִזְרֵקוֹתָיו mizrekothaiiv, from זָרַק zarak, to sprinkle or disperse; bowls or basins to receive the blood of the sacrifices, in order that it might be sprinkled on the people before the altar, etc.

His flesh-hooks— מִזְלֵגוֹתָיו mizlegothaiiu. That this word is rightly translated flesh-hooks is fully evident from 1 Samuel 2:13, where the same word is used in such a connection as demonstrates its meaning: And the priest's custom with the people was, that when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in the seething, with a FLESH-HOOK (מִזְלֵג mazleg) of three teeth (prongs) in his hand, and he struck it into the pan, etc.; all that the FLESH-HOOK (מִזְלֵג mazleg) brought up, the priest took for himself. It was probably a kind of trident, or fork with three prongs, and these bent to a right angle at the middle, as the ideal meaning of the Hebrew seems to imply crookedness or curvature in general.

His fire-pans— מַחֲתָתָיו machtothaiiu. Bishop Patrick and others suppose that “this was a larger sort of vessel, wherein, probably, the sacred fire which came down from heaven (Leviticus 9:24) was kept burning, whilst they cleansed the altar and the grate from the coals and the ashes; and while the altar was carried from one place to another, as it often was in the wilderness.

Verse 4. *Thou shalt make for it a grate*— Calmet supposes this altar to have been a sort of box, covered with brass plates, on the top of which was a grating to supply the fire with air, and permit the ashes to fall through into the siroth or pan that was placed below. At the four corners of the grating were four rings and four chains, by which it was attached to the four horns; and at the sides were rings for the poles of shittim wood with which it was carried. Even on this there is a great variety of opinions.

Verse 8. *Hollow with boards*— It seems to have been a kind of frame-work, and to have had nothing solid in the inside, and only covered with the grating at the top. This rendered it more light and portable.

Verse 9. *The court of the tabernacle*— The tabernacle stood in an enclosure or court, open at the top. This court was made with pillars or posts, and hangings. It was one hundred cubits, or about fifty-eight yards and a half, in length; the breadth we learn from Exodus 27:12, 18; and five cubits, or nearly three yards, high, Exodus 27:18. And as this was but half the height of the tabernacle, Exodus 26:16, that sacred building might easily be seen by the people from without.

Verse 16. *And for the gate of the court*— It appears that the hangings of this gate were of the same materials and workmanship with that of the inner covering of the tabernacle, and the outer and inner veil. See Exodus 26:36.

Verse 19. *All the vessels — shall be of brass.*— It would have been improper to have used instruments made of the more precious metals about this altar, as they must have been soon worn out by the severity of the service.

Verse 20. *Pure oil olive beaten*— That is, such oil as could easily be expressed from the olives after they had been bruised in a mortar; the mother drop, as it is called, which drops out of itself as soon as the olives are a little broken, and which is much purer than that which is obtained after the olives are put under the press.

Columella, who is a legitimate evidence in all such matters, says that the oil which flowed out of the fruit either spontaneously, or with little application of the force of the press, was of a much finer flavour than that

which was obtained otherwise. *Quoniam longe melioris saporis est, quod minore vi preli, quasi luxurians, defluxerit.* — COLUM., lib. xii., c. 50.

To cause the lamp to burn always— They were to be kept burning through the whole of the night, and some think all the day besides; but there is a difference of sentiment upon this subject. See the note on the following verse.

This oil and continual flame were not only emblematical of the unction and influences of the Holy Ghost, but also of that pure spirit of devotion which ever animates the hearts and minds of the genuine worshippers of the true God. The temple of VESTA, where a fire was kept perpetually burning, seems to have been formed on the model of the tabernacle; and from this the followers of Zeratusht, commonly called Zoroaster, appear to have derived their doctrine of the perpetual fire, which they still worship as an emblem of the Deity.

Verse 21. *The tabernacle of the congregation*— The place where all the assembly of the people were to worship, where the God of that assembly was pleased to reside, and to which, as the habitation of their king and protector, they were ever to turn their faces in all their adorations.

Before the testimony— That is, the ark where the tables of the covenant were deposited. See Exodus 25:16.

Aaron and his sons— These and their descendants being the only legitimate priests, God having established the priesthood in this family.

Shall order it from evening to morning— Josephus says the whole of the seven lamps burned all the night; in the morning four were extinguished, and three kept burning through the whole day. Others assert that the whole seven were kept lighted both day and night continually; but it appears sufficiently evident, from 1 Samuel 3:3, that these lamps were extinguished in the morning: And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep, etc. See also Exodus 30:8: And when Aaron LIGHTETH THE LAMPS AT EVEN. It appears therefore that the business of the priests was to light the lamps in the evening; and either to extinguish them in the morning, or permit them to burn out, having put in the night before as much oil as was necessary to last till daylight.

A statute for ever— This ordering of the lamps night and morning, and attendance on the service of the tabernacle, was a statute that was to be in full force while the tabernacle and temple stood, and should have its spiritual accomplishment in the Christian Church to the end of time. Reader, the tabernacle and temple are both destroyed; the Church of Christ is established in their place. The seven golden candlesticks were typical of this Church and the glorious light it possesses, Revelation 1:12-20; and Jesus Christ, the Fountain and Dispenser of this true light, walks in the midst of them. Reader, hast thou that celestial flame to enlighten and animate thy heart in all those acts of devotion which thou professest to pay to him as thy Maker, Redeemer, and Preserver? What is thy profession, and what thy religious acts and services, without this? A sounding brass, a tinkling cymbal.

TERTULLIAN asserts that all the ancient heathens borrowed their best notions from the sacred writings: “Which,” says he, “of your poets, which of your sophists, have not drunk from the fountain of the prophets? It is from those sacred springs that your philosophers have refreshed their thirsty spirits; and if they found any thing in the Holy Scriptures which hit their fancy, or which served their hypothesis, they took and turned it to a compliance with their own curiosity, not considering those writings to be sacred and unalterable, nor understanding their true sense, every one altering them according to his own fancy.”-Apologet.

The reader’s attention has already been called to this point several times in the preceding parts of this work, and the subject will frequently recur. At the conclusion of Exodus 25:31 (See Clarke’s note at “Exodus 25:31”) we had occasion to observe that the heathens had imitated many things in that Divine worship prescribed by Moses; but in application to their own corrupt system every thing was in a certain measure falsified and distorted, yet not so far as to prevent the grand outlines of primitive truth from being discerned. One of the most complete imitations of the tabernacle and its whole service is found in the very ancient temple of Hercules, founded probably by the Phoenicians, at Gades, now Cadiz, in Spain, so minutely described by Silius Italicus from actual observation. He observes that though the temple was at that time very ancient, yet the beams were the same that had been placed there by the founders, and that they were generally supposed to be incorruptible; a quality ascribed to the shittim

wood, termed *ξύλον ασηπτον*, incorruptible wood, by the Septuagint. That women were not permitted to enter this temple, and that no swine were ever suffered to come near it. That the priests did not wear party-coloured vestments, but were always clothed in fine linen, and their bonnets made of the same. That they offered incense to their god, their clothes being ungirded; for the same reason doubtless given Exodus 20:26, that in going up to the altar nothing unseemly might appear, and therefore they permitted their long robes to fall down to their feet. He adds, that by the laws of their forefathers they bore on their sacerdotal vestments the *latus clavus*, which was a round knob or stud of purple with which the robes of the Roman knights and senators were adorned, which these priests seem to have copied from the breastplate of judgment made of cunning work, embroidered with purple, blue, etc. See Exodus 28:15. They also ministered barefooted, their hair was trimmed or cut off, and they observed the strictest continency, and kept a perpetual fire burning on their altars. And he farther adds that there was no image or similitude of the gods to be seen in that sacred place. This is the substance of his description; but as some of my readers may wish to see the original, I shall here subjoin it. *Vulgatum (nec cassa fides) ab origine fani Impositas durare trabes, solasque per aevum Condentum novisse manus: hic credere gaudent Consedis Deum, seniumque repellere templis. Tum, queis fas et honos adyti penetralia nosse, Foemineos prohibent gressus, ac limine curant Setigeros arcere sues: nec discolor ulli Ante aras cultus: velantur corpora lino, Et Pelusiaco praefulget stamine vertex. Discinctis mos thura dare, atque, e lege parentum Sacrificam LATO vestem distinguere CLAVO. Pes nudus, tousaeque comae, castumque cubile, Irrestincta focis servant altaria flammae. Sed nulla effigies, simulacrave nota Deorum Majestate locum, et sacro implevere timore. Punicor., lib. iii., ver. 17-31.* This is such a remarkable case that I think myself justified in quoting it at length, as an extraordinary monument, though corrupted, of the tabernacle and its service. It is probable that the original founders had consecrated this temple to the true God, under the name of אֱלֹהִים EL, the strong God, or אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר EL GIBBOR, the strong, prevailing, and victorious God, Isaiah 9:6, out of whom the Greeks and Romans made their Hercules, or god of strength; and, to make it agree with this appropriation, the labors of Hercules were sculptured on the doors of this temple at Gades.

In foribus labor Alcidae Lernaea recisis Anguibus Hydra jacet, etc., etc.

CHAPTER 28

Aaron and his sons are set apart for the priest's office, 1. Garments to be provided for them, 2, 3. What these garments were, 4, and of what made, 5. The ephod, its shoulder-pieces, and girdle, 6-8. The two onyx stones, on which the names of the twelve tribes were to be engraven, 9-14. The breastplate of judgment; its twelve precious stones, engraving, rings, chains, and its use, 15-29. The Urim and Thummim, 30. The robe of the ephod, its border, bells, pomegranates, etc., and their use, 31-35. The plate of pure gold and its motto, 36, to be placed on Aaron's mitre, 37, 38. The embroidered coat for Aaron, 39. Coats, girdles, and bonnets, 40. Aaron and his sons to be anointed for the priest's office, 41. Other articles of clothing and their use, 42, 43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 1. Aaron-and his sons— The priesthood was to be restrained to this family because the public worship was to be confined to one place; and previously to this the eldest in every family officiated as priest, there being no settled place of worship. It has been very properly observed that, if Moses had not acted by the Divine appointment, he would not have passed by his own family, which continued in the condition of ordinary Levites, and established the priesthood, the only dignity in the nation, in the family of his brother Aaron. “The priests, however, had no power of a secular nature, nor does it appear from history that they ever arrived at any till the time of the Asmoneans or Maccabees.” See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 19:22”.

Verse 2. For glory and for beauty.— Four articles of dress were prescribed for the priests in ordinary, and four more for the high-priest. Those for the priests in general were a coat, drawers, a girdle, and a bonnet. Besides these the high-priest had a robe, an ephod, a breastplate, and a plate or diadem of gold on his forehead. The garments, says the sacred historian, were for honor and for beauty. They were emblematical of the office in which they ministered. 1. It was honorable. They were the

ministers of the Most High, and employed by him in transacting the most important concerns between God and his people, concerns in which all the attributes of the Divine Being were interested, as well as those which referred to the present and eternal happiness of his creatures. 2. They were for beauty. They were emblematical of that holiness and purity which ever characterize the Divine nature and the worship which is worthy of him, and which are essentially necessary to all those who wish to serve him in the beauty of holiness here below, and without which none can ever see his face in the realms of glory. Should not the garments of all those who minister in holy things still be emblematical of the things in which they minister? Should they not be for glory and beauty, expressive of the dignity of the Gospel ministry, and that beauty of holiness without which none can see the Lord? As the high-priest's vestments, under the law, were emblematical of what was to come, should not the vestments of the ministers of the Gospel bear some resemblance of what is come? Is then the dismal black, now worn by almost all kinds of priests and ministers, for glory and for beauty? Is it emblematical of any thing that is good, glorious, or excellent? How unbecoming the glad tidings announced by Christian ministers is a color emblematical of nothing but mourning and wo, sin, desolation, and death! How inconsistent the habit and office of these men! Should it be said, "These are only shadows, and are useless because the substance is come." I ask, Why then is black almost universally worn? why is a particular color preferred, if there be no signification in any? Is there not a danger that in our zeal against shadows, we shall destroy or essentially change the substance itself? Would not the same sort of argumentation exclude water in baptism, and bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? The white surplice in the service of the Church is almost the only thing that remains of those ancient and becoming vestments, which God commanded to be made for glory and beauty. Clothing, emblematical of office, is of more consequence than is generally imagined. Were the great officers of the crown, and the great officers of justice, to clothe themselves like the common people when they appear in their public capacity, both their persons and their decisions would be soon held in little estimation.

Verse 3. *Whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom*— So we find that ingenuity in arts and sciences, even those of the ornamental kind, comes

from God. It is not intimated here that these persons were filled with the spirit of wisdom for this purpose only; for the direction to Moses is, to select those whom he found to be expert artists, and those who were such, God shows by these words, had derived their knowledge from himself. Every man should be permitted as far as possible to follow the bent or direction of his own genius, when it evidently leads him to new inventions, and improvements on old plans. How much has both the labor of men and cattle been lessened by improvements in machinery! And can we say that the wisdom which found out these improvements did not come from God? No man, by course of reading or study, ever acquired a genius of this kind: we call it natural, and say it was born with the man. Moses teaches us to consider it as Divine. Who taught NEWTON to ascertain the laws by which God governs the universe, through which discovery a new source of profit and pleasure has been opened to mankind through every part of the civilized world? No reading, no study, no example, formed his genius. God, who made him, gave him that compass and bent of mind by which he made those discoveries, and for which his name is celebrated in the earth. When I see NAPIER inventing the logarithms; COPERNICUS, DES CARTES, and KEPLER contributing to pull down the false systems of the universe, and NEWTON demonstrating the true one; and when I see the long list of PATENTEES of useful inventions, by whose industry and skill long and tedious processes in the necessary arts of life have been shortened, labor greatly lessened, and much time and expense saved; I then see, with Moses, men who are wise-hearted, whom God has filled with the spirit of wisdom for these very purposes; that he might help man by man, and that, as time rolls on, he might give to his intelligent creatures such proofs of his Being, infinitely varied wisdom, and gracious providence, as should cause them to depend on him, and give him that glory which is due to his name.

How pointedly does the Prophet Isaiah refer to this sort of teaching as coming from God, even in the most common and less difficult arts of life! The whole passage is worthy of the reader's most serious attention.

“Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat, and the appointed barley, and the rye, in their place? For HIS GOD DOTH INSTRUCT HIM to discretion, and doth teach him. For the fitches are

not threshed with a threshing-instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working," Isaiah 28:24-29.

But let us take heed not to run into extremes here; machinery is to help man, not to render him useless. The human hand is the great and most perfect machine, let it not be laid aside. In our zeal for machinery we are rendering all the lower classes useless; filling the land with beggary and vice, and the workhouses with paupers; and ruining the husbandmen with oppressive poor-rates. Keep machinery as a help to the human hand, and to lighten the labor, but never let it supersede either.

This principle, that God is the author of all arts and sciences, is too little regarded: Every good gift, and every perfect gift, says St. James, comes from above, from the FATHER of LIGHTS. Why has God constructed every part of nature with such a profusion of economy and skill, if he intended this skill should never be discovered by man, or that man should not attempt to examine his works in order to find them out? From the works of CREATION what proofs, astonishing and overwhelming proofs, both to believers and infidels, have been drawn both of the nature, being, attributes, and providence of God! What demonstrations of all these have the Archbishop of Cambray, Dr. Nieuwentyt, Dr. Derham, and Mr. Charles Bonnet, given in their philosophical works! And who gave those men this wisdom? GOD, from whom alone MIND, and all its attributes, proceed. While we see Count de Buffon and Swammerdam examining and tracing out all the curious relations, connections, and laws of the ANIMAL kingdom; -Tournefort, Ray, and Linne, those of the VEGETABLE;-Theophrastus, Werner, Klaproth, Cronstedt, Morveau, Reamur, Kirwan, and a host of philosophical chemists, Boerhaave, Boyle, Stahl, Priestley, Lavoisier, Fourcroy, Black, and Davy, those of the MINERAL; the discoveries they have made, the latent and important properties of vegetables and minerals which they have developed, the powerful machines which, through their discoveries, have been constructed, by the operations of which the human slave is restored to his own place in society, the brute saved from his destructive toil in our

manufactories, and inanimate, unfeeling NATURE caused to perform the work of all these better, more expeditiously, and to much more profit; shall we not say that the hand of GOD is in all this? Only I again say, let machinery aid man, and not render him useless. The nations of Europe are pushing mechanical power to a destructive extreme. He alone girded those eminent men, though many of them knew him not; he inspired them with wisdom and understanding; by his all-pervading and all-informing spirit he opened to them the entrance of the paths of the depths of science, guided them in their researches, opened to them successively more and more of his astonishing treasures, crowned their persevering industry with his blessing and made them his ministers for good to mankind. The antiquary and the medalist are also his agents; their discernment and penetration come from him alone. By them, how many dark ages of the world have been brought to light; how many names of men and places, how many customs and arts, that were lost, restored! And by their means a few busts, images, stones, bricks, coins, rings, and culinary utensils, the remaining wrecks of long-past numerous centuries have supplied the place of written documents, and cast a profusion of light on the history of man, and the history of providence. And let me add, that the providence which preserved these materials, and raised up men to decipher and explain them, is itself gloriously illustrated by them.

Of all those men (and the noble list might be greatly swelled) we may say the same that Moses said of Bezaleel and Aholiab: “GOD hath filled them with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge; and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works; to work in gold and in silver, and in brass, in cutting of stones, carving of timber, and in all manner of workmanship;” Exodus 31:3-6. “The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein;” Psalm 111:2.

Verse 4. Breastplate—**חֹשֶׁן** choshen. See Clarke on “Exodus 25:7”.

Ephod—**אֶפֶד**. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 25:7”.

Robe—**מַעִיל** meil, from **עָלָה** alah, to go up, go upon; hence the meil may be considered as an upper coat, a surtout. It is described by Josephus as a garment that reaches down to the feet, not made of two distinct pieces, but

was one entire long garment, woven throughout. This was immediately under the ephod. See Clarke on “Exodus 28:31”, etc.

Broidered coat— **כתנת תשבץ** kethoneth, tashbets, what Parkhurst translates a close, strait coat or garment; according to Josephus, “a tunic circumscribing or closely encompassing the body, and having tight sleeves for the arms.” This was immediately under the meil or robe, and answered the same purpose to the priests that our shirts do to us. See Clarke on “Exodus 28:13”.

Mitre— **מצנפת** mitsnepheth. As this word comes from the root **צנפ** tsanaph, to roll or wrap round, it evidently means that covering of the head so universal in the eastern countries which we call turban or turband, corrupted from the Persian [P] doolbend, which signifies what encompasses and binds the head or body; and hence is applied, not only to this covering of the head, but to a sash in general. As the Persian word is compounded of [P] dool, or dawal, a revolution, vicissitude, wheel, etc., and [P] binden, to bind; it is very likely that the Hebrew words **דור** dur, to go round, and **בנט** benet, a band, may have been the original of doolbend and turband. It is sometimes called [Persiac] serbend, from [P] ser, the head, and [P] binden, to bind. The turban consists generally of two parts: the cap, which goes on the head; and the long sash of muslin, linen, or silk, that is wrapped round the head. These sashes are generally several yards in length.

A girdle— **אבנט** abnet, a belt or girdle; see before. This seems to have been the same kind of sash or girdle, so common in the eastern countries, that confined the loose garments about the waist; and in which their long skirts were tucked up when they were employed in work, or on a journey. After being tied round the waist, the two ends of it fell down before, to the skirts of their robes.

Verse 8. The curious girdle of the ephod— The word **חשב** chesheb, rendered here curious girdle, signifies merely a kind of diaper, or embroidered work; (see Clarke’s note on “Exodus 26:1”); and it is widely different from **אבנט** abnet, which is properly translated girdle Exodus 28:4. The meaning therefore of the text, according to some, is this, that the two pieces, Exodus 28:7, which connected the parts of the ephod at the

shoulders where the onyx stones were set, should be of the same texture with the ephod itself, i.e., of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, embroidered together. But others suppose that some kind of a girdle is meant, different from the abnet, Exodus 28:39, being only of plain workmanship.

Verse 9. *Two onyx stones*— See Clarke on “Exodus 25:7”.

Verse 11. *Like the engravings of a signet*— So signets or seals were in use at this time, and engraving on precious stones was then an art, and this art, which was one of the most elegant and ornamental, was carried in ancient times to a very high pitch of perfection, and particularly among the ancient Greeks; such a pitch of perfection as has never been rivalled, and cannot now be even well imitated. And it is very likely that the Greeks themselves borrowed this art from the ancient Hebrews, as we know it flourished in Egypt and Palestine long before it was known in Greece.

Verse 12. *Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord*— He was to consider that he was the representative of the children of Israel; and the stones on the ephod and the stones on the breastplate were for a memorial to put Aaron in remembrance that he was the priest and mediator of the twelve tribes; and, speaking after the manner of men, God was to be put in mind of the children of Israel, their wants, etc., as frequently as the high priest appeared before him with the breastplate and the ephod. See Exodus 28:29.

Verse 13. *Ouches of gold*— **משבצת** mishbetsoth, strait places, sockets to insert the stones in, from **שבץ** shabats, to close, inclose, straiten.

Socket, in this place, would be a more proper translation, as ouch cannot be traced up to any legitimate authority. It appears sometimes to signify a hook, or some mode of attaching things together.

Verse 15. *The breastplate of judgment*— **חש משפט** choshen mishpat, the same as the **חש** choshen, see Exodus 25:7, but here called the breastplate of judgment, because the high priest wore it upon his breast when he went to ask counsel of the Lord, to give judgment in any particular case; as also when he sat as judge to teach the law, and to determine controversies. See Leviticus 10:11; Deuteronomy 17:8, 9.

Verse 16. Four-square it shall be— Here we have the exact dimensions of this breastplate, or more properly breast-piece or stomacher. It was a span in length and breadth when doubled, and consequently two spans long one way before it was doubled. Between these doublings, it is supposed, the Urim and Thummim were placed. See Clarke on “Exodus 28:30”.

Verse 17. Four rows of stones— With a name on each stone, making in all the twelve names of the twelve tribes. And as these were disposed according to their birth, Exodus 28:10, we may suppose they stood in this order, the stones being placed also in the order in which they are produced, Exodus 28:17-20: —

FIRST ROW

Upon a Sardius or Ruby was engraven Reuben רֶאֱוֹב

Topaz Simeon שִׁמְעוֹן

Carbuncle Levi לֵוִי

SECOND ROW

— Sons of Upon an Emerald was engraven Judah יְהוּדָה

Leah. a Sapphire

Issachar יִשָּׂשכָר a Diamond

Zebulun זְבוּלֹן

SONS OF THIRD ROW

Billah, Upon a Ligure or Jacinth was engraven Dan דָּן

Rachael's Agate

Naphtali נַפְתָּלִי maid. Amethyst

Gad גָּד Sons of Zilpah,

SECOND ROW

Leah's Upon a Beryl, or Crysolite was engraven

Asher אֲשֵׁר maid Onyx, or Sardonyx

Joseph יוֹסֵף Sons of Jasper

Benjamin בְּנִימִן Rachel.

In this order the Jews in general agree to place them. See the Jerusalem Targum on this place, and the Targum upon Canticles, Song of Solomon 5:14; and see also Ainsworth. The Targum of Jonathan says, “These four rows were placed opposite to the four quarters of the world; but this could only be when laid down horizontally, for when it hung on the breast of the high priest it could have had no such position. As it is difficult to ascertain in every case what these precious stones were, it may be necessary to consider this subject more at large.

1. A SARDIUS, **מדם** odem, from the root adam, he was ruddy; the ruby, a beautiful gem of a fine deep red color. The sardius, or sardie stones, is defined to be a precious stone of a blood-red color, the best of which come from Babylon.

2. A TOPAZ, **פטרדה** pitdah, a precious stone of a pale dead green, with a mixture of yellow, sometimes of a fine yellow; and hence it was called chrysolite by the ancients, from its gold color. It is now considered by mineralogists as a variety of the sapphire.

3. CARBUNCLE, **ברקת** bareketh, from **ברק** barak, to lighten, glitter, or glisten; a very elegant gem of a deep red color, with an admixture of scarlet. From its bright lively color it had the name carbunculus, which signifies a little coal; and among the Greeks **ανθραξ** anthrax, a coal, because when held before the sun it appears like a piece of bright burning charcoal. It is found only in the East Indies, and there but rarely.

4. EMERALD, **נפך** nophech, the same with the ancient smaragdus; it is one of the most beautiful of all the gems, and is of a bright green color, without any other mixture. The true oriental emerald is very scarce, and is only found at present in the kingdom of Cambay.

5. SAPPHIRE, **ספיר** sappir. See this described, Exodus 24:10.

6. DIAMOND, **יהלם** yahalom, from **הלם** halam, to beat or smite upon. The diamond is supposed to have this name from its resistance to a blow, for the ancients have assured us that if it be struck with a hammer, upon an anvil, it will not break, but either break them or sink into the surface of that which is softest. This is a complete fable, as it is well known that the diamond can be easily broken, and is capable of being entirely volatilized

or consumed by the action of fire. It is, however, the hardest, as it is the most valuable, of all the precious stones hitherto discovered, and one of the most combustible substances in nature.

7. FIGURE, **לשם** leshem, the same as the jacinth or hyacinth; a precious stone of a dead red or cinnamon color, with a considerable mixture of yellow.

8. AGATE, **שבו** shebo. This is a stone that assumes such a variety of hues and appearances, that Mr. Parkhurst thinks it derives its name from the root **שב** shab, to turn, to change, “as from the circumstance of the agate changing its appearance without end, it might be called the varier.” Agates are met with so variously figured in their substance, that they seem to represent the sky, the stars, clouds, earth, water, rocks, villages, fortifications, birds, trees, flowers, men, and animals of different kinds. Agates have a white, reddish, yellowish, or greenish ground. They are only varieties of the flint, and the lowest in value of all the precious stones.

9. AMETHYST, **אחלמה** achlamah, a gem generally of a purple color, composed of a strong blue and deep red. The oriental amethyst is sometimes of a dove color, though some are purple, and others white like diamonds. The name amethyst is Greek, **αμεθυστος**, and it was so called because it was supposed that it prevented inebriation.

10. The BERYL, **תרש** tarshish. Mr. Parkhurst derives this name from **תר** tar, to go round, and **שש** shash, to be vivid or bright in color. If the beryl be intended, it is a pellucid gem of a bluish green color, found in the East Indies, and about the gold mines of Peru. But some of the most learned mineralogists and critics suppose the chrysolite to be meant. This is a gem of a yellowish green color, and ranks at present among the topazes. Its name in Greek, chrysolite, **χρυσολιθος**, literally signifies the golden stone.

11. The ONYX, **שהם** shoham. See Clarke note on “Genesis 2:12”; See Clarke note on “Exodus 25:7”. There are a great number of different sentiments on the meaning of the original; it has been translated beryl, emerald, prasius, sapphire, sardius, ruby, cornelian, onyx, and sardonyx. It is likely that the name may signify both the onyx and sardonyx. This latter

stone is a mixture of the chalcedony and cornelian, sometimes in strata, at other times blended together, and is found striped with white and red strata or layers. It is generally allowed that there is no real difference, except in the degree of hardness, between the onyx, cornelian, chalcedony, sardonyx, and agate. It is well known that the onyx is of a darkish horny color, resembling the hoof or nail, from which circumstance it has its name. It has often a plate of a bluish white or red in it, and when on one or both sides of this white there appears a plate of a reddish color, the jewellers, says Woodward, call the stone a sardonyx.

12. JASPER, **יָשֶׁפֶה** yashepneh. The similarity of the Hebrew name has determined most critics and mineralogists to adopt the jasper as intended by the original word. The jasper is usually defined a hard stone, of a beautiful bright green color, sometimes clouded with white, and spotted with red or yellow. Mineralogists reckon not less than fifteen varieties of this stone: 1. green; 2. red; 3. yellow; 4. brown; 5. violet; 6. black; 7. bluish grey; 8. milky white; 9. variegated with green, red, and yellow clouds; 10. green with red specks; 11. veined with various colors, apparently in the form of letters; 12. with variously coloured zones; 13. with various colors mixed without any order; 14. with many colors together; 15. mixed with particles of agate. It can scarcely be called a precious stone; it is rather a dull opaque rock.

In examining what has been said on these different precious stones by the best critics, I have adopted such explanations as appeared to me to be best justified by the meaning and use of the original words; but I cannot say that the stones which I have described are precisely those intended by the terms in the Hebrew text, nor can I take upon me to assert that the tribes are arranged exactly in the manner intended by Moses; for as these things are not laid down in the text in such a way as to preclude all mistake, some things must be left to conjecture. Of several of these stones many fabulous accounts are given by the ancients, and indeed by the moderns also: these I have in general omitted because they are fabulous; as also all spiritual meanings which others have found so plentifully in each stone, because I consider some of them puerile, all futile, and not a few dangerous.

Verse 30. *Thou shalt put in the breastplate -the Urim and the Thummim*— What these were has, I believe, never yet been discovered. 1.

They are nowhere described. 2. There is no direction given to Moses or any other how to make them. 3. Whatever they were, they do not appear to have been made on this occasion. 4. If they were the work of man at all, they must have been the articles in the ancient tabernacle, matters used by the patriarchs, and not here particularly described, because well known. 5. It is probable that nothing material is designed. This is the opinion of some of the Jewish doctors. Rabbi Menachem on this chapter says, “The Urim and Thummim were not the work of the artificer; neither had the artificers or the congregation of Israel in them any work or any voluntary offering; but they were a mystery delivered to Moses from the mouth of God, or they were the work of God himself, or a measure of the Holy Spirit.” 6. That God was often consulted by Urim and Thummim, is sufficiently evident from several scriptures; but how or in what manner he was thus consulted appears in none. 7. This mode of consultation, whatever it was, does not appear to have been in use from the consecration of Solomon’s temple to the time of its destruction; and after its destruction it is never once mentioned. Hence the Jews say that the five following things, which were in the first temple, were wanting in the second: “1. The ark with the mercy-seat and cherubim; 2. The fire which came down from heaven; 3. The shechinah or Divine presence; 4. The Holy Spirit, i.e., the gift of prophecy; and 5. The Urim and Thummim.” 8. As the word אֲוֹרִים urim signifies LIGHTS, and the word תְּמִיִּם tummim, PERFECTIONS, they were probably designed to point out the light — the abundant information, in spiritual things, afforded by the wonderful revelation which God made of himself by and under the LAW; and the perfection-entire holiness and strict conformity to himself, which this dispensation required, and which are introduced and accomplished by that dispensation of light and truth, the GOSPEL, which was prefigured and pointed out by the law and its sacrifices, etc.; and in this light the subject has been viewed by the Vulgate, where the words are translated *doctrina et veritas*, doctrine and truth — a system of teaching proceeding from truth itself. The Septuagint translate the original by *δηλωσις και αληθεια*, the manifestation and the truth; meaning probably the manifestation which God made of himself to Moses and the Israelites, and the truth which he had revealed to them, of which this breastplate should be a continual memorial.

All the other versions express nearly the same things, and all refer to intellectual and spiritual subjects, such as light, truth, manifestation, doctrine, perfection, etc., etc., not one of them supposing that any thing material is intended. The Samaritan text is however different; it adds here a whole clause not found in the Hebrew: [Samaritan] veasitha eth haurim veeth hattummim, Thou shalt make the Urim and the Thummim. If this reading be admitted, the Urim and Thummim were manufactured on this occasion as well as the other articles. However it be, they are indescribable and unknown.

The manner in which the Jews suppose that the inquiry was made by Urim and Thummim is the following: “When they inquired the priest stood with his face before the ark, and he that inquired stood behind him with his face to the back of the priest; and the inquirer said, Shall I go up? or, Shall I not go up? And forthwith the Holy Ghost came upon the priest, and he beheld the breastplate, and saw therein by the vision of prophecy, Go up, or Go not up, in the letters which showed forth themselves upon the breastplate before his face.” See Numbers 27:18, 21; Judges 1:1; Judges 20:18, 28; 1 Samuel 23:9-12; 28:6; and see Ainsworth.

It was the letters that formed the names of the twelve tribes upon the breastplate, which the Jews suppose were used in a miraculous way to give answers to the inquirers. Thus when David consulted the Lord whether he should go into a city of Judea, three letters which constituted the word **עלה** aloh, Go, rose up or became prominent in the names on the breastplate; **ע** ain, from the name of Simeon, **ל** lamed from the name of Levi, and **ה** he from the name of Judah. But this supposition is without proof.

Among the Egyptians, a breastplate something like that of the Jewish high-priest was worn by the president of the courts of justice. Diodorus Siculus has these words: **εφορει δ' ουτος περι τον τραχηλον εκ χρυσης αλυσεως ηρητημενον ζωδιον των πολυτελων λιθων ο προσηγορευον αληθειαν.** “He bore about his neck a golden chain, at which hung an image set about with or composed of precious stones, which was called TRUTH.”—Bib. Hist., lib. i., chap. 75., p. 225. And he farther adds, “that as soon as the president put this gold chain about his neck, the legal proceedings commenced, but not before. And that when the

case of the plaintiff and defendant had been fully and fairly heard, the president turned the image of truth, which was hung to the golden chain round his neck, toward the person whose cause was found to be just," by which he seemed to intimate that truth was on his side.

Ælian, in his *Hist. Var.*, lib. xxxiv., gives the same account. "The chief justice or president," he says, "was always a priest, of a venerable age and acknowledged probity. *ειχε δε και αγαλμα περι τον αυχενα εκ σαπφειρου λιθου, και εκαλειτο αγαλμα αληθεια*. And he had an image which was called TRUTH engraved on a sapphire, and hung about his neck with a gold chain."

Peter du Val mentions a mummy which he saw at Cairo, in Egypt, round the neck of which was a chain, having a golden plate suspended, which lay on the breast of the person, and on which was engraved the figure of a bird. This person was supposed to have been one of the supreme judges; and in all likelihood the bird, of what kind he does not mention, was the emblem of truth, justice, or innocence.

I have now before me paintings, taken on the spot by a native Chinese, of the different courts in China where criminal causes were tried. In these the judge always appears with a piece of embroidery on his breast, on which a white bird of the ardea or heron kind is represented, with expanded wings. All these seem to have been derived from the same source, both among the Hebrews, the Egyptians, and the Chinese. And it is certainly not impossible that the two latter might have borrowed the notion and use of the breastplate of judgment from the Hebrews, as it was in use among them long before we have any account of its use either among the Egyptians or Chinese. The different mandarins have a breast-piece of this kind.

Verse 31. *The robe of the ephod*— See Clarke on "Exodus 28:4". From this description, and from what Josephus says, who must have been well acquainted with its form, we find that this meil, or robe, was one long straight piece of blue cloth, with a hole or opening in the center for the head to pass through; which hole or opening was bound about, that it might not be rent in putting it on or taking it off, Exodus 28:32.

Verse 35. *His sound shall be heard*— The bells were doubtless intended to keep up the people's attention to the very solemn and important office which the priest was then performing, that they might all have their hearts engaged in the work; and at the same time to keep Aaron himself in remembrance that he ministered before Jehovah, and should not come into his presence without due reverence.

That he die not.— This seems an allusion to certain ceremonies which still prevail in the eastern countries. Jehovah appeared among his people in the tabernacle as an emperor in his tent among his troops. At the doors of the tents or palaces of grandees was generally placed some sonorous body, either of metal or wood, which was struck to advertise those within that a person prayed for admittance to the presence of the king, etc. As the tabernacle had no door, but a veil, and consequently nothing to prevent any person from going in, Aaron was commanded to put the bells on his robe, that his sound might be heard when he went into the holy place before the Lord.

Verse 36. *Thou shalt make a plate of pure gold*— The word צִיץ *tsits*, which we render plate, means a flower, or any appearance of this kind, The Septuagint translate it by *πεταλον*, a leaf; hence we might be led to infer that this plate resembled a wreath of flowers or leaves; and as it is called, Exodus 29:6, *נֵזֶר* *nezer*, a crown, and the author of the book of Wisdom, chap. 18:24, who was a Jew, and may be supposed to know well what it was, calls it *διαδημα*, it was probably of the form, not of the ancient diadem, but rather of the radiated crown worn by the ancient Roman emperors, which was a gold band that went round the head from the vertex to the occiput; but the position of the Jewish sacerdotal crown was different, as that went round the forehead, under which there was a blue lace or fillet, Exodus 28:37, which was probably attached to the mitre or turban, and formed its lowest part or border.

HOLINESS TO THE LORD.— This we may consider as the grand badge of the sacerdotal office. 1. The priest was to minister in holy things. 2. He was the representative of a holy God. 3. He was to offer sacrifices to make an atonement for and to put away SIN. 4. He was to teach the people the way of righteousness and true holiness. 5. As mediator, he was to obtain for them those Divine influences by which they should be made holy, and be

prepared to dwell with holy spirits in the kingdom of glory. 6. In the sacerdotal office he was the type of that holy and just ONE who, in the fullness of time, was to come and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

It is allowed on all hands that this inscription was, in the primitive Hebrew character, such as appears upon ancient shekels, and such as was used before the Babylonish captivity, and probably from the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. The **קדש ליהוה** Kodesh Laihovah, of the present Hebrew text, would in those ancient characters appear thus:—

[Ancient Hebrew]

which, in the modern Samaritan character, evidently derived from that above, is as follows: [Samaritan]. And the word [Samaritan] in this ancient and original character is the famous Tetragrammaton, or word of four letters, which, to the present day, the Jews will neither write nor pronounce. The Jews teach that these letters were embossed on the gold, and not engraven in it, and that the plate on which they were embossed was about two fingers broad, and that it occupied a space on the forehead between the hair and the eyebrows. But it is most likely that it was attached to the lower part of the mitre.

Verse 38. *May bear the iniquity of the holy things*— **ונשא אהרן**

את עו הקדשים venasa Aharon eth avon hakkodashim. And Aaron shall bear (in a vicarious and typical manner) the sin of the holy or separated things—offerings or sacrifices. Aaron was, as the high priest of the Jews, the type or representative of our blessed Redeemer; and as he offered the sacrifices prescribed by the law to make an atonement for sin, and was thereby represented as bearing their sins because he was bound to make an atonement for them; so Christ is represented as bearing their sins, i.e., the punishment due to the sins of the world, in his becoming a sacrifice for the human race. See Isaiah 53:4, 12, where the same verb, **נשא** nasa, is used; and see 1 Peter 2:24. By the inscription on the plate on his forehead Aaron was acknowledged as the holy minister of the holy God. To the people's services and their offerings much imperfection was attached, and therefore Aaron was represented, not only as making an atonement in general for the sins of the people by the sacrifices they brought, but also as making an

atonement for the imperfection of the atonement itself, and the manner in which it was brought.

It shall be always upon his forehead— The plate inscribed with Holiness to the Lord should be always on his forehead, to teach that the law required holiness; that this was its aim, design, and end: and the same is required by the Gospel; for under this dispensation it is expressly said, Without holiness no man shall see the Lord; Hebrews 12:14.

Verse 40. *For glory and for beauty.*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 28:2".

Verse 42. *Linen breeches*— This command had in view the necessity of purity and decency in every part of the Divine worship, in opposition to the shocking indecency of the pagan worship in general, in which the priests often ministered naked, as in the sacrifices to Bacchus, etc.

ON the garments of the high priest some general reflections have already been made; see Exodus 28:2: See Clarke's note on "Exodus 28:2". and to what is there said it may be just necessary to add, that there can be no doubt of their being all emblematical of spiritual things; but of which, and in what way, no man can positively say. Many commentators have entered largely into this subject, and have made many edifying and useful remarks; but where no clue is given to guide us through a labyrinth in which the possibility of mistake is every moment occurring, it is much better not to attempt to be wise above what is written; for however edifying the reflections may be which are made on these subjects, yet, as they are not clearly deducible from the text itself, they can give little satisfaction to a sincere inquirer after truth. These garments were all made for glory and for beauty, and this is the general account that it has pleased God to give of their nature and design: in a general sense, they represented,

1. The necessity of purity in every part of the Divine worship;
2. The necessity of an atonement for sin;
3. The purity and justice of the Divine Majesty; and,
4. The absolute necessity of that holiness without which none can see the Lord.

And these subjects should be diligently kept in view by all those who wish to profit by the curious and interesting details given in this chapter. In the notes these topics are frequently introduced.

CHAPTER 29

Ceremonies to be used in consecrating Aaron and his sons, 1-3. They are to be washed, 4. Aaron is to be clothed with the holy vestments, 5, 6; to be anointed, 7. His sons to be clothed and girded, 8, 9. They are to offer a bullock for a sin-offering, 10-14; and a ram for a burnt-offering, 15-18; and a second ram for a consecration-offering, 19-22. A loaf, a cake, and a wafer or thin cake, for a wave-offering, 23-25. The breast of the wave-offering and the shoulder of the heave-offering to be sanctified, 26-28. Aaron's vestments to descend to his son, who shall succeed him, 29, 30. Aaron and his sons to eat the flesh of the ram of consecration, 31, 32. No stranger to eat of it, 33. Nothing of it to be left till the morning, but to be burnt with fire, 34. Seven days to be employed in consecrating Aaron and his sons, 35-37. Two lambs, one for the morning and the other for the evening sacrifice, to be offered continually, 38-42. God promises to sanctify Israel with his glory, and to dwell among them, 43-46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. *Take one young bullock*— This consecration did not take place till after the erection of the tabernacle. See Leviticus 8:9-14.

Verse 2. *Unleavened bread*— Three kinds of bread as to its form are mentioned here, but all unleavened: 1. **מצות** matstsoth, unleavened bread, no matter in what shape. See Exodus 12:8. 2. **חלת** challoth, cakes, pricked or perforated, as the root implies. 3. **רקיקי** rekikey, an exceeding thin cake, from **רק** rak, to be attenuated, properly enough translated wafer. The manner in which these were prepared is sufficiently plain from the text, and probably these were the principal forms in which flour was prepared for household use during their stay in the wilderness. These were all waved before the Lord, Exodus 29:24, as an acknowledgment that the bread that sustains the body, as well as the mercy which saves the soul, comes from God alone.

Verse 4. *Thou shalt wash them*— This was done emblematically, to signify that they were to put away all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God; 2 Corinthians 7:1.

Verse 5. *Thou shalt take the garments*— As most offices of spiritual and secular dignity had appropriate habits and insignia, hence, when a person was appointed to an office and habited for the purpose, he was said to be invested with that office, from in, used intensively, and vestio, I clothe, because he was then clothed with the vestments peculiar to that office.

Verse 7. *Then shalt thou take the anointing oil*— It appears, from Isaiah 61:1, that anointing with oil, in consecrating a person to any important office, whether civil or religious, was considered as an emblem of the communication of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. This ceremony was used on three occasions, viz., the installation of prophets, priests, and kings, into their respective offices. But why should such an anointing be deemed necessary? Because the common sense of men taught them that all good, whether spiritual or secular, must come from God, its origin and cause. Hence it was taken for granted, 1. That no man could foretell events unless inspired by the Spirit of God. And therefore the prophet was anointed, to signify the communication of the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. 2. That no person could offer an acceptable sacrifice to God for the sins of men, or profitably minister in holy things, unless enlightened, influenced, and directed by the Spirit of grace and holiness. Hence the priest was anointed, to signify his being Divinely qualified for the due performance of his sacred functions. 3. That no man could enact just and equitable laws, which should have the prosperity of the community and the welfare of the individual continually in view, or could use the power confided to him only for the suppression of vice and the encouragement of virtue, but that man who was ever under the inspiration of the Almighty. Hence kings were inaugurated by anointing with oil. Two of these officers only exist in all civilized nations, the sacerdotal and regal; and in some countries the priest and king are still consecrated by anointing. In the Hebrew language מִשַׁח *mashach* signifies to anoint, and מָשִׁיחַ *mashiach*, the anointed person. But as no man was ever dignified by holding the three offices, so no person ever had the title *mashiach*, the anointed one, but Jesus the Christ. He alone is King of kings and Lord of lords: the king who governs the universe, and rules in the hearts of his

followers; the prophet, to instruct men in the way wherein they should go; and the great high priest, to make atonement for their sins. Hence he is called the Messiah, a corruption of the word **הַמָּשִׁיחַ** hammashiach, THE anointed ONE, in Hebrew; which gave birth to **ὁ χριστός**, ho Christos, which has precisely the same signification in Greek. Of him, Melchizedek, Abraham, Aaron, David, and others were illustrious types. But none of these had the title of THE MESSIAH, or THE ANOINTED OF GOD. This does, and ever will, belong exclusively to JESUS the CHRIST.

Verse 10. *Shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock.*— By this rite the animal was consecrated to God, and was then proper to be offered in sacrifice. Imposition of hands also signified that they offered the life of this animal as an atonement for their sins, and to redeem their lives from that death which, through their sinfulness, they had deserved. In the case of the sin-offering and trespass-offering, the person who brought the sacrifice placed his hands on the head of the animal between the horns, and confessed his sin over the sin-offering, and his trespass over the trespass-offering, saying, “I have sinned, I have done iniquity; I have trespassed, and have done thus and thus; and do return by repentance before thee, and with this I make atonement.” Then the animal was considered as vicariously bearing the sins of the person who brought it. — Exodus 29:14

Verse 14. *It is a sin-offering.*— See Clarke note on “Genesis 4:7; See Clarke note on “Genesis 13:13; See Clarke note on “Leviticus 7:1, etc.

Verse 18. *It is a burnt-offering*— See Clarke note on “Leviticus 7:1, etc.

Verse 19. *The other ram*— There were two rams brought on this occasion: one was for a burnt-offering, and was to be entirely consumed; the other was the ram of consecration, Exodus 29:22, **מִלֵּימֵי אֵיל** eil milluim, the ram of filling up, because when a person was dedicated or consecrated to God, his hands were filled with some particular offering proper for the occasion, which he presented to God. Hence the word consecration signifies the filling up or filling the hands, some part of the sacrifice being put into the hands of such persons, denoting thereby that they had now a right to offer sacrifices and oblations to God. It seems in reference to this ancient mode of consecration, that in the Church of England, when a

person is ordained priest, a Bible is put into his hands with these words, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God," etc. The filling the hands refers also to the presents which, in the eastern countries, every inferior was obliged to bring when brought into the presence of a superior. Thus the sacrifice was considered, not only as an atonement for sin, but also as a means of approach and as a present to Jehovah.

Verse 20. *Take of his blood*— The putting the blood of the sacrifice on the tip of the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot, was doubtless intended to signify that they should dedicate all their faculties and powers to the service of God; their ears to the hearing and study of his law, their hands to diligence in the sacred ministry and to all acts of obedience, and their feet to walking in the way of God's precepts. And this sprinkling appears to have been used to teach them that they could neither hear, work, nor walk profitably, uprightly, and well-pleasing in the sight of God, without this application of the blood of the sacrifice. And as the blood of rams, bulls, and goats, could never take away sin, does not this prove to us that something infinitely better is shadowed out, and that we can do nothing holy and pure in the sight of a just and holy God, but through the blood of atonement? See Clarke note on "Exodus 30:20".

Verse 22. *The fat and the rump*— The rump or tail of some of the eastern sheep is the best part of the animal, and is counted a great delicacy. They are also very large, some of them weighing from twelve to forty pounds' weight; "so that the owners," says Mr. Ludolf, in his History of Ethiopia, "are obliged to tie a little cart behind them, whereon they put the tail of the sheep, as well for the convenience of carriage, and to ease the poor creature, as to preserve the wool from dirt, and the tail from being torn among the bushes and stones." An engraving of this kind of sheep, his tall, cart, etc., may be seen at p. 53 of the above work.

Verse 23. *And one loaf of bread*— The bread of different kinds, (see Clarke on "Exodus 29:2"), in this offering, seems to have been intended as a minchah, or offering of grateful acknowledgment for providential blessings. The essence of worship consisted in acknowledging God, 1. As the Creator, Governor, and Preserver of all things, and the Dispenser of every good and perfect gift. 2. As the Judge of men, the Punisher of sin,

and he who alone could pardon it. The minchahs, heave-offerings, wave-offerings, and thank-offerings, referred to the first point. The burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, and sacrifices in general, referred to the second.

Verse 24. *For a wave-offering*— See Clarke note on “Leviticus 7:1” etc., where an ample account of all the offerings, sacrifices, etc., under the Mosaic dispensation, and the reference they bore to the great sacrifice offered by Christ, is given in detail.

Verse 25. *Thou shalt receive them of their hands*— Aaron and his sons are here considered merely as any common persons bringing an offering to God, and not having, as yet, any authority to present it themselves, but through the medium of a priest. Moses, therefore, was now to Aaron and his sons what they were afterwards to the children of Israel; and as the minister of God he now consecrates them to the sacred office, and presents their offerings to Jehovah.

Verse 27. *The breast of the wave-offering, and the shoulder of the heave-offering*— As the wave-offering was agitated to and fro, and the heave-offering up and down, some have conceived that this twofold action represented the figure of the cross, on which the great Peace-offering between God and man was offered in the personal sacrifice of our blessed Redeemer. Had we authority for this conjecture, it would certainly cast much light on the meaning and intention of these offerings; and when the intelligent reader is informed that one of the most judicious critics in the whole republic of letters is the author of this conjecture, viz., Houbigant, he will treat it with respect. I shall here produce his own words on this verse: Hic distinguuntur, תנופה et תרומה, ut ejusdem oblationis caeremoniae duae. In תנופה significatur, moveri oblatam victimam huc et illuc, ad dextram et ad sinistram. In תרומה sursum tolli, et sublatam rursus deprimi; nam pluribus vicibus id fiebat. Rem sic interpretantur Judaei; et Christianos docent, quanquam id non agentes, sic adumbrari eam crucem, in quam generis humani victima illa pacifica sublata est, quam veteres victimae omnes praenunciabant. “The heave-offering and wave-offering, as two ceremonies in the same oblation, are here distinguished. The wave-offering implies that the victim was moved hither and thither, to the right hand and to the left; the heave-offering was lifted

up and down, and this was done several times. In this way the Jews explain these things, and teach the Christians, that by these acts the cross was adumbrated, upon which that Peace-offering of the human race was lifted up which was prefigured by all the ancient victims.”

The breast and the shoulder, thus waved and heaved, were by this consecration appointed to be the priests’ portion for ever; and this, as Mr. Ainsworth piously remarks, “taught the priests how, with all their heart and all their strength, they should give themselves unto the service of the Lord in his Church.” Moses, as priest, received on this occasion the breast and the shoulder, which became afterwards the portion of the priests; see Exodus 29:28, and Leviticus 7:34. It is worthy of remark, that although Moses himself had no consecration to the sacerdotal office, yet he acts here as high priest, consecrates a high priest, and receives the breast and the shoulder, which were the priests’ portion! But Moses was an extraordinary messenger, and derived his authority, without the medium of rites or ceremonies, immediately from God himself. It does not appear that Christ either baptized the twelve apostles, or ordained them by imposition of hands; yet, from his own infinite sufficiency, he gave them authority both to baptize, and to lay on hands, in appointing others to the work of the sacred ministry. Exodus 29:29

Verse 29. *The holy garments-shall be his son’s after him*— These garments were to descend from father to son, and no new garments were to be made.

Verse 30. *Seven days*— The priest in his consecration was to abide seven days and nights at the door of the tabernacle, keeping the Lord’s watch. See Leviticus 8:33, etc. The number seven is what is called among the Hebrews a number of perfection; and it is often used to denote the completion, accomplishment, fullness, or perfection of a thing, as this period contained the whole course of that time in which God created the world, and appointed the day of rest. As this act of consecration lasted seven days, it signified a perfect consecration: and intimated to the priest that his whole body and soul, his time and talents, should be devoted to the service of God and his people.

The number seven, which was a sacred number among the Hebrews, was conveyed from them down to the Greeks by means of the Egyptian

philosophy, from which they borrowed most of their mysteries; and it is most likely that the opinion which the Greeks give is the same that the original framers of the idea had. That there was some mystical idea attached to it, is evident from its being made the number of perfection among the Hebrews. Philo and Josephus say that the Essenes, an ancient sect of the Jews, held it sacred “because it results from the side of a square added to those of a triangle.” But what meaning does this convey? A triangle, or triad, according to the Pythagoreans, who borrowed their systems from the Egyptians, who borrowed from the Jews, was the emblem of wisdom, as consisting of beginning (Monad,) middle (Duad,) and end (Triad itself;) so wisdom consists of three parts- experience of the past, attention to the present, and judgment of the future. It is also the most penetrating of all forms, as being the shape of the wedge; and indestructibility is essential to it, as a triangle can never be destroyed. From those three properties it was the emblem of spirit. The square, solid, and tetrad, by the same system were interchangeable signs. Now a square is the representation of a solid or matter, and thus the number seven contains within itself the properties of both the triangle or solid, and the square or tetrad, i.e., is all emblem of body and spirit; comprehends both the intellectual and natural world; embraces the idea of GOD, the chief of spirits or essences; and all nature, the result of his power; thus a very fit emblem of perfection. It is perhaps in this way that we must explain what CICERO, Tusc. Quest., lib. i., cap. 10, says of the number seven, where he calls it the knot and cement of all things; as being that by which the natural and spiritual world are comprehended in one idea. Thus the ancient philosophers spoke of numbers, themselves being the best judges of their own meaning.

Verse 33. *But a stranger shall not eat thereof*— That is, no person who was not of the family of Aaron — no Israelite, and not even a Levite.

Verse 34. *Burn the remainder with fire*— Common, voluntary, and peace-offerings, might be eaten even on the second day; see Leviticus 7:16; 19:5, 6. But this being a peculiar consecration, in order to qualify a person to offer sacrifices for sin, like that great sacrifice, the paschal lamb, that typified the atonement made by Christ, none of it was to be left till the morning lest putrefaction should commence, which would be utterly improper in a sacrifice that was to make expiation for sin, and bring the

soul into a state of holiness and perfection with God. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 12:10".

Verse 36. *Thou shalt cleanse the altar*— The altar was to be sanctified for seven days; and it is likely that on each day, previously to the consecration service, the altar was wiped clean, and the former day's ashes, etc., removed.

Verse 37. *Whatsoever touches the altar shall be holy*.— To this our Lord refers Matthew 23:19, where he says the altar sanctifies the gift; and this may be understood as implying that whatever was laid on the altar became the Lord's property, and must be wholly devoted to sacred uses, for in no other sense could such things be sanctified by touching the altar.

Verse 39. *One lamb thou shalt offer in the morning*— These two lambs, one in the morning, and the other in the evening, were generally termed the morning and evening daily sacrifices, and were offered from the time of their settlement in the promised land to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The use of these sacrifices according to the Jews was this: "The morning sacrifice made atonement for the sins committed in the night, and the evening sacrifice expiated the sins committed during the day."

Verse 40. *A tenth deal of flour*— Deal signifies a part, from the Anglo-Saxon [AS], to divide; hence [AS], a part, a portion taken from the whole. From Numbers 28:5 we learn that this tenth deal was the tenth part of an ephah, which constituted what is called an omer. See Exodus 16:36; and see Clarke's note on "Exodus 16:16" of the same chapter, where an account is given of different measures of capacity among the Hebrews. The omer contained about three quarts English.

The fourth part of a hin— The hin contained one gallon and two pints. The fourth part of this was about one quart and a half of a pint.

Drink-offering.— A libation poured out before the Lord. See its meaning, Leviticus 7:1, etc.

Verse 43. *There I will meet with the children of Israel*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:22".

Verse 44. *I will sanctify-both Aaron and his sons*— So we find the sanctification by Moses according to the Divine institution was only symbolical; and that Aaron and his sons must be sanctified, i.e., made holy, by God himself before they could officiate in holy things. From this, as well as from many other things mentioned in the sacred writings, we may safely infer that no designation by man only is sufficient to qualify any person to fill the office of a minister of the sanctuary. The approbation and consecration of man have both their propriety and use, but must never be made substitutes for the unction and inspiration of the Almighty. Let holy men ordain, but let God sanctify; then we may expect that his Church shall be built up on its most holy faith.

Verse 45. *I will dwell among the children of Israel*— This is the great charter of the people of God, both under the Old and New Testaments; see Exodus 25:8; Leviticus 26:11, 12; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Revelation 21:3. God dwells **AMONG** them: he is ever to be found in his Church to enlighten, quicken, comfort, and support it; to dispense the light of life by the preaching of his word, and the influences of his Spirit for the conviction and conversion of sinners. And he dwells **IN** those who believe; and this is the very tenor of the New Covenant which God promised to make with the house of Israel; see Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 37:24-28; Hebrews 8:7-12; and 2 Corinthians 6:16. And because God had promised to dwell in all his genuine followers, hence the frequent reference to this covenant and its privileges in the New Testament. And hence it is so frequently and strongly asserted that every believer is a habitation of God through the Spirit, Ephesians 2:22. That the Spirit of God witnesses with their spirits that they are the children of God, Romans 8:16. That the Spirit of Christ in their hearts enables them to call God their Father, Galatians 4:6. And that if any man have not this Spirit, he is none of his, Romans 8:9, etc. And hence St. Paul states this to be the sum and substance of apostolical preaching, and the riches of the glory of the mystery of the Gospel among the Gentiles, viz., Christ **IN** you the hope of glory; whom, says he, we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect **IN** Christ Jesus; Colossians 1:27, 28.

Verse 46. *And they shall know that I am the Lord their God*— That is, They shall acknowledge God, and their infinite obligations to him. In a multitude of places in Scripture the word know should be thus understood.

That I may dwell among them— For without this acknowledgment and consequent dependence on and gratitude and obedience to God, they could not expect him to dwell among them.

BY dwelling among the people God shows that he would be a continual resident in their houses and in their hearts; that he would be their God — the sole object of their religious worship, to whom they should turn and on whom they should trust in all difficulties and distresses; and that he would be to them all that the Creator could be to his creatures. That in consequence they should have a full conviction of his presence and blessing, and a consciousness that HE was their God, and that they were his people. Thus then God dwells among men that they may know him; and they must know him that he may continue to dwell among them. He who does not experimentally know God, cannot have him as an indwelling Savior; and he who does not continue to know-to acknowledge, love, and obey him, cannot retain him as his Preserver and Sanctifier. From the beginning of the world, the salvation of the souls of men necessarily implied the indwelling influences of God. Reader, hast thou this salvation? This alone will support thee in all thy travels in this wilderness, comfort thee in death, and give thee boldness in the day of judgment. “He,” says an old writer, “who has pardon may look his judge in the face.”

CHAPTER 30

The altar of burnt incense, 1. Dimensions, 2. Golden crown, 3. Rings and staves, 4, 5. Where placed, 6, 7. Use, 8-10. The ransom price of half a shekel, 11-13. Who were to pay it, 14. The rich and the poor to pay alike, 15. The use to which it was applied, 16. The brazen laver, and its uses, 17-21. The holy anointing oil, and its component parts, 22-25. To be applied to the tabernacle, ark, golden table, candlestick, altar of burnt-offerings, and the laver, 26-29. And to Aaron and his sons, 30. Never to be applied to any other uses, and none like it ever to be made, 31-33. The perfume, and how made, 34, 35. Its use, 36. Nothing similar to it ever to be made, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. *Altar to burn incense*— The Samaritan omits the ten first verses of this chapter, because it inserts them after the 32d verse of chap. 26. See Clarke’s note there “Exodus 26:32”.

Shittim wood— The same of which the preceding articles were made, because it was abundant in those parts, and because it was very durable; hence everywhere the Septuagint translation, which was made in Egypt, renders the original by ξύλον ασηπτον, incorruptible wood.

Verse 2. *Four-square*— That is, on the upper or under surface, as it showed four equal sides; but it was twice as high as it was broad, being twenty-one inches broad, and three feet six inches high. It was called, not only the altar of incense, but also the golden altar, Numbers 4:11. For the crown, horns, staves, etc., see on the altar of burnt-offering, chap. 27. See Clarke on “Exodus 27:1”, etc.

Verse 6. *Before the mercy-seat that is over the testimony*— These words in the original are supposed to be a repetition, by mistake, of the preceding clause; the word הפרכת happarocheth, the veil, being corrupted by interchanging two letters into הכפרת haccapporeth, the mercy-seat; and this, as Dr. Kennicott observes, places the altar of incense before the

mercy-seat, and consequently IN the holy of holies! Now this could not be, as the altar of incense was attended every day, and the holy of holies entered only once in the year. The five words which appear to be a repetition are wanting in twenty-six of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS., and in the Samaritan. The verse reads better without them, and is more consistent with the rest of the account.

Verse 7. *When he dresseth the lamps*— Prepares the wicks, and puts in fresh oil for the evening.

Shall burn incense upon it.— Where so many sacrifices were offered it was essentially necessary to have some pleasing perfume to counteract the disagreeable smells that must have arisen from the slaughter of so many animals, the sprinkling of so much blood, and the burning of so much flesh, etc. The perfume that was to be burnt on this altar is described Exodus 30:34. No blood was ever sprinkled on this altar, except on the day of general expiation, which happened only once in the year, Exodus 30:10. But the perfume was necessary in every part of the tabernacle and its environs.

Verse 9. *No strange incense*— None made in any other way.

Nor burnt-sacrifice— It should be an altar for incense, and for no other use.

Verse 10. *An atonement-once in a year*— On the tenth day of the seventh month. See Leviticus 16:18, etc., and the notes there. See Clarke on "Leviticus 16:21", etc.

Verse 12. *Then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul*— This was a very important ordinance, and should be seriously considered. See the following verse.

Verse 13. *Half a shekel*— Each of the Israelites was ordered to give as a ransom for his soul (i.e., for his life) half a shekel, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. From this we may learn, 1. That the life of every man was considered as being forfeited to Divine justice. 2. That the redemption money given, which was doubtless used in the service of the sanctuary, was ultimately devoted to the use and profit of those who gave it. 3. That the standard by which the value of coin was ascertained, was kept in the

sanctuary; for this appears to be the meaning of the words, after the shekel of the sanctuary. 4. The shekel is here said to be twenty gerahs. A gerah, according to Maimonides, weighed sixteen barleycorns, a shekel three hundred and twenty of pure silver. The shekel is generally considered to be equal in value to three shillings English; the redemption money, therefore, must be about one shilling and sixpence. 5. The rich were not to give more, the poor not to give less; to signify that all souls were equally precious in the sight of God, and that no difference of outward circumstances could affect the state of the soul; all had sinned, and all must be redeemed by the same price. 6. This atonement must be made that there might be no plague among them, intimating that a plague or curse from God must light on those souls for whom the atonement was not made. 7. This was to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, Exodus 30:16, to bring to their remembrance their past deliverance, and to keep in view their future redemption. 8. St. Peter seems to allude to this, and to intimate that this mode of atonement was ineffectual in itself, and only pointed out the great sacrifice which, in the fullness of time, should be made for the sin of the world. “Ye know,” says he, “that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world,” etc.; 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 20. 9. Therefore all these things seem to refer to Christ alone, and to the atonement made by his blood; and upon him who is not interested in this atonement, God’s plagues must be expected to fall. Reader, acquaint now thyself with God and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee.

Verse 18. A laver of brass— כִּיּוֹר *kiyor* sometimes signifies a caldron, 1 Samuel 2:14; but it seems to signify any large round vessel or basin used for washing the hands and feet. There were doubtless cocks or spigots in it to draw off the water, as it is not likely the feet were put into it in order to be washed. The foot of the laver must mean the pedestal on which it stood.

Verse 20. They shall wash with water, that they die not— This was certainly an emblematical washing; and as the hands and the feet are particularly mentioned, it must refer to the purity of their whole conduct. Their hands — all their works, their feet — all their goings, must be

washed — must be holiness unto the Lord. And this washing must be repeated every time they entered into the tabernacle, or when they came near to the altar to minister. This washing was needful because the priests all ministered barefoot; but it was equally so because of the guilt they might have contracted, for the washing was emblematical of the putting away of sin, or what St. Paul calls the laver of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, (Titus 3:5,) as the influences of the Spirit must be repeated for the purification of the soul, as frequently as any moral defilement has been contracted.

Verse 21. *And it shall be a statute for ever*— To continue, in its literal meaning, as long as the Jewish economy lasted, and, in its spiritual meaning, to the end of time. What an important lesson does this teach the ministers of the Gospel of Christ! Each time they minister in public, whether in dispensing the WORD or the SACRAMENTS, they should take heed that they have a fresh application of the grace and spirit of Christ, to do away past transgressions or unfaithfulness, and to enable them to minister with the greater effect, as being in the Divine favor, and consequently entitled to expect all the necessary assistances of the Divine unction, to make their ministrations spirit and life to the people. See Clarke note on “Exodus 29:20”.

Verse 23. *Take-unto thee principal spices*— From this and the following verse we learn that the holy anointing oil was compounded of the following ingredients:- 500 shekels-Myrrh is the produce of an oriental tree not well known, and is col- Pure myrrh, מַר דְּרֹר mar lected by making an deror incision in the tree. What is now called by this name is precisely the same with that of the ancients.

Sweet cinnamon, קִנְמֹן בֶּשֶׂם kinnemon besem, (probably } 250 shekels. from Arabia)

Sweet calamus, קִנְהַ בֶּשֶׂם keneh bosem, or sweet } 250 shekels. cane, Jeremiah 6:20. — Calamus aromaticus.

Cassia, קִדְדָה kildah, (cassia lignea,) brought } 500 shekels. also from Arabia.

Olive oil, שֶׁמֶן זַיִת shemen sayith, one hin, about 5 quarts.

lbs. oz. dwts. grs. 500 shekels of the first and last, make 48 4 12 21 21/31 250 of the cinnamon and calamus. 24 2 6 10 26/31 Olive oil is supposed to be the best preservative of odours. As the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit are termed the anointing of the Holy Ghost, therefore this holy ointment appears to have been designed as emblematical of those gifts and graces. See Acts 1:5; 10:38; 2 Corinthians 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27.

Verse 25. *After the art of the apothecary*— The original, רוקח *rokeach*, signifies a compounder or confectioner; any person who compounds drugs, aromatics, etc.

Verse 30. *Thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons*— For the reason of this anointing, see Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:7". It seems that this anointing oil was an emblem of Divine teaching, and especially of those influences by which the Church of Christ was, in the beginning, guided into all truth; as is evident from the allusion to it by St. John: "Ye have an unction from the HOLY ONE, and ye know all things. The anointing which ye have received from him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in HIM; 1 John 2:20, 27.

Verse 34. *Take unto thee sweet spices*— The holy perfume was compounded of the following ingredients:

Stacte— נטף *nataph*, supposed to be the same with what was afterwards called the balm of Jericho. Stacte is the gum which spontaneously flows from the tree which produces myrrh. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 30:23".

Onycha— שחלת *shecheleth*, allowed by the best critics to be the unguis odoriferans described by Rumph, which is the external crust of the shell-fish purpura or murex, and is the basis of the principal perfumes made in the East Indies.

Galbanum— חלבנה *chelbenah*, the bubon gummiferum or African ferula; it rises with a ligneous stalk from eight to ten feet, and is garnished with leaves at each joint. The top of the stock is terminated by an umbel of yellow flowers, which are succeeded by oblong channelled seeds, which have a thin membrane or wing on their border. When any part of the plant is broken, there issues out a little thin milk of a cream color. The gummy

resinous juice which proceeds from this plant is what is commonly called galbanum, from the chelbench of the Hebrews.

Pure frankincense— **לבנה זקה** lebonah zaccah. Frankincense is supposed to derive its name from frank, free, because of its liberal or ready distribution of its odours. It is a dry resinous substance, in pieces or drops of a pale yellowish white color, has a strong smell, and bitter acrid taste. The tree which produces it is not well known. Dioscorides mentions it as gotten in India. What is called here pure frankincense is no doubt the same with the *mascula thura* of Virgil, and signifies what is first obtained from the tree—that which is strongest and most free from all adventitious mixtures. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 30:7".

THE Israelites were most strictly prohibited, on the most awful penalties, from making any anointing oil or perfume similar to those described in this chapter. He that should compound such, or apply any of this to any common purpose, even to smell to, Exodus 30:38, should be cut off, that is, excommunicated from his people, and so lose all right, title, and interest in the promises of God and the redemption of Israel. From all this we may learn how careful the Divine Being is to preserve his own worship and his own truth, so as to prevent them from being adulterated by human inventions; for he will save men in his own way, and upon his own terms. What are called human inventions in matters of religion, are not only of no worth, but are in general deceptive and ruinous. Arts and sciences in a certain way may be called inventions of men, for the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man — can comprehend, plan, and execute, under the general influence of God, every thing in which human life is immediately concerned; but religion, as it is the gift, so it is the invention, of God: its doctrines and its ceremonies proceed from his wisdom and goodness, for he alone could devise the plan by which the human race may be restored to his favor and image, and taught to worship him in spirit and in truth. And that worship which himself has prescribed, we may rest assured, will be most pleasing in his sight. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord; and their destruction by the fire of Jehovah is recorded as a lasting warning to all presumptuous worshippers, and to all who attempt to model his religion, according to their own caprice, and to minister in sacred things without that authority which proceeds from himself alone. The imposition of hands whether of pope, cardinal, or

bishop can avail nothing here. The call and unction of God alone can qualify the minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 31

Bezaleel appointed for the work of the tabernacle, 1-5. Aholiab appointed for the same, 6. The particular things on which they were to be employed, the ark and mercy-seat, 7. Table, candlestick, and altar of incense, 8. Altar of burnt-offering and the laver, 9. Priest's garments, 10. Anointing oil and sweet incense, 11. God renews the command relative to the sanctification of the Sabbath, 12-17. Delivers to Moses the two tables of stone, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 2. *I have called by name Bezaleel*— That is, I have particularly appointed this person to be the chief superintendent of the whole work. His name is significant, **בצלאל** betsal-el, in or under the shadow of God, meaning, under the especial protection of the Most High. He was the son of Uri, the son of Hur, the son of Caleb or Chelubai, the son of Esron, the son of Pharez, the son of Judah. See 1 Chronicles 2:5, 9, 18, 19, 20, and see Clarke's note on "Exodus 17:10".

Verse 3. *I have filled him with the spirit of God*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 28:3".

In wisdom— **חכמה**, chochmah, from **חכם** chacham, to be wise, skillful, or prudent, denoting the compass of mind and strength of capacity necessary to form a wise man: hence our word wisdom, the power of judging what is wise or best to be done; from the Saxon, [AS], to teach, to advise, and [AS], to judge; hence [AS], the doom or judgment of the well taught, wise, or prudent man.

Understanding— **תבונה** tebunah, from **ב** ban or bun, to separate, distinguish, discern; capacity to comprehend the different parts of a work, how to connect, arrange, etc., in order to make a complete whole.

Knowledge— **דעת** daath, denoting particular acquaintance with a person or thing; practical, experimental knowledge.

Verse 4. *Cunning works*— מַחֲשָׁבוֹת machashaboth, works of invention or genius, in the goldsmith and silversmith line.

Verse 5. *In cutting of stones, etc.*— Every thing that concerned the lapidary's, jeweller's, and carver's art.

Verse 6. *In the hearts of all that are wisehearted I have put wisdom*— So every man that had a natural genius, as we term it, had an increase of wisdom by immediate inspiration from God, so that he knew how to execute the different works which Divine wisdom designed for the tabernacle and its furniture. Dark as were the heathens, yet they acknowledged that all talents, and the seeds of all arts, came from God. Hence Seneca: *Insita nobis omnium artium semina, magisterque ex occulto Deus producit ingenia.* In the same way Homer attributes such curious arts to Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, and Vulcan, the god of handicrafts.

ὡς δ' ὅτε τις χρῦσον περιχευεται ἀργυρῷ ἀνῆρ
 ἰδρὶς, οὐκ ἠφαιστός δεδαέν και παλλὰς ἀθηνη
 τεχνην παντοίην, χαριεντὰ δε ἐργα τελειει.

Odys., 1. vi., ver. 232.

*As by some artist, to whom VULCAN gives
 His skill divine, a breathing statue lives;
 By PALLAS taught, he frames the wondrous mould,
 And o'er the silver pours the fusile gold.*

— POPE.

And all this the wisest of men long before them declared; when speaking of the wisdom of God he says, I, Wisdom, dwell with Prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions; Proverbs 8:12. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 28:3", to which the reader is particularly desired to refer. There is something remarkable in the name of this second superintendent, אֹהֵל־אָב אholiab, the tabernacle of the father, or, the father is my tabernacle; a name nearly similar in its meaning to that of Bezaleel, see Clarke's note on "Exodus 31:2".

Verse 8. *The pure candlestick*— Called so either because of the pure gold of which it was made, or the brightness and splendor of its workmanship,

or of the light which it imparted in the tabernacle, as the purest, finest oil was always burnt in it.

Verse 9. *The altar of burnt-offering*— See Clarke note on “Exodus 27:1”.

The laver and his foot— The pedestal on which it stood.

Verse 10. *Clothes of service*— Vestments for the ordinary work of their ministry; the holy garments — those which were peculiar to the high priest.

Verse 11. *The anointing oil*— See Clarke note on “Exodus 30:23”.

Sweet incense— See on Exodus 30:24. See Clarke note on “Exodus 30:23”.

Verse 13. *My Sabbaths ye shall keep*— See Clarke note on “Genesis 2:3”. See Clarke note on “Exodus 20:8”.

Verse 14. *Every one that defileth it*— By any kind of idolatrous or profane worship.

Shall surely be put to death— The magistrates shall examine into the business, and if the accused be found guilty, he shall be stoned to death.

Shall be cut off— Because that person who could so far condemn the Sabbath, which was a sign to them of the rest which remained for the people of God, was of course an infidel, and should be cut off from all the privileges and expectations of an Israelite.

Verse 16. *A perpetual covenant*.— Because it is a sign of this future rest and blessedness, therefore the religious observance of it must be perpetually kept up. The type must continue in force till the antitype come.

Verse 17. *Rested, and was refreshed*.— God, in condescension to human weakness, applies to himself here what belongs to man. If a man religiously rests on the Sabbath, both his body and soul shall be refreshed; he shall acquire new light and life.

Verse 18. *When he had made an end of communing*— When the forty days and forty nights were ended.

Two tables of testimony— See Clarke note on “Exodus 34:1”.

Tables of stone— That the record might be lasting, because it was a testimony that referred to future generations, and therefore the materials should be durable.

Written with the finger of God.— All the letters cut by God himself. Dr. Winder, in his History of Knowledge, thinks it probable that this was the first writing in alphabetical characters ever exhibited to the world, though there might have been marks or hieroglyphics cut on wood, stone, etc., before this time; see Exodus 17:14. That these tables were written, not by the commandment but by the power of God himself, the following passages seem to prove: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mountain, and be thou there; and I will give thee tables of stone WHICH I HAVE WRITTEN, that thou mayest teach them;” Exodus 24:12. “And he gave unto Moses, upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, WRITTEN WITH THE FINGER OF GOD;” Exodus 31:18. “And Moses went down from the mount, and the two tables of testimony were in his hand; the tables were Written on both their sides. And the tables were THE WORK OF GOD, and the WRITING WAS THE WRITING OF GOD, graven upon the tables;” Exodus 32:15, 16. “These words [the ten commandments] the Lord spake in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more, BUT HE WROTE THEM on two tables of stone;” Deuteronomy 5:22. It is evident therefore that this writing was properly and literally the writing of God himself. God wrote now on tables of stone what he had originally written on the heart of man, and in mercy he placed that before his eyes which by sin had been obliterated from his soul; and by this he shows us what, by the Spirit of Christ, must be rewritten in the mind, 2 Corinthians 3:3; and this is according to the covenant which God long before promised to make with mankind, Jeremiah 31:33. See also what is said on this subject, “Exodus 20:1”, and see Clarke note “Exodus 34:1”. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 17:14”.

“No time,” says Dr. A. Bayley, “seems so proper from whence to date the introduction of letters among the Hebrews as this, for after this period we find continual mention of letters, reading, and writing, in the now proper sense of those words. See Deuteronomy 27:8; 31:9. Moses, it is said, **επαιδευθη**, was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians — in all the learning they possessed; but it is manifest that he had not learned of them

any method of writing, otherwise there had been no want of God's act and assistance in writing the two tables of the law, no need of a miraculous writing. Had Moses known this art, the Lord might have said to him, as he does often afterwards, Write thou these words; Exodus 34:27. Write on the stones the words of this law; Deuteronomy 27:3. Write you this song for you; Deuteronomy 31:19. Perhaps it may be said, God's writing the law gave it a sanction. True; but why might it not also teach the first use of letters, unless it can be proved that they were in use prior to this transaction? It might be thought too much to assert that letters no more than language were a natural discovery; that it was impossible for man to have invented writing, and that he did not invent it: yet this may appear really the case from the following reflections:-1. Reason may show us how near to an impossibility it was that a just and proper number of convenient characters for the sounds in language should naturally be hit upon by any man, for whom it was easy to imitate and vary, but not to invent. 2. From evidence of the Mosaic history, it appears that the introduction of writing among the Hebrews was not from man, but GOD. 3. There are no evident vestiges of letters subsisting among other nations till after the delivery of the law at Mount Sinai; nor then, among some, till very late."

CHAPTER 32

The Israelites, finding that Moses delayed his return, desire Aaron to make them gods to go before them, 1. Aaron consents, and requires their ornaments, 2. They deliver them to him, and he makes a molten calf, 3, 4. He builds an altar before it, 5; and the people offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, 6. The Lord commands Moses to go down, telling him that the people had corrupted themselves, 7, 8. The Lord is angry, and threatens to destroy them, 9, 10. Moses intercedes for them, 11-13; and the Lord promises to spare them, 14. Moses goes down with the tables in his hands, 15, 16. Joshua, hearing the noise they made at their festival, makes some remarks on it, 17, 18. Moses, coming to the camp, and seeing their idolatrous worship, is greatly distressed, throws down and breaks the two tables, 19. Takes the calf, reduces it to powder, strews it upon the water, and causes them to drink it, 20. Moses expostulates with Aaron, 21. Aaron vindicates himself, 22-24. Moses orders the Levites to slay the transgressors, 25-27. They do so, and 3000 fall, 28, 29. Moses returns to the Lord on the mount, and makes supplication for the people, 30-32. God threatens and yet spares, 33. Commands Moses to lead the people, and promises him the direction of an angel, 34. The people are plagued because of their sin, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. *When the people saw that Moses delayed*— How long this was before the expiration of the forty days, we cannot tell; but it certainly must have been some considerable time, as the ornaments must be collected, and the calf or ox, after having been founded, must require a considerable time to fashion it with the graving tool; and certainly not more than two or three persons could work on it at once. This work therefore, must have required several days.

The people gathered themselves together— They came in a tumultuous and seditious manner, insisting on having an object of religious worship

made for them, as they intended under its direction to return to Egypt. See Acts 7:39, 40.

As for this Moses, the man that brought us up— This seems to be the language of great contempt, and by it we may see the truth of the character given them by Aaron, Exodus 32:22, they were set on mischief. It is likely they might have supposed that Moses had perished in the fire, which they saw had invested the top of the mountain into which he went.

Verse 2. Golden ear-rings— Both men and women wore these ornaments, and we may suppose that these were a part of the spoils which they brought out of Egypt. How strange, that the very things which were granted them by an especial influence and providence of God, should be now abused to the basest idolatrous purposes! But it is frequently the case that the gifts of God become desecrated by being employed in the service of sin; I will curse your blessings, saith the Lord, Malachi 2:2.

Verse 3. And all the people brake off the golden ear-rings— The human being is naturally fond of dress, though this has been improperly attributed to the female sex alone, and those are most fond of it who have the shallowest capacities; but on this occasion the bent of the people to idolatry was greater than even their love of dress, so that they readily stripped themselves of their ornaments in order to get a molten god. They made some compensation for this afterwards; see Exodus 35:22, and See Clarke's note on "Exodus 38:9".

Verse 4. Fashioned it with a graving tool— There has been much controversy about the meaning of the word **חֶרֶט** cheret in the text: some make it a mould, others a garment, cloth, or apron; some a purse or bag, and others a graver. It is likely that some mould was made on this occasion, that the gold when fused was cast into it, and that afterwards it was brought into form and symmetry by the action of the chisel and graver.

These be thy gods, O Israel— The whole of this is a most strange and unaccountable transaction. Was it possible that the people could have so soon lost sight of the wonderful manifestations of God upon the mount? Was it possible that Aaron could have imagined that he could make any god that could help them? And yet it does not appear that he ever

remonstrated with the people! Possibly he only intended to make them some symbolical representation of the Divine power and energy, that might be as evident to them as the pillar of cloud and fire had been, and to which God might attach an always present energy and influence; or in requiring them to sacrifice their ornaments, he might have supposed they would have desisted from urging their request: but all this is mere conjecture, with very little probability to support it. It must however be granted that Aaron does not appear to have even designed a worship that should supersede the worship of THE Most High; hence we find him making proclamation, To-morrow is a feast to the LORD, (אֶת־יְהוָה;) and we find farther that some of the proper rites of the true worship were observed on this occasion, for they brought burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, Exodus 32:6, 7: hence it is evident he intended that the true God should be the object of their worship, though he permitted and even encouraged them to offer this worship through an idolatrous medium, the molten calf. It has been supposed that this was an exact resemblance of the famous Egyptian god Apis who was worshipped under the form of an ox, which worship the Israelites no doubt saw often practiced in Egypt. Some however think that this worship of Apis was not then established; but we have already had sufficient proof that different animals were sacred among the Egyptians, nor have we any account of any worship in Egypt earlier than that offered to Apis, under the figure of an Ox.

Verse 5. *To-morrow is a feast to the Lord*— In Bengal the officiating Brahmin, or an appointed person proclaims, “To-morrow, or on —day of —, such a ceremony will be performed!”

Verse 6. *The people sat down to eat and to drink*— The burnt-offerings were wholly consumed; the peace-offerings, when the blood had been poured out, became the food of the priests, etc. When therefore the strictly religious part of these ceremonies was finished, the people sat down to eat of the peace-offerings, and this they did merely as the idolaters, eating and drinking to excess. And it appears they went much farther, for it is said they rose up to play, לְצַחֵק letsachek, a word of ominous import, which seems to imply here fornicating and adulterous intercourse; and in some countries the verb to play is still used precisely in this sense. In this sense the original is evidently used, Genesis 39:14.

Verse 7. *Thy people-have corrupted themselves*— They had not only got into the spirit of idolatry, but they had become abominable in their conduct, so that God disowns them to be his: THY people have broken the covenant, and are no longer entitled to my protection and love.

This is one pretense that the Roman Catholics have for the idolatry in their image worship. Their high priest, the pope, collects the ornaments of the people, and makes an image, a crucifix, a madonna, etc. The people worship it; but the pope says it is only to keep God in remembrance. But of the whole God says, Thy people have corrupted themselves; and thus as they continue in their idolatry, they have forfeited the blessings of the Lord's covenant. They are not God's people, they are the pope's people, and he is called "our holy father the pope."

Verse 9. *A stiff-necked people*— Probably an allusion to the stiff-necked ox, the object of their worship.

Verse 10. *Now therefore let me alone*— Moses had already begun to plead with God in the behalf of this rebellious and ungrateful people; and so powerful was his intercession that even the Omnipotent represents himself as incapable of doing any thing in the way of judgment, unless his creature desisted from praying for mercy! See an instance of the prevalence of fervent intercession in the case of Abraham, Genesis 18:23-33, from the model of which the intercession of Moses seems to have been formed.

Verse 14. *And the Lord repented of the evil*— This is spoken merely after the manner of men who, having formed a purpose, permit themselves to be diverted from it by strong and forcible reasons, and so change their minds relative to their former intentions.

Verse 15. *The tables were written on both their sides*— If we take this literally, it was certainly a very unusual thing; for in ancient times the two sides of the same substance were never written over. However, some rabbins suppose that by the writing on both sides is meant the letters were cut through the tables, so that they might be read on both sides, though on one side they would appear reversed. Supposing this to be correct, if the letters were the same with those called Hebrew now in common use, the □ samech, which occurs twice, and the final □ mem which occurs twenty-three times in the ten commandments, both of these being close

letters, could not be cut through on both sides without falling out, unless, as some of the Jews have imagined, they were held in by miracle; but if this ancient character were the same with the Samaritan, this through cutting might have been quite practicable, as there is not one close letter in the whole Samaritan alphabet. On this transaction there are the three following opinions: 1. We may conceive the tables of stone to have been thin slabs or a kind of slate, and the writing on the back side to have been a continuation of that on the front, the first not being sufficient to contain the whole. 2. Or the writing on the back side was probably the precepts that accompanied the ten commandments; the latter were written by the Lord, the former by Moses; see Clarke's note on "Exodus 34:1". See Clarke's note on "Exodus 34:27". 3. Or the same words were written on both sides, so that when held up, two parties might read at the same time.

Verse 16. *The tables were the work of God*— Because such a law could proceed from none but himself; God alone is the fountain and author of LAW, of what is right, just, holy, and good. See the meaning of the word LAW, Exodus 12:49. See Clarke note on the word LAW, "Exodus 12:49".

The writing was the writing of God— For as he is the sole author of law and justice, so he alone can write them on the heart of man. This is agreeable to the spirit of the new covenant which God had promised to make with men in the latter days: I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel-I will PUT MY LAWS IN THEIR MINDS, AND WRITE THEM IN THEIR HEARTS, Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 8:10; 2 Corinthians 3:3. That the writing of these tables was the writing of God, see proved at the conclusion of the last chapter.

Verse 17. *Joshua-said-There is a noise of war in the camp.*— How natural was this thought to the mind of a military man! Hearing a confused noise he supposed that the Israelitish camp had been attacked by some of the neighboring tribes.

Verse 18. *And he said*— That is, Moses returned this answer to the observations of Joshua.

Verse 19. *He saw the calf, and the dancing*— Dancing before the idol takes place in almost every Hindoo idolatrous feast. — Ward.

He cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them— He might have done this through distress and anguish of spirit, on beholding their abominable idolatry and dissolute conduct; or he probably did it emblematically, intimating thereby that, as by this act of his the tables were broken in pieces, on which the law of God was written; so they, by their present conduct, had made a breach in the covenant, and broken the laws of their Maker. But we must not excuse this act; it was rash and irreverent; God's writing should not have been treated in this way.

Verse 20. *He took the calf-and burnt-and ground it to powder, etc.*— How truly contemptible must the object of their idolatry appear when they were obliged to drink their god, reduced to powder and strewed on the water! “But,” says an objector, “how could gold, the most ductile of all metals, and the most ponderous, be stamped into dust and strewed on water?” In Deuteronomy 9:21, this matter is fully explained. I took, says Moses, your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, that is, melted it down, probably into ingots, or gross plates, and stamped it, that is, beat into thin laminae, something like our gold leaf, and ground it very small, even until it was as small as dust, which might be very easily done by the action of the hands, when beat into thin plates or leaves, as the original words אֶבֶן *eccoth* and דָּק *dak* imply. And I cast the dust thereof into the brook, and being thus lighter than the water, it would readily float, so that they could easily see, in this reduced and useless state, the idol to which they had been lately offering Divine honors, and from which they were vainly expecting protection and defense. No mode of argumentation could have served so forcibly to demonstrate the folly of their conduct, as this method pursued by Moses.

Verse 21. *What did this people unto thee.*— It seems if Aaron had been firm, this evil might have been prevented.

Verse 22. *Thou knowest the people*— He excuses himself by the wicked and seditious spirit of the people, intimating that he was obliged to accede to their desires.

Verse 24. *I cast it into the fire and there came out this calf.*— What a silly and ridiculous subterfuge! He seems to insinuate that he only threw the metal into the fire, and that the calf came unexpectedly out by mere accident. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel makes a similar excuse for

him: “And I said unto them, Whosoever hath gold, let him break it off and give it to me; and I cast it into the fire, and Satan entered into it, and it came out in the form of this calf!” Just like the popish legend of the falling of the shrine of our Lady of Loretta out of heaven! These legends come from the same quarter. Satan can provide more when necessary for his purpose.

Verse 25. *Moses saw that the people were naked*— They were stripped, says the Targum, of the holy crown that was upon their heads, on which the great and precious name [Ancient Hebrew] JEHOVAH was engraved. But it is more likely that the word פָּרַע parua implies that they were reduced to the most helpless and wretched state, being abandoned by God in the midst of their enemies. This is exactly similar to that expression, 2 Chronicles 28:19: For the Lord brought Judah low, because of Ahaz king of Israel: for he made Judah NAKED, הִפְרִיעַ hiphria, and transgressed sore against the Lord. Their nakedness, therefore, though in the first sense it may imply that several of them were despoiled of their ornaments, yet it may also express their defenceless and abandoned state, in consequence of their sin. That they could not literally have all been despoiled of their ornaments, appears evident from their offerings. See Exodus 35:21, etc.

Verse 26. *Who is on the Lord's side?*— That is, Who among you is free from this transgression?

And all the sons of Levi, etc.— It seems they had no part in this idolatrous business.

Verse 27. *From gate to gate*— It is probable that there was an enclosed or intrenched camp, in which the chief rulers and heads of the people were, and that this camp had two gates or outlets; and the Levites were commanded to pass from one to the other, slaying as many of the transgressors as they could find.

Verse 28. *There fell about three thousand men.*— These were no doubt the chief transgressors; having broken the covenant by having other gods besides Jehovah, they lost the Divine protection, and then the justice of God laid hold on and slew them. Moses doubtless had positive orders from God for this act of justice, (see Exodus 32:27;) for though, through his intercession, the people were spared so as not to be exterminated as a

nation, yet the principal transgressors, those who were set on mischief, Exodus 32:22, were to be put to death.

Verse 29. *For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves*— Fill your hands to the Lord. See the reason of this form of speech in the note on Exodus 29:19. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:19".

Verse 31. *Moses returned unto the Lord*— Before he went down from the mountain God had acquainted him with the general defection of the people, whereupon he immediately, without knowing the extent of their crime, began to make intercession for them; and God, having given him a general assurance that they should not be cut off, hastened him to go down, and bring them off from their idolatry. Having descended, he finds matters much worse than he expected, and ordered three thousand of the principal delinquents to be slain; but knowing that an evil so extensive must be highly provoking in the sight of the just and holy God, he finds it highly expedient that an atonement be made for the sin: for although he had the promise of God that as a nation they should not be exterminated, yet he had reason to believe that Divine justice must continue to contend with them, and prevent them from ever entering the promised land. That he was apprehensive that this would be the case, we may see plainly from the following verse.

Verse 32. *Forgive their sin*—; *and if not, blot me — out of thy book*— It is probable that one part of Moses' work during the forty days of his residence on the mount with God, was his regulating the muster-roll of all the tribes and families of Israel, in reference to the parts they were respectively to act in the different transactions in the wilderness, promised land, etc.; and this, being done under the immediate direction of God, is termed God's book which he had written, (such muster-rolls, or registers, called also genealogies, the Jews have had from the remotest period of their history;) and it is probable that God had told him, that those who should break the covenant which he had then made with them should be blotted out of that list, and never enter into the promised land. All this Moses appears to have particularly in view, and, without entering into any detail, immediately comes to the point which he knew was fixed when this list or muster-roll was made, namely, that those who should break the covenant should be blotted out, and never have any inheritance in the promised land:

therefore he says, This people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold; thus they had broken the covenant, (see the first and second commandments,) and by this had forfeited their right to Canaan. Yet now, he adds, if thou wilt forgive their sin, that they may yet attain the promised inheritance —; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written — if thou wilt blot out their names from this register, and never suffer them to enter Canaan, blot me out also; for I cannot bear the thought of enjoying that blessedness, while my people and their posterity shall be for ever excluded. And God, in kindness to Moses, spared him the mortification of going into Canaan without taking the people with him. They had forfeited their lives, and were sentenced to die in the wilderness; and Moses' prayer was answered in mercy to him, while the people suffered under the hand of justice. But the promise of God did not fail; for, although those who sinned were blotted out of the book, yet their posterity enjoyed the inheritance.

This seems to be the simple and pure light in which this place should be viewed; and in this sense St. Paul is to be understood, Romans 9:3, where he says: For I could wish that myself were ACCURSED from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are ISRAELITES, to whom pertaineth the ADOPTION, and the GLORY, and the COVENANTS. Moses could not survive the destruction of his people by the neighboring nations, nor their exclusion from the promised land; and St. Paul, seeing the Jews about to be cut off by the Roman sword for their rejection of the Gospel, was willing to be deprived of every earthly blessing, and even to become a sacrifice for them, if this might contribute to the preservation and salvation of the Jewish state. Both those eminent men, engaged in the same work, influenced by a spirit of unparalleled patriotism, were willing to forfeit every blessing of a secular kind, even die for the welfare of the people. But certainly, neither of them could wish to go to eternal perdition, to save their countrymen from being cut off, the one by the sword of the Philistines, the other by that of the Romans. Even the supposition is monstrous.

On this mode of interpretation we may at once see what is implied in the book of life, and being written in or blotted out of such a book. In the public registers, all that were born of a particular tribe were entered in the list of their respective families under that tribe. This was the book of life;

but when any of those died, his name might be considered as blotted out from this list. Our baptismal registers, which record the births of all the inhabitants of a particular parish or district, and which are properly our books of life; and our bills of mortality, which are properly our books of death, or the lists of those who are thus blotted out from our baptismal registers or books of life; are very significant and illustrative remains of the ancient registers, or books of life and death among the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, and most ancient nations. It is worthy of remark, that in China the names of the persons who have been tried on criminal processes are written in two distinct books, which are called the book of life and the book of death: those who have been acquitted, or who have not been capitally convicted, are written in the former; those who have been found guilty, in the latter. These two books are presented to the emperor by his ministers, who, as sovereign, has a right to erase any name from either: to place the living among the dead, that he may die; or the dead, that is, the person condemned to death, among the living, that he may be preserved. Thus he blots out of the book of life or the book of death according to his sovereign pleasure, on the representation of his ministers, or the intercession of friends, etc. An ancient and extremely rich picture, in my own possession, representing this circumstance, painted in China, was thus interpreted to me by a native Chinese.

Verse 33. *Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out*— As if the Divine Being had said: “All my conduct is regulated by infinite justice and righteousness: in no case shall the innocent ever suffer for the guilty. That no man may transgress through ignorance, I have given you my law, and thus published my covenant; the people themselves have acknowledged its justice and equity, and have voluntarily ratified it. He then that sins against me, (for sin is the transgression of the law, 1 John 3:4, and the law must be published and known that it may be binding,) him will I blot out of my book.” And is it not remarkable that to these conditions of the covenant God strictly adhered, so that not one soul of these transgressors ever entered into the promised rest! Here was justice. And yet, though they deserved death, they were spared! Here was mercy. Thus, as far as justice would permit, mercy extended; and as far as mercy would permit, justice proceeded. Behold, O reader, the GOODNESS and

SEVERITY of GOD! MERCY saves all that JUSTICE can spare; and JUSTICE destroys all that MERCY should not save.

Verse 34. *Lead the people unto the place*— The word place is not in the text, and is with great propriety omitted. For Moses never led this people into that place, they all died in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb; but Moses led them towards the place, and thus the particle **ל** el here should be understood, unless we suppose that God designed to lead them to the borders of the land, but not to take them into it.

I will visit their sin— I will not destroy them, but they shall not enter into the promised land. They shall wander in the wilderness till the present generation become extinct.

Verse 35. *The Lord plagued the people*— Every time they transgressed afterwards Divine justice seems to have remembered this transgression against them. The Jews have a metaphorical saying, apparently founded on this text: “No affliction has ever happened to Israel in which there was not some particle of the dust of the golden calf.”

1. THE attentive reader has seen enough in this chapter to induce him to exclaim, How soon a clear sky may be overcast! How soon may the brightest prospects be obscured! Israel had just ratified its covenant with Jehovah, and had received the most encouraging and unequivocal pledges of his protection and love. But they sinned, and provoked the Lord to depart from them, and to destroy the work of his hands. A little more faith, patience, and perseverance, and they should have been safely brought into the promised land. For want of a little more dependence upon God, how often does an excellent beginning come to an unhappy conclusion! Many who were just on the borders of the promised land, and about to cross Jordan, have, through an act of unfaithfulness, been turned back to wander many a dreary year in the wilderness. Reader, be on thy guard. Trust in Christ, and watch unto prayer.

2. Many people have been greatly distressed on losing their baptismal register, and have been reduced in consequence to great political inconvenience. But still they had their lives, and should a living man complain? But a man may so sin as to provoke God to cut him off; or, like a fruitless tree, be cut down, because he encumbers the ground. Or he may

have sinned a sin unto death, 1 John 5:16, 17, that is, a sin which God will punish with temporal death, while he extends mercy to the soul.

3. With respect to the blotting out of God's book, on which there has been so much controversy, Is it not evident that a soul could not be blotted out of a book in which it had never been written? And is it not farther evident from Exodus 32:32, 33, that, although a man be written in God's book, if he sins he may be blotted out? Let him that readeth understand; and let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. Reader, be not high-minded, but fear. See Clarke note on "Exodus 32:32", and See Clarke note on "Exodus 32:33".

CHAPTER 33

Moses is commanded to depart from the mount, and lead up the people towards the promised land, 1. An angel is promised to be their guide, 2. The land is described, and the Lord refuses to go with them, 3. The people mourn, and strip themselves of their ornaments, 4-6. The tabernacle or tent is pitched without the camp, 7. Moses goes to it to consult the Lord, and the cloudy pillar descends on it, 8, 9. The people, standing at their tent doors, witness this, 10. The Lord speaks familiarly with Moses; he returns to the camp, and leaves Joshua in the tabernacle, 11. Moses pleads with God, and desires to know whom he will send to be their guide, and to be informed of the way of the Lord, 12, 13. The Lord promises that his presence shall go with them, 14. Moses pleads that the people may be taken under the Divine protection, 15, 16. The Lord promises to do so, 17. Moses requests to see the Divine glory, 18. And God promises to make his goodness pass before him, and to proclaim his name, 19. Shows that no man can see his glory and live, 20; but promises to put him in the cleft of a rock, and to cover him with his hand while his glory passed by, and then to remove his hand and let him see his back parts, 21-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 1. *Unto the land*— That is, towards it, or to the borders of it. See Exodus 32:34. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 32:34".

Verse 2. *I will send an angel*— In Exodus 23:20, God promises to send an angel to conduct them into the good land, in whom the name of God should be; that is, in whom God should dwell. See Clarke's note there "Exodus 23:20". Here he promises that an angel shall be their conductor; but as there is nothing particularly specified of him, it has been thought that an ordinary angel is intended, and not that Angel of the Covenant promised before. And this sentiment seems to be confirmed by the following verse.

Verse 3. *I will not go up in the midst of thee*— Consequently, the angel here promised to be their guide was not that angel in whom Jehovah's name was: and so the people understood it; hence the mourning which is afterwards mentioned.

Verse 5. *Now put off thy ornaments from thee*— “The Septuagint, in their translation, suppose that the children of Israel not only laid aside their ear-rings, and such like ornaments, in a time of professed deep humiliation before God, but their upper or more beautiful garments too. Moses says nothing of this last circumstance; but as it is a modern practice, so it appears by their version to have been as ancient as their time, and probably took place long before that. The Septuagint gives us this as the translation of the passage: ‘The people, having heard this sad declaration, mourned with lamentations. And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Now, therefore, put off your robes of glory, and your ornaments, and I will show you the things I will do unto you. And the children of Israel put off their ornaments and robes by the mount, by Horeb.’

“If it had not been the custom to put off their upper garments in times of deep mourning, in the days that the Septuagint translation was made, they would not have inserted this circumstance in the account Moses gives of their mourning, and concerning which he was silent. They must have supposed too that this practice might be in use in those elder times.

“That it is now practiced in the east, appears from the account Pitts gives of the ceremonies of the Mohammedan pilgrimage to Mecca. ‘A few days after this we came to a place called Rabbock, about four days’ sail on this side of Mecca, where all the haggas or pilgrims, (excepting those of the female sex) do enter into hirrawem or ihram, i.e., they take off all their clothes, covering themselves with two hirrawems, or large white cotton wrappers; one they put about their middle, which reaches down to their ankles; with the other they cover the upper part of their body, except the head; and they wear no other thing on their bodies but these wrappers, only a pair of grimgameca, that is thin-soled shoes like sandals, the over-leather of which covers only the toes, the insteps being all naked. In this manner, like humble penitents, they go from Rabbock until they come to Mecca, to approach the temple, many times enduring the scorching heat of the sun until the very skin is burnt off their backs and arms, and their

heads swollen to a very great degree.’-pp. 115, 116. Presently after he informs us ‘that the time of their wearing this mortifying habit is about the space of seven days.’ Again, (p. 138:) ‘It was a sight, indeed, able to pierce one’s heart, to behold so many thousands in their garments of humility and mortification, with their naked heads, and cheeks watered with tears; and to hear their grievous sighs and sobs, begging earnestly for the remission of their sins, promising newness of life, using a form of penitential expressions, and thus continuing for the space of four or five hours.’

“The Septuagint suppose the Israelites made much the same appearance as these Mohammedan pilgrims, when Israel stood in anguish of soul at the foot of Mount Horeb, though Moses says nothing of putting off any of their vestments.

“Some passages of the Jewish prophets seem to confirm the notion of their stripping themselves of some of their clothes in times of deep humiliation, particularly Micah 1:8: Therefore I will wail and howl; I will go stripped and naked; I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.

“Saul’s stripping himself, mentioned 1 Samuel 19:24, is perhaps to be understood of his assuming the appearance of those that were deeply engaged in devotional exercises, into which he was unintentionally brought by the prophetic influences that came upon him, and in which he saw others engaged.”-Harmer’s Observat., vol. iv., p. 172.

The ancient Jewish commentators were of opinion that the Israelites had the name יהוה Jehovah inscribed on them in such a way as to ensure them the Divine protection; and that this, inscribed probably on a plate of gold, was considered their choicest ornament; and that when they gave their ornaments to make the golden calf, this was given by many, in consequence of which they were considered as naked and defenceless. All the remaining parts of their ornaments, which it is likely were all emblematical of spiritual things, God commands them here to lay off; for they could not with propriety bear the symbols of the Divine protection, who had forfeited that protection for their transgression.

That I may know what to do unto thee.— For it seems that while they had these emblematic ornaments on them, they were still considered as under

the Divine protection. These were a shield to them, which God commands them to throw aside. Though many had parted with their choicest ornaments, yet not all, only a few comparatively, of the wives, daughters, and sons of 600, 000 men, could have been thus stripped to make one golden calf. The major part still had these ornaments, and they are now commanded to lay them aside.

Verse 7. *Moses took the tabernacle*— אֹהֶל הָאֱהֹרָא eth haohel, the TENT; not אֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן eth hammishcan, the tabernacle, the dwelling-place of Jehovah, see Exodus 35:11, for this was not as yet erected; but probably the tent of Moses, which was before in the midst of the camp, and to which the congregation came for judgment, and where, no doubt, God frequently met with his servant. This is now removed to a considerable distance from the camp, (two thousand cubits, according to the Talmudists,) as God refuses to dwell any longer among this rebellious people. And as this was the place to which all the people came for justice and judgment, hence it was probably called the tabernacle, more properly the tent, of the congregation.

Verse 9. *The cloudy pillar descended*— This very circumstance precluded the possibility of deception. The cloud descending at these times, and at none others, was a full proof that it was miraculous, and a pledge of the Divine presence. It was beyond the power of human art to counterfeit such an appearance; and let it be observed that all the people saw this, Exodus 33:10. How many indubitable and irrefragable proofs of its own authenticity and Divine origin does the Pentateuch contain!

Verse 11. *The Lord spake unto Moses face to face*— That there was no personal appearance here we may readily conceive; and that the communications made by God to Moses were not by visions, ecstasies, dreams, inward inspirations, or the mediation of angels, is sufficiently evident: we may therefore consider the passage as implying that familiarity and confidence with which the Divine Being treated his servant, and that he spake with him by articulate sounds in his own language, though no shape or similitude was then to be seen.

Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man— There is a difficulty here. Joshua certainly was not a young man in the literal sense of the word; “but he was

called so,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “In respect of his service, not of his years; for he was now above fifty years old, as may be gathered from Joshua 24:29. But because ministry and service are usually by the younger sort, all servants are called young men, Genesis 14:24.” See also Genesis 22:3, and Genesis 41:12. Perhaps the word נַעַר *naar*, here translated young man, means a single person, one unmarried.

Verse 12. *Moses said unto the Lord*— We may suppose that after Moses had quitted the tabernacle he went to the camp, and gave the people some general information relative to the conversation he lately had with the Lord; after which he returned to the tabernacle or tent, and began to plead with God, as we find in this and the following verses.

Thou hast not let me know, etc.— As God had said he would not go up with this people, Moses wished to know whom he would send with him, as he had only said, in general terms, that he would send an angel.

Verse 13. *Show me now thy way*— Let me know the manner in which thou wouldst have this people led up and governed, because this nation is thy people, and should be governed and guided in thy own way.

Verse 14. *My presence shall go with thee*— פָּנַי יֵלְכוּ *panai yelechu*, my faces shall go. I shall give thee manifestations of my grace and goodness through the whole of thy journey. I shall vary my appearances for thee, as thy necessities shall require.

Verse 15. *If thy presence go not*— אִם אֵי פָּנֶיךָ הֹלְכִים *im ein pancycha holechim*, if thy faces do not go — if we have not manifestations of thy peculiar providence and grace, carry us not up hence. Without supernatural assistance, and a most particular providence, he knew that it would be impossible either to govern such a people, or support them in the desert; and therefore he wishes to be well assured on this head, that he may lead them up with confidence, and be able to give them the most explicit assurances of support and protection. But by what means should these manifestations take place? This question seems to be answered by the Prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 63:9: In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence (פָּנָיו *panaiv*, of his faces) saved them. So we find that the goodness and mercy of God were to be manifested by the Angel of the Covenant, the Lord Jesus, the Messiah; and this is the interpretation

which the Jews themselves give of this place. Can any person lead men to the typical Canaan, who is not himself influenced and directed by the Lord? And of what use are all the means of grace, if not crowned with the presence and blessing of the God of Israel? It is on this ground that Jesus Christ hath said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in the midst of them, Matthew 18:20; without which, what would preachings, prayers, and even SACRAMENTS avail?

Verse 16. *So shall we be separated*— By having this Divine protection we shall be saved from idolatry, and be preserved in thy truth and in the true worshipping of thee; and thus shall we be separated from all the people that are upon the face of the earth: as all the nations of the world, the Jews only excepted, were at this time idolaters.

Verse 17. *I will do this thing also*— My presence shall go with thee, and I will keep thee separate from all the people of the earth. Both these promises have been remarkably fulfilled. God continued miraculously with them till he brought them into the promised land; and from the day in which he brought them out of Egypt to the present day, he has kept them a distinct, unmixed people! Who can account for this on any principle but that of a continual especial providence, and a constant Divine interference? The Jews have ever been a people fond of money; had they been mingled with the people of the earth among whom they have been scattered, their secular interests would have been greatly promoted by it; and they who have sacrificed every thing besides to their love of money, on this point have been incorruptible! They chose in every part of their dispersions rather to be a poor, despised, persecuted people, and continue separate from all the people of the earth, than to enjoy ease and affluence by becoming mixed with the nations. For what great purposes must God be preserving this people! for it does not appear that any moral principle binds them together—they seem lost to this; and yet in opposition to their interests, for which in other respects they would sacrifice every thing, they are still kept distinct from all the people of the earth: for this an especial providence alone can account.

Verse 18. *Show me thy glory*— Moses probably desired to see that which constitutes the peculiar glory or excellence of the Divine nature as it stands in reference to man. By many this is thought to signify his eternal mercy in

sending Christ Jesus into the world. Moses perceived that what God was now doing had the most important and gracious designs which at present he could not distinctly discover; therefore he desires God to show him his glory. God graciously promises to indulge him in this request as far as possible, by proclaiming his name, and making all his goodness pass before him, Exodus 33:19. But at the same time he assures him that he could not see his face — the fullness of his perfections and the grandeur of his designs, and live, as no human being could bear, in the present state, this full discovery. But he adds, Thou shalt see my back parts, **אֶת אַחֲרָי** *eth achorai*, probably meaning that appearance which he should assume in after times, when it should be said, God is manifest in the flesh. This appearance did take place, for we find God putting him into a cleft of the rock, covering him with his hand, and passing by in such a way as to exhibit a human similitude. John may have had this in view when he said, The Word was made flesh and dwelt **AMONG** us, full of grace and truth, and **WE BEHELD HIS GLORY**. What this glory was, and what was implied by this grace and truth, we shall see in the succeeding chapter.

Verse 19. *I will make all my goodness pass before thee*— Thou shalt not have a sight of my justice, for thou couldst not bear the infinite splendor of my purity: but I shall show myself to thee as the fountain of inexhaustible compassion, the sovereign Dispenser of my own mercy in my own way, being gracious to whom I will be gracious, and showing mercy on whom I will show mercy.

I will proclaim the name of the Lord.— See Clarke's note, "Exodus 34:6".

Verse 20. *No man see me, and live.*— The splendor would be insufferable to man; he only, whose mortality is swallowed up of life, can see God as he is. See 1 John 3:2. From some disguised relation of the circumstances mentioned here, the fable of Jupiter and Semele was formed; she is reported to have entreated Jupiter to show her his glory, who was at first very reluctant, knowing that it would be fatal to her; but at last, yielding to her importunity, he discovered his divine majesty, and she was consumed by his presence. This story is told by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, book iii., table iii., 5.

Verse 21. *Behold, there is a place by me*— There seems to be a reference here to a well-known place on the mount where God was accustomed to

meet with Moses. This was a rock; and it appears there was a cleft or cave in it, in which Moses was to stand while the Divine Majesty was pleased to show him all that human nature was capable of bearing: but this appears to have referred more to the counsels of his mercy and goodness, relative to his purpose of redeeming the human race, than to any visible appearance of the Divine Majesty itself. See Clarke on “Exodus 33:18”.

1. THE conclusion of this chapter is very obscure: we can scarcely pretend to say, in any precise manner, what it means; and it is very probable that the whole concerned Moses alone. He was in great perplexity and doubt; he was afraid that God was about to abandon this people; and he well knew that if he did so, their destruction must be the consequence. He had received general directions to decamp, and lead the people towards the promised land; but this was accompanied with a threat that Jehovah would not go with them. The prospect that was before him was exceedingly gloomy and discouraging; and it was rendered the more so because God predicted their persevering stiffneckedness, and gave this as one reason why he would not go up among them, for their provocations would be so great and so frequent that his justice would be so provoked as to break through in a moment and consume them. Moses, well knowing that God must have some great and important designs in delivering them and bringing them thus far, earnestly entreated him to give him some discovery of it, that his own mind might be satisfied. God mercifully condescends to meet his wishes in such a way as no doubt gave him full satisfaction; but as this referred to himself alone the circumstances are not related, as probably they could be of no farther use to us than the mere gratifying of a principle of curiosity.

2. On some occasions to be kept in the dark is as instructive as to be brought into the light. In many cases those words of the prophet are strictly applicable. Verily, thou art a God, who HIDEST THYSELF, O God of Israel, the Savior! One point we see here very plainly, that while the people continued obstinate and rebellious, that presence of God by which his approbation was signified could not be manifested among them; and yet, without his presence to guide, protect, and provide for them, they could neither go up nor be saved. This presence is promised, and on the fulfillment of the promise the safety of Israel depended. The Church of God is often now in such a state that the approbation of God cannot be

manifested in it; and yet if his presence were wholly withdrawn, truth would fall in the streets, equity go backward, and the Church must become extinct. How have the seeds of light and life been preserved during the long, dark, and cold periods when error was triumphant, and the pure worship of God adulterated by the impurities of idolatry and the thick darkness of superstition, by the presence of his endless mercy, preserving his own truth in circumstances in which he could not show his approbation! He was with the Church in the wilderness, and preserved the living oracles, kept alive the heavenly seeds, and is now showing forth the glory of those designs which before he concealed from mankind. He cannot err because he is infinitely wise; he can do nothing that is unkind, because he delighteth in mercy. We, as yet, see only through a glass darkly; by and by we shall see face to face. The Lord's presence is with his people; and those who trust in him have confident rest in his mercy.

CHAPTER 34

Moses is commanded to hew two tables similar to the first, and bring them up to the mount, to get the covenant renewed, 1-3. He prepares the tables and goes up to meet the Lord, 4. The Lord descends, and proclaims his name JEHOVAH, 5. What this name signifies, 6, 7. Moses worships and intercedes, 8, 9. The Lord promises to renew the covenant, work miracles among the people, and drive out the Canaanites, etc., 10, 11. No covenant to be made with the idolatrous nations, but their altars and images to be destroyed, 12-15. No matrimonial alliances to be contracted with them, 16. The Israelites must have no molten gods, 17. The commandment of the feast of unleavened bread, and of the sanctification of the first-born, renewed, 18-29; as also that of the Sabbath, and the three great annual feasts, 21-23. The promise that the surrounding nations shall not invade their territories, while all the males were at Jerusalem celebrating the annual feasts, 24. Directions concerning the passover, 25; and the first-fruits, 26. Moses is commanded to write all these words, as containing the covenant which God had now renewed with the Israelites, 27. Moses, being forty days with God without eating or drinking, writes the words of the covenant; and the Lord writes the ten commandments upon the tables of stone, 28. Moses descends with the tables; his face shines, 29. Aaron and the people are afraid to approach him, because of his glorious appearance, 30. Moses delivers to them the covenant and commandments of the Lord; and puts a veil over his face while he is speaking, 31-33, but takes it off when he goes to minister before the Lord, 34, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 1. *Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first*— In Exodus 32:16 we are told that the two first tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God; but here Moses is commanded to provide tables of his own workmanship, and God promises to write on them the words which were on the first. That God wrote the first tables himself, see proved by different passages of Scripture at the end of chap. xxxii. See

Clarke note at “Exodus 32:35”. But here, in Exodus 34:27, it seems as if Moses was commanded to write these words, and in Exodus 34:28 it is said, And he wrote upon the tables; but in Deuteronomy 10:1-4 it is expressly said that God wrote the second tables as well as the first.

In order to reconcile these accounts let us suppose that the ten words, or ten commandments, were written on both tables by the hand of God himself, and that what Moses wrote, Exodus 34:27, was a copy of these to be delivered to the people, while the tables themselves were laid up in the ark before the testimony, whither the people could not go to consult them, and therefore a copy was necessary for the use of the congregation; this copy, being taken off under the direction of God, was authenticated equally with the original, and the original itself was laid up as a record to which all succeeding copies might be continually referred, in order to prevent corruption. This supposition removes the apparent contradiction; and thus both God and Moses may be said to have written the covenant and the ten commandments: the former, the original; the latter, the copy. This supposition is rendered still more probable by Exodus 34:27 itself: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words (that is, as I understand it, a copy of the words which God had already written;) for AFTER THE TENOR (Y^P LE AL PI, ACCORDING TO THE MOUTH) of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.” Here the original writing is represented by an elegant prosopopoesia, or personification, as speaking and giving out from its own mouth a copy of itself. It may be supposed that this mode of interpretation is contradicted by Exodus 34:28: AND HE wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant; but that the pronoun HE refers to the Lord, and not to Moses, is sufficiently proved by the parallel place, Deuteronomy 10:1-4: At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first-and I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables-and I hewed two tables of stone as at the first-And HE wrote on the tables according to the first writing. This determines the business, and proves that God wrote the second as well as the first tables, and that the pronoun in Exodus 34:28 refers to the LORD, and not to Moses. By this mode of interpretation all contradiction is removed. Houbigant imagines that the difficulty may be removed by supposing that God wrote the ten commandments, and that Moses wrote the other parts of the covenant from Exodus 34:11 to Exodus

34:26, and thus it might be said that both God and Moses wrote on the same tables. This is not an improbable case, and is left to the reader's consideration. See Clarke note on "Exodus 34:27".

There still remains a controversy whether what are called the ten commandments were at all written on the first tables, those tables containing, according to some, only the terms of the covenant without the ten words, which are supposed to be added here for the first time. "The following is a general view of this subject. In chap. 20. the ten commandments are given; and at the same time various political and ecclesiastical statutes, which are detailed in chapters 21., 22., and 23. To receive these, Moses had drawn near unto the thick darkness where God was, Exodus 20:21, and having received them he came again with them to the people, according to their request before expressed, Exodus 20:19: Speak thou with us-but let not the Lord speak with us, lest we die, for they had been terrified by the manner in which God had uttered the ten commandments; see Exodus 20:18. After this Moses, with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the seventy elders, went up to the mountain; and on his return he announced all these laws unto the people, Exodus 24:1-3, etc., and they promised obedience. Still there is no word of the tables of stone. Then he wrote all in a book, Exodus 24:4, which was called the book of the covenant, Exodus 24:7. After this there was a second going up of Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders, Exodus 24:9, when that glorious discovery of God mentioned in Exodus 24:10, 11 took place. After their coming down Moses is again commanded to go up; and God promises to give him tables of stone, containing a law and precepts, Exodus 24:12. This is the first place these tables of stone are mentioned; and thus it appears that the ten commandments, and several other precepts, were given to and accepted by the people, and the covenant sacrifice offered, Exodus 24:5, before the tables of stone were either written or mentioned." It is very likely that the commandments, laws, etc., were first published by the Lord in the hearing of the people; repeated afterwards by Moses; and the ten words or commandments, containing the sum and substance of the whole, afterwards written on the first tables of stone, to be kept for a record in the ark. These being broken, as is related Exodus 32:19, Moses is commanded to hew out two tables like to the first, and bring them up to the mountain, that God might write upon them what

he had written on the former, Exodus 34:1. And that this was accordingly done, see the preceding part of this note.

Verse 6. And the Lord passed by-and proclaimed, The Lord, etc.— It would be much better to read this verse thus: “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed JEHOVAH,” that is, showed Moses fully what was implied in this august name. Moses had requested God to show him his glory, (see the preceding chapter, Exodus 33:18,) and God promised to proclaim or fully declare the name JEHOVAH, (Exodus 33:19;) by which proclamation or interpretation Moses should see how God would “be gracious to whom he would be gracious,” and how he would “be merciful to those to whom he would show mercy. Here therefore God fulfils that promise by proclaiming this name. It has long been a question, what is the meaning of the word יהוה JEHOVAH, Yehovah, Yehue, Yehveh, or Yeve, Jeue, Jao, Iao, Jhueh, and Jove; for it has been as variously pronounced as it has been differently interpreted. Some have maintained that it is utterly inexplicable; these of course have offered no mode of interpretation. Others say that it implies the essence of the Divine nature. Others, that it expresses the doctrine of the Trinity connected with the incarnation; the letter י yod standing for the Father, ה he for the Son, and ו vau (the connecting particle) for the Holy Spirit: and they add that the ה he being repeated in the word, signifies the human nature united to the Divine in the incarnation. These speculations are calculated to give very little satisfaction. How strange is it that none of these learned men have discovered that God himself interprets this name in Exodus 34:6, “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed יהוה YEHOWAH the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” These words contain the proper interpretation of the venerable and glorious name JEHOVAH. But it will be necessary to consider them in detail.

The different names in this and the following verse have been considered as so many attributes of the Divine nature. Commentators divide them into eleven, thus:—1. יהוה JEHOVAH. 2. אל EL, the strong or mighty God. 3. רחום RACHUM, the merciful Being, who is full of tenderness and compassion. 4. חנוּן CHANNUN, the gracious One; he whose nature is

goodness itself; the loving God. 5. אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם ERECH APPAYIM, long-suffering; the Being who, because of his goodness and tenderness, is not easily irritated, but suffers long and is kind. 6. רַב RAB, the great or mighty One. 7. חֶסֶד CHESED, the bountiful Being; he who is exuberant in his beneficence. 8. אֱמֶת EMETH, the truth or true One; he alone who can neither deceive nor be deceived, who is the fountain of truth, and from whom all wisdom and knowledge must be derived. 9. נֹצֵר חֶסֶד NOTSER CHESED, the preserver of bountifulness; he whose beneficence never ends, keeping mercy for thousands of generations, showing compassion and mercy while the world endures. 10. נֹשֵׂא עֲוֹנוֹת וְחַטָּאִים NOSE avon vaphesha vechattaah, he who bears away iniquity and transgression and sin: properly, the REDEEMER, the Pardoner, the Forgiver; the Being whose prerogative alone it is to forgive sin and save the soul. נִקְהָה לֹא (לוֹ) יִנְקָה NAKKEH lo yenakkeh, the righteous Judge, who distributes justice with an impartial hand, with whom no innocent person can ever be condemned. And, 11. פֹּקֵד עֲוֹנוֹת POKED avon, etc.; he who visits iniquity, who punishes transgressors, and from whose justice no sinner can escape. The God of retributive and vindictive justice.

These eleven attributes, as they have been termed, are all included in the name JEHOVAH, and are, as we have before seen, the proper interpretation of it; but the meaning of several of these words has been variously understood.

Verse 7. *That will by no means clear the guilty*— This last clause is rather difficult; literally translated it signifies, in clearing he will not clear. But the Samaritan, reading לוֹ lo, to him, instead of the negative לוֹ lo, not, renders the clause thus: With whom the innocent shall be innocent; i.e., an innocent or holy person shall never be treated as if he were a transgressor, by this just and holy God. The Arabic version has it, He justifies and is not justified; and the Septuagint is nearly as our English text, **καὶ οὐ καθαρῶν τοὺς ἐνοχοὺς**, and he doth not purify the guilty. The Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint, edited by Dr. Grabe, has **καὶ τὸν ἐνοχὸν καθαρῶν οὐ καθαρῶν**, and the guilty he will not cleanse with a purification-offering. The Coptic is to the same purpose. The Vulgate is a paraphrase: nullusque apud te per se innocens est, “and no person is innocent by or of himself before thee.” This gives a sound theologic sense,

stating a great truth, That no man can make an atonement for his own sins, or purify his own heart; and that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Verse 9. *O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us*— The original is not יהוה Jehovah, but אדני Adonai in both these places, and seems to refer particularly to the Angel of the Covenant, the Messiah. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 15:8".

Verse 10. *I will do marvels*— This seems to refer to what God did in putting them in possession of the land of Canaan, causing the walls of Jericho to fall down; making the sun and moon to stand still, etc. And thus God made his covenant with them; binding himself to put them in possession of the promised land, and binding them to observe the precepts laid down in the following verses, from Exodus 34:11-26 inclusive.

Verse 13. *Ye shall destroy their images*— See the subjects of this and all the following verses, to Exodus 34:28, treated at large in the notes on chap. xxiii.

Verse 21. *In earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.*— This commandment is worthy of especial note; many break the Sabbath on the pretense of absolute necessity, because, if in harvest time the weather happens to be what is called bad, and the Sabbath day be fair and fine, they judge it perfectly lawful to employ that day in endeavoring to save the fruits of the field, and think that the goodness of the day beyond the preceding, is an indication from Providence that it should be thus employed. But is not the above command pointed directly against this? I have known this law often broken on this pretense, and have never been able to discover a single instance where the persons who acted thus succeeded one whit better than their more conscientious neighbors, who availed themselves of no such favorable circumstances, being determined to keep God's law, even to the prejudice of their secular interests; but no man ever yet ultimately suffered loss by a conscientious attachment to his duty to God. He who is willing and obedient, shall eat the good of the land; but God will ever distinguish those in his providence who respect his commandments.

Verse 24. *Neither shall any man desire thy land*— What a manifest proof was this of the power and particular providence of God! How easy would it have been for the surrounding nations to have taken possession of the whole Israelitish land, with all their fenced cities, when there were none left to protect them but women and children! Was not this a standing proof of the Divine origin of their religion, and a barrier which no deistical mind could possibly surmount! Thrice every year did God work an especial miracle for the protection of his people; controlling even the very desires of their enemies, that they might not so much as meditate evil against them. They who have God for their protector have a sure refuge; and how true is the proverb, *The path of duty is the way of safety!* While these people went up to Jerusalem to keep the Lord's ordinances, he kept their families in peace, and their land in safety.

Verse 25. *The blood of my sacrifice*— That is, the paschal lamb. See Clarke on "Exodus 23:18".

Verse 26. *Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk*.— See this amply considered Exodus 23:19. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 23:19".

Verse 27. *Write thou these words*— Either a transcript of the whole law now delivered, or the words included from Exodus 34:11 to Exodus 34:26. God certainly wrote the ten words on both sets of tables. Moses either wrote a transcript of these and the accompanying precepts for the use of the people, or he wrote the precepts themselves in addition to the ten commandments which were written by the finger of God. See Clarke on "Exodus 34:1". Allowing this mode of interpretation, the accompanying precepts were, probably, what was written on the back side of the tables by Moses; the ten commandments, what were written on the front by the finger of Jehovah: for we must pay but little attention to the supposition of the rabbins, that the letters on each table were cut through the stone, so as to be legible on each side. See Clarke on "Exodus 32:15".

Verse 28. *Forty days and forty nights*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 24:18".

Verse 29. *The skin of his face shone*— קרן karan, was horned: having been long in familiar intercourse with his Maker, his flesh, as well as his soul, was penetrated with the effulgence of the Divine glory, and his looks

expressed the light and life which dwelt within. Probably Moses appeared now as he did when, in our Lord's transfiguration, he was seen with Elijah on the mount, Matthew 17. As the original word קָרַן *karan* signifies to shine out, to dart forth, as horns on the head of an animal, or rays of light reflected from a polished surface, we may suppose that the heavenly glory which filled the soul of this holy man darted out from his face in coruscations, in that manner in which light is generally represented. The Vulgate renders the passage, *et ignorabat quod cornuta esset facies sua*, "and he did not know that his face was horned;" which version, misunderstood, has induced painters in general to represent Moses with two very large horns, one proceeding from each temple. But we might naturally ask, while they were indulging themselves in such fancies, why only two horns? for it is very likely that there were hundreds of these radiations, proceeding at once from the face of Moses. It was no doubt from this very circumstance that almost all the nations of the world who have heard of this transaction, have agreed in representing those men to whom they attributed extraordinary sanctity, and whom they supposed to have had familiar intercourse with the Deity, with a lucid nimbus or glory round their heads. This has prevailed both in the east and in the west; not only the Greek and Roman saints, or eminent persons, are thus represented, but those also among the Mohammedans, Hindoos, and Chinese.

Verse 30. *They were afraid to come nigh him.*— A sight of his face alarmed them; their consciences were still guilty from their late transgression, and they had not yet received the atonement. The very appearance of superior sanctity often awes the guilty into respect.

Verse 33. *And till Moses had done speaking*— The meaning of the verse appears to be this: As often as Moses spoke in public to the people, he put the veil on his face, because they could not bear to look on the brightness of his countenance; but when he entered into the tabernacle to converse with the Lord, he removed this veil, Exodus 34:34. St. Paul, 2 Corinthians 3:7, etc., makes a very important use of the transactions recorded in this place. He represents the brightness of the face of Moses as emblematical of the glory or excellence of that dispensation; but he shows that however glorious or excellent that was, it had no glory when compared with the superior excellence of the Gospel. As Moses was glorious in the

eyes of the Israelites, but that glory was absorbed and lost in the splendor of God when he entered into the tabernacle, or went to meet the Lord upon the mount; so the brightness and excellence of the Mosaic dispensation are eclipsed and absorbed in the transcendent brightness or excellence of the Gospel of Christ. One was the shadow, the other is the substance. One showed SIN in its exceeding sinfulness, together with the justice and immaculate purity of God; but, in and of itself, made no provision for pardon or sanctification. The other exhibits Jesus, the Lamb of God, typified by all the sacrifices under the law, putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself, reconciling God to man and man to God, diffusing his Spirit through the souls of believers, and cleansing the very thoughts of their hearts by his inspiration, and causing them to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The one seems to shut heaven against mankind, because by the law was the knowledge, not the cure, of SIN; the other opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers. The former was a ministration of death, the latter a dispensation of life. The former ministered terror, so that even the high priest was afraid to approach, the people withdrew and stood afar off, and even Moses, the mediator of it, exceedingly feared and trembled; by the latter we have boldness to enter into the holiest through the blood of Jesus, who is the end of the law for righteousness-justification, to every one that believeth. The former gives a partial view of the Divine nature; the latter shows God as he is,

“Full orbed, in his whole round of rays complete.”

The apostle farther considers the veil on the face of Moses, as being emblematical of the metaphorical nature of the different rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation, each covering some spiritual meaning or a spiritual subject; and that the Jews did not lift the veil to penetrate the spiritual sense, and did not look to the end of the commandment, which was to be abolished, but rested in the letter or literal meaning, which conferred neither light nor life.

He considers the veil also as being emblematical of that state of intellectual darkness into which the Jewish people, by their rejection of the Gospel, were plunged, and from which they have never yet been recovered. When a Jew, even at the present day, reads the law in the synagogue, he puts over his head an oblong woollen veil, with four tassels at the four corners,

which is called the taled or thaled. This is a very remarkable circumstance, as it appears to be an emblem of the intellectual veil referred to by the apostle, which is still upon their hearts when Moses is read, and which prevents them from looking to the end of that which God designed should be abrogated, and which has been abolished by the introduction of the Gospel. The veil is upon their hearts, and prevents the light of the glory of God from shining into them; but we all, says the apostle, speaking of believers in Christ, with open face, without any veil, beholding as in a glass the glory of God, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord; 2 Corinthians 3:18. Reader, dost thou know this excellence of the religion of Christ? Once thou wert darkness; art thou now light in the Lord? Art thou still under the letter that killeth, or under the Spirit that giveth life? Art thou a slave to sin or a servant of Christ? Is the veil on thy heart, or hast thou found redemption in his blood, the remission of sins? Knowest thou not these things? Then may God pity, enlighten, and save thee!

CHAPTER 35

Moses assembles the congregation to deliver to them the commandments of God, 1. Directions concerning the Sabbath, 2, 3. Free-will offerings of gold, silver, brass, etc., for the tabernacle, 4-7. Of oil and spices, 8. Of precious stones, 9. Proper artists to be employed, 10. The tabernacle and its tent, 11. The ark, 12. Table of the shew-bread, 13. Candlestick, 14. Altar of incense, 15. Altar of burnt-offering, 16. Hangings, pins, etc., 17, 18. Clothes of service, and holy vestments, 19. The people cheerfully bring their ornaments as offerings to the Lord, 20-22; together with blue, purple, scarlet, etc., etc., 23, 24. The women spin, and bring the produce of their skill and industry, 25, 26. The rulers bring precious stones, etc., 27, 28. All the people offer willingly, 29. Bezaleel and Aholiab appointed to conduct and superintend all the work of the tabernacle, for which they are qualified by the spirit of wisdom, 30-35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 1. *And Moses gathered*— The principal subjects in this chapter have been already largely considered in the notes on chapters 25., 26., 27., 28., 29., 30., and 31., and to those the reader is particularly desired to refer, together with the parallel texts in the margin.

Verse 3. *Ye shall kindle no fire*— The Jews understand this precept as forbidding the kindling of fire only for the purpose of doing work or dressing victuals; but to give them light and heat, they judge it lawful to light a fire on the Sabbath day, though themselves rarely kindle it—they get Christians to do this work for them.

Verse 5. See, on these metals and colors, Exodus 25:3, 4. etc.

Verse 6. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 35:5".

Verse 7. *Rams' skins, etc.*— See Exodus 25:5.

Verse 8. *Oil for the light*— See Exodus 25:6.

Verse 9. *Onyx stones*— See Exodus 25:7.

Verse 11. *The tabernacle*— See Exodus 25:8.

Verse 12. *The ark*— See Exodus 25:10-17.

Verse 13. *The table*— See Exodus 25:23-28.

Verse 14. *The candlestick*— See Exodus 25:31-39.

Verse 15. *The incense altar*— The golden altar, see Exodus 30:1-10.

Verse 16. *The altar of burnt-offering*— The brazen altar, see Exodus 27:1-8.

Verse 17. *The hangings of the court*— See Exodus 27:9.

Verse 19. *The clothes of service*— Probably aprons, towels, and such like, used in the common service, and different from the vestments for Aaron and his sons. See these latter described Exodus 28:1, etc.

Verse 21. *Every one whose heart stirred him up*— Literally, whose heart was lifted up — whose affections were set on the work, being cordially engaged in the service of God.

Verse 22. *As many as were willing-hearted*— For no one was forced to lend his help in this sacred work; all was a free-will offering to the Lord.

Bracelets— חַחַח chach, whatever hooks together; ornaments for the wrists, arms, legs, or neck.

Ear-rings— נֶזֶם nezem, see this explained Genesis 24:22.

Rings— טַבְּאָתַּ tabbaath, from טָבַּא taba, to penetrate, enter into; probably rings for the fingers.

Tablets— כּוּמָז cumaz, a word only used here and in Numbers 31:50, supposed to be a girdle to support the breasts.

Verse 25. *All the women that were wise-hearted did spin*— They had before learned this art, they were wise-hearted; and now they practice it, and God condescends to require and accept their services. In building this house of God, all were ambitious to do something by which they might

testify their piety to God, and their love for his worship. The spinning practiced at this time was simple, and required little apparatus. It was the plain distaff or twirling pin, which might be easily made out of any wood they met with in the wilderness.

Verse 27. *The rulers brought onyx stones*— These being persons of consequence, might be naturally expected to furnish the more scarce and costly articles. See how all join in this service! The men worked and brought offerings, the women spun and brought their ornaments, the rulers united with them, and delivered up their jewels! and all the children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord, Exodus 35:29.

Verse 30. *The Lord hath called by name Bezaleel*— See this subject discussed at large in the note on Exodus 28:3, See Clarke's note on "Exodus 28:3", where the subject of superseding the work of the hand by the extra use of machinery is particularly considered.

1. FROM the nature of the offerings made for the service of the tabernacle, we see of what sort the spoils were which the Israelites brought out of Egypt: gold, silver, brass, blue, purple, scarlet, fine linen, rams' skins dyed red, what we call badgers' skins, oil, spices, incense, onyx stones, and other stones, the names of which are not here mentioned. They must also have brought looms, spinning wheels, instruments for cutting precious stones, anvils, hammers, furnaces, melting-pots, with a vast variety of tools for the different artists employed on the work of the tabernacle, viz., smiths, joiners, carvers, gilders, etc.

2. God could have erected his tabernacle without the help or skill of man; but he condescended to employ him. As all are interested in the worship of God, so all should bear a part in it; here God employs the whole congregation: every male and female, with even their sons and their daughters, and the very ornaments of their persons, are given to raise and adorn the house of God. The women who had not ornaments, and could neither give gold nor silver, could spin goat's hair, and the Lord graciously employs them in this work, and accepts what they can give and what they can do, for they did it with a willing mind; they were wise of heart — had learned a useful business, their hearts were lifted up in the work, Exodus 35:21, and all felt it a high privilege to be able to put only a nail in the holy place. By the free-will offerings of the people the tabernacle was erected,

and all the costly utensils belonging to it provided. This was the primitive mode of providing proper places for Divine worship; and as it was the primitive, so it is the most rational mode. Taxes levied by law for building or repairing churches were not known in the ancient times of religious simplicity. It is an honor to be permitted to do any thing for the support of public worship; and he must have a strange, unfeeling, and ungodly heart, who does not esteem it a high privilege to have a stone of his own laying or procuring in the house of God. How easily might all the buildings necessary for the purpose of public worship be raised, if the money that is spent in needless self-indulgence by ourselves, our sons, and our daughters, were devoted to this purpose! By sacrifices of this kind the house of the Lord would be soon built, and the top-stone brought on with shouting, Grace, grace unto it!

CHAPTER 36

Moses appoints Bezaleel, Aholiab, and their associates, to the work, and delivers to them the free-will offerings of the people, 1-3. The people bring offerings more than are needed for the work, and are only restrained by the proclamation of Moses, 4-7. The curtains, their loops, taches, etc., for the tabernacle, 8-18. The covering for the tent, 19. The boards, 20-30. The bars, 31-34. The veil and its pillars, 35, 36. The hangings and their pillars, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 1. *Then wrought, etc.*— The first verse of this chapter should end the preceding chapter, and this should begin with verse the second; as it now stands, it does not make a very consistent sense. By reading the first word **וַעֲשֶׂה** *veasah*, then wrought, in the future tense instead of the past, the proper connection will be preserved: for all grammarians know that the conjunction **וַ** *vau* is often conversive, i.e., it turns the preterite tense of those verbs to which it is prefixed into the future, and the future into the preterite: this power it evidently has here; and joined with the last verse of the preceding chapter the connection will appear thus, Exodus 35:30-35, etc.: The Lord hath called by name Bezaleel and Aholiab; them hath he filled with wisdom of heart to work all manner of work. Exodus 36:1: And Bezaleel and Aholiab **SHALL WORK**, and every wise-hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom.

Verse 5. *The people bring much more than enough*— With what a liberal spirit do these people bring their free-will offerings unto the Lords! Moses is obliged to make a proclamation to prevent them from bringing any more, as there was at present more than enough! Had Moses been intent upon gain, and had he not been perfectly disinterested, he would have encouraged them to continue their contributions, as thereby he might have multiplied to himself gold, silver, and precious stones. But he was doing the Lord's work, under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, and therefore he sought no secular gain. Indeed, this one circumstance is an ample proof

of it. Every thing necessary for the worship of God will be cheerfully provided by a people whose hearts are in that worship. In a state where all forms of religion and modes of worship are tolerated by the laws, it would be well to find out some less exceptionable way of providing for the national clergy than by tithes. Let them by all means have the provision allowed them by the law; but let them not be needlessly exposed to the resentment of the people by the mode in which this provision is made, as this often alienates the affections of their flocks from them, and exceedingly injures their usefulness. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 28:22", in fine, where the subject is viewed on all sides.

Verse 8. *Cherubims of cunning work*— See on Exodus 25:18. Probably the word means no more than figures of any kind wrought in the diaper fashion in the loom, or by the needle in embroidery, or by the chisel or graving tool in wood, stone, or metal; see Clarke on "Exodus 25:18". This meaning Houbigant and other excellent critics contend for. In some places the word seems to be restricted to express a particular figure then well known; but in many other places it seems to imply any kind of figure commonly formed by sculpture on stone, by carving on wood, by engraving upon brass, and by weaving in the loom, etc.

Verse 9. *The length of one curtain*— Concerning these curtains, see Clarke on "Exodus 26:1", etc.

Verse 20. *And he made boards*— See Clarke note on "Exodus 26:15", etc.

Verse 31. *He made bars*— See on Exodus 26:26, etc.

Verse 35. *He made a veil*— See Clarke on "Exodus 26:31", etc.

Verse 37. *Hanging for the-door*— See Clarke on "Exodus 26:36", etc.

Verse 38. *The five pillars of it with their hooks*— Their capitals. See Clarke on "Exodus 26:32", etc.

THERE is scarcely any thing particular in this chapter that has not been touched on before; both it and the following to the end of the book being in general a repetition of what we have already met in detail in the preceding chapters from chap. xxv. to xxxi. inclusive, and to those the reader is requested to refer. God had before commanded this work to be done, and it was necessary to record the execution of it to show that all was done

according to the pattern shown to Moses; without this detailed account we should not have known whether the work had ever been executed according to the directions given.

At the commencement of this chapter the reader will observe that I have advanced the dates A. M. and B.C. one year, without altering the year of the exodus, which at first view may appear an error; the reason is, that the above dates commenced at Tisri, but the years of the exodus are dated from Abib.

CHAPTER 37

Bezaleel and Aholiab make the ark, 1-5. The mercy-seat, 6. The two cherubim, 7-9. The table of the shew-bread, and its vessels, 10-16. The candlestick, 17-24. The golden altar of incense, 25-28. The holy anointing oil and perfume, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 37

Verse 1. *And Bezaleel made the ark, etc.*— For a description of the ark, see Exodus 25:10, etc. See Clarke “Exodus 25:10”.

Verse 6. *He made the mercy-seat*— See this described Exodus 25:17. See Clarke “Exodus 25:17”.

Verse 10. *He made the table*— See Exodus 25:23.

Verse 16. *He made the vessels*— See all these particularly described in the notes on Exodus 25:29. See Clarke note “Exodus 25:29”.

Verse 17. *He made the candlestick*— See this described in the note on Exodus 25:31. See Clarke note “Exodus 25:31”.

Verse 25. *He made the incense altar*— See this described Exodus 30:1. See Clarke note “Exodus 30:1”.

Verse 29. *He made the holy anointing oil*— See this and the perfume, and the materials out of which they were made, described at large in the notes on Exodus 30:23-25 and Exodus 30:34-38. As this chapter also is a repetition of what has been mentioned in preceding chapters, the reader is desired to refer to them.

CHAPTER 38

Bezaleel makes the altar of burnt-offering, 1-7. He makes the laver and its foot out of the mirrors given by the women, 8. The court, its pillars, hangings, etc., 9-20. The whole tabernacle and its work finished by Bezaleel, Aholiab, and their assistants, 21-23. The amount of the gold contributed, 24. The amount of the silver, and how it was expended, 25-28. The amount of the brass, and how this was used, 29-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 38

Verse 1. *The altar of burnt-offering*— See Clarke note on “Exodus 27:1; and for its horns, pots, shovels, basins, etc., see the meaning of the Hebrew terms explained, Exodus 27:3-5.

Verse 8. *He made the laver*— See Clarke note on “Exodus 30:18, etc.

The looking-glasses— The word מראה maroth, from ראה raah, he saw, signifies reflectors or mirrors of any kind. Here metal, highly polished, must certainly be meant, as glass was not yet in use; and had it even been in use, we are sure that looking — GLASSES could not make a BRAZEN laver. The word therefore should be rendered mirrors, not looking-glasses, which in the above verse is perfectly absurd, because from those maroth the brazen laver was made. The first mirrors known among men were the clear, still, fountain, and unruffled lake; and probably the mineral called mica, which is a very general substance through all parts of the earth. Plates of it have been found of three feet square, and it is so extremely divisible into laminae, that it has been divided into plates so thin as to be only the three hundred thousandth part of an inch. A plate of this forms an excellent mirror when any thing black is attached to the opposite side. A plate of this mineral, nine inches by eight, now lies before me; a piece of black cloth, or any other black substance, at the back, converts it into a good mirror; or it would serve as it is for a square of glass, as every object is clearly perceivable through it. It is used in Russian ships of war, instead of glass, for windows. The first artificial mirrors were apparently made of

brass, afterwards of polished steel, and when luxury increased they were made of silver; but they were made at a very early period of mixed metal, particularly of tin and copper, the best of which, as Pliny tells us, were formerly manufactured at Brundisium: *Optima apud majores fuerant Brundisina, stanno et aere mixtis.* — *Hist. Nat. lib. xxxiii., cap. 9.* But, according to him, the most esteemed were those made of tin; and he says that silver mirrors became so common that even the servant girls used them: *Specula (ex stanno) laudatissima Brundisii temperabantur; donec argenteis uti caepere et ancillae;* *lib. xxxiv., cap. 17.* When the Egyptian women went to the temples, they always carried their mirrors with them. The Israelitish women probably did the same, and Dr. Shaw states that the Arabian women carry them constantly hung at their breasts. It is worthy of remark, that at first these women freely gave up their ornaments for this important service, and now give their very mirrors, probably as being of little farther service, seeing they had already given up the principal decorations of their persons. Woman has been invidiously defined by Aristotle, an animal fond of dress, (though this belongs to the whole human race, and not exclusively to woman.) Had this been true of the Israelitish women, in the present case we must say they nobly sacrificed their incentives to pride to the service of their God. Woman, go thou and do likewise.

Of the women-which assembled at the door— What the employment of these women was at the door of the tabernacle, is not easily known. Some think they assembled there for purposes of devotion. Others, that they kept watch there during the night; and this is the most probable opinion, for they appear to have been in the same employment as those who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in the days of Samuel, who were abused by the sons of the high priest Eli, 1 Samuel 2:22. Among the ancients women were generally employed in the office of porters or doorkeepers. Such were employed about the house of the high priest in our Lord's time; for a woman is actually represented as keeping the door of the palace of the high priest, John 18:17: Then saith the DAMSEL that KEPT THE DOOR unto Peter; see also Matthew 26:69. In 2 Samuel 4:6, both the Septuagint and Vulgate make a woman porter or doorkeeper to Ishbosheth. Aristophanes mentions them in the same office,

and calls them **σηκεις**, Sekis, which seems to signify a common maid-servant. Aristoph., in *Vespis*, ver. 768:—

ὅτι την θυραν ανεωξεν η σηκεις λαθρα.

Homer, *Odys.*, **ψ**, ver. 225-229, mentions Actoris, Penelope's maid, whose office it was to keep the door of her chamber:—

ακτορις —
η νωιν ειρυτο θυρας πυκινου θαλαμοιο.

And Euripides, in *Troad.*, ver. 197, brings in Hecuba, complaining that she who was wont to sit upon a throne is now reduced to the miserable necessity of becoming a doorkeeper or a nurse, in order to get a morsel of bread. —

η ταν παρα προθυροις φυλακαν κατεχουσα,
η παιδων θρεπτειρα.

Sir John Chardin observes, that women are employed to keep the gate of the palace of the Persian kings. Plautus, *Curcul.*, act 1., scene 1, mentions an old woman, who was keeper of the gate.

Anus hic solet cubitare, custos janitrix.

Many other examples might be produced. It is therefore very likely that the persons mentioned here, and in 1 Samuel 2:22, were the women who guarded the tabernacle; and that they regularly relieved each other, a troop or company regularly keeping watch: and indeed this seems to be implied in the original, **צבאו** tsabeu, they came by troops; and these troops successively consecrated their mirrors to the service of the tabernacle. See Calmet on John 18:16.

Verse 9. The court— See Clarke on “Exodus 27:9”.

Verse 17. The hooks-and their fillets— The capitals, and the silver bands that went round them; see Clarke's note on “Exodus 26:32”.

Verse 21. This is the sum of the tabernacle.— That is, The foregoing account contains a detail of all the articles which Bezaleel and Aholiab

were commanded to make; and which were reckoned up by the Levites, over whom Ithamar, the son of Aaron, presided.

Verse 24. *All the gold that was occupied for the work, etc.*— To be able to ascertain the quantum and value of the gold, silver, and brass, which were employed in the tabernacle, and its different utensils, altars, etc., it will be necessary to enter into the subject in considerable detail.

In the course of my notes on this and the preceding book, I have had frequent occasion to speak of the shekel in use among the ancient Hebrews, which, following Dean Prideaux, I have always computed at 3s. English. As some value it at 2s. 6d., and others at 2s. 4d., I think it necessary to lay before the reader the learned dean's mode of computation as a proper introduction to the calculations which immediately follow.

“Among the ancients, the way of reckoning their money was by talents. So the Hebrews, so the Babylonians, and so the Romans did reckon. And of these talents they had subdivisions which were usually in minas and drachms; i.e., of their talents into minas, and their minas into drachms. The Hebrews had, besides these, their shekels and half-shekels, or bekas; and the Romans their denarii, which last were very nearly of the same value with the drachms of the Greeks. What was the value of a Hebrew talent appears from Exodus 38:25, 26, for there 603, 550 persons being taxed at half a shekel a head, they must have paid in the whole 301, 775 shekels; and that sum is there said to amount to one hundred talents, and 1775 shekels over: if therefore we deduct the 1775 shekels from the number 301, 775, and divide the remaining sum, i.e., 300, 000, by a hundred, this will prove each of those talents to contain three thousand shekels. Each of these shekels weighed about three shillings of our money; and sixty of them, Ezekiel tells us, Ezekiel 45:12, made a mina; and therefore fifty of those minas made a talent. And as to their drachms, it appears by the Gospel of St. Matthew that it was the fourth part of a shekel, that is, nine-pence of our money. For there (Matthew 17:24) the tribute money annually paid to the temple, by every Jew, (Talmud in shekalim,) which was half a shekel, is called *διδραχμον* (i.e., the two drachm piece;) and therefore, if half a shekel contained two drachms, a drachm must have been the quarter part of a shekel, and every shekel must have contained four of them: and so Josephus tells us it did; for he says, Antiq., lib. iii., c. 9, that

a shekel contained four Attic drachms, which is not exactly to be understood according to the weight, but according to the valuation in the currency of common payments. For according to the weight, the heaviest Attic drachms did not exceed eight-pence farthing half-farthing, of our money; and a Hebrew drachm, as I have said, was nine-pence; but what the Attic drachm fell short of the Hebrew in weight might be made up in the fineness, and its ready currency in all countries, (which last the Hebrew drachm could not have,) and so might be made equivalent in common estimation among the Jews. Allowing therefore a drachm, as well Attic as Jewish, as valued in Judea, to be equivalent to nine-pence of our money, a BEKA or half-shekel will be one shilling and six-pence; a SHEKEL, three shillings; a MINA, nine pounds; and a TALENT, four hundred and fifty pounds. So it was in the time of Moses and Ezekiel; and so was it in the time of Josephus among that people, for he tells us, *Antiq.*, lib. xiv., c. 12, that a Hebrew mina contained two LITRAS and a half, which comes exactly to nine pounds of our money: for a litra, being the same with a Roman libra, contained twelve ounces troy weight, that is, ninety-six drachms; and therefore two litras and a half must contain two hundred and forty drachms, which being estimated at nine-pence a drachm, according to the Jewish valuation, comes exactly to sixty shekels, or nine pounds of our money. And this account agrees exactly with that of Alexandria. For the Alexandrian talent contained 12, 000 Attic drachms; and 12, 000 Attic drachms, according to the Jewish valuation, being 12, 000 of our nine-pences, they amount to 450 pounds of sterling money, which is the same in value as the Mosaic talent. But here it is to be observed, that though the Alexandrian talent amounted to 12, 000 Attic drachms, yet they themselves reckoned it but at 6000 drachms, because every Alexandrian drachm contained two Attic drachms; and therefore the Septuagint version being made by the Alexandrian Jews, they there render the Hebrew word shekel, by the Greek διδραχμον, which signifies two drachms, because two Alexandrian drachms make a shekel, two of them amounting to as much as four Attic drachms. And therefore computing the Alexandrian money according to the same method in which we have computed the Jewish, it will be as follows: One drachm of Alexandria will be of our money eighteen pence; one didrachm or shekel, consisting of two drachms of Alexandria, or four of Attica, will be three shillings; one mina, consisting of sixty didrachms or shekels, will be nine pounds; and one

talent, consisting of fifty minas, will be four hundred and fifty pounds, which is the talent of Moses, Exodus 38:25, 26: and so also is it the talent of Josephus, *Antiq.*, lib. iii., c. 7; for he tells us that a Hebrew talent contained one hundred Greek (i.e., Attic) minas. For those fifty minas, which here make an Alexandrian talent, would be one hundred Attic minas in the like method of valuation; the Alexandrian talent containing double as much as the Attic talent, both in the whole, and also in all its parts, in whatever method both shall be equally distributed. Among the Greeks the established rule was, Jul. Pollux, *Onomast.*, lib. x., c. 6, that one hundred drachms made a mina, and sixty minas a talent. But in some different states their drachms being different, accordingly their minas and talents were within the same proportion different also. But the money of Attica was the standard by which all the rest were valued, according as they more or less differed from it. And therefore, it being of most note, wherever any Greek historian speaks of talents, minas, or drachms, if they be simply mentioned, it is to be always understood of talents, minas, or drachms of Attica, and never of the talents, minas, or drachms of any other place, unless it be expressed. Mr. Brerewood, going by the goldsmith's weights, reckons an Attic drachm to be the same with a drachm now in use in their shops, that is, the eighth part of an ounce; and therefore lays it at the value of seven-pence halfpenny of our money, or the eighth part of a crown, which is or ought to be an ounce weight. But Dr. Bernard, going more accurately to work, lays the middle sort of Attic drachms at eight-pence farthing of our money, and the minas and talents accordingly, in the proportions above mentioned. The Babylonish talent, according to Pollux, *Onomast.*, lib. x., c. 6, contained seven thousand of those drachms. The Roman talent (see Festus Pompeius) contained seventy-two Italic minas, which were the same with the Roman libras; and ninety-six Roman denariuses, each being of the value of seven-pence halfpenny of our money, made a Roman libra. But all the valuations I have hitherto mentioned must be understood only of silver money, and not of gold; for that was much higher. The proportion of gold to silver was among the ancients commonly as ten to one; sometimes it was raised to be as eleven to one, sometimes as twelve, and sometimes as thirteen to one. In the time of King Edward the First it was here, in England, at the value of ten to one; but it is now gotten at sixteen to one; and so I value it in all the reductions which I make in this history of ancient sums to the present value. But to

make the whole of this matter the easier to the reader, I will lay all of it before him for his clear view in this following table of valuations:—

HEBREW MONEY	ú	s.	d.
A Hebrew drachm.			9
Two drachms made a beka or half-shekel, which was the tribute money paid by every Jew to the temple			1
6			
Two bekas made a shekel		3	0
Sixty shekels made a mina. 9	9	0	0
Fifty minas made a talent 450	450	0	0.
A talent of gold, sixteen to one 7200	7200	0	0.
ATTIC money, according to Mr. BREREWOOD			
An Attic drachm			7.
A hundred drachms made a minac 3	3	2	6,
Sixty minas made a talent 187	187	10	0.
A talent of gold, sixteen to one 3000	3000	0	0.
ATTIC money, according to Dr. BERNARD			
An Attic drachm			8.
A hundred drachms made a mina 3	3	8	9.
Sixty minas made a talent 206	206	5	0.
A talent of gold, sixteen to one 3300	3300	0	0.
BABYLONISH money, according to Mr. BREREWOOD			
A Babylonish talent of silver containing seven thousand Attic drachms			
	218	15	0.
A Babylonish talent in gold, sixteen to one			
	3500	0	0.
BABYLONISH money, according to Dr. BERNARD			
A Babylonish talent in silver 240	240	12	6
A Babylonish talent in gold, sixteen to one			
	38500	0	0.

ALEXANDRIAN money

A drachm of Alexandria, containing two Attic drachms, as valued by the Jews

1 6.

A didrachm of Alexandria, containing two Alexandrian drachms, which was a Hebrew shekel

3

0.

Sixty didrachms or Hebrew shekels made a mina

9 0 0.

Fifty minas made a talent 450

0 0.

A talent of gold, sixteen to one 7200

0 0.

ROMAN money Four sesterciuses made a Roman denarius 7.

Ninety-six Roman denariuses made an Italic mina, which was the same with a Roman libra

3 0 0.

Seventy-two Roman libras made a talent

216 0 0.

See the Old and New Testament connected, etc. Vol. 1., preface, pp. xx-xxvii.

There were twenty-nine talents seven hundred and thirty shekels of GOLD; one hundred talents one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels of SILVER; and seventy talents two thousand four hundred shekels of BRASS.

If with Dean Prideaux we estimate the value of the silver shekel at three shillings English, we shall obtain the weight of the shekel by making use of the following proportion. As sixty-two shillings, the value of a pound weight of silver as settled by the British laws, is to two hundred and forty, the number of penny-weights in a pound troy, so is three shillings, the value of a shekel of silver, to 11 dwts. 14 $\frac{22}{31}$ grains, the weight of the shekel required.

In the next place, to find the value of a shekel of gold we must make use of the proportion following: As one ounce troy is to 3ú. 17s. 10´d., the legal value of an ounce of gold, so is 11 dwts. 14 $\frac{22}{31}$ grains, the weight of the shekel as found by the last proportion, to 2ú. 5s. 2´ $\frac{42}{93}$ d., the value of the shekel of gold required. From this datum we shall soon be able to

ascertain the value of all the gold employed in the work of this holy place, by the following arithmetical process: Reduce 2ú. 5s. 2´ 42/93d. to the lowest term mentioned, which is 201, 852 ninety-third parts of a farthing. Multiply this last number by 3000, the number of shekels in a talent, and the product by 29, the number of talents; and add in 730 times 201, 852, on account of the 730 shekels which were above the 29 talents employed in the work, and we shall have for the last product 17, 708, 475, 960, which, divided successively by 93, 4, 12, and 20, will give 198, 347ú. 12s. 6d. for the total value of the gold employed in the tabernacle, etc.

The value of the silver contributed by 603, 550 Israelites, at half a shekel or eighteen pence per man, may be found by an easy arithmetical calculation to amount to 45, 266ú. 5s.

The value of the brass at 1s. per pound will amount to 513ú. 17s.

The GOLD of the holy place weighed 4245 pounds.

The SILVER of the tabernacle 14, 602 pounds.

The BRASS 10, 277 pounds troy weight,

The total value of all the gold, silver, and brass of the tabernacle will consequently amount to 244, 127ú. 14s. 6d. And the total weight of all these three metals amounts to 29, 124 pounds troy, which, reduced to avoirdupois weight, is nearly ten tons and a half. When all this is considered, besides the quantity of gold which was employed in the golden calf, and which was all destroyed, it is no wonder that the sacred text should say the Hebrews spoiled the Egyptians, particularly as in those early times the precious metals were probably not very plentiful in Egypt.

Verse 26. A *bekah* for every man— The Hebrew word בֵּקָה beka, from בָּקָה baka, to divide, separate into two, seems to signify, not a particular coin, but a shekel broken or cut in two; so, anciently, our farthing was a penny divided in the midst and then subdivided, so that each division contained the fourth part of the penny; hence its name fourthing or fourthling, since corrupted into farthing.

THERE appear to be three particular reasons why much riches should be employed in the construction of the tabernacle, etc. 1. To impress the

people's minds with the glory and dignity of the Divine Majesty, and the importance of his service. 2. To take out of their hands the occasion of covetousness; for as they brought much spoils out of Egypt, and could have little if any use for gold and silver in the wilderness, where it does not appear that they had much intercourse with any other people, and were miraculously supported, so that they did not need their riches, it was right to employ that in the worship of God which otherwise might have engendered that love which is the root of all evil. 3. To prevent pride and vainglory, by leading them to give up to the Divine service even the ornaments of their persons, which would have had too direct a tendency to divert their minds from better things. Thus God's worship was rendered august and respectable, incitements to sin and low desires removed, and the people instructed to consider nothing valuable, but as far as it might be employed to the glory and in the service of God.

CHAPTER 39

Bezaleel makes the clothes of service for the holy place, and the holy garments, 1. The ephod, 2. Gold is beaten into plates, and cut into wires for embroidery, 3. He makes the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, 4. The curious girdle, 5. Cuts the onyx stones for the shoulder-pieces, 6. Makes the breastplate, its chains, ouches, rings, etc., 7-21. The robe of the ephod, 22-26. Coats of fine linen, 27. The mitre, 28. The girdle, 29. The plate of the holy crown, 30, 31. The completion of the work of the tabernacle, 32. All the work is brought unto Moses, 33-41. Moses, having examined the whole, finds every thing done as the Lord had commanded in consequence of which he blesses the people, 42, 43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 39

Verse 1. *Blue and purple, and scarlet*— See this subject largely explained in the notes on Exodus 25:4. See Clarke note “Exodus 25:4”.

Verse 2. *Ephod*— See this described, Exodus 25:7. See Clarke note “Exodus 25:7”.

Verse 3. *They did beat the gold into thin plates*— For the purpose, as it is supposed, of cutting it into wires (פּתִילִים) or threads; for to twist or twine is the common acceptance of the root פּתַל pathal. I cannot suppose that the Israelites had not then the art of making gold thread, as they possessed several ornamental arts much more difficult: but in the present instance, figures made in a more solid form than that which could have been effected by gold thread, might have been required.

Verse 6. *Onyx stones*— Possibly the Egyptian pebble. See Exodus 25:7, and 28:17, etc.

Verse 8. *Breastplate*— See 28:15. See Clarke on “Exodus 28:15”.

Verse 10. *And they set in it four rows of stones*— See all these precious stones particularly explained in the notes on Exodus 28:17, etc. See Clarke note on “Exodus 28:17”.

Verse 23. *As the hole of a habergeon*— The habergeon or hauberk was a small coat of mail, something in form of a half shirt, made of small iron rings curiously united together. It covered the neck and breast, was very light, and resisted the stroke of a sword. Sometimes it went over the whole head as well as over the breast. This kind of defensive armor was used among the Asiatics, particularly the ancient Persians, among whom it is still worn. It seems to have been borrowed from the Asiatics by the Norman crusaders.

Verse 30. *The holy crown of pure gold*— On Asiatic monuments, particularly those that appear in the ruins of Persepolis and on many Egyptian monuments, the priests are represented as wearing crowns or tiaras, and sometimes their heads are crowned with laurel. Cuper observes, that the priests and priestesses, among the ancient Greeks, were styled **στεφανοφοροι**, or crown-bearers, because they officiated having sometimes crowns of gold, at others, crowns of laurel, upon their heads.

Verse 32. *Did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses*— This refers to the command given Exodus 25:40; and Moses has taken care to repeat every thing in the most circumstantial detail, to show that he had conscientiously observed all the directions he had received.

Verse 37. *The pure candlestick*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:31".

The lamps to be set in order— To be trimmed and fresh oiled every day, for the purpose of being lighted in the evening. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 27:21".

Verse 43. *And Moses did look upon all the work*— As being the general superintendent of the whole, under whom Bezaleel and Aholiab were employed, as the other workmen were under them.

They had done it as the Lord had commanded— Exactly according to the pattern which Moses received from the Lord, and which he laid before the workmen to work by.

And Moses blessed them.— Gave them that praise which was due to their skill, diligence, and fidelity. See this meaning of the original word in the note on Genesis 2:3. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 2:3". See also a fine instance of ancient courtesy between masters and their servants, in the

case of Boaz and his reapers, Ruth 2:4. Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, The Lord be with YOU! And they answered him, The Lord bless THEE! It is, however, very probable that Moses prayed to God in their behalf, that they might be prospered in all their undertakings, saved from every evil, and be brought at last to the inheritance that fadeth not away. This blessing seems to have been given, not only to the workmen, but to all the people. The people contributed liberally, and the workmen wrought faithfully, and the blessing of God was pronounced upon ALL.

THE promptitude, cordiality, and despatch used in this business cannot be too highly commended, and are worthy of the imitation of all who are employed in any way in the service of God. The prospect of having God to dwell among them inflamed every heart, because they well knew that on this depended their prosperity and salvation. They therefore hastened to build him a house, and they spared no expense or skill to make it, as far as a house made with hands could be, worthy of that Divine Majesty who had promised to take up his residence in it. This tabernacle, like the temple, was a type of the human nature of the Lord Jesus; that was a shrine not made with hands, formed by God himself, and worthy of that fullness of the Deity that dwelt in it.

It is scarcely possible to form an adequate opinion of the riches, costly workmanship, and splendor of the tabernacle; and who can adequately conceive the glory and excellence of that human nature in which the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwelt? That this tabernacle typified the human nature of Christ, and the Divine shechinah that dwelt in it the Deity that dwelt in the man Christ Jesus, these words of St. John sufficiently prove: In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was GOD. And the WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (ἔσκηνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, made his TABERNACLE among us,) full of grace and truth — possessing the true Urim and Thummim; all the lights and perfections, the truth and the grace, typified by the Mosaic economy, John 1:1, 14. And hence the evangelist adds, And we beheld his glory; as the Israelites beheld the glory of God resting on the tabernacle, so did the disciples of Christ see the Divine glory resting on him, and showing itself forth in all his words, spirit, and works. And for what purpose was the tabernacle erected? That God might dwell in it among the children of Israel. And for what purpose was the human nature of Christ so miraculously

produced? That the Godhead might dwell in it; and that God and man might be reconciled through this wonderful economy of Divine grace, God being in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, 2 Corinthians 5:19. And what was implied by this reconciliation? The union of the soul with God, and the indwelling of God in the soul. Reader, has God yet filled thy tabernacle with his glory? Does Christ dwell in thy heart by faith; and dost thou abide in him, bringing forth fruit unto holiness? Then thy end shall be eternal life. Why shouldst thou not go on thy way rejoicing with Christ in thy heart, heaven in thine eye, and the world, the devil, and the flesh, under thy feet?

CHAPTER 40

Moses is commanded to set up the tabernacle, the first day of the first month of the second year of their departure from Egypt, 1, 2. The ark to be put into it, 3. The table and candlestick to be brought in also with the golden altar, 4.5. The altar of burnt-offering to be set up before the door, and the laver between the tent and the altar, 6, 7. The court to be set up, 8. The tabernacle and its utensils to be anointed, 9-11. Aaron and his sons to be washed, clothed, and anointed, 12-15. All these things are done accordingly, 16. The tabernacle is erected; and all its utensils, etc., placed in it on the first of the first month of the second year, 17-33. The cloud covers the tent, and the glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle, so that even Moses is not able to enter, 34, 35. When they were to journey, the cloud was taken up; when to encamp, the cloud rested on the tabernacle, 36, 37. A cloud by day and a fire by night was upon the tabernacle, in the sight of all the Israelites, through the whole course of the journeyings, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 40

Verse 2. *The first day of the first month*— It is generally supposed that the Israelites began the work of the tabernacle about the sixth month after they had left Egypt; and as the work was finished about the end of the first year of their exodus, (for it was set up the first day of the second year,) that therefore they had spent about six months in making it: so that the tabernacle was erected one year all but fifteen days after they had left Egypt. Such a building, with such a profusion of curious and costly workmanship, was never got up in so short a time. But it was the work of the Lord, and the people did service as unto the Lord; for the people had a mind to work.

Verse 4. *Thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things, etc.*— That is, Thou shalt place the twelve loaves upon the table in the order before mentioned. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 25:30".

Verse 15. *For their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood*— By this anointing a right was given to Aaron and his family to be high

priests among the Jews for ever; so that all who should be born of this family should have a right to the priesthood without the repetition of this unction, as they should enjoy this honor in their father's right, who had it by a particular grant from God. But it appears that the high priest, on his consecration, did receive the holy unction; see Leviticus 4:3; 6:22; 21:10. And this continued till the destruction of the first temple, and the Babylonish captivity; and according to Eusebius, Cyril of Jerusalem, and others, this custom continued among the Jews to the advent of our Lord, after which there is no evidence it was ever practiced. See Calmet's note on chap. 39:7. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:7". The Jewish high priest was a type of Him who is called the high priest over the house of God, Hebrews 10:21; and when he came, the functions of the other necessarily ceased. This case is worthy of observation. The Jewish sacrifices were never resumed after the destruction of their city and temple, for they hold it unlawful to sacrifice anywhere out of Jerusalem; and the unction of their high priest ceased from that period also: and why? Because the true priest and the true sacrifice were come, and the types of course were no longer necessary after the manifestation of the antitype.

Verse 19. *He spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle*— By the tent, in this and several other places, we are to understand the coverings made of rams' skins, goats' hair, etc., which were thrown over the building; for the tabernacle had no other kind of roof.

Verse 20. *And put the testimony into the ark*— That is, the two tables on which the ten commandments had been written. See Exodus 25:16. The ark, the golden table with the shew-bread, the golden candlestick, and the golden altar of incense, were all in the tabernacle, within the veil or curtains, which served as a door, Exodus 40:22, 24, 26. And the altar of burnt-offering was by the door, Exodus 40:29. And the brazen laver, between the tent of the congregation and the brazen altar, Exodus 40:30; still farther outward, that it might be the first thing the priests met with when entering into the court to minister, as their hands and feet must be washed before they could perform any part of the holy service, Exodus 40:31, 32. When all these things were thus placed, then the court that surrounded the tabernacle, which consisted of posts and hangings, was set up, Exodus 40:33.

Verse 34. *Then a cloud covered the tent*— Thus God gave his approbation of the work; and as this was visible, so it was a sign to all the people that Jehovah was among them.

And the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.— How this was manifested we cannot tell; it was probably by some light or brightness which was insufferable to the sight, for Moses himself could not enter in because of the cloud and the glory, Exodus 40:35. Precisely the same happened when Solomon had dedicated his temple; for it is said that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord; 1 Kings 8:10, 11. Previously to this the cloud of the Divine glory had rested upon that tent or tabernacle which Moses had pitched without the camp, after the transgression in the matter of the molten calf; but now the cloud removed from that tabernacle and rested upon this one, which was made by the command and under the direction of God himself. And there is reason to believe that this tabernacle was pitched in the center of the camp, all the twelve tribes pitching their different tents in a certain order around it.

Verse 36. *When the cloud was taken up*— The subject of these three last verses has been very largely explained in the notes on Exodus 13:21, to which, as well as to the general remarks on that chapter, the reader is requested immediately to refer. See Clarke note on “Exodus 13:21”.

Verse 38. *For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day*— This daily and nightly appearance was at once both a merciful providence, and a demonstrative proof of the Divinity of their religion: and these tokens continued with them throughout all their journeys; for, notwithstanding their frequently repeated disobedience and rebellion, God never withdrew these tokens of his presence from them, till they were brought into the promised land. When, therefore, the tabernacle became fixed, because the Israelites had obtained their inheritance, this mark of the Divine presence was no longer visible in the sight of all Israel, but appears to have been confined to the holy of holies, where it had its fixed residence upon the mercy-seat between the cherubim; and in this place continued till the first temple was destroyed, after which it was no more seen in Israel till God was manifested in the flesh.

As in the book of GENESIS we have God's own account of the commencement of the WORLD, the origin of nations, and the peopling of the earth; so in the book of EXODUS we have an account, from the same source of infallible truth, of the commencement of the Jewish CHURCH, and the means used by the endless mercy of God to propagate and continue his pure and undefiled religion in the earth, against which neither human nor diabolic power or policy have ever been able to prevail! The preservation of this religion, which has ever been opposed by the great mass of mankind, is a standing proof of its Divinity. As it has ever been in hostility against the corrupt passions of men, testifying against the world that its deeds were evil, these passions have ever been in hostility to it. Cunning and learned men have argued to render its authority dubious, and its tendency suspicious; whole states and empires have exerted themselves to the uttermost to oppress and destroy it; and its professed friends, by their conduct, have often betrayed it: yet librata ponderibus suis, supported by the arm of God and its own intrinsic excellence, it lives and flourishes; and the river that makes glad the city of God has run down with the tide of time 5800 years, and is running on with a more copious and diffusive current. *Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.*

“Still glides the river, and will ever glide.” We have seen how, by the miraculous cloud, all the movements of the Israelites were directed. They struck or pitched their tents, as it removed or became stationary. Every thing that concerned them was under the direction and management of God. But these things happened unto them for ensamples; and it is evident, from Isaiah 4:5, that all these things typified the presence and influence of God in his Church, and in the souls of his followers. His Church can possess no sanctifying knowledge, no quickening power but from the presence and influence of his Spirit. By this influence all his followers are taught, enlightened, led, quickened, purified, and built up on their most holy faith; and without the indwelling of his Spirit, light, life, and salvation are impossible. These Divine influences Are necessary, not only for a time, but through all our journeys, Exodus 40:38; though every changing scene of providence, and through every step in life. And these the followers of Christ are to possess, not by inference or inductive reasoning, but consciously. The influence is to be felt, and the fruits of it to appear as fully as the cloud of the Lord by day, and the fire by night, appeared in the

sight of all the house of Israel. Reader, hast thou this Spirit? Are all thy goings and comings ordered by its continual guidance? Does Christ, who was represented by this tabernacle, and in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, dwell in thy heart by faith? If not, call upon God for that blessing which, for the sake of his Son, he is ever disposed to impart; then shalt thou be glorious, and on all thy glory there shall be a defense. Amen, Amen.

On the ancient division of the law into fifty-four sections, see the notes at the end of Genesis. See Clarke note on “Genesis 50:26”. Of these fifty-four sections Genesis contains twelve; and the commencement and ending of each has been marked in the note already referred to. Of these sections Exodus contains eleven, all denominated, as in the former case, by the words in the original with which they commence. I shall point these out as in the former, carrying the enumeration from Genesis.

The THIRTEENTH section, called שְׁמוֹת *shemoth*, begins Exodus 1:1, and ends Exodus 6:1.

The FOURTEENTH, called וַאֲרָא *vaera*, begins Exodus 6:2, and ends Exodus 9:35.

The FIFTEENTH, called בֹּא *bo*, begins Exodus 10:1, and ends Exodus 13:16.

The SIXTEENTH, called בְּשַׁלַּח *beshallach*, begins Exodus 13:17, and ends Exodus 17:16.

The SEVENTEENTH, called יִתְרוֹ *yithro*, begins Exodus 18:1, and ends Exodus 20:26.

The EIGHTEENTH, called מִשְׁפָּטִים *mishpatim*, begins Exodus 21:1, and ends Exodus 24:18.

The NINETEENTH, called תְּרוּמָה *terumah*, begins Exodus 25:2, and ends Exodus 27:19.

The TWENTIETH, called תְּצַוֶּה *tetsavveh*, begins Exodus 27:20, and ends Exodus 30:10.

The TWENTY-FIRST, called תשא tissa, begins Exodus 30:11, and ends Exodus 34:35.

The TWENTY-SECOND, called ויקהל vaiyakhel, begins Exodus 35:1, and ends Exodus 38:20.

The TWENTY-THIRD, calledפקודי pekudey, begins Exodus 38:21, and ends Exodus 40:38.

It will at once appear to the reader that these sections have their technical names from some remarkable word, either in the first or second verse of their commencement.

MASORETIC Notes on EXODUS

Number of VERSES in Veelleh shemoth, (Exodus,) 1209.

The symbol of this number is ט אר ; א aleph denoting 1000, ר, resh 200, and ט teth 9.

The middle verse is Exodus 22:28: Thou shalt not revile God, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

Its parashioth, or larger sections, are 11. The symbol of this is the word אײ ei, Isaiah 66:1.: WHERE is the house that ye will build unto me? In which א aleph stands for 1, and י yod for 10.

Its sedarim are 29. The symbol of which is taken from Psalm 19:2, יײה yechavveh: Night unto night SHOWETH FORTH knowledge. In which word, י yod stands for 10, ח cheth for 8, ו vau for 6, and ה he for 5; amounting to 29.

Its pirkey, perakim, or present chapters, 40. The symbol of which is בלבו belibbo, taken from Psalm 37:31: The law of God is IN HIS HEART. In this word, ב beth stands for 2, ל lamed for 30, ב beth for 2, and ו vau for 6; amounting to 40.

The open sections are 69. The close sections are 95. Total 164. The symbol of which is יסעדך yisadecha, from Psalm 20:2: STRENGTHEN THEE out of Zion. In which numerical word ע ain stands for 70, ס samech

for 60, ך caph for 20, ך yod for 10, and ך daleth for 4; making together 164.

Number of words, 16, 513; of letters 63, 467.

But on these subjects, important to some, and trifling to others, see what is said in the concluding note on GENESIS. See Clarke note on “Genesis 50:26”.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE TRAVELS OF THE ISRAELITES THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

IN the preceding notes I have had frequent occasion to refer to Dr. Shaw’s account of the different stations of the Israelites, of which I promised an abstract in this place. This will doubtless be acceptable to every reader Who knows that Dr. Shaw traveled over the same ground, and carefully, in person, noted every spot to which reference is made in the preceding chapters.

After having endeavored to prove that Goshen was that part of the Heliopolitan Nomos, or of the land of Rameses, which lay in the neighborhood of Kairo, Matta-reah, and Bishbesh, and that Cairo might be Rameses, the capital of the district of that name, where the Israelites had their rendezvous before they departed out of Egypt, he takes up the text and proceeds thus:—

“Now, lest peradventure (Exodus 13:17) when the Hebrews saw war they should repent and return to Egypt, God did not lead them through the way of the land of the Philistines, (viz., either by Heroopolis in the midland road, or by Bishbesh, Tineh, and so along the seacoast towards Gaza and Ascalon,) although that was the nearest, but he led them ABOUT through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. There are accordingly two roads through which the Israelites might have been conducted from Kairo to Pihahhiroth, on the banks of the Red Sea. One of them lies through the valleys, as they are now called, of Jendily, Rumeleah, and Baideah, bounded on each side by the mountains of the lower Thebais. The other lies higher, having the northern range of these mountains, (the mountains of Mocattee) running parallel with it on the right hand, and the desert of the Egyptian Arabia, which lies all the way open to the land of the Philistines,

on the left. About the middle of this range we may turn short upon our right hand into the valley of Baideah through a remarkable breach or discontinuation, in which we afterwards continued to the very bank of the Red Sea. Suez, a small city upon the northern point of it, at the distance of thirty hours or ninety Roman miles from Kairo, lies a little to the northward of the promontory that is formed by this same range of mountains, called at present Attackah, as that which bounds the valley of Baideah to the southward is called Gewoubee.

“This road then through the valley of Baideah, which is some hours longer than the other open road which leads us directly from Kairo to Suez, was, in all probability, the very road which the Israelites took to Pihahhiroth, on the banks of the Red Sea. Josephus then, and other authors who copy after him, seem to be too hasty in making the Israelites perform this journey of ninety or one hundred Roman miles in three days, by reckoning each of the stations that are recorded for one day. Whereas the Scriptures are altogether silent with regard to the time or distance, recording the stations only. The fatigue, likewise, would have been abundantly too great for a nation on foot, encumbered with their dough, their kneading-troughs, their little children and cattle, to walk at the rate of thirty Roman miles a day. Another instance of the same kind occurs Numbers 33:9, where Elim is mentioned as the next station after Marah, though Elim and Marah are farther distant from each other than Kairo is from the Red Sea. Several intermediate stations, therefore, as well here as in other places, were omitted, the holy penman contenting himself with laying down such only as were the most remarkable, or attended with some notable transaction. Succoth, then, the first station from Rameses, signifying only a place of tents, may have no fixed situation, being probably nothing more than some considerable Dou-war of the Ishmaelites or Arabs, such as we will meet with at fifteen or twenty miles’ distance from Kairo, in the road to the Red Sea. The rendezvous of the caravan which conducted us to Suez was at one of these Dou-wars; at the same time we saw another at about six miles’ distance, under the mountains of Mocattee, or in the very same direction which the Israelites may be supposed to have taken in their marches from Goshen towards the Red Sea.

“That the Israelites, before they turned towards Pihahhiroth, had traveled in an open country, (the same way, perhaps, which their forefathers had

taken in coming into Egypt,) appears to be farther illustrated from the following circumstance: that upon their being ordered to remove from the edge of the wilderness, and to encamp before Pihahhiroth, it immediately follows that Pharaoh should then say, they are entangled in the land, the wilderness (betwixt the mountains we may suppose of Gewoubee and Attackah) hath shut them in, Exodus 14:3, or, as it is in the original, (סַגְרִי סַגְרִי) viam illis clausit, as that word is explained by Pagninus; for, in these circumstances the Egyptians might well imagine that the Israelites could have no possible way to escape, inasmuch as the mountains of Gewoubee would stop their flight or progress to the southward, as the mountains of Attackah would do the same towards the land of the Philistines; the Red Sea likewise lay before them to the east, whilst Pharaoh closed up the valley behind them with his chariots and horsemen. This valley ends at the sea, in a small bay made by the eastern extremities of the mountains which I have been describing, and is called Tiah-Beni Israel, i.e., the road of the Israelites, by a tradition that is still kept up by the Arabs, of their having passed through it; so it is also called Baideah, from the new and unheard-of miracle that was wrought near it, by dividing the Red Sea, and destroying therein Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen. The third notable encampment then of the Israelites was at this bay. It was to be before Pihahhiroth, betwixt Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-tsephon, Exodus 14:2; and in Numbers 33:7 it was to be before Migdol, where the word לִפְנֵי לִפְנֵי liphney, (before, as we render it,) being applied to Pihahhiroth and Migdol, may signify no more than that they pitched within sight of, or at a small distance from, the one and the other of those places. Whether Baal-tsephon then may have relation to the northern situation of the place itself, or to some watch tower or idol temple that was erected upon it, we may probably take it for the eastern extremity of the mountains of Suez or Attackah, the most conspicuous of these deserts, inasmuch as it overlooks a great part of the lower Thebais, as well as the wilderness that reaches towards, or which rather makes part of, the land of the Philistines. Migdol then might lie to the south, as Baal-tsephon did to the north, of Pihahhiroth; for the marches of the Israelites from the edge of the wilderness being to the seaward, that is, towards the south-east, their encampments betwixt Migdol and the sea, or before Migdol, as it is otherwise noted, could not well have another situation.

“Pihahhiroth, or Hhiroth rather, without regarding the prefixed part of it, may have a more general signification, and denote the valley or that whole space of ground which extended itself from the edge of the wilderness of Etham to the Red Sea: for that particular part only, where the Israelites were ordered to encamp, appears to have been called Pihahhiroth, i.e., mouth of Hhiroth; for when Pharaoh overtook them, it was in respect to his coming down upon them, Exodus 14:9, **על פי התירה** i.e., beside or at the mouth, or the most advanced part, of Hhiroth to the eastward. Likewise in Numbers 33:7, where the Israelites are related to have encamped before Migdol, it follows, Numbers 33:8, that they departed **מפני התירה** from before Hhiroth, and not from before Pihahhiroth, as it is rendered in our translation.

“There are likewise other circumstances to prove that the Israelites took their departure from this valley in their passage through the Red Sea, for it could not have been to the northward of the mountains of Attackah, or in the higher road, which I have taken notice of; because as this lies for the most part upon a level, the Israelites could not have been here, as we find they were, shut in and entangled. Neither could it have been on the other side, viz., to the south of the mountains of Gewoubee, for then (besides the insuperable difficulties which the Israelites would have met with in climbing over them, the same likewise that the Egyptians would have had in pursuing them) the opposite shore could not have been the desert of Shur where the Israelites landed, Exodus 15:22, but it would have been the desert of Marah, that lay a great way beyond it. What is now called Corondel might probably be the southern portion of the desert of Marah, the shore of the Red Sea, from Suez, hitherto having continued to be low and sandy; but from Corondel to the port of Tor, the shore is for the most part rocky and mountainous, in the same manner with the Egyptian coast that lies opposite to it; neither the one nor the other of them affording any convenient place, either for the departure of a multitude from the one shore, or the reception of it upon the other. And besides, from Corondel to Tor, the channel of the Red Sea, which from Suez to Sdur is not above nine or ten miles broad, begins here to be so many leagues, too great a space certainly for the Israelites, in the manner they were encumbered, to pass over in one night. At Tor the Arabian shore begins to wind itself round about Ptolemy’s promontory of Paran, towards the gulf of Eloth, whilst

the Egyptian shore retires so far to the south-west that it can scarce be perceived. As the Israelites then, for these reasons, could not, according to the opinion of some authors, have landed either at Corondel or Tor, so neither could they have landed at Ain Mousa, according to the conjectures of others. For if the passage of the Israelites had been so near the extremity of the Red Sea, it may be presumed that the very encampments of six hundred thousand men, besides children and a mixed multitude, which would amount to as many more, would have spread themselves even to the farther or the Arabian side of this narrow isthmus, whereby the interposition of Providence would not have been at all necessary; because, in this case and in this situation, there could not have been room enough for the waters, after they were divided, to have stood on a heap, or to have been a wall unto them, particularly on the left hand. This, moreover, would not have been a division, but a recess only of the water to the southward. Pharaoh likewise, by overtaking them as they were encamped in this open situation by the sea, would have easily surrounded them on all sides. Whereas the contrary seems to be implied by the pillar of the cloud, Exodus 14:19, 20, which (divided or) came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, and thereby left the Israelites (provided this cloud should have been removed) in a situation only of being molested in the rear. For the narrow valley which I have described, and which we may presume was already occupied and filled up behind by the host of Egypt, and before by the encampments of the Israelites, would not permit or leave room for the Egyptians to approach them, either on the right hand or on the left. Besides, if this passage was at Ain Mousa, how can we account for that remarkable circumstance, Exodus 15:22, where it is said that, when Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, they went out into (or landed in) the wilderness of Shur? For Shur, a particular district of the wilderness of Etham, lies directly fronting the valley from which I suppose they departed, but a great many miles to the south-ward of Ain Mousa. If they landed likewise at Ain Mousa, where there are several fountains, there would have been no occasion for the sacred historian to have observed, at the same time, that the Israelites after they went out from the sea into the wilderness of Shur, went three days in the wilderness, always directing their marches toward Mount Sinai, and found no water; for which reason Marah is recorded, Exodus 15:23, to be the first place where they found water, as their wandering so far before they found it seems to

make Marah also their first station, after their passage through the Red Sea. Moreover, the channel over against Ain Mousa is not above three miles over, whereas that betwixt Shur or Sedur and Jibbel Gewoubee and Attackah, is nine or ten, and therefore capacious enough, as the other would have been too small, for covering or drowning therein, Exodus 14:28, the chariots and horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh. And therefore, by impartially weighing all these arguments together, this important point in the sacred geography may with more authority be fixed at Sedur, over against the valley of Baideah, than at Tor, Corondel, Ain Mousa, or any other place.

“Over against Jibbel Attackah and the valley of Baideah is the desert, as it is called, of Sdur, (the same with Shur, Exodus 15:22,) where the Israelites landed after they had passed through the interjacent gulf of the Red Sea. The situation of this gulf, which is the יַם סוּפִי Jam suph, the weedy sea or the tongue of the Egyptian sea in the Scripture language; the gulf of Heroopolis in the Greek and Latin geography; and the Western arm, as the Arabian geographers call it, of the sea of Kolzum; stretches itself nearly north and south, and therefore lies very properly situated to be traversed by that strong east wind which was sent to divide it, Exodus 14:21. The division that was thus made in the channel, the making the waters of it to stand on a heap, (Psalm 78:13,) their being a wall to the Israelites on the right hand and on the left, (Exodus 14:22,) besides the twenty miles’ distance, at least, of this passage from the extremity of the gulf, are circumstances which sufficiently vouch for the miraculousness of it, and no less contradict all such idle suppositions as pretend to account for it from the nature and quality of tides, or from any such extraordinary recess of the sea as it seems to have been too rashly compared to by Josephus.

“In travelling from Sdur towards Mount Sinai we come into the desert, as it is still called, of Marah, where the Israelites met with those bitter waters or waters of Marah, Exodus 15:23. And as this circumstance did not happen till after they had wandered three days in the wilderness, we may probably fix these waters at Corondel, where there is still a small rill which, unless it be diluted by the dews and rain, still continues to be brackish. Near this place the sea forms itself into a large bay called Berk el Corondel, i.e., the lake of Corondel, which is remarkable from a strong current that sets into it from the northward, particularly at the recess of

the tide. The Arabs, agreeably to the interpretation of Kolzum, (the name for this sea,) preserve a tradition, that a numerous host was formerly drowned at this place, occasioned no doubt by what is related Exodus 14:30, that the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore, i.e., all along, as we may presume, from Sdur to Corondel, and at Corondel especially, from the assistance and termination of the current as it has been already mentioned.

“There is nothing farther remarkable till we see the Israelites encamped at Elim, Exodus 15:27, Numbers 33:9, upon the northern skirts of the desert of Sin, two leagues from Tor, and near thirty from Corondel. I saw no more than nine of the twelve wells that are mentioned by Moses, the other three being filled up by those drifts of sand which are common in Arabia. Yet this loss is amply made up by the great increase of the palm-trees, the seventy having propagated themselves into more than two thousand. Under the shade of these trees is the Hamman Mousa or bath of Moses, particularly so called, which the inhabitants of Tor have in great esteem and veneration, acquainting us that it was here where the household of Moses was encamped.

“We have a distinct view of Mount Sinai from Elim, the wilderness, as it is still called, of ⲓⲛ Sin lying betwixt them. We traversed these plains in nine hours, being all the way diverted with the sight of a variety of lizards and vipers that are here in great numbers. We were afterwards near twelve hours in passing the many windings and difficult ways which lie betwixt these deserts and those of Sinai. The latter consists of a beautiful plain, more than a league in breadth, and nearly three in length, lying open towards the north-east, where we enter it, but is closed up to the southward by some of the lower eminences of Mount Sinai. In this direction likewise the higher parts of this mountain make such encroachments upon the plain that they divide it into two, each of them capacious enough to receive the whole encampment of the Israelites. That which lies to the eastward may be the desert of Sinai, properly so called, where Moses saw the angel of the Lord in the burning bush, when he was guarding the flocks of Jethro, Exodus 3:2. The convent of St. Catharine is built over the place of this Divine appearance. It is near three hundred feet square, and more than forty in height, being built partly with stone, partly with mud and mortar mixed together. The more immediate place of the

shechinah is honored with a little chapel which this old fraternity of St. Basil has in such esteem and veneration that, in imitation of Moses, they put off their shoes from off their feet whenever they enter it. This, with several other chapels dedicated to particular saints, is included within the church, as they call it, of the transfiguration, which is a large beautiful structure covered with lead, and supported by two rows of marble columns. The floor is very elegantly laid out in a variety of devices in Mosaic work. Of the same tessellated workmanship likewise are both the floor and the walls of the presbyterium, upon the latter whereof are represented the effigies of the Emperor Justinian, together with the history of the transfiguration. Upon the partition which separates the presbyterium from the body of the church, there is placed a small marble shrine, wherein are preserved the skull and one of the hands of St. Catharine, the rest of the sacred body having been bestowed at different times upon such Christian princes as have contributed to the support of this convent.

“Mount Sinai, which hangs over this convent, is called by the Arabs, Jibbel Mousa, i.e., the mountain of Moses, and sometimes only, by way of eminence, El Tor, i.e., the mountain. The summit of Mount Sinai is not very spacious, where the Mohammedans, the Latins, and the Greeks, have each of them a small chapel.

“After we had descended, with no small difficulty, down the other or western side of this mount, we come into the plain or wilderness of Rephidim, Exodus 17:1, where we see that extraordinary antiquity, the rock of Meribah, Exodus 17:6, 7, which has continued down to this day without the least injury from time or accidents. This is rightly called, (Deuteronomy 8:15,) from its hardness, a rock of flint, **צור התלמיש**; though, from the purple or reddish color of it, it may be rather rendered the rock of **תלם** or **אתלמה** amethyst, or the amethystine or granite rock. It is about six yards square, lying tottering as it were, and loose, near the middle of the valley; and seems to have been formerly a part or cliff of Mount Sinai, which hangs in a variety of precipices all over this plain. The waters which gushed out and the stream which flowed withal, Psalm 78:20, have hollowed, across one corner of this rock, a channel about two inches deep and twenty wide, all over incrustated like the inside of a tea-kettle that has been long used. Besides several mossy productions that are still preserved

by the dew, we see all over this channel a great number of holes, some of them four or five inches deep and one or two in diameter, the lively and demonstrative tokens of their having been formerly so many fountains. Neither could art or chance be concerned in the contrivance, inasmuch as every circumstance points out to us a miracle; and in the same manner, with the rent in the rock of Mount Calvary in Jerusalem, never fails to produce the greatest seriousness and devotion in all who see it.

“From Mount Sinai the Israelites directed their marches northward, toward the land of Canaan. The next remarkable encampments therefore were in the desert of Paran, which seems to have commenced immediately upon their departing from Hazaroth, three stations’ or days’ journey, i.e., thirty miles, as we will only compute them from Sinai, Numbers 10:33, and 12:16. And as tradition has continued down to us the names of Shur, Marah, and Sin, so it has also that of Paran; the ruins of the late convent of Paran, built upon the ruins of an ancient city of that name, (which might give denomination to the whole of that desert,) being about the half way betwixt Sinai and Corondel, which lie at forty leagues’ distance. This situation of Paran, so far to the south of Kadesh, will illustrate Genesis 14:5, 6, where Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, are said to have smote the Horites in their Mount Seir unto El Paran, (i.e., unto the city, as I take it, of that name,) which is in or by the wilderness. From the more advanced part of the wilderness of Paran, (the same that lay in the road betwixt Midian and Egypt, 1 Kings 11:18,) Moses sent a man out of every tribe to spy out the land of Canaan, Numbers 13:2, 3, who returned to him after forty days, unto the same wilderness, to Kadesh Barnea, Numbers 32:8; Deuteronomy 1:10; 9:23; Joshua 14:7. This place or city, which in Genesis 14:7 is called Enmishpat, (i.e., the fountain of Mishpat,) is in Numbers 20:1; 27:14; 33:36, called Tzin Kadesh, or simply Kadesh, as in Genesis 16:14; Genesis 20:1; and being equally ascribed to the desert of Tzin (צִן,) and to the desert of Paran, we may presume that the desert of Tzin and Paran were one and the same; פ or פני may be so called from the plants of divers palm grounds upon it.

“A late ingenious author has situated Kadesh Barnea, a place of no small consequence in Scripture history, which we are now inquiring after, at eight hours’ or twenty miles’ distance only from Mount Sinai, which I presume cannot be admitted for various reasons, because several texts of

Scripture insinuate that Kadesh lay at a much greater distance. Thus in Deuteronomy 1:19, it is said, they departed from Horeb through that great and terrible wilderness, (which supposes by far a much greater extent both of time and space,) and came to Kadesh Barnea; and in Deuteronomy 9:23, when the Lord sent you from Kadesh Barnea to possess the land; which, Numbers 20:16, is described to be a city in the uttermost parts of the border of Edom; the border of the land of Edom and that of the land of promise being contiguous, and in fact the very same. And farther, Deuteronomy 1:2, it is expressly said, There are eleven days' journey from Horeb, by the way of Mount Seir, to Kadesh Barnea; which from the context, cannot be otherwise understood than of marching along the direct road. For Moses hereby intimates how soon the Israelites might have entered upon the borders of the land of promise, if they had not been a stubborn and rebellious people. Whereas the number of their stations betwixt Sinai and Kadesh, as they are particularly enumerated Number 33., (each of which must have been at least one day's journey,) appear to be near twice as many, or twenty-one, in which they are said with great truth and propriety, Psalm 107:4, to have wandered in the wilderness out of the way; and in Deuteronomy 2:1, to have compassed Mount Seir, rather than to have traveled directly through it. If then we allow ten miles for each of these eleven days' journey, (and fewer I presume cannot well be insisted upon,) the distance of Kadesh from Mount Sinai will be about one hundred and ten miles. That ten miles (I mean in a direct line, as laid down in the map, without considering the deviations which are everywhere, more or less) were equivalent to one day's journey, may be farther proved from the history of the spies, who searched the land (Numbers 13:21) from Kadesh to Rehob, as men come to Hamath, and returned in forty days. Rehob, then, the farthest point of this expedition to the northward, may well be conceived to have been twenty days' journey from Kadesh; and therefore to know the true position of Rehob will be a material point in this disquisition. Now it appears from Joshua 19:29, 30, and Judges 1:31, that Rehob was one of the maritime cities of the tribe of Asher, and lay (in travelling, as we may suppose, by the common or nearest way along the seacoast) לְכַא חֲמַת, Numbers 13:21, (not as we render it, as men come to Hamath, but,) as men go towards Hamath, in going to Hamath, or in the way or road to Hamath. For to have searched the land as far as Hamath, and to have returned to Kadesh in forty days, would have been altogether

impossible. Moreover, as the tribe of Asher did not reach beyond Sidon, (for that was its northern boundary, Joshua 19:28,) Rehob must have been situated to the southward of Sidon, upon or (being a derivative perhaps from רחב, *latum esse*) below in the plain, under a long chain of mountains that runs east and west through the midst of that tribe. And as these mountains called by some the mountains of Saran, are all along, except in the narrow road which I have mentioned, near the sea, very rugged and difficult to pass over, the spies, who could not well take another way, might imagine they would run too great a risk of being discovered in attempting to pass through it. For in these eastern countries a watchful eye was always, as it is still, kept upon strangers, as we may collect from the history of the two angels at Sodom, Genesis 19:5, and of the spies at Jericho, Joshua 2:2, and from other instances. If then we fix Rehob upon the skirts of the plains of Acre, a little to the south of this narrow road (the Scala Tyriorum as it was afterwards named) somewhere near Egdippa, the distance betwixt Kadesh and Rehob will be about two hundred and ten miles, whereas, by placing Kadesh twenty miles only from Sinai or Horeb, the distance will be three hundred and thirty miles. And instead of ten miles a day, according to the former computation, the spies must have traveled near seventeen, which for forty days successively seems to have been too difficult an expedition in this hot and consequently fatiguing climate, especially as they were on foot or footpads, as מבגלים (their appellation in the original) may probably import. These geographical circumstances therefore, thus corresponding with what is actually known of those countries at this time, should induce us to situate Kadesh, as I have already done, one hundred and ten miles to the northward of Mount Sinai, and forty-two miles to the westward of Eloth, near Callah Nahur, i.e., the castle of the river or fountain, (probably the Ain Mishpat,) a noted station of the Mohammedans in their pilgrimage to Mecca.

“From Kadesh the Israelites were ordered to turn into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, (Numbers 14:25; Deuteronomy 1:40,) i.e., they were at this time, in punishment of their murmurings, infidelity, and disobedience, to advance no farther northward towards the land of Canaan. Now, these marches are called the compassing of Mount Seir, Deuteronomy 2:1, and the passing by from the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain of Eloth and Ezion-gaber,

Deuteronomy 2:8. The wandering, therefore, of the children of Israel, during the space of thirty-eight years, (Deuteronomy 2:14,) was confined, in all probability to that neck of land only which lies bounded by the gulfs of Eloth and Heroopolis. If then we could adjust the true position of Eloth, we should gain one considerable point towards the better laying down and circumscribing this mountainous tract, where the Israelites wandered for so many years. Now, there is a universal consent among geographers that אֵילָה Eloth, Ailah, or Aelana, as it is differently named, was situated upon the northern extremity of the gulf of that name. Ptolemy, indeed, places it forty-five minutes to the south of Heroopolis, and nearly three degrees to the east; whereas Abulfeda, whose later authority, and perhaps greater experience, should be more regarded, makes the extremities of the two gulfs to lie nearly in the same parallel, though without recording the distance between them. I have been often informed by the Mohammedan pilgrims, who, in their way to Mecca, pass them both, that they direct their marches from Kairo eastward, till they arrive at Callah Accaba, or the castle (situated below the mountains) of Accaba, upon the Elanitic point of the Red Sea. Here they begin to travel betwixt the south and south-east, with their faces directly towards Mecca, which lay hitherto upon their right hand; having made in all, from Adjeroute, ten miles to the north northwest of Suez, to this castle, a journey of seventy hours. But as this whole tract is very mountainous, the road must consequently be attended with great variety of windings and turnings, which would hinder them from making any greater progress than at the rate, we will suppose, of about half a league an hour. Eloth, then, (which is the place of a Turkish garrison at present, as it was a praesidium of the Romans in former times,) will lie, according to this calculation, about one hundred and forty miles from Adjeroute, in an east by south direction; a position which will likewise receive farther confirmation from the distance that is assigned to it from Gaza, in the old geography. For, as this distance was one hundred and fifty Roman miles according to Pliny, or one hundred and fifty-seven according to other authors, Eloth could not have had a more southern situation than latitude twenty-nine degrees, forty minutes; neither could it have had a more northern latitude, insomuch as this would have so far invalidated a just observation of Strabo's, who makes Heroopolis and Pelusium to be much nearer each other than Eloth and Gaza. And, besides, as Gaza is well known to lie in latitude thirty-one degrees, forty minutes, (as we have

placed Eloth in latitude twenty-nine degrees, forty minutes,) the difference of latitude betwixt them will be two degrees or one hundred and twenty geographical miles; which converted into Roman miles, (seventy-five and a half of which make one degree,) we have the very distance (especially as they lie nearly under the same meridian) that is ascribed to them above by Strabo and Pliny. Yet, notwithstanding this point may be gained, it would be too daring an attempt, even to pretend to trace out above two or three of the encampments mentioned Numbers 33., though the greatest part of them was in all probability confined to this tract of Arabia Petraea, which I have bounded to the east by the meridian of Eloth, and to the west by that of Heroopolis, Kadesh lying near or upon the skirts of it to the northward.

“However, one of their more southern stations, after they had left Mount Sinai and Paran, seems to have been at Ezion-gaber; which being the place from whence Solomon’s navy went for gold to Ophir, 1 Kings 9:26, 2 Chronicles 8:17, we may be induced to take it for the present Meenah el Dsahab, i.e., the port of gold. According to the account I had of this place from the monks of St. Catharine, it lies in the gulf of Eloth, betwixt two and three days’ journey from them, — enjoying a spacious harbour; from whence they are sometimes supplied, as I have already mentioned, with plenty of lobsters and shell fish. Meenah el Dsahab therefore, from this circumstance, may be nearly at the same distance from Sinai with Tor; from whence they are likewise furnished with the same provisions, which, unless they are brought with the utmost expedition, frequently corrupt and putrefy. I have already given the distance between the northwest part of the desert of Sin and Mount Sinai, to be twenty-one hours; and if we farther add three hours, (the distance betwixt the desert of Sin and the port of Tor, from whence these fish are obtained,) we shall have in all twenty-four hours; i.e., in round numbers, about sixty miles. Ezion-gaber consequently may lie a little more or less at that distance from Sinai; because the days’ journeys which the monks speak of are not, perhaps, to be considered as ordinary and common ones; but such as are made in haste, that the fish may arrive in good condition.

“In the description of the East, p. 157, Ezion-gaber is placed to the south-east of Eloth, and at two or three miles only from it; which, I presume, cannot be admitted. For, as Eloth itself is situated upon the very joint of the gulf, Ezion-gaber, by lying to the south-east of it would belong

to the land of Midian; whereas Ezion-gaber was undoubtedly a sea-port in the land of Edom, as we learn from the authorities above related, viz., where King Solomon is said to have made a navy of ships in Ezion-gaber, which is **את אילות** beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. Here it may be observed that the word **את** which we render beside Eloth, should be rendered, together with Eloth; not denoting any vicinity between them, but that they were both of them ports of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

“From Ezion-gaber the Israelites turned back again to Kadesh, with an intent to direct their marches that way into the land of Canaan. But upon Edom’s refusing to give Israel passage through his border, (Numbers 20:18,) they turned away from him to the right hand, as I suppose, toward Mount Hor, (Numbers 20:21, 22,) which might lie to the eastward of Kadesh, in the road from thence to the Red Sea; and as the soul of the children of Israel is said to have been here much discouraged because of the way, it is very probable that Mount Hor was the same chain of mountains that are now called Accaba by the Arabs, and were the easternmost range, as we may take them to be, of Ptolemy’s **μελανα ορη** above described. Here, from the badness of the road, and the many rugged passes that are to be surmounted, the Mohammedan pilgrims lose a number of camels, and are no less fatigued than the Israelites were formerly in getting over them. I have already hinted, that this chain of mountains, the **μελανα ορη** of Ptolemy, reached from Paran to Judea. Petra, therefore, according to its later name, the metropolis of this part of Arabia, may well be supposed to lie among them, and to have been left by the Israelites on their left hand, in journeying toward Moab. Yet it will be difficult to determine the situation of this city, for want of a sufficient number of geographical data to proceed upon. In the old geography, Petra is placed one hundred and thirty-five miles to the eastward of Gaza, and four days’ journey from Jericho, to the southward. But neither of these distances can be any ways accounted for; the first being too great, the other too deficient. For, as we may well suppose Petra to lie near, or upon the borders of Moab, seven days’ journey would be the least: the same that the three kings took hither, 2 Kings 3:9, (by fetching a compass, as we may imagine,) from Jerusalem, which was nearer to that border than Jericho. However, at a medium, Petra lay in all probability about the half way between the south extremity of

the Asphaltic lake, and the gulf of Eloth, and may be therefore fixed near the confines of the country of the Midianites and Moabites at seventy miles distance from Kadesh, towards the north-east; and eighty-five from Gaza, to the south. According to Josephus, it was formerly called Arce, which Bochart supposes to be a corruption of Rekem, the true and ancient name. The Amalekites, so frequently mentioned in Scripture, were once seated in the neighborhood of this place, who were succeeded by the Nabathaeans, a people no less famous in profane history. From Mount Hor, the direction of their marches through Zalmona, Punon, etc., seems to have been between the north and north-east. For it does not appear that they wandered any more in the wilderness out of the direct way that was to conduct them through the country of Moab, (Numbers 33:35-49,) into the land of promise.”-SHAW’S Travels, chap. v., p. 304, etc.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS RECORDED IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS SHOWING IN WHAT YEAR OF THE WORLD, IN WHAT YEAR BEFORE CHRIST, IN WHAT YEAR FROM THE DELUGE, AND IN WHAT YEAR FROM THEIR DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT, EACH EVENT HAPPENED; INTERSPERSED WITH A FEW CONNECTING CIRCUMSTANCES FROM PROFANE HISTORY, ACCORDING TO THE PLAN OF ARCHBISHOP USHER.

A.M. 2365 B.C. 1639 An.Dil. 709 Levi, the third son of Jacob, dies in the 137th year of his age, Exodus 6:16. — N.B. This event is placed twenty years later by most chronologists, but I have followed the computation of Mr. Skinner and Dr. Kennicott. See Clarke on “Genesis 31:41”.

A.M. 2375 B.C. 1629 An.Dil. 719 About this time Acenchres, son of Orus, began to reign in Egypt, and reigned twelve years and one month.

A.M. 2385 B.C. 1619 An.Dil. 729 The Ethiopians, from the other side of the Indus, first settle in the middle of Egypt.

A.M. 2387 B.C. 1617 An.Dil. 731 Rathotis, the brother of Acenchres, began about this time to reign over the Egyptians, and reigned nine years.

A.M. 2396 B.C. 1608 An.Dil. 740 Acencheres, the son of Rathotis, succeeds his father and reigns twelve years and six months.

A.M. 2400 B.C. 1604 An.Dil. 744 About this time it is supposed the Egyptians began to be jealous of the Hebrews, on account of their prodigious multiplication.

A.M. 2409 B.C. 1595 An.Dil. 753 Ancencheres succeeds Acencheres, and reigns twelve years and three months.

A.M. 2421 B.C. 1583 An.Dil. 765 Armais succeeds Ancencheres, and reigns four years and one month.

About this time Kohath, the son of Levi, and grandfather of Moses, died in the 133d year of his age; Exodus 6:18. — N. B. There are several years of uncertainty in the date of this event. —

A.M. 2425 B.C. 1579 An.Dil. 769 Rameses succeeds Armais in the government, and reigns one year and four months.

A.M. 2427 B.C. 1577 An.Dil. 771 Rameses Miamun succeeds Rameses, and reigns sixty-seven years.

A.M. 2430 B.C. 1574 An.Dil. 774 Aaron, son of Amram, brother of Moses, born eighty-three years before the exodus of the Israelites; Exodus 6:20; 7:7.

A.M. 2431 B.C. 1573 An.Dil. 775 About this time Pharaoh (supposed to be the same with Rameses Miamun) published an edict, ordering all the male children of the Hebrews to be drowned in the Nile, Exodus 1:22.

A.M. 2433 B.C. 1571 An.Dil. 777 Moses, the Jewish lawgiver, born; Exodus 2:2.

A.M. 2448 B.C. 1556 An.Dil. 792 The kingdom of the Athenians founded about this time by Cecrops.

A.M. 2465 B.C. 1539 An.Dil. 809 In this year, which was the eighteenth of Cecrops, the Chaldeans waged war with the Phoenicians.

A.M. 2466 B.C. 1538 An.Dil. 810 About this time the Arabians subdued the Chaldeans, and took possession of their country.

A.M. 2473 B.C. 1531 An.Dil. 817 Moses, being forty years of age, kills an Egyptian, whom he found smiting a Hebrew; in consequence of which,

being obliged to fly for his life, he escapes to the land of Midian, where becoming acquainted with the family of Jethro, he marries Zipporah; Exodus 2:11-22.

A.M. 2474 B.C. 1530 An.Dil. 818 The birth of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh.

A.M. 2494 B.C. 1510 An.Dil. 838 Rameses Miamun, king of Egypt, dies about this time in the sixty-seventh year of his reign, and is succeeded by his son Amenophis, who reigns nineteen years and six months.

A.M. 2495 B.C. 1509 An.Dil. 839 The death of Amram, the father of Moses, is supposed to have taken place about this time.

A.M. 2513 B.C. 1491 An.Dil. 857 While Moses keeps the flock of Jethro at Mount Horeb, the Angel of God appears to him in a burning bush, promises to deliver the Hebrews from their oppression in Egypt, and sends him to Pharaoh to command him to let Israel go; chap. 3.

Aaron and Moses assemble the elders of Israel, inform them of the Divine purpose, and then go to Pharaoh and desire him, in the name of the God of the Hebrews, to let the people go three days' journey into the wilderness to hold a feast unto the Lord. Pharaoh is enraged, and increases the oppression of the Israelites; chap. 5.

Aaron throws down his rod, which becomes a serpent. The Egyptian magicians imitate this miracle; chap. 7.

Pharaoh refusing to let the Israelites go, God sends his FIRST plague upon the Egyptians, and the waters are turned into blood: Exodus 7:19-25.

Pharaoh remaining impenitent, God sends immense numbers of frogs, which infest the whole land of Egypt. This was the SECOND plague; Exodus 8:1-7.

This plague not producing the desired effect, God sends the THIRD plague, the dust of the ground becoming lice on man and beast; Exodus 8:16-20.

Pharaoh's heart still remaining obdurate, God sends the FOURTH plague upon the nation, by causing great swarms of flies to cover the whole land; Exodus 8:20-32.

The Egyptian king still refusing to dismiss the Hebrews, God sends his FIFTH plague, which is a universal murrain or mortality among the cattle; Exodus 9:1-7.

This producing no good effect, the SIXTH plague of boils and blains is sent; Exodus 9:8-12.

Pharaoh still hardening his heart, God sends the SEVENTH plague, viz., a grievous hail which destroyed the whole produce of the field; Exodus 9:22-26.

This, through Pharaoh's obstinacy, proving ineffectual, the EIGHTH plague is sent, immense swarms of locusts, which devour the land; Exodus 10:1-20.

Pharaoh refusing to submit to the Divine authority, the NINTH plague, a total darkness of three days' continuance, is spread over the whole land of Egypt; Exodus 10:21-24.

Pharaoh continuing to refuse to let the people go, God institutes the rite of the passover, and sends the TENTH plague upon the Egyptians, and the first-born of man and beast died throughout the whole land. This was in the fourteenth night of the month Abib. The Israelites are driven out of Egypt, Exodus 12:1-36; and carry Joseph's bones with them; Exodus 13:19.

The Israelites march from Succoth to Etham; thence to Pi-hahiroth, the Lord guiding them by a Isr. miraculous pillar; Exodus 13:20-22; 14:1, 2.

Towards the close of this month, Pharaoh and the Abib Egyptians pursue the Israelites; God opens a passage for these through the Red Sea, and they pass over as on dry land, which the Egyptians essaying to do, are all drowned; chap. 14; Hebrews 11:29.

The Israelites come to Marah, and murmur because of the bitter waters; Moses is directed to throw a certain tree into them, by which they are rendered sweet; Exodus 15:23-25.

About the beginning of this month the Israelites or come to Elim; Exodus 15:27.

On the fifteenth day of this month the Israelites come to the desert of Sin, where, murmuring for want of bread, quails are sent, and manna from heaven; chap. 16.

Coming to Rephidim they murmur for want of water, and God supplies this want by miraculously bringing water out of a rock in Horeb, Exodus 17:1-7.

The Amalekites attack the Israelites in Rephidim, and are discomfited; Exodus 17:8-16.

The Israelites come to the wilderness of Sinai. God calls Moses up to the mount, where he receives the ten commandments and other precepts; chap. 19-24.: is instructed how to make the tabernacle; 25-28. Aaron and his sons are dedicated to the priest's office; chap. 28.

Moses delaying to come down from the mount, the people make a molten calf, and worship it. Moses, coming down, sees their idolatry, is distressed, and breaks the tables; three thousand of the idolaters are slain; and, at the intercession of Moses, the rest of the people are saved from destruction; chap. 22.

Moses is again called up into the mount, where God renews the covenant, and writes the two tables afresh. Moses desires to see the Divine glory; his request is partially granted; Exodus 33:18-23; 34:1-27.

Moses, after having been in the mount forty days and forty nights, during which time he ate nothing, comes down with the two tables of stone: his face shines so that he is obliged to cover it with a veil; Exodus 34:29-35.

A.M. 2514 B.C. 1490 An.Dil. 858 From this time to the month Adar, including Marcheshvan, Cisleu, Thebet, and Sebat, Bezaleel, Aholiab, and their assistants are employed in constructing the tabernacle, etc., according to the pattern delivered to Moses on the mount; chap. 36-39. 858

On the first of the month, being the first month of the second year after their departure from Egypt, the tabernacle is reared up, and Aaron and his sons set apart for the priest's office; Exodus 40:17-32. — N. B. The ceremonies attending this consecration form the chief part of the following book, LEVITICUS.

Jethro brings Zipporah and her two sons to Moses 2 in the wilderness, and gives him wholesome or directions concerning the best mode of governing the people, which Moses thankfully or accepts, and God approves; chap. 18, and see Zif the notes there.

PREFACE TO THE BOOK

OF

LEVITICUS

THE Greek version of the SEPTUAGINT, and the VULGATE Latin, have given the title of LEVITICUS to the third book of the Pentateuch, and the name has been retained in almost all the modern versions. The book was thus called because it treats principally of the laws and regulations of the Levites and priests in general. In Hebrew it is termed וַיִּיקְרָא *Vaiyikra*, “And he called,” which is the first word in the book, and which, as in preceding cases, became the running title to the whole. It contains an account of the ceremonies to be observed in the offering of burnt-sacrifices; meat, peace, and sin-offerings; the consecration of priests, together with the institution of the three grand national festivals of the Jews, the PASSOVER, PENTECOST, and TABERNACLES, with a great variety of other ecclesiastical matters. It seems to contain little more than the history of what passed during the eight days of the consecration of Aaron and his sons, though Archbishop Usher supposes that it comprises the history of the transactions of a whole month, viz., from April 21 to May 21, of the year of the world 2514, which answers to the first month of the second year after the departure from Egypt. As there are no data by which any chronological arrangement of the facts mentioned in it can be made, it would be useless to encumber the page with conjectures which, because uncertain, can answer no end to the serious reader for doctrine, reproof, or edification in righteousness. As the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, the whole sacrificial system was intended to point out that Lamb of God, Christ Jesus, who takes away the sin of the world. In reading over this book, this point should be kept particularly in view, as without this spiritual reference no interest can be excited by a perusal of the work. The

principal events recorded in this book may be thus deduced in the order of the chapters: Moses having set up the tabernacle, as has been related in the conclusion of the preceding book; and the cloud of the Divine glory, the symbol of the presence of God, having rested upon it; God called to him out of this tabernacle, and delivered the laws and precepts contained in the seven first chapters. In chap. i. he prescribes every thing relative to the nature and quality of burnt offerings, and the ceremonies which should be observed, as well by the person who brought the sacrifice as by the priest who offered it. In chap. 2. he treats of meat-offerings of fine flour with oil and frankincense; of cakes, and the oblations of first-fruits. Chap. 3. treats of peace-offerings, prescribes the ceremonies to be used in such offerings, and the parts which should be consumed by fire. Chap. 4. treats of the offerings made for sins of ignorance; for the sins of the priests, rulers, and of the common people. Chap. 5. treats of the sin of him who, being adjured as a witness, conceals his knowledge of a fact; the case of him who touches an unclean thing; of him who binds himself by a vow or an oath; and of trespass-offerings in cases of sacrilege, and in sins of ignorance. Chap. 6. treats of the trespass-offerings for sins knowingly committed; and of the offerings for the priests, the parts which should be consumed, and the parts which should be considered as the priests' portion. And in Chap. 7. the same subject is continued. Chap. 8. treats of the consecration of Aaron and his sons; their sin-offering; burnt-offering; ram of consecration; and the time during which these solemn rites should continue. Chap. 9. After Aaron and his sons were consecrated, on the eighth day they were commanded to offer sin-offerings and burnt-offerings for themselves and for the people, which they accordingly did, and Aaron and Moses having blessed the people, a fire came forth from before the Lord, and consumed the offering that was laid upon the altar. Chap. 10. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, having offered strange fire before the Lord, are consumed; and the priests are forbidden the use of wine and all inebriating liquors. Chap. 11. treats of clean and unclean beasts, fishes, birds, and reptiles. Chap. 12. treats of the purification of women after child-birth, and the offerings they should present before the Lord. Chap. 13. prescribes the manner of discerning the infection of the leprosy in persons, garments, and houses. Chap. 14. prescribes the sacrifices and ceremonies which should be offered by those who were cleansed from the leprosy. Chap. 15. treats of certain uncleannesses in man and woman; and of their purifications. Chap.

16. treats of the solemn yearly expiation to be made for the sins of the priest and of the people, of the goat and bullock for a sacrifice, and of the scape-goat; all which should be offered annually on the tenth day of the seventh month. Chap. 17. The Israelites are commanded to offer all their sacrifices at the tabernacle; the eating of blood is prohibited, as also the flesh of those animals which die of themselves, and of those that are torn by dogs. Chap. 18. shows the different degrees within which marriages were not to be contracted, and prohibits various acts of impurity. Chap. 19. recapitulates a variety of laws which had been mentioned in the preceding book, (Exodus,) and adds several new ones. Chap. 20. prohibits the consecration of their children to Molech, forbids their consulting wizards and those which had familiar spirits, and also a variety of incestuous and unnatural mixtures. Chap. 21. gives different ordinances concerning the mourning and marriages of priests, and prohibits those from the sacerdotal office who have certain personal defects. Chap. 22. treats of those infirmities and uncleannesses which rendered the priests unfit to officiate in sacred things, and lays down directions for the perfection of the sacrifices which should be offered to the Lord. Chap. 23. treats of the Sabbath and the great annual festivals — the passover, pentecost, feast of trumpets, day of atonement, and feast of tabernacles. Chap. 24. treats of the oil for the lamps, and the shew-bread; the law concerning which had already been given, see Exodus 25., etc.; mentions the case of the person who blasphemed God, and his punishment; lays down the law in cases of blasphemy and murder; and recapitulates the *lex talionis*, or law of like for like, prescribed Exodus 21. Chap. 25. recapitulates the law, given Exodus 23., relative to the Sabbatical year; prescribes the year of jubilee; and lays down a variety of statutes relative to mercy, kindness, benevolence, charity, etc. Chap. 26. prohibits idolatry, promises a great variety of blessings to the obedient, and threatens the disobedient with many and grievous curses. Chap. 27. treats of vows, of things devoted, and of the tithes which should be given for the service of the tabernacle. No Chronological Table can be affixed to this book, as the transactions of it seem to have been included within the space of eight days, or of a month at the utmost, as we have already seen. And even some of the facts related here seem to have taken place previously to the erection of the tabernacle; nor is the order in which the others occurred so distinguished as to enable us to lay down the precise days in which they took place.

THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES

CALLED

LEVITICUS

- Year before the common Year of Christ, 1490.
- Julian Period, 3224.
- Cycle of the Sun, 27.
- Dominical Letter, D.
- Cycle of the Moon, 9.
- Indiction, 6.
- Creation from Tisri or September, 2514.

CHAPTER 1

The Lord calls to Moses out of the tabernacle, and gives him directions concerning burnt-offerings of the beeve kind, 1, 2. The burnt-offering to be a male without blemish, 3. The person bringing it to lay his hands upon its head, that it might be accepted for him, 4. He is to kill, flay, and cut it in pieces, and bring the blood to the priests, that they might sprinkle it round about the altar, 5, 6. All the pieces to be laid upon the altar and burnt, 7-9. Directions concerning offerings of the SMALLER CATTLE, such as sheep and goats, 10-13. Directions concerning offerings of FOWLS, such as doves and pigeons, 14-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *And the Lord called unto Moses*— From the manner in which this book commences, it appears plainly to be a continuation or the preceding; and indeed the whole is but one law, though divided into five portions, and why thus divided is not easy to be conjectured. Previously to the erection of the tabernacle God had given no particular directions concerning the manner of offering the different kinds of sacrifices; but as soon as this Divine structure was established and consecrated, Jehovah took it as his dwelling place; described the rites and ceremonies which he would have observed in his worship, that his people might know what was best pleasing in his sight; and that, when thus worshipping him, they might have confidence that they pleased him, every thing being done according to his own directions. A consciousness of acting according to the revealed will of God gives strong confidence to an upright mind.

Verse 2. *Bring an offering*— The word קרבן korban, from קרב karab, to approach or draw near, signifies an offering or gift by which a person had access unto God: and this receives light from the universal custom that prevails in the east, no man being permitted to approach the presence of a superior without a present or gift; and the offering thus brought was called korban, which properly means the introduction-offering, or offering of access. This custom has been often referred to in the preceding books. See also chap. 7.

Of the cattle— הבהמה habbehmah, animals of the beeve kind, such as the bull, heifer, bullock, and calf; and restrained to these alone by the term herd, בקר bakar, which, from its general use in the Levitical writings, is known to refer to the ox, heifer, etc. And therefore other animals of the beeve kind were excluded.

Of the flock— צאן tson. SHEEP and GOATS; for we have already seen that this term implies both kinds; and we know, from its use, that no other animal of the smaller clean domestic quadrupeds is intended, as no other animal of this class, besides the sheep and goat, was ever offered in sacrifice to God. The animals mentioned in this chapter as proper for sacrifice are the very same which God commanded Abraham to offer; see Genesis 15:9. And thus it is evident that God delivered to the patriarchs an epitome of that law which was afterwards given in detail to Moses, the essence of which consisted in its sacrifices; and those sacrifices were of

clean animals, the most perfect, useful, and healthy, of all that are brought under the immediate government and influence of man. Gross-feeding and ferocious animals were all excluded, as were also all birds of prey. In the pagan worship it was widely different; for although the ox was esteemed among them, according to Livy, as the major hostia; and according to Pliny, the *victima optima, et laudatis sima deorum placatio*, Plin. Hist. Nat., lib. viii., c. 45, “the chief sacrifice and the most availing offering which could be made to the gods;” yet obscene fowls and ravenous beasts, according to the nature of their deities, were frequently offered in sacrifice. Thus they sacrificed horses to the SUN, wolves to MARS, asses to PRIAPUS, swine to CERES, dogs to HECATE, etc., etc. But in the worship of God all these were declared unclean, and only the three following kinds of QUADRUPEDS were commanded to be sacrificed: 1. The bull or ox, the cow or heifer, and the calf. 2. The he-goat, she-goat, and the kid. 3. The ram, the ewe, and the lamb. Among FOWLS, only pigeons and turtle-doves were commanded to be offered, except in the case of cleansing the leper, mentioned chap. 14:4, where two clean birds, generally supposed to be sparrows or other small birds, though of what species is not well known, are specified. Fish were not offered, because they could not be readily brought to the tabernacle alive.

Verse 3. *Burnt-sacrifice*—The most important of all the sacrifices offered to God; called by the Septuagint *ολοκαυτωμα*, because it was wholly consumed, which was not the case in any other offering. See on chap 7.

His own voluntary will—*לרצונו* *lirtsono*, to gain himself acceptance before the Lord: in this way all the versions appear to have understood the original words, and the connection in which they stand obviously requires this meaning.

Verse 4. *He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering*—By the imposition of hands the person bringing the victim acknowledged, 1. The sacrifice as his own. 2. That he offered it as an atonement for his sins. 3. That he was worthy of death because he had sinned, having forfeited his life by breaking the law. 4. That he entreated God to accept the life of the innocent animal in place of his own. 5. And all this, to be done profitably, must have respect to HIM whose life, in the fullness of time, should be made a sacrifice for sin. 6. The blood was to be sprinkled

round about upon the altar, ver. 5, as by the sprinkling of blood the atonement was made; for the blood was the life of the beast, and it was always supposed that life went to redeem life. See Clarke on “Exodus 29:10”. On the required perfection of the sacrifice see Clarke on “Exodus 12:5”. It has been sufficiently remarked by learned men that almost all the people of the earth had their burnt-offerings, on which also they placed the greatest dependence. It was a general maxim through the heathen world, that there was no other way to appease the incensed gods; and they sometimes even offered human sacrifices, from the supposition, as Caesar expresses it, that life was necessary to redeem life, and that the gods would be satisfied with nothing less. “Quod pro vita hominis nisi vita hominis redditur, non posse aliter deorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur.”-Com. de Bell. Gal., lib. vi. But this was not the case only with the Gauls, for we see, by Ovid, Fast., lib. vi., that it was a commonly received maxim among more polished people:—

“ — *Pro parvo victima parva cadit.*
Cor pro corde, precor, pro fibris sumite fibras.
Hanc animam vobis pro meliore damus.”

See the whole of this passage in the above work, from ver. 135 to 163.

Verse 6. *He shall flay*— Probably meaning the person who brought the sacrifice, who, according to some of the rabbins, killed, flayed, cut up, and washed the sacrifice, and then presented the parts and the blood to the priest, that he might burn the one, and sprinkle the other upon the altar. But it is certain that the priests also, and the Levites, flayed the victims, and the priest had the skin to himself; see chap. 7:8, and 2 Chronicles 29:34. The red heifer alone was not flayed, but the whole body, with the skin, etc., consumed with fire. See Numbers 19:5.

Verse 7. *Put fire*— The fire that came out of the tabernacle from before the Lord, and which was kept perpetually burning; see chap. 9:24. Nor was it lawful to use any other fire in the service of God. See the case of Nadab and Abihu, chap. 10.

Verse 8. *The priests-shall lay the parts*— The sacrifice was divided according to its larger joints. 1. After its blood was poured out, and the skin removed, the head was cut off. 2. They then opened it and took out the omentum, or caul, that invests the intestines. 3. They took out the

intestines with the mesentery, and washed them well, as also the fat. 4. They then placed the four quarters upon the altar, covered them with the fat, laid the remains of the intestines upon them, and then laid the head above all. 5. The sacred fire was then applied, and the whole mass was consumed. This was the holocaust, or complete burnt-offering.

Verse 9. *An offering-of a sweet savor*— אִשְׁשֵׁה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ ishsheh reiach nichoach, a fire-offering, an odour of rest, or, as the Septuagint express it, **θυσια οσμη ευωδιας**, “a sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savor;” which place St. Paul had evidently in view when he wrote Ephesians 5:2: “Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering, **και θυσιαν-εις οσμην ευωδιας**, and a sacrifice, for a sweet-smelling savor,” where he uses the same terms as the Septuagint. Hence we find that the holocaust, or burnt-offering, typified the sacrifice and death of Christ for the sins of the world.

Verse 10. *His offering be of the flocks*— See Clarke on “Leviticus 1:2”.

Verse 12. *Cut it into his pieces*— See Clarke note on “Genesis 15:10”.

Verse 16. *Pluck away his crop with his feathers*— In this sacrifice of fowls the head was violently wrung off, then the blood was poured out, then the feathers were plucked off, the breast was cut open, and the crop, stomach, and intestines taken out, and then the body was burnt. Though the bird was split up, yet it was not divided asunder. This circumstance is particularly remarked in Abram’s sacrifice, Genesis 15:10. See Clarke note “Genesis 15:10”. See Ainsworth. WE have already seen, on ver. 2, that four kinds of animals might be made burnt-offerings to the Lord. 1. Neat cattle, such as bulls, oxen, cows, and calves. 2. He-goats, she-goats, and kids. 3. Rams, ewes, and lambs. 4. Pigeons and turtle-doves; and in one case, viz., the cleansing of the leper, sparrows or some small bird. All these must be without spot or blemish—the most perfect of their respective kinds, and be wholly consumed by fire. The RICH were to bring the most costly; the POOR, those of least price. Even in this requisition of justice how much mercy was mingled! If a man could not bring a bullock or a heifer, a goat or a sheep, let him bring a calf, a kid, or a lamb. If he could not bring any of these because of his poverty, let him bring a turtle-dove, or a young pigeon, (see chap. 5:7;) and it appears that in cases of extreme poverty, even a little meal or fine flour was accepted by the bountiful Lord

as a sufficient oblation; see chap. 5:11. This brought down the benefits of the sacrificial service within the reach of the poorest of the poor; as we may take for granted that every person, however low in his circumstances, might be able to provide the tenth part of an ephah, about three quarts of meal, to make an offering for his soul unto the Lord. But every man must bring something; the law stooped to the lowest circumstances of the poorest of the people, but every man must sacrifice, because every man had sinned. Reader, what sort of a sacrifice dost thou bring to God? To Him thou owest thy whole body, soul, and substance; are all these consecrated to his service? Or has he the refuse of thy time, and the offal of thy estate? God requires thee to sacrifice as his providence has blessed thee. If thou have much, thou shouldst give liberally to God and the poor; If thou have but little, do thy diligence to give of that little. God's justice requires a measure of that which his mercy has bestowed. But remember that as thou hast sinned, thou needest a Savior. Jesus is that lamb without spot which has been offered to God for the sin of the world, and which thou must offer to him for thy sin; and it is only through Him that thou canst be accepted, even when thou dedicatest thy whole body, soul, and substance to thy Maker. Even when we present ourselves a living sacrifice to God, we are accepted for his sake who carried our sins, and bore our sorrows. Thanks be to God, the rich and the poor have equal access unto him through the Son of his love, and equal right to claim the benefits of the great sacrifice!

CHAPTER 2

The meat-offering of flour with oil and incense, 1-3. The oblation of the meat-offering baked in the oven and in the pan, 4-6. The meat-offering baked in the frying-pan, 7-10. No leaven nor honey to be offered with the meat-offering, 11. The oblation of the first-fruits, 12. Salt to be offered with the meat offering, 13. Green ears dried by the fire, and corn to be beaten out of full ears, with oil and frankincense, to be offered as a meat-offering of first-fruits, 14-16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. Meat-offering—מִנְחָה minchah. For an explanation of this word see Clarke's note on "Genesis 4:3", and Lev. vii. Calmet has remarked that there are five kinds of the minchah mentioned in this chapter. 1. סֶלֶת soleth, simple flour or meal, ver. 1. 2. Cakes and wafers, or whatever was baked in the oven, ver. 4. 3. Cakes baked in the pan, ver. 5. 4. Cakes baked on the frying-pan, or probably, a gridiron, verse 7. 5. Green ears of corn parched, ver. 14. All these were offered without honey or leaven, but accompanied with wine, oil, and frankincense. It is very likely that the minchah, in some or all of the above forms, was the earliest oblation offered to the Supreme Being, and probably was in use before sin entered into the world, and consequently before bloody sacrifices, or piacular victims, had been ordained. The minchah of green ears of corn dried by the fire, etc., was properly the gratitude-offering for a good seed time, and the prospect of a plentiful harvest. This appears to have been the offering brought by Cain, Genesis 4:3; see Clarke's note "Genesis 4:3". The flour, whether of wheat, rice, barley, rye, or any other grain used for aliment, was in all likelihood equally proper; for in Numbers 5:15, we find the flour of barley, or barley meal, is called minchah. It is plain that in the institution of the minchah no animal was here included, though in other places it seems to include both kinds; but in general the minchah was not a bloody offering, nor used by way of atonement or expiation, but merely in a eucharistic way, expressing gratitude to God for the produce of the soil.

It is such an offering as what is called natural religion might be reasonably expected to suggest: but alas! so far lost is man, that even thankfulness to God for the fruits of the earth must be taught by a Divine revelation; for in the heart of man even the seeds of gratitude are not found, till sown there by the hand of Divine grace. Offerings of different kinds of grain, flour, bread, fruits, etc., are the most ancient among the heathen nations; and even the people of God have had them from the beginning of the world. See this subject largely discussed on Exodus 23:29, where several examples are given. Ovid intimates that these gratitude-offerings originated with agriculture. “In the most ancient times men lived by rapine, hunting, etc., for the sword was considered to be more honorable than the plough; but when they sowed their fields, they dedicated the first-fruits of their harvest to Ceres, to whom the ancients attributed the art of agriculture, and to whom burnt-offerings of corn were made, according to immemorial usages.” The passage to which I refer, and of which I have given the substance, is the following:—

*“Non habuit tellus doctos antiqua colonos:
Lassabant agiles aspera bella viros.
Plus erat in gladio quam curvo laudis aratro:
Neglectus domino pauca ferebat ager.
Farra tamen veteres jaciebant, farra metebant:
Primitias Cereri farra resecta dabant.
Usibus admoniti flammis torrenda dedere:
Multaque peccato damna tulere suo.”*

FASTOR, lib. ii., ver. 515.

Pliny observes that “Numa taught the Romans to offer fruits to the gods, and to make supplications before them, bringing salt cakes and parched corn; as grain in this state was deemed most wholesome.” Numa instituit deos FRUGE colere, et MOLA SALSa supplicare, atque (ut auctor est Hemina) far torrere, quoniam tostum cibo salubrius esset. — HIST. NAT. lib xviii., c. 2. And it is worthy of remark, that the ancient Romans considered “no grain as pure or proper for divine service that had not been previously parched.” Id uno modo consecutum, statuendo non esse purum ad rem divinam nisi tostum. — Ibid. God, says Calmet, requires nothing here which was not in common use for nourishment; but he commands that these things should be offered with such articles as might give them the most exquisite relish, such as salt, oil, and wine, and that the flour should

be of the finest and purest kind. The ancients, according to Suidas, seem to have made much use of meal formed into a paste with milk, and sometimes with water. (See Suidas in **μαζα**.) The priests kept in the temples a certain mixture of flour mingled with oil and wine, which they called **υγιεια** Hugieia or health, and which they used as a kind of amulet or charm against sickness; after they had finished their sacrifices, they generally threw some flour upon the fire, mingled with oil and wine, which they called **θυληματα** thulemata, and which, according to Theophrastus, was the ordinary sacrifice of the poor.

Verse 2. His handful of the flour— This was for a memorial, to put God in mind of his covenant with their fathers, and to recall to their mind his gracious conduct towards them and their ancestors. Mr. Ainsworth properly remarks, “that there was neither oil nor incense offered with the sin and jealousy offerings; because they were no offerings of memorial, but such as brought iniquities to remembrance, which were neither gracious nor sweet-smelling before the Lord.” Numbers 5:15; Leviticus 5:11. In this case a handful only was burnt, the rest was reserved for the priest’s use; but all the frankincense was burnt, because from it the priest could derive no advantage.

Verse 4. Baken in the oven— **תנור** tannur, from **נר** nar, to split, divide, says Mr. Parkhurst; and hence the oven, because of its burning, dissolving, and melting heat.

Verse 5. Baken in a pan— **מחבת** machabath, supposed to be a flat iron plate, placed over the fire; such as is called a griddle in some countries.

Verse 7. The frying-pan— **מרחשת** marchesheth, supposed to be the same with that called by the Arabs a ta-jen, a shallow earthen vessel like a frying-pan, used not only to fry in, but for other purposes. On the different instruments, as well as the manner of baking in the east, Mr. Harmer, in his observations on select passages of Scripture, has collected the following curious information. “Dr. Shaw informs us that in the cities and villages of Barbary, there are public ovens, but that among the Bedouins, who live in tents, and the Kabyles, who live in miserable hovels in the mountains, their bread, made into thin cakes, is baked either immediately upon the coals, or else in a ta-jen, which he tells us is a

shallow earthen vessel like a frying-pan: and then cites the Septuagint to show that the supposed pan, mentioned chap. 2:5, was the same thing as a ta-jen. The ta-jen, according to Dr. Russel, is exactly the same among the Bedouins as the **πηγανον**, a word of the same sound as well as meaning, was among the Greeks. So the Septuagint, chap. 2:5: if thy oblation be a meat-offering, baken in a pan, (**απο τηγανου**,) it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil. “This account given by the doctor is curious; but as it does not give us all the eastern ways of baking, so neither does it furnish us, I am afraid, with a complete comment on that variety of methods of preparing the meat-offerings which is mentioned by Moses in chap. ii. So long ago as Queen Elizabeth’s time, Rauwolff observed that travelers frequently baked bread in the deserts of Arabia on the ground, heated for that purpose by fire, covering their cakes of bread with ashes and coals, and turning them several times until they were baked enough; but that some of the Arabians had in their tents, stones, or copper plates, made on purpose for baking. Dr. Pococke very lately made a like observation, speaking of iron hearths used for baking their bread. “Sir John Chardin, mentioning the several ways of baking their bread in the east, describes these iron plates as small and convex. These plates are most commonly used, he tells us, in Persia, and among the wandering people that dwell in tents, as being the easiest way of baking, and done with the least expense; the bread being as thin as a skin, and soon prepared. Another way (for he mentions four) is by baking on the hearth. That bread is about an inch thick; they make no other all along the Black Sea from the Palus Maeotis to the Caspian Sea, in Chaldea, and in Mesopotamia, except in towns. This, he supposes, is owing to their being woody countries. These people make a fire in the middle of a room; when the bread is ready for baking they sweep a corner of the hearth, lay the bread there, and cover it with hot ashes and embers; in a quarter of an hour they turn it: this bread is very good. The third way is that which is common among us. The last way, and that which is common through all Asia, is thus: they make an oven in the ground, four or five feet deep and three in diameter, well plastered with mortar. When it is hot, they place the bread (which is commonly long, and not thicker than a finger) against the sides, and it is baked in a moment. “D’Arvieux mentions another way used by the Arabs about Mount Carmel, who sometimes bake in an oven, and at other time on the hearth; but have a third method, which is, to make a fire in a great

stone pitcher and when it is heated, they mix meal and water, as we do to make paste to glue things together, which they apply with the hollow of their hands to the outside of the pitcher, and this extremely soft paste spreading itself upon it is baked in an instant. The heat of the pitcher having dried up all the moisture, the bread comes off as thin as our wafers; and the operation is so speedily performed that in a very little time a sufficient quantity is made. “Maimonides and the Septuagint differ in their explanation of ver. 5; for that Egyptian rabbi supposes this verse speaks of a fiat plate, and these more ancient interpreters, of a ta-jen. But they both seem to agree that these were two of the methods of preparing the meat-offering; for Maimonides supposes the seventh verse speaks of a frying-pan or ta-jen; whereas the Septuagint, on the contrary, thought the word there meant a hearth, which term takes in an iron or copper plate, though it extends farther. “The meat-offerings of the fourth verse answer as well to the Arab bread, baked by means of their stone pitchers, which are used by them for the baking of wafers, as to their cakes of bread mentioned by D’Arvieux, who, describing the way of baking among the modern Arabs, after mentioning some of their methods, says they bake their best sort of bread, either by heating an oven, or a large pitcher, half full of certain little smooth shining flints, upon which they lay the dough, spread out in form of a thin broad cake. The mention of wafers seems to fix the meaning of Moses to these oven pitchers, though perhaps it may be thought an objection that this meat-offering is said to have been baked in an oven; but it will be sufficient to observe that the Hebrew words only signify a meat-offering of the oven, and consequently may be understood as well of wafers baked on the outside of these oven pitchers, as of cakes of bread baked in them. And if thou bring an oblation, a baked thing, of the oven, it shall be an unleavened cake of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. Whoever then attends to these accounts of the stone pitcher, the ta-jen, and the copper plate or iron hearth, will enter into this second of Leviticus, I believe, much more perfectly than any commentator has done, and will find in these accounts what answers perfectly well to the description Moses gives us of the different ways of preparing the meat-offerings. A ta-jen indeed, according to Dr. Shaw, serves for a frying-pan as well as for a baking vessel; for he says, the bagreah of the people of Barbary differs not much from our pancakes, only that, instead of rubbing the ta-jen or pan in which they fry

them with butter, they rub it with soap, to make them like a honeycomb. “Moses possibly intended a meat-offering of that kind might be presented to the Lord; and our translators seem to prefer that supposition, since, though the margin mentions the opinion of Maimonides, the reading of the text in the sixth verse opposes a pan for baking to a pan for frying in the seventeenth verse. The thought, however, of Maimonides seems to be most just, as Moses appears to be speaking of different kinds of bread only, not of other farinaceous preparations. “These oven pitchers mentioned by D’Arvieux, and used by the modern Arabs for baking cakes of bread in them, and wafers on their outsides, are not the only portable ovens of the east. St. Jerome, in his commentary on Lamentations 5:10, describes an eastern oven as a round vessel of brass, blackened on the outside by the surrounding fire which heats it within. Such an oven I have seen used in England. Which of these the Mishnah refers to when it speaks of the women lending their ovens to one another, as well as their mills and their sieves, I do not know; but the foregoing observations may serve to remove a surprise that this circumstance may otherwise occasion in the reader of the Mishnah. Almost every body knows that little portable handmills are extremely common in the Levant; movable ovens are not so well known. Whether ovens of the kind which St. Jerome mentions be as ancient as the days of Moses, does not appear, unless the ta-jen be used after this manner; but the pitcher ovens of the Arabs are, without doubt, of that remote antiquity. “Travellers agree that the eastern bread is made in small thin moist cakes, must be eaten new, and is good for nothing when kept longer than a day. This, however, admits of exceptions. Dr. Russel of late, and Rauwolff formerly, assure us that they have several sorts of bread and cakes: some, Rauwolff tells us, done with yolk of eggs; some mixed with several sorts of seed, as of sesamum, Romish coriander, and wild garden saffron, which are also stewed upon it; and he elsewhere supposes that they prepare biscuits for travelling. Russel, who mentions this stewing of seeds on their cakes says, they have a variety of rusks and biscuits. To these authors let me add Pitts, who tells us the biscuits they carry with them from Egypt will last them to Mecca and back again. “The Scriptures suppose their loaves of bread were very small, three of them being requisite for the entertainment of a single person, Luke 11:5. That they were generally eaten new, and baked as they wanted them, as appears from the case of Abraham. That sometimes, however, they were made so

as to keep several days; so the shew-bread was fit food, after lying before the Lord a week. And that bread for travelers was wont to be made to keep some time, as appears from the pretences of the Gibeonites, Joshua 9:12, and the preparations made for Jacob's journey into Egypt, Genesis 45:23. The bread or rusks for travelling is often made in the form of large rings, and is moistened or soaked in water before it is used. In like manner, too, they seem to have had there a variety of eatables of this kind as the Aleppines now have. In particular, some made like those on which seeds are strewed, as we may collect from that part of the presents of Jeroboam's wife to the Prophet Ahijah, which our translators have rendered cracknels, 1 Kings 14:3. Buxtorf indeed supposes the original word **נִקְדִּים** nikkuddim signifies biscuits, called by this name, either because they were formed into little buttons like some of our gingerbread, or because they were pricked full of holes after a particular manner. The last of these two conjectures, I imagine, was embraced by our translators of this passage; for cracknels, if they are all over England of the same form, are full of holes, being formed into a kind of flourish of lattice-work. I have seen some of the unleavened bread of the English Jews made in like manner in a net form. Nevertheless I should think it more natural to understand the word of biscuit spotted with seeds; for it is used elsewhere to signify works of gold spotted with studs of silver; and, as it should seem, bread spotted with mould, Joshua 9:5-12; how much more natural is it then to understand the word of cakes spotted with seeds, which are so common in the east! Is not **לִבְבוֹת** lebiboth, in particular, the word that in general means rich cakes? a sort of which Tamar used to prepare that was not common, and furnished Amnon with a pretense for desiring her being sent to his house, that she might make some of that kind for him in the time of his indisposition, his fancy running upon them; see 2 Samuel 13:2-8. Parkhurst supposes the original word to signify pancakes, and translates the root **לָבַב** labab to move or toss up and down: 'And she took the dough, (**וּתְלוֹשׁ** vattalosh,) and kneaded (**וּתְלַבֵּב** vattelabbab, and tossed) it in his sight, (**וּתְבַשֵּׁל** vattebashshel, and dressed the cakes.' In this passage, says Mr. Parkhurst, it is to be observed that **לָבַב** is distinguished from **לָשׁ** to knead, and from **בָּשַׁל** to dress, which agrees with the interpretation here given. "The account which Mr. Jackson gives of an Arab baking apparatus, and the manner of kneading and tossing their cakes,

will at once, if I mistake not, fix the meaning of this passage, and cast much light on chap. 11:35. “I was much amused by observing the dexterity of the Arab women in baking their bread. They have a small place built with clay, between two and three feet high, having a hole in the bottom for the convenience of drawing out the ashes, somewhat similar to that of a lime-kiln. The oven, which I think is the most proper name for this place, is usually about fifteen inches wide at top, and gradually grows wider to the bottom. It is heated with wood, and when sufficiently hot, and perfectly clear from smoke, having nothing but clear embers at the bottom, which continue to reflect great heat, they prepare the dough in a large bowl, and mould the cakes to the desired size on a board or stone placed near the oven. After they have kneaded the cake to a proper consistence, they pat it a little, then toss it about with great dexterity in one hand till it is as thin as they choose to make it. They then wet one side of it with water, at the same time wetting the hand and arm with which they put it into the oven. The side of the cake adheres fast to the side of the oven till it is sufficiently baked, when, if not paid proper attention to, it would fall down among the embers. If they were not exceedingly quick at this work, the heat of the oven would burn their arms; but they perform it with such amazing dexterity that one woman will continue keeping three or four cakes in the oven at once, till she has done baking. This mode, let me add, does not require half the fuel that is made use of in Europe.” See more in HARMER’S *Observat.*, vol. i., p. 414, etc., Edit. 1808.

Verse 8. *Thou shalt bring the meat-offering*— It is likely that the person himself who offered the sacrifice brought it to the priest, and then the priest presented it before the Lord.

Verse 11. *No meat-offering-shall be made with leaven*— See the reason of this prohibition in the note on Exodus 12:8. See Clarke “Exodus 12:8”.

Nor any honey— Because it was apt to produce acidity, as some think, when wrought up with flour paste; or rather because it was apt to gripe and prove purgative. On this latter account the College of Physicians have totally left it out of all medicinal preparations. This effect which it has in most constitutions was a sufficient reason why it should be prohibited here, as a principal part of all these offerings was used by the priests as a part of their ordinary diet; and these offerings, being those of the poorer

sort, were in greater abundance than most others. On this account, the gripping, and purgative quality of the honey must render it extremely improper. As leaven was forbidden because producing fermentation, it was considered a species of corruption, and was therefore used to signify hypocrisy, malice, etc., which corrupt the soul; it is possible that honey might have had a moral reference, also, and have signified, as St. Jerome thought, carnal pleasures and sensual gratifications. Some suppose that the honey mentioned here was a sort of saccharine matter extracted from dates. Leaven and honey might be offered with the first-fruits, as we learn from the next verse; but they were forbidden to be burnt on the altar,

Verse 13. *With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.*—SALT was the opposite to leaven, for it preserved from putrefaction and corruption, and signified the purity and persevering fidelity that were necessary in the worship of God. Every thing was seasoned with it, to signify the purity and perfection that should be extended through every part of the Divine service, and through the hearts and lives of God's worshippers. It was called the salt of the covenant of God, because as salt is incorruptible, so was the covenant made with Abram, Isaac, Jacob, and the patriarchs, relative to the redemption of the world by the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ. Among the heathens salt was a common ingredient in all their sacrificial offerings; and as it was considered essential to the comfort and preservation of life, and an emblem of the most perfect corporeal and mental endowments, so it was supposed to be one of the most acceptable presents they could make unto their gods, from whose sacrifices it was never absent. That inimitable and invaluable writer, Pliny, has left a long chapter on this subject, the seventh of the thirty-first book of his Natural History, a few extracts from which will not displease the intelligent reader. Ergo, hercule, vita humanior sine Sale nequit degere: adeoque necessarium elementum est, ut transierit intellectus ad voluptates animi quoque. Nam ita SALES appellantur omnisque vitae lepos et summa hilaritas, laborumque requies non alio magis vocabulo constat. Honoribus etiam militiaeque interponitur, SALARIIS inde dictis--Maxime tamen in sacris intelligitur auctoritas, quando nulla conficiuntur sine mola salsa. "So essentially necessary is salt that without it human life cannot be preserved: and even the pleasures and endowments of the mind are expressed by it; the delights of life, repose, and the highest mental serenity, are expressed by no other

term than sales among the Latins. It has also been applied to designate the honorable rewards given to soldiers, which are called *salarii* or salaries. But its importance may be farther understood by its use in sacred things, as no sacrifice was offered to the gods without the salt cake." So Virgil, *Eclog.* viii., ver. 82: *Sparge molam.*

"Crumble the sacred mole of salt and corn."

And again, *AEneid.*, lib. iv., ver. 517:—

Ipsa mola, manibitsque piis, altaria juxta.

*"Now with the sacred cake, and lifted hands,
All bent on death, before her altar stands."*

PITT.

In like manner Homer:—

πασσε δ' ἄλος θειοιο, κρατευτα
ων επαειπας.

Iliad, lib. ix., ver. 214.

*"And taking sacred salt from the hearth side,
Where it was treasured, pour'd it o'er the feast."*

COWPER.

Quotations of this kind might be easily multiplied, but the above may be deemed sufficient.

Verse 14. *Green ears of corn dried by the fire*— Green or half-ripe ears of wheat parched with fire is a species of food in use among the poor people of Palestine and Egypt to the present day. As God is represented as keeping a table among his people, (for the tabernacle was his house, where he had the golden table, shewbread, etc.,) so he represents himself as partaking with them of all the aliments that were in use, and even sitting down with the poor to a repast on parched corn! We have already seen that these green ears were presented as a sort of eucharistical offering for the blessings of seed time, and the prospect of a plentiful harvest. See Clarke's note on "Leviticus 2:1"; several other examples might be added

here, but they are not necessary. The command to offer salt with every oblation, and which was punctually observed by the Jews, will afford the pious reader some profitable reflections. It is well known that salt has two grand properties. 1. It seasons and renders palatable the principal ailments used for the support of life. 2. It prevents putrefaction and decay. The covenant of God, that is, his agreement with his people, is called a covenant of salt, to denote as we have seen above, its stable undecaying nature, as well as to point out its importance and utility in the preservation of the life of the soul. The grace of God by Christ Jesus is represented under the emblem of salt, (see Mark 9:49; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6,) because of its relishing, nourishing, and preserving quality. Without it no offering, no sacrifice, no religious service, no work even of charity and mercy, can be acceptable in the sight of God. In all things we must come unto the Father THROUGH HIM. And from none of our sacrifices or services must this salt of the covenant of our God be lacking.

CHAPTER 3

The law of the peace-offering in general, 1-5. That of the peace-offering taken from the flock, 6-11; and the same when the offering is a goat, 12-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Peace-offering*— שלמים shelamim, an offering to make peace between God and man; see on chap. vii., and Genesis 14:18.

Verse 2. *Lay his hand upon the head of his offering*— See this rite explained, See “Exodus 29:10”, and See “Leviticus 1:4”. “As the burnt-offering, (chap. i.)” says Mr. Ainsworth, “figured our reconciliation to God by the death of Christ, and the meat-offering, (chap. ii.) our sanctification in him before God, so this peace-offering signified both Christ’s oblation of himself whereby he became our peace and salvation, (Ephesians 2:14-16; Acts 13:47; Hebrews 5:9; Hebrews 9:28,) and our oblation of praise, thanksgiving, and prayer unto God.”

Verse 3. *The fat that covereth the inwards*— The omentum, caul or web, as some term it. The fat that is upon the inwards; probably the mesentery or fatty part of the substance which connects the convolutions of the alimentary canal or small intestines.

Verse 5. *Aaron’s sons shall burn it*— As the fat was deemed the most valuable part of the animal, it was offered in preference to all other parts; and the heathens probably borrowed this custom from the Jews, for they burnt the omentum or caul in honor of their gods.

Verse 9. *The whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone*— To what has already been said on the tails of the eastern sheep, in the note on Exodus 29:22, we may add the following observation from Dr. Russel concerning the sheep at Aleppo. “Their tails,” says he, “are of a substance between fat and marrow, and are not eaten separately, but mixed with the lean meat in many of their dishes, and also often used instead of butter.”

He states also that a common sheep of this kind, without the head, fat, skin, and entrails, weighs from sixty to seventy English pounds, of which the tail usually weighs fifteen pounds and upwards; but that those of the largest breed, when fattened will weigh one hundred and fifty pounds, and their tails fifty, which corresponds with the account given by Ludolf in the note referred to above. The sheep about Jerusalem are the same with those in Abyssinia mentioned by Ludolf, and those of Syria mentioned by Dr. Russel.

Verse 11. *It is the food of the offering*— We have already remarked that God is frequently represented as feasting with his people on the sacrifices they offered; and because these sacrifices were consumed by that fire which was kindled from heaven, therefore they were considered as the food of that fire, or rather of the Divine Being who was represented by it. “In the same idiom of speech,” says Dodd, “the gods of the heathens are said, Deuteronomy 32:38, to eat the fat and drink, the wine which were consumed on their altars.

Verse 12. *A goat*— Implying the whole species, he-goat, she-goat, and kid, as we have already seen.

Verse 17. *That ye eat neither fat nor blood*.— It is not likely that the fat should be forbidden in the same manner and in the same latitude as the blood. The blood was the life of the beast, and that was offered to make an atonement for their souls; consequently, this was never eaten in all their generations: but it was impossible to separate the fat from the flesh, which in many parts is so intimately intermixed with the muscular fibres; but the blood, being contained in separate vessels, the arteries and veins, might with great ease be entirely removed by cutting the throat of the animal, which was the Jewish method. By the fat therefore mentioned here and in the preceding verse, we may understand any fat that exists in a separate or unmixed state, such as the omentum or caul, the fat of the mesentery, the fat on the kidneys, and whatever else of the internal fat was easily separable, together with the whole of the tail already described. And probably it was the fat of such animals only as were offered to God in sacrifice, that was unlawful to be eaten. As all temporal as well as spiritual blessings come from God, he has a right to require that such of them should be dedicated to his service as he may think proper to demand. He

required the most perfect of all the animals, and the best parts of these perfect animals. This he did, not that he needed any thing, but to show the perfection of his nature and the purity of his service. Had he condescended to receive the meanest animals and the meanest parts of animals as his offerings, what opinion could his worshippers have entertained of the perfection of his nature? If such imperfect offerings were worthy of this God, then his nature must be only worthy of such offerings. It is necessary that every thing employed in the worship of God should be the most perfect of its kind that the time and circumstances can afford. As sensible things are generally the medium through which spiritual impressions are made, and the impression usually partakes of the nature of the medium through which these impressions are communicated; hence every thing should not only be decent, but as far as circumstances will admit dignified, in the worship of God: the object of religious worship, the place in which he is worshipped, and the worship itself, should have the strongest and most impressive correspondence possible.

CHAPTER 4

The law concerning the sin-offering for transgressions committed through ignorance, 1, 2. For the priest thus sinning, 3-12. For the sins of ignorance of the whole congregation, 13-21. For the sins of ignorance of a ruler, 22-26. For the sins of ignorance of any of the common people, 27-35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

Verse 2. *If a soul shall sin through ignorance*— That is, if any man shall do what God has forbidden, or leave undone what God has commanded, through ignorance of the law relative to these points; as soon as the transgression or omission comes to his knowledge, he shall offer the sacrifice here prescribed, and shall not suppose that his ignorance is an excuse for his sin. He who, when his iniquity comes to his knowledge, refuses to offer such a sacrifice, sins obstinately and wilfully, and to him there remains no other sacrifice for sin — no other mode by which he can be reconciled to God, but he has a certain fearful looking for of judgment — which shall devour such adversaries; and this seems the case to which the apostle alludes, Hebrews 10:26, etc., in the words above quoted. There have been a great number of subtle questions started on this subject, both by Jews and Christians, but the above I believe to be the sense and spirit of the law.

Verse 3. *If the priest that is anointed*— Meaning, most probably, the high priest. According to the sin of the people; for although he had greater advantages than the people could have, in being more conversant with the law of God, and his lips should understand and preserve knowledge, yet it was possible even for him, in that time in which the word of God had not been fully revealed, to transgress through ignorance; and his transgression might have the very worst tendency, because the people might be thereby led into sin. Hence several critics understand this passage in this way, and translate it thus: If the anointed priest shall lead the people to sin; or, literally, if the anointed priest shall sin to the sin of the people; that is, so

as to cause the people to transgress, the shepherd going astray, and the sheep following after him.

Verse 4. *Lay his hand upon the bullock's head*— See Clarke note on “Leviticus 1:4”.

Verse 6. *Seven times*— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 29:30”. The blood of this sacrifice was applied in three different ways: 1. The priest put his finger in it, and sprinkled it seven times before the veil, ver. 6. 2. He put some of it on the horns of the altar of incense. 3. He poured the remaining part at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offerings, ver. 7.

Verse 12. *Without the camp*— This was intended figuratively to express the sinfulness of this sin, and the availableness of the atonement. The sacrifice, as having the sin of the priest transferred from himself to it by his confession and imposition of hands, was become unclean and abominable, and was carried, as it were, out of the Lord’s sight; from the tabernacle and congregation it must be carried without the camp, and thus its own offensiveness was removed, and the sin of the person in whose behalf it was offered. The apostle (Hebrews 13:11-13) applies this in the most pointed manner to Christ: “For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore JESUS also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”

Verse 13. *If the whole congregation of Israel sin*— This probably refers to some oversight in acts of religious worship, or to some transgression of the letter of the law, which arose out of the peculiar circumstances in which they were then found, such as the case mentioned 1 Samuel 14:32, etc., where the people, through their long and excessive fatigue in their combat with the Philistines, being faint, flew on the spoil, and took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground, and did eat with the blood; and this was partly occasioned by the rash adjuration of Saul, mentioned 1 Samuel 14:24: Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening. The sacrifices and rites in this case were the same as those prescribed in the preceding, only here the elders of the congregation, i. e., three of the sanhedrim, according to Maimonides, laid their hands on the head of the victim in the name of all the congregation.

Verse 22. *When a ruler hath sinned*— Under the term נָשִׂיף *nasi*, it is probable that any person is meant who held any kind of political dignity among the people, though the rabbins generally understand it of the king. A kid of the goats was the sacrifice in this case, the rites nearly the same as in the preceding cases, only the fat was burnt as that of the peace-offering. See ver. 26, and chap. 3:5.

Verse 27. *The common people*— עַם הָאָרֶץ *am haarets*, the people of the land, that is, any individual who was not a priest, king, or ruler among the people; any of the poor or ordinary sort. Any of these, having transgressed through ignorance, was obliged to bring a lamb or a kid, the ceremonies being nearly the same as in the preceding cases. The original may denote the very lowest of the people, the laboring or agricultural classes. The law relative to the general cases of sins committed through ignorance, and the sacrifices to be offered on such occasions, so amply detailed in this chapter, may be thus recapitulated. For all sins and transgressions of this kind committed by the people, the prince, and the priest, they must offer expiatory offerings. The person so sinning must bring the sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle, and lay his hands upon its head, as in a case already referred to, acknowledging the sacrifice to be his, that he needed it for his transgression; and thus he was considered as confessing his sin, and the sin was considered as transferred to the animal, whose blood was then spilt to make an atonement. See Clarke on “Leviticus 1:4”. Such institutions as these could not be considered as terminating in themselves, they necessarily had reference to something of infinitely higher moment; in a word, they typified Him whose soul was made an offering for sin, Isaiah 53:10. And taken out of this reference they seem both absurd and irrational. It is obviously in reference to these innocent creatures being brought as sin-offerings to God for the guilty that St. Paul alludes 2 Corinthians 5:21, where he says, He (God) made him to be sin (ἁμαρτίαν, a sin-offering) for us WHO KNEW NO SIN, that we might be made the righteousness of God — holy and pure by the power and grace of God, in or through him. And it is worthy of remark, that the Greek word used by the apostle is the same by which the Septuagint, in more than fourscore places in the Pentateuch, translate the Hebrew word חַטָּאת *hattaah*, sin, which in all those places our translation renders sin-offering. Even sins of ignorance cannot be unnoticed by a strict and

holy law; these also need the great atonement: on which account we should often pray with David, Cleanse thou me from secret faults! Psalm 19:12. How little attention is paid to this solemn subject! Sins of this kind-sins committed sometimes ignorantly, and more frequently heedlessly, are permitted to accumulate in their number, and consequently in their guilt; and from this very circumstance we may often account for those painful desertions, as they are called, under which many comparatively good people labor. They have committed sins of ignorance or heedlessness, and have not offered the sacrifice which can alone avail in their behalf. How necessary in ten thousand cases is the following excellent prayer! "That it may please thee to give us true repentance; to forgive us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances; and to endue us with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to thy HOLY WORD."-Litany.

CHAPTER 5

Concerning witnesses who, being adjured, refuse to tell the truth, 1. Of those who contract defilement by touching unclean things or persons, 2, 3. Of those who bind themselves by vows or oaths, and do not fulfill them, 4, 5. The trespass-offering prescribed in such cases, a lamb or a kid, 6; a turtle-dove or two young pigeons, 7-10; or an ephah of fine flour with oil and frankincense, 11-13. Other laws relative to trespasses, through ignorance in holy things, 14-16. Of trespasses in things unknown, 17-19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *If a soul sin*— It is generally supposed that the case referred to here is that of a person who, being demanded by the civil magistrate to answer upon oath, refuses to tell what he knows concerning the subject; such a one shall bear his iniquity — shall be considered as guilty in the sight of God, of the transgression which he has endeavored to conceal, and must expect to be punished by him for hiding the iniquity to which he was privy, or suppressing the truth which, being discovered, would have led to the exculpation of the innocent, and the punishment of the guilty.

Verse 2. *Any unclean thing*— Either the dead body of a clean animal, or the living or dead carcass of any unclean creature. All such persons were to wash their clothes and themselves in clean water, and were considered as unclean till the evening, chap. 11:24-31. But if this had been neglected, they were obliged to bring a trespass-offering. What this meant, see in the notes on chap. vii.

Verse 4. *To do evil, or to do good*— It is very likely that rash promises are here intended; for if a man vow to do an act that is evil, though it would be criminal to keep such an oath or vow, yet he is guilty because he made it, and therefore must offer the trespass-offering. If he neglect to do the good he has vowed, he is guilty, and must in both cases confess his iniquity, and bring his trespass-offering.

Verse 5. *He shall confess that he hath sinned*— Even restitution was not sufficient without this confession, because a man might make restitution without being much humbled; but the confession of sin has a direct tendency to humble the soul, and hence it is so frequently required in the Holy Scriptures, as without humiliation there can be no salvation.

Verse 7. *If he be not able to bring a lamb*— See the conclusion of chap. i.

Verse 8. *But shall not divide it*— See Clarke's note on "Leviticus 1:16".

Verse 10. *He shall offer the second for a burnt-offering*— The pigeon for the burnt-offering was wholly consumed, it was the Lord's property; that for the sin-offering was the priest's property, and was to be eaten by him after its blood had been partly sprinkled on the side of the altar, and the rest poured out at the bottom of the altar. See also chap. 6:26.

Verse 11. *Tenth part of an ephah*— About three quarts. The ephah contained a little more than seven gallons and a half.

Verse 15. *In the holy things of the Lord*— This law seems to relate particularly to sacrilege, and defrauds in spiritual matters; such as the neglect to consecrate or redeem the firstborn, the withholding of the first-fruits, tithes, and such like; and, according to the rabbins, making any secular gain of Divine things, keeping back any part of the price of things dedicated to God, or withholding what man had vowed to pay. See a long list of these things in Ainsworth.

With thy estimation— The wrong done or the defraud committed should be estimated at the number of shekels it was worth, or for which it would sell. These the defrauder was to pay down, to which he was to add a fifth part more, and bring a ram without blemish for a sin-offering besides. There is an obscurity in the text, but this seems to be its meaning.

Verse 16. *Shall make amends*— Make restitution for the wrong he had done according to what is laid down in the preceding verse.

Verse 19. *He hath certainly trespassed*— And because he hath sinned, therefore he must bring a sacrifice. On no other ground shall he be accepted by the Lord. Reader, how dost thou stand in the sight of thy Maker? ON the subject of this chapter it may be proper to make the following reflections. When the infinite purity and strict justice of God are

considered, the exceeding breadth of his commandment, our slowness of heart to believe, and our comparatively cold performance of sacred duties, no wonder that there is sinfulness found in our holy things; and at what a low ebb must the Christian life be found when this is the case! This is a sore and degrading evil in the Church of God; but there is one even worse than this, that is, the strenuous endeavor of many religious people to reconcile their minds to this state of inexcusable imperfection, and defend it zealously, on the supposition that it is at once both unavoidable and useful — unavoidable, for they think they cannot live without it; and useful, because they suppose it tends to humble them! The more inward sin a man has, the more pride he will feel; the less, the more humility. A sense of God's infinite kindness to us, and our constant dependence on him, will ever keep the soul in the dust. Sin can never be necessary to the maintenance or extension of the Christian life, it is the thing which Jesus Christ came into the world to destroy; and his name is called JESUS or Savior because he saves his people from their sins. But how little of the spirit and influence of his Gospel is known in the world! He saves, unto the uttermost, them who come unto the Father through him. But alas! how few are thus saved! for they will not come unto him that they might have life. Should any Christian refuse to offer up the following prayer to God? "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen."-The Liturgy.

CHAPTER 6

Laws relative to detention of property intrusted to the care of another, to robbery, and deceit, 1, 2; finding of goods lost, keeping them from their owner, and swearing falsely, 3. Such a person shall not only restore what he has thus unlawfully gotten, but shall add a fifth part of the value of the property besides, 4, 5; and bring a ram without blemish, for a trespass-offering to the Lord, 6, 7. Laws relative to the burnt-offering and the perpetual fire, 8-13. Law of the meat-offering, and who may lawfully eat of it, 14-18. Laws relative to the offerings of Aaron and his sons and their successors, on the day of their anointing, 19-23. Laws relative to the sin-offering, and those who might eat of it, 24-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 2. *Lie unto his neighbor, etc.*— This must refer to a case in which a person delivered his property to his neighbor to be preserved for him, and took no witness to attest the delivery of the goods; such a person therefore might deny that he had ever received such goods, for he who had deposited them with him could bring no proof of the delivery. On the other hand, a man might accuse his neighbor of detaining property which had never been confided to him, or, after having been confided, had been restored again; hence the law here is very cautious on these points: and because in many cases it was impossible to come at the whole truth without a direct revelation from God, which should in no common case be expected, the penalties are very moderate; for in such cases, even when guilt was discovered, the man might not be so criminal as appearances might intimate. See the law concerning this laid down and explained, See “Exodus 22:7”, etc.

Verse 3. *Have found that which was lost*— The Roman lawyers laid it down as a sound maxim of jurisprudence, “that he who found any property and applied it to his own use, should be considered as a thief whether he knew the owner or not; for in their view the crime was not lessened, supposing the finder was totally ignorant of the right owner.”

Qui alienum quid jacens lucri faciendi causa sustulit, furti obstringitur, sive scit, cujus sit, sive ignoravit; nihil enim ad furtum minuendum, facit, quod, cujus sit, ignoret. — DIGESTOR, lib. xlvii., TIT. ii., de furtis, Leg. xliiii., sec. 4. On this subject every honest man must say, that the man who finds any lost property, and does not make all due inquiry to find out the owner, should, in sound policy, be treated as a thief. It is said of the Dyrbaeans, a people who inhabited the tract between Bactria and India, that if they met with any lost property, even on the public road, they never even touched it. This was actually the case in this kingdom in the time of Alfred the Great, about A. D. 888; so that golden bracelets hung up on the public roads were untouched by the finger of rapine. One of Solon's laws was, Take not up what you laid not down. How easy to act by this principle in case of finding lost property: "This is not mine, and it would be criminal to convert it to my use unless the owner be dead and his family extinct." When all due inquiry is made, if no owner can be found, the lost property may be legally considered to be the property of the finder.

Verse 5. *All that about which he hath sworn falsely*— This supposes the case of a man who, being convicted by his own conscience, comes forward and confesses his sin.

Restore it in the principal— The property itself if still remaining, or the full value of it, to which a fifth part more was to be added.

Verse 6. *With thy estimation*— See Clarke's note on "Leviticus 5:15".

Verse 8. *And the Lord spake unto Moses*— At this verse the Jews begin the 25th section of the law; and here, undoubtedly, the 6th chapter should commence, as the writer enters upon a new subject, and the preceding verses belong to the fifth chapter. The best edited Hebrew Bibles begin the 6th chapter at this verse.

Verse 9. *This is the law of the burnt-offering*— This law properly refers to that burnt-offering which was daily made in what was termed the morning and evening sacrifice; and as he had explained the nature of this burnt-offering in general, with its necessary ceremonies, as far as the persons who brought them were concerned, he now takes up the same in relation to the priests who were to receive them from the hands of the offerer, and present them to the Lord on the altar of burnt-offerings.

Because of the burning upon the altar all night— If the burnt-offering were put all upon the fire at once, it could not be burning all night. We may therefore reasonably conclude that the priests sat up by turns the whole night, and fed the fire with portions of this offering till the whole was consumed, which they would take care to lengthen out till the time of the morning sacrifice. The same we may suppose was done with the morning sacrifice; it was also consumed by piecemeal through the whole day, till the time of offering the evening sacrifice. Thus there was a continual offering by fire unto the Lord; and hence in ver. 13 it is said: The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar, it shall never go out. If at any time any extraordinary offerings were to be made, the daily sacrifice was consumed more speedily, in order to make room for such extra offerings. See more on this subject in Clarke's note on "Leviticus 6:23". The Hebrew doctors teach that no sacrifice was ever offered in the morning before the morning sacrifice; and none, the passover excepted, ever offered in the evening after the evening sacrifice; for all sacrifices were made by day-light. The fat seems to have been chiefly burned in the night season, for the greater light and conveniency of keeping the fire alive, which could not be so easily done in the night as in the day time.

Verse 11. *And put on other garments*— The priests approached the altar in their holiest garments; when carrying the ashes, etc., from the altar, they put on other garments, the holy garments being only used in the holy place.

Clean place.— A place where no dead carcasses, dung, or filth of any kind was laid; for the ashes were holy, as being the remains of the offerings made by fire unto the Lord.

Verse 13. *The fire shall ever be burning*— See on ver. 9 and ver. 20. In imitation of this perpetual fire, the ancient Persian Magi, and their descendants the Parsees, kept up a perpetual fire; the latter continue it to the present day. This is strictly enjoined in the Zend Avesta, which is a code of laws as sacred among them as the Pentateuch is among the Jews. A Sagnika Brahmin preserves the fire that was kindled at his investiture with the poita, and never suffers it to go out, using the same fire at his wedding and in all his burnt-offerings, till at length his body is burnt with it. —
WARD'S Customs.

Verse 14. *The meat-offering*— See Clarke on “Leviticus 2:1”, etc.

Verse 15. *His handful of the flour*— An omer of flour, which was the tenth part of an ephah, and equal to about three quarts of our measure, was the least quantity that could be offered even by the poorest sort, and this was generally accompanied with a log of oil, which was a little more than half a pint. This quantity both of flour and oil might be increased at pleasure, but no less could be offered.

Verse 20. *In the day when he is anointed*— Not only in that day, but from that day forward, for this was to them and their successors a statute for ever. See verse 22.

Verse 23. *For every meat-offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt*— Whatever the priest offered was wholly the Lord’s, and therefore must be entirely consumed: the sacrifices of the common people were offered to the Lord, but the priests partook of them; and thus they who ministered at the altar were fed by the altar. Had the priests been permitted to live on their own offerings as they did on those of the people, it would have been as if they had offered nothing, as they would have taken again to themselves what they appeared to give unto the Lord. Theodoret says that this marked “the high perfection which God required in the ministers of his sanctuary,” as his not eating of his own sin-offering supposes him to stand free from all sin; but a better reason is given by Mr. Ainsworth: “The people’s meat-offering was eaten by the priests that made atonement for them, ver. 15, 16, chap. 7:7; but because no priest, being a sinner, could make atonement for himself, therefore his meat-offering might not be eaten, but all burnt on the altar, to teach him to expect salvation, not by his legal service or works, but by Christ; for the eating of the sin-offering figured the bearing of the sinner’s iniquity;” chap. 10:17.

Verse 25. *In the place where the burnt-offering is killed, etc.*— The place here referred to was the north side of the altar. See chap. 1:11.

Verse 26. *The priest-shall eat it*— From the expostulation of Moses with Aaron, chap. 10:17, we learn that the priest, by eating the sin-offering of the people, was considered as bearing their sin, and typically removing it from them: and besides, this was a part of their maintenance, or what the Scripture calls their inheritance; see Ezekiel 44:27-30. This was afterwards

greatly abused; for improper persons endeavored to get into the priest's office merely that they might get a secular provision, which is a horrible profanity in the sight of God. See 1 Samuel 2:36; Jeremiah 23:12; Ezekiel 34:2-4; and Hos 4:8.

Verse 27. *Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy*— The following note of Mr. Ainsworth is not less judicious than it is pious:— “All this rite was peculiar to the sin-offering, (whether it were that which was to be eaten, or that which was to be burnt,) above all the other most holy things. As the sin-offering in special sort figured Christ, who was made sin for us, (2 Corinthians 5:21,) so this ordinance for all that touched the flesh of the sin-offering to be holy, the garments sprinkled with the blood to be washed, the vessels wherein the flesh was boiled to be broken, or scoured and rinsed-taught a holy use of this mystery of our redemption, whereof they that are made partakers ought to be washed, cleansed, and sanctified by the Spirit of God; that we possess our vessels in holiness and honor, and yield not our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin,” 1 Thessalonians 4:4; Romans 6:13.

Verse 28. *The earthen vessel shall be broken*— Calmet states that this should be considered as implying the vessels brought by individuals to the court of the temple or tabernacle, and not of the vessels that belonged to the priests for the ordinary service. That the people dressed their sacrifices sometimes in the court of the tabernacle, he gathers from 1 Samuel 2:13, 14, to which the reader is desired to refer. In addition to what has been already said on the different subjects in this chapter, it may be necessary to notice a few more particulars. The perpetual meat-offering, תמיד מנחה minchah tamid, Leviticus 6:20, the perpetual fire, אש תמיד esh tamid, Leviticus 6:13, and the perpetual burnt-offering, עלת תמיד olath tamid, Exodus 29:42, translated by the Septuagint θυσια διαπαντος, πυο διαπαντος, and ολοκαυτωμις and ολοκαυτωμα διαπαντος, all cast much light on Hebrews 7:25, where it is said, Christ is able to save them to the uttermost (εις το παντελες, perpetually, to all intents and purposes) that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth (παντοτε ζων, he is perpetually living) to make intercession for them; in which words there is a manifest allusion to the perpetual minchah, the perpetual fire, and the perpetual burnt-offering, mentioned here by Moses. As the minchah, or

gratitude-offering should be perpetual, so our gratitude for the innumerable mercies of God should be perpetual. As the burnt-offering must be perpetual, so should the sacrifice of our blessed Lord be considered as a perpetual offering, that all men, in all ages, should come unto God through him who is ever living, in his sacrificial character, to make intercession for men; and who is therefore represented even in the heavens as the Lamb just slain, standing before the throne, Revelation 5:6; Hebrews 10:19-22. And as the fire on the altar must be perpetual, so should the influences of the Holy Spirit in every member of the Church, and the flame of pure devotion in the hearts of believers, be ever energetic and permanent. A continual sacrifice for continual successive generations of sinners was essentially necessary. Continual influences of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men were essentially necessary to apply and render effectual this atonement, to the salvation of the soul. And incessant gratitude for the ineffable love of God, manifested by his unspeakable gift, is surely required of all those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Reader, dost thou feel thy obligations to thy Maker? Does the perpetual fire burn on the altar of thy heart? Art thou ever looking unto Jesus, and beholding, by faith, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world? And dost thou feel the influences of his Spirit, at all times witnessing with thy spirit that thou art his child, and exciting thee to acts of gratitude and obedience? If not, of what benefit has the religion of Christ been to thee to the present day? Of a contrary state to that referred to above, it may be well said, This is not the way to heaven, for the way of life is above to the wise, that they may depart from the snares of death beneath. Arise, therefore, and shake thyself from the dust; and earnestly call upon the Lord thy God, that he may save thy soul, and that thou fall not into the bitter pains of an eternal death.

CHAPTER 7

The law of the trespass-offering, and the priest's portion in it, 1-7. As also in the sin-offerings and meat-offerings, 8-10. The law of the sacrifice of peace-offering, 11, whether it was a thanksgiving — offering, 12-15; or a Vow or voluntary offering, 16-18. Concerning the flesh that touched any unclean thing, 19, 20, and the person who touched any thing unclean, 21. Laws concerning eating of fat, 22-25, and concerning eating of blood, 26, 27. Farther ordinances concerning the peace-offerings and the priest's portion in them, 28-36. Conclusion of the laws and ordinances relative to burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, sin-offerings, and peace-offerings, delivered in this and the preceding chapters, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *Trespass-offering*— See end of the chapter. See Clarke note at “Leviticus 7:38”.

Verse 2. *In the place where they kill the burnt-offering*— viz., on the north side of the altar, chap. 1:11.

Verse 3. *The rump*— See Clarke note on “Leviticus 3:9”, where the principal subjects in this chapter are explained, being nearly the same in both.

Verse 4. *The fat that is on them*— Chiefly the fat that was found in a detached state, not mixed with the muscles; such as the omentum or caul, the fat of the mesentery, the fat about the kidneys, etc. See Clarke note on “Leviticus 3:9”, etc.

Verse 8. *The priest shall have to himself the skin*— Bishop Patrick supposes that this right of the priest to the skin commenced with the offering of Adam, “for it is probable,” says he, “that Adam himself offered the first sacrifice, and had the skin given him by God to make garments for him and his wife; in conformity to which the priests ever after had the skin of the whole burnt-offerings for their portion, which was a custom among

the Gentiles as well as the Jews, who gave the skins of their sacrifices to their priests, when they were not burnt with the sacrifices, as in some sin-offerings they were among the Jews, see chap. 4:11. And they employed them to a superstitious use, by lying upon them in their temples, in hopes to have future things revealed to them in their dreams. Of this we have a proof in Virgil, AEn. lib. vii., ver. 86-95.

“ — *huc dona sacerdos
Cum tulit, et caesarum ovium sub nocte silenti
Pellibus incubuit stratis, somnosque petivit;
Multa modus simulncra videt volitantia miris,
Et varias audit voces, fruiturque deorum
Colloquio, atque imis Acheronta affatur Avernis.
Hic et tum pater ipse petens responsa Latinus
Centum lanigeras mactabat rite bidentes,
Atque harum effultus tergo stratisque jacebat
Velleribus. Subita ex alto vox reddita luco est.*”

*First, on the fleeces of the slaughter'd sheep
By night the sacred priest dissolves in sleep,
When in a train, before his slumbering eye,
Thin airy forms and wondrous visions fly.
He calls the powers who guard the infernal floods,
And talks, inspired, familiar with the gods.
To this dread oracle the prince withdrew,
And first a hundred sheep the monarch slew;
Then on their fleeces lay; and from the wood
He heard, distinct, these accents of the god.*

— PITT.

The same superstition, practiced precisely in the same way and for the same purposes, prevail to the present day in the Highlands of Scotland, as the reader may see from the following note of Sir Walter Scott, in his *Lady of the Lake*: — “The Highlanders of Scotland, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the togharm. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a water-fall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination, passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt these desolate recesses. One way of

consulting this oracle was by a party of men, who first retired to solitary places, remote from any house, and there they singled out one of their number, and wrapt him in a big cow's hide, which they folded about him; his whole body was covered with it except his head, and so left in this posture all night, until his invisible friends relieved him by giving a proper answer to the question in hand; which he received, as he fancied, from several persons that he found about him all that time. His consorts returned to him at day-break; and then he communicated his news to them, which often proved fatal to those concerned in such unwarrantable inquiries. "Mr. Alexander Cooper, present minister of North Virt, told me that one John Erach, in the Isle of Lewis, assured him it was his fate to have been led by his curiosity with some who consulted this oracle, and that he was a night within the hide above mentioned, during which time he felt and heard such terrible things that he could not express them: the impression made on him was such as could never go off; and he said, for a thousand worlds he would never again be concerned in the like performance, for it had disordered him to a high degree. He confessed it ingenuously, and with an air of great remorse, and seemed to be very penitent under a just sense of so great a crime: he declared this about five years since, and is still living in the Isle of Lewis for any thing I know."—Description of the Western Isles, p. 110. See also Pennant's Scottish Tour, vol. ii., p. 301; and Sir W. Scott's *Lady of the Lake*.

Verse 9. *Baken in the oven*— See Clarke note on "Leviticus 2:5", etc.

Verse 12. *If he offer it for a thanksgiving*— See the notes at the end of this chapter. See Clarke note at "Leviticus 7:38".

Verse 15. *He shall not leave any of it until the morning*.— Because in such a hot country it was apt to putrefy, and as it was considered to be holy, it would have been very improper to expose that to putrefaction which had been consecrated to the Divine Being. Mr. Harmer supposes that the law here refers rather to the custom of drying flesh which had been devoted to religious purposes, which is practiced among the Mohammedans to the present time. This, he thinks, might have given rise to the prohibition, as the sacred flesh thus preserved might have been abused to superstitious purposes. Therefore God says, ver. 18, "If any of the flesh of the sacrifice be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be

accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it; it is an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity.” That is, on Mr. Harmer’s hypothesis, This sacred flesh shall avail nothing to him that eats it after the first or second day on which it is offered; however consecrated before, it shall not be considered sacred after that time. See Harmer’s Obs., vol. i., p. 394, edit. 1808.

Verse 20. *Having his uncleanness upon him*— Having touched any unclean thing by which he became legally defiled, and had not washed his clothes, and bathed his flesh.

Verse 21. *The uncleanness of man*— Any ulcer, sore, or leprosy; or any sort of cutaneous disorder, either loathsome or infectious.

Verse 23. *Fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat*.— Any other fat they might eat, but the fat of these was sacred, because they were the only animals which were offered in sacrifice, though many others ranked among the clean animals as well as these. But it is likely that this prohibition is to be understood of these animals when offered in sacrifice, and then only in reference to the inward fat, as mentioned on ver. 4. Of the fat in any other circumstances it cannot be intended, as it was one of the especial blessings which God gave to the people. Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with FAT of LAMBS, and RAMS of the breed of Bashan, and GOATS, were the provision that he gave to his followers. See Deuteronomy 32:12-14.

Verse 27. *Whatsoever soul-that eateth any manner of blood*— See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 9:4”. Shall be cut off — excommunicated from the people of God, and so deprived of any part in their inheritance, and in their blessings. See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 17:14”.

Verse 29. *Shall bring his oblation*— Meaning those things which were given out of the peace-offerings to the Lord and to the priest. — Ainsworth.

Verse 30. *Wave-offering*— See Clarke on “Exodus 29:27”.

Verse 32. *The right shoulder*— See Clarke on “Exodus 29:27”.

Verse 36. *In the day that he anointed them*— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 40:15”.

Verse 38. In the wilderness of Sinai.— These laws were probably given to Moses while he was on the mount with God; the time was quite sufficient, as he was there with God not less than fourscore days in all; forty days at the giving, and forty days at the renewing of the law. As in the course of this book the different kinds of sacrifices commanded to be offered are repeatedly occurring, I think it best, once for all, to give a general account of them, and a definition of the original terms, as well as of all others relative to this subject which are used in the Old Testament, and the reference in which they all stood to the great sacrifice offered by Christ. 1. אָשָׁם ASHAM, TRESPASS-offering, from אָשָׁם asham, to be guilty, or liable to punishment; for in this sacrifice the guilt was considered as being transferred to the animal offered up to God, and the offerer redeemed from the penalty of his sin, ver. 37. Christ is said to have made his soul an offering for sin, (אָשָׁם,) Isaiah 53:10. 2. אִשְׁשֵׁהּ ISHSHEH, FIRE-offering, probably from אָשָׁשׁ ashash, to be grieved, angered, inflamed; either pointing out the distressing nature of sin, or its property of incensing Divine justice against the offender, who, in consequence, deserving burning for his offense, made use of this sacrifice to be freed from the punishment due to his transgression. It occurs Exodus 29:18, and in many places of this book. 3. הַבְּהִיִּים HABHABIM, ITERATED OR REPEATED offerings, from יָהַב yahab, to supply. The word occurs only in Hosea 8:13, and probably means no more than the continual repetition of the accustomed offerings, or continuation of each part of the sacred service. 4. זֶבַח ZEBACH, A SACRIFICE, (in Chaldee, דְּבַח debach, the ז zain being changed into ד daleth,) a creature slain in sacrifice, from זָבַח zabach, to slay; hence the altar on which such sacrifices were offered was termed מִזְבֵּחַ mizbeach, the place of sacrifice. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 8:20". Zebach is a common name for sacrifices in general. 5. חַג CHAG, a festival, especially such as had a periodical return, from חָגַג chagag, to celebrate a festival, to dance round and round in circles. See Exodus 5:1; 12:24. The circular dance was probably intended to point out the revolution of the heavenly bodies, and the exact return of the different seasons. See Parkhurst. 6. חַטָּאת CHATTATH and חַטָּאת CHATTAAH, Sin-offering, from חָטָא chata, to miss the mark; it also signifies sin in general, and is a very apt term to express its nature by. A sinner is continually aiming at and seeking happiness; but

as he does not seek it in God, hence the Scripture represents him as missing his aim, or missing the mark. This is precisely the meaning of the Greek word **ἁμαρτία**, translated sin and sin-offering in our version; and this is the term by which the Hebrew word is translated both by the Septuagint and the inspired writers of the New Testament. The sin-offering was at once an acknowledgment of guilt, in having forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns that could hold none; and also of the firm purpose of the offerer to return to God, the true and pure fountain of blessedness. This word often occurs. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 4:7". See Clarke's note on "Genesis 13:13". 7. **כִּפֹּר** COPHER, the EXPIATION or ATONEMENT, from **כָּפַר** caphar, to cover, to smear over, or obliterate, or annul a contract. Used often to signify the atonement or expiation made for the pardon or cancelling of iniquity. See Clark's note on "Exodus 25:17". 8. **מוֹעֵד** MOED, an APPOINTED annual festival, from **עָד** yaad, to appoint or constitute, signifying such feasts as were instituted in commemoration of some great event or deliverance, such as the deliverance from Egypt. See Exodus 13:10, and thus differing from the chag mentioned above. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 1:14". 9. **מִלֻּחִים** MILLUIM, CONSECRATIONS or consecration-offerings, from **מָלַא** mala, to fill; those offerings made in consecrations, of which the priests partook, or, in the Hebrew phrase, had their hands filled, or which had filled the hands of them that offered them. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:19"; and see 2 Chronicles 13:9. 10. **מִנְחָה** MINCHAH, MEAT-offering, from **נָח** nach, to rest, settle after toil. It generally consisted of things without life, such as green ears of corn, full ears of corn, flour, oil, and frankincense; (see on chap. 2:1, etc. ;) and may be considered as having its name from that rest from labor and toil which a man had when the fruits of the autumn were brought in, or when, in consequence of obtaining any rest, ease, etc., a significant offering or sacrifice was made to God. It often occurs. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 4:3". The jealousy-offering (Numbers 5:15) was a simple minchah, consisting of barley-meal only. 11. **מִסֵּךְ** MESECH and **מִמְסַח** MIMSACH, a MIXTURE-offering, or MIXED LIBATION, called a DRINK-offering, Isaiah 55:11, from **מָסַח** masach, to mingle; it seems in general to mean old wine mixed with the less, which made it extremely intoxicating. This offering does not appear to have had any place in the worship of the true God; but from Isaiah 65:11, and Proverbs 23:30, it

seems to have been used for idolatrous purposes, such as the Bacchanalia among the Greeks and Romans, “when all got drunk in honor of the god.”

12. **מִשְׂאֵת** MASSEETH, an OBLATION, things carried to the temple to be presented to God, from **נָשָׂא** nasa, to bear or carry, to bear sin; typically, Exodus 28:38; chap. 10:17; 16:21; really, Isaiah 53:4, 12. The sufferings and death of Christ were the true masseeth or vicarious bearing of the sins of mankind, as the passage in Isaiah above referred to sufficiently proves. See this alluded to by the Evangelist John, John 1:29; and see the root in Parkhurst. 13. **נְדָבָה** NEDABAH, FREE-WILL, or voluntary offering; from **נָדַב** nadab, to be free, liberal, princely. An offering not commanded, but given as a particular proof of extraordinary gratitude to God for especial mercies, or on account of some vow or engagement voluntarily taken, ver. 16. 14. **נֶסֶךְ** NESECH, LIBATION, OR DRINK-offering, from **נָסַךְ** nasach, to diffuse or pour out. Water or wine poured out at the conclusion or confirmation of a treaty or covenant. To this kind of offering there is frequent allusion and reference in the New Testament, as it typified the blood of Christ poured out for the sin of the world; and to this our Lord himself alludes in the institution of the holy eucharist. The whole Gospel economy is represented as a covenant or treaty between God and man, Jesus Christ being not only the mediator, but the covenant sacrifice, whose blood was poured out for the ratification and confirmation of this covenant or agreement between God and man. 15. **עֹלָה** and **עֹלֵן** OLAH, BURNT-offering, from **עָלָה** alah, to ascend, because this offering, as being wholly consumed, ascended as it were to God in smoke and vapor. It was a very expressive type of the sacrifice of Christ, as nothing less than his complete and full sacrifice could make atonement for the sin of the world. In most other offerings the priest, and often the offerer, had a share, but in the whole burnt-offering all was given to God. 16. **קֶטֶרֶת** KETORETH, INCENSE OR PERFUME-offering, from **קָטַר** katar, to burn, i. e., the frankincense, and other aromatics used as a perfume in different parts of the Divine service. To this St. Paul compares the agreeableness of the sacrifice of Christ to God, Ephesians 5:2: Christ hath given himself for us, an offering-to God for a SWEET-SMELLING savor. From Revelation 5:8 we learn that it was intended also to represent the prayers of the saints, which, offered up on the altar, Christ Jesus, that sanctifies every gift, are highly pleasing in the sight of God. 17. **קֹרְבָן** KORBAN, the GIFT-offering,

from קרב karab to draw nigh or approach. See this explained on chap. 1:2. Korban was a general name for any kind of offering, because through these it was supposed a man had access to his Maker. 18. שלמים SHELAMIM, PEACE-offering, from שלם shalam, to complete, make whole; for by these offerings that which was lacking was considered as being now made up, and that which was broken, viz., the covenant of God, by his creatures' transgression, was supposed to be made whole; so that after such an offering, the sincere and conscientious mind had a right to consider that the breach was made up between God and it, and that it might lay confident hold on this covenant of peace. To this the apostle evidently alludes, Ephesians 2:14-19: He is our peace, (i. e. our shalam or peace-offering,) who has made both one, and broken down the middle wall; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, etc. See the whole passage, and see Clarke's note on "Genesis 14:18". 19. תודה TODAH, THANK-offering, from ידה yadah, to confess; offerings made to God with public confession of his power, goodness, mercy, etc. 20. תנופה TENUPHAH, WAVE-offering, from נפ naph, to stretch out; an offering of the first-fruits stretched out before God, in acknowledgment of his providential goodness. This offering was moved from the right hand to the left. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:27". 21. תרומה TERUMAH, HEAVE-offering, from רם ram, to lift up, because the offering was lifted up towards heaven, as the wave — offering, in token of the kindness of God in granting rain and fruitful seasons, and filling the heart with food and gladness. As the wave-offering was moved from right to left, so the heave-offering was moved up and down; and in both cases this was done several times. These offerings had a blessed tendency to keep alive in the breasts of the people a due sense of their dependence on the Divine providence and bounty, and of their obligation to God for his continual and liberal supply of all their wants. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:27". In the above collection are comprised, as far as I can recollect, an explanation of all the terms used in the Hebrew Scriptures which signify sacrifice, oblation, atonement, offering, etc., etc., as well as the reference they bear to the great and only sufficient atonement, sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction made by Christ Jesus for the sins of mankind. Larger accounts must be sought in authors who treat professedly on these subjects.

CHAPTER 8

Moses is commanded to consecrate Aaron and his sons, 1-3. Moses convenes the congregation; washes, clothes, and anoints Aaron, 4-12. He also clothes Aaron's sons, 13. Offers a bullock for them as a sin-offering, 14-17. And a ram for a burnt-offering, 18-21. And another ram for a consecration-offering, 22-24. The fat, with cakes of unleavened bread, and the right shoulder of the ram, he offers as a wave-offering, and afterwards burns, 25-28. The breast, which was the part of Moses, he also waves, 29. And sprinkles oil and blood upon Aaron and his sons, 30. The flesh of the consecration ram is to be boiled and eaten at the door of the tabernacle, 31, 32. Moses commands Aaron and his sons to abide seven days at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, which they do accordingly, 33-36.

NOTES ON CHAP 8

Verse 2. *Take Aaron and his sons*— The whole subject of this chapter has been anticipated in the notes, See “Exodus 28:1”, etc., and See “Exodus 29:1”, etc., in which all the sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies have been explained in considerable detail; and to those notes the reader is referred. It is only necessary to observe that Aaron and his sons were not anointed until now. Before, the thing was commanded; now, first performed.

Verse 8. *He put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim.*— The Urim and Thummim are here supposed to be something different from the breastplate itself. See Clarke note on “Exodus 28:15”, See Clarke note on “Exodus 28:16”, See Clarke note on “Exodus 28:30”.

Verse 9. *And he put the mitre*— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 28:36”.

Verse 14. *The bullock for the sin-offering*— This was offered each day during the seven days of consecration. See Exodus 29:36.

Verse 23. *Put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, etc.*— See this significant ceremony explained in the note on Exodus 29:20. See Clarke’s

note “Exodus 29:20”. Calmet remarks that the consecration of the high priest among the Romans bore a considerable resemblance to the consecration of the Jewish high priest. “The Roman priest, clothed with a garment of silk, his head covered with a crown of gold adorned with sacred ribbons, was conducted into a subterranean place, over which there was a floor of planks pierced through with many holes. On this floor they sacrificed a bullock, whose blood was freely poured out on the planks or floor, which running through the holes fell upon the priest, who stood under to receive this sacred aspersion, and who, in order to be completely covered with the blood, took care to present the whole of his body, his clothes, face, eyes, nose, lips, and even his tongue, to receive the drops of blood falling through the pierced floor above. Being completely covered with this sanguineous shower, he ascended from his subterranean place, and was acknowledged and adored by the people as Pontifex Maximus, or supreme high priest.” These rites, which bear a striking allusion to those used in the consecration of Aaron, and from which they were probably borrowed, and disguised by the introduction of their own superstitions, are particularly described by Aurelius Prudentius, in his poem entitled *Romani Martyris Supplicium*, from which I shall select those verses, the subject of which is given above, as the passage is curious, and the work not common.

*“Summus sacerdos nempe sub terram scrobe
Acta in profundum consecrandus mergitur,
Mire infulatus, festa vittis tempora
Nectens, corona tum repexus aurea,
Cinctu Gabino sericam fultus togam.
Tabulis superne strata texunt pulpita,
Rimosa rari pegmatis compagibus,
Scindunt subinde vel terebrant aream,
Crebroque lignum perforant acumine,
Pateat minutis ut frequens hiatibus.—*

*Hic ut statuta est immolanda bellua,
Pectus sacrata dividunt venabulo,
Eructat amplum volnus undam sanguinis-etc.
Tum per frequentes mille rimarum vias
Illapsus imber, tabidum rorem pluit,
Defossus intus quem sacerdos excipit,
Guttas ad omnes turpe subjectans caput,
Et veste et omni putrefactus corpore:
Quin os supinat, obvias offert genas
Supponit aures, labra, nares objicit,
Oculos et ipsos perluit liquoribus,*

*Nec jam palato parcit, et linguam rigat,
 Donec cruorem totus atrum combibat.—
 Proceedit inde pontifex vlsu horridus-etc.
 Omnes salutant atque adorant eminus,
 Vilis quod illum sanguis, et bos mortuus
 Foedis latentem sub cavernis laverint.”*

Of these lines the reader will not be displeased to find the following poetical version:—

*“For when, with sacred pomp and solemn state,
 Their great high priest the Romans consecrate,
 His silken vest in Gabine cincture bound,
 A festal fillet twines his temples round:*

*And, while aloft the gorgeous mitre shines,
 His awful brow a golden crown confines.
 In a deep dyke, for mystic ritual made,
 He stands, surrounded with terrific shade.*

*High o’er his holy head a stage they place,
 Adorn with paintings, and with statues grace;
 Then with keen piercers perforate the floor,
 Till thronging apertures admit no more.*

*Thither the victim ox is now convey’d,
 To glut the vengeance of the thirsty blade.
 The sacred spear his sturdy throat divides,
 Down, instant streaming, gush the gory tides,*

*Through countless crevices the gaping wood
 Distils corrupted dew and smoking blood;
 Drop after drop, in swift succession shed,
 Falls on the holy pontiff’s mitred head;*

*While, to imbibe the sanctifying power,
 His outspread garments drink the crimson shower;
 Then on his back in reeking streams he lies,
 And laves in livid blood his lips and eyes;*

*Bares every limb, exposes every pore,
 To catch the virtue of the streaming gore;
 With open mouth expects the falling flood,
 Moistens his palate and his tongue with blood;*

*Extends his ears to meet the sanguine rain,
 Nor lets a single drop descend in vain.
 Then from the gloomy cave comes forth to light,
 Bathed in black blood, and horrible to sight! —*

*By the vile torrent, and the victim slain,
In the dark cavern cleansed from mortal stain,
Their priest, enveloped in atoning gore,
With trembling awe surrounding throngs adore."*

Prudentius was born about the middle of the fourth century, and was no doubt intimately acquainted with the circumstances he describes.

Verse 27. *And waved them for a wave-offering*— See the nature of this and the heave-offering in the note on Exodus 29:27. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:27".

Verse 30. *And Moses took-the blood-and sprinkled it upon Aaron, etc.*— Thus we find that the high priest himself must be sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice; and our blessed Lord, of whom Aaron was a type, was sprinkled with his own blood. 1. In his agony in the garden. 2. In his being crowned with thorns. 3. In the piercing of his hands and his feet. And, 4. In his side being pierced with the spear. All these were so many acts of atonement performed by the high priest.

Verse 33. *For seven days shall he consecrate you.*— This number was the number of perfection among the Hebrews; and the seven days' consecration implied a perfect and full consecration to the sacerdotal office. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 29:30".

Verse 36. *So Aaron and his sons did*— This chapter shows the exact fulfillment of the commands delivered to Moses, Exodus xxix.; and consequently the complete preparation of Aaron and his sons to fill the awfully important office of priests and mediators between God and Israel, to offer sacrifices and make atonement for the sins of the people. "Thus," says Mr. Ainsworth, "the covenant of the priesthood was confirmed unto the tribe of Levi in Aaron and his sons, which covenant was life and peace, Malachi 2:5. But these are made priests without an oath; also, there were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; and they served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, offering gifts and sacrifices which could not make him who did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience; for they were carnal ordinances imposed upon them till the time of reformation, that is, until the time of Christ, who was made a priest of God with an oath, and made surety of a

better covenant established on better promises. And because he continueth for ever, he hath a priesthood which passeth not from one to another, and is a minister of the true tabernacle, which God pitched and not man. Not by the blood of bulls and of goats, but by his own blood, he entered once into the holy place, having found everlasting redemption for us; and is therefore able to save to the uttermost them who come unto God through him, as he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Taken in reference to his priesthood and sacrifice, all these rites and ceremonies are significant and edifying, but taken out of his relation, they would be as absurd and nugatory as the consecration of the Roman Pontifex Maximus, mentioned above by Prudentius.

CHAPTER 9

Aaron is commanded to offer, on the eighth day, a sin-offering and a burnt-offering, 1, 2. The people are commanded also to offer a sin-offering, a burnt-offering, peace-offerings, and a meat-offering, 3, 4. They do as they were commanded; and Moses promises that God shall appear among them, 5, 6. Aaron is commanded to make an atonement for the people, 7. He and his sons prepare and offer the different sacrifices, 8-21. Aaron and Moses bless the congregation, 22, 23. And the fire of the Lord consumes the sacrifice, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *On the eighth day*— This was the first day after their consecration, before which they were deemed unfit to minister in holy things, being considered as in a state of imperfection. “All creatures,” says Ainsworth, “for the most part were in their uncleanness and imperfection seven days, and perfected on the eighth; as children by circumcision, Leviticus 12:2, 3; young beasts for sacrifice, chap. 22:27; persons that were unclean by leprosy, issues, and the like, chap. 14:8-10; 15:13, 14; Numbers 6:9, 10. So here, the priests, until the eighth day, were not admitted to minister in their office.”

Verse 2. *Take thee a young calf, etc.*— As these sacrifices were for Aaron himself, they are furnished by himself and not by the people, for they were designed to make atonement for his own sin. See chap. 4:3. And this is supposed by the Jews to have been intended to make an atonement for his sin in the matter of the golden calf. This is very probable, as no formal atonement for that transgression had yet been made.

Verse 3. *Take ye a kid*— In chap. 4:14 a young bullock is commanded to be offered for the sin of the people; but here the offering is a kid, which was the sacrifice appointed for the sin of the ruler, chap. 4:22, 23, and hence some think that the reading of the Samaritan and the Septuagint is to be preferred. Speak unto the ELDERS of Israel, these being the only princes or rulers of Israel at that time; and for them it is possible this sacrifice was

designed. It is however supposed that the sacrifice appointed chap. 4:14 was for a particular sin, but this for sin in general; and that it is on this account that the sacrifices differ.

Verse 6. *And the glory of the Lord shall appear*— God shall give the most sensible signs of his presence among you; this he did in general by the cloud on the tabernacle, but in this case the particular proof was the fire that came out from before the Lord, and consumed the burnt-offering; see ver. 23, 24.

Verse 7. *Make an atonement for thyself*— This showed the imperfection of the Levitical law; the high priest was obliged to make an expiation for his own sins before he could make one for the sins of the people. See the use made of this by the apostle, Hebrews 5:3; 7:27; 9:7.

Verse 22. *And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them*— On lifting up the hands in prayer, see Exodus 9:29. The form of the blessing we have in Numbers 6:23, etc.: “The LORD bless thee and keep thee! The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!” See the notes on these passages. See Clarke on “Numbers 6:23”.

And came down from offering of the sin-offering, etc.— A sin-offering, a burnt-offering, a meat-offering, and peace-offerings, were made to God that his glory might appear to the whole congregation. This was the end of all sacrifice and religious service; not to confer any obligation on God, but to make an atonement for sin, and to engage him to dwell among and influence his worshippers.

Verse 23. *Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle*— It is supposed that Moses accompanied Aaron into the tabernacle to show him how to offer the incense, prepare the lamps and the perfume, adjust the shew-bread, etc., etc.

And the glory of the Lord appeared— To show that every thing was done according to the Divine mind, 1. The glory of Jehovah appears unto all the people; 2. A fire came out from before the Lord, and consumed the burnt-offering. This was the proof which God gave upon extraordinary occasions of his acceptance of the sacrifice. This was done probably, 1. In the case of Abel, Genesis 4:4. 2. In the case of Aaron; see above, Leviticus

9:24. 3. In the case of Gideon, Judges 6:21. 4. In the case of Manoah and his wife. Compare Judges 13:19-23. 5. In the case of David dedicating the threshing-floor of Ornan, 1 Chronicles 21:28. 6. In the case of Solomon dedicating the temple, 2 Chronicles 7:1. 7. In the case of Elijah, 1 Kings 18:38. Hence to express the accepting of an offering, sacrifice, etc., the verb **שׂח** *dishshen* is used, which signifies to reduce to ashes, i. e., by fire from heaven. See Psalm 20:3. In such a case as this, it was necessary that the fire should appear to be divinely sent, and should come in such a way as to preclude the supposition that any art or deceit had been practiced on the occasion. Hence it is not intimated that Moses and Aaron brought it out of the tabernacle, professing that God had kindled it there for them, but the fire **CAME OUT** from **BEFORE** the **LORD**, and **ALL** the **PEOPLE** **SAW** it. The victims were consumed by a fire evidently of no human kindling. Josephus says that “a fire proceeded from the victims themselves of its own accord, which had the appearance of a flash of lightning;” **ἐξ αὐτῶν πῦρ ἀνηφθῆ αυτοματῶν, καὶ ὁμοίον ἀστραπῆς λαμπηδονι ὀρωμενον τῆ φλογι**. “and consumed, all that was upon the altar.”-Antiq., lib. iii., c. 8, s. 6, edit. Haverc. And it is very likely that by the agency of the ethereal or electric spark, sent immediately from the Divine presence, the victims were consumed. The heathens, in order to give credit to their worship, imitated this miracle, and pretended that Jupiter testified his approbation of the sacrifices offered to him by thunder and lightning: to this **VIRGIL** seems to allude, though the words have been understood differently.

Audiat haec genitor, qui foedera fulmine sancit. AEn. xii., ver. 200.

“Let Jupiter hear, who sanctions covenants by his thunder.”

On which words Servius makes this remarkable comment: Quia cum fiunt foedera, si coruscatio fuerit, confirmantur. Vel certe quia apud majores arae non incendebantur, sed ignem divinum precibus eliciebant qui incendebant altaria. “To sanction the covenant signifies to confirm it; for when a covenant was made, if there were a flash of lightning, it was considered to be thereby confirmed: or rather because our **ANCESTORS** lighted no fire upon the altars, but obtained by their supplications divine fire,” etc. The expression *apud majores*, “among our ancestors,” shows that they could boast of no such divine fire then; nor could they ever before, as the whole

account was borrowed from the Jews. Solinus Polyhistor gives us an account to the same effect; for, speaking of the hill of Vulcan in Sicily, he says: In quo, qui divinte rei operantur, ligna vitea super aras struunt, nec ignis apponitur in hanc congerlem: cum prosicias intulerunt, si adest deus, si sacrum probatur, sarmenta licet viridia sponte concipiunt, et nullo inflagrante halitu, ab ipso numine fit accendium, cap. v. in fine. "They who perform sacred rites in this place, put a bundle of vine-tree wood upon the altar, but put no fire to it; for when they lay the pieces of the victim upon it, if the deity be present, and he approve the sacrifice, the bundle, although of green wood, takes fire of itself, and without any other means the deity himself kindles the flame." These are remarkable instances, and show how exactly the heathen writers have borrowed from the sacred records. And in farther imitation of this miracle, they had their perpetual fire in the temple of Vesta, which they feigned to have descended at first from heaven, and which they kept with the most religious veneration.

Verse 24. *When all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.*— 1. The miracle was done in such a way as gave the fullest conviction to the people of its reality. 2. They exulted in the thought that the God of almighty power and energy had taken up his abode among them. 3. They prostrated themselves in his presence, thereby intimating the deep sense they had of HIS goodness, of their unworthiness, and of the obligation they were under to live in subjection to his authority, and obedience to his will. — This celestial fire was carefully preserved among the Israelites till the time of Solomon, when it was renewed, and continued among them till the Babylonish captivity. This Divine fire was the emblem of the Holy Spirit. And as no sacrifice could be acceptable to God which was not salted, i. e., seasoned and rendered pleasing, by this fire, as our Lord says, Mark 9:49, so no soul can offer acceptable sacrifices to God, but through the influences of the Divine Spirit. Hence the promise of the Spirit under the emblem of fire, Matthew 3:11, and its actual descent in this similitude on the day of pentecost, Acts 2:3, 4. THE most remarkable circumstance in this chapter is the manifestation of the presence of God, and the consuming of the victims by the miraculous fire. We have already seen that the chief design of these sacrificial rites was to obtain reconciliation to God, that the Divine Presence might dwell and be manifested among them. To encourage the people to make the necessary

preparations, to offer the sacrifices in a proper spirit, and to expect especial mercies from the hand of God, Moses promises, ver. 4, that the Lord would appear unto them on the morrow, and that his glory should appear, ver. 6. In hope or expectation of this, the priest, the elders, and the people purified themselves by offering the different sacrifices which God had appointed; and when this was done God did appear, and gave the fullest proofs of his approbation, by miraculously consuming the sacrifices which were prepared on the occasion. Does not St. John evidently refer to these circumstances, 1 John 3:2, 3: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” This manifestation of God in the tabernacle was a type of his presence, first, in the Church militant on earth; and secondly, in the Church triumphant in heaven. They who expect to have the presence of God here, must propitiate his throne of justice by the only available sacrifice; they who wish to enjoy everlasting felicity, must be purified from all unrighteousness, for without holiness none can see the Lord. If we hope to see him as he is, we must resemble him. How vain is the expectation of glory, where there is no meetness for the place! And how can we enter into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus? Hebrews 10:19. And of what use can this sacrifice be to those who do not properly believe in it? And can any faith, even in that sacrifice, be effectual to salvation, that does not purify the heart? Reader! earnestly pray to God that thou hold not the truth in unrighteousness.

CHAPTER 10

Nadab and Abihu offer strange fire before the Lord, and are destroyed, 1-5. Aaron and his family forbidden to mourn for them, 6, 7. He and his family are forbidden the use of wine, 8-11. Directions to Aaron and his sons concerning the eating of the meat-offerings, etc., 12-15. Moses chides Aaron for not having eaten the sin-offering, 16-18. Aaron excuses himself, and Moses is satisfied, 19, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. *And Nadab and Abihu—took either of them his censer*— The manner of burning incense in the temple service was, according to the Jews, as follows:—“One went and gathered the ashes from off the altar into a golden vessel, a second brought a vessel full of incense, and a third brought a censer with fire, and put coals on the altar, and he whose office it was to burn the incense strewed it on the fire at the command of the governor. At the same time all the people went out of the temple from between the porch and the altar. Each day they burned the weight of a hundred denaries of incense, fifty in the morning, and fifty in the evening. The hundred denaries weighed fifty shekels of the sanctuary, each shekel weighing three hundred and twenty barleycorns; and when the priest had burned the incense, he bowed himself down and went his way out. See Maimonides’ Treatise of the Daily Service, chap. iii. So when Zacharias, as his lot fell, burned incense in the temple, the whole multitude of the people were without at prayer while the incense was burning, Luke 1:9, 10. By this service God taught them that the prayers of his faithful people are pleasing to him, whilst our High Priest, Christ Jesus, by his mediation puts incense to their prayers; (see Psalm 141:2; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 8:1, 2; 9:24; Revelation 8:3, 4;) for the priests under the law served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things; Hebrews 8:5.” See Ainsworth in loco.

In the preceding chapter we have seen how God intended that every part of his service should be conducted; and that every sacrifice might be

acceptable to him, he sent his own fire as the emblem of his presence, and the means of consuming the sacrifice. — Here we find Aaron's sons neglecting the Divine ordinance, and offering incense with strange, that is, common fire,—fire not of a celestial origin; and therefore the fire of God consumed them. So that very fire which, if properly applied, would have sanctified and consumed their gift, became now the very instrument of their destruction! How true is the saying, The Lord is a consuming fire! He will either hallow or destroy us: he will purify our souls by the influence of his Spirit, or consume them with the breath of his mouth! The tree which is properly planted in a good soil is nourished by the genial influences of the sun: pluck it up from its roots, and the sun which was the cause of its vegetative life and perfection now dries up its juices, decomposes its parts, and causes it to moulder into dust. Thus must it be done to those who grieve and do despite to the Spirit of God. Reader, hast thou this heavenly fire? Hear then the voice of God, QUENCH not the SPIRIT. Some critics are of opinion that the fire used by the sons of Aaron was the sacred fire, and that it is only called strange from the manner of placing the incense on it. I cannot see the force of this opinion.

Which he commanded them not.— Every part of the religion of God is Divine. He alone knew what he designed by its rites and ceremonies, for that which they prefigured—the whole economy of redemption by Christ—was conceived in his own mind, and was out of the reach of human wisdom and conjecture. He therefore who altered any part of this representative system, who omitted or added any thing, assumed a prerogative which belonged to God alone, and was certainly guilty of a very high offense against the wisdom, justice, and righteousness of his Maker. This appears to have been the sin of Nadab and Abihu, and this at once shows the reason why they were so severely punished. The most awful judgments are threatened against those who either add to, or take away from, the declarations of God. See Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; and Revelation 22:18, 19.

Verse 3. And Aaron held his peace.— וַיִּדְמּוּ אַהֲרֹן vaiyiddom Aharon, and Aaron was dumb. How elegantly expressive is this of his parental affection, his deep sense of the presumption of his sons, and his own submission to the justice of God! The flower and hope of his family was nipped in the bud and blasted; and while he exquisitely feels as a father, he

submits without murmuring to this awful dispensation of Divine justice. It is an awful thing to introduce innovations either into the rites and ceremonies, or into the truths, of the religion of Christ: he who acts thus cannot stand guiltless before his God. It has often been remarked that excessive grief stupefies the mind, so that amazement and deep anguish prevent at once both tears and complaints; hence that saying of Seneca, *Curae leves loquantur; graviore silent.* “Slight sorrows are loquacious; deep anguish has no voice. See Clarke on “Leviticus 10:19”.

Verse 4. *Uzziel the uncle of Aaron*— He was brother to Amram the father of Aaron; see Exodus 6:18-22.

Verse 5. *Carried them in their coats out of the camp*— The modern impropriety of burying the dead within towns, cities, or places inhabited, had not yet been introduced; much less that abomination, at which both piety and common sense shudder, burying the dead about and even within places dedicated to the worship of God!

Verse 6. *Uncover not your heads, etc.*— They were to use no sign of grief or mourning, 1. Because those who were employed in the service of the sanctuary should avoid every thing that might incapacitate them for that service; and, 2. Because the crime of their brethren was so highly provoking to God, and so fully merited the punishment which he had inflicted, that their mourning might be considered as accusing the Divine justice of undue severity.

Verse 7. *The anointing oil of the Lord is upon you.*— They were consecrated to the Divine service, and this required their constant attendance, and most willing and cheerful service.

Verse 9. *Do not drink wine nor strong drink*— The cabalistical commentator, Baal Hatturim, and others, have supposed, from the introduction of this command here, that Aaron’s sons had sinned through excess of wine, and that they had attempted to celebrate the Divine service in a state of inebriation. Strong drink. — The word שכר shechar, from shachar, to inebriate, signifies any kind of fermented liquors. This is exactly the same prohibition that was given in the case of John Baptist, Luke 1:15: *οινον και σικερα ου μη πτη*. Wine and sikera he shall not drink. Any inebriating liquor, says St. Jerome, (Epist. ad nepot.,) is called

sicera, whether made of corn, apples, honey, dates, or other fruit. One of the four prohibited drinks among the Mohammedans in India is called [A] sakar, (see the Hedaya, vol. iv., p. 158,) which signifies inebriating drink in general, but especially date wine or arrack. From the original word probably we have borrowed our term cider or sider, which among us exclusively signifies the fermented juice of apples. See on Luke 1:15.

Verse 10. *That we may put difference between holy and unholy*— This is a strong reason why they should drink no inebriating liquor, that their understanding being clear, and their judgment correct, they might be always able to discern between the clean and the unclean, and ever pronounce righteous judgment. Injunctions similar to this were found among the Egyptians, Carthaginians, and Greeks. Indeed, common sense itself shows that neither a drunkard nor a sot should ever be suffered to minister in holy things.

Verse 14. *Wave-breast and heave-shoulder*— See chap. vii., and See “Exodus 29:27”.

Verse 16. *Moses diligently sought the goat*— The goat which was offered the same day for the sins of the priests and the people, (see chap. 9:15, 16,) and which, through the confusion that happened on account of the death of Nadab and Abihu, was burnt instead of being eaten. See ver. 18.

Verse 17. *To bear the iniquity of the congregation*— See on “Leviticus 6:26”, etc.

Verse 19. *And such things have befallen me, etc.*— The excuse which Aaron makes for not feasting on the sin-offering according to the law is at once appropriate and dignified; as if he had said: “God certainly has commanded me to eat of the sin-offering; but when such things as these have happened unto me, could it be good in the sight of the Lord? Does he not expect that I should feel as a father under such afflicting circumstances?” With this spirited answer Moses was satisfied; and God, who knew his situation, took no notice of the irregularity which had taken place in the solemn service. To human nature God has given the privilege to weep in times of affliction and distress. In his infinite kindness he has ordained that tears, which are only external evidences of our grief, shall be

the outlets to our sorrows, and tend to exhaust the cause from which they flow. See on “Leviticus 10:3”.

Verse 20. *When Moses heard that, he was content.*— The argument used by Aaron had in it both good sense and strong reason, and Moses, as a reasonable man, felt its force; and as God evidenced no kind of displeasure at this irregularity, which was, in a measure at least, justified by the present necessity, he thought proper to urge the matter no farther. THOUGH the punishment of Nadab and Abihu may appear severe, because the sacred text does not specify clearly the nature and extent of their crime, we may rest assured that it was of such a nature as not only to justify but to demand such a punishment. God has here given us a full proof that he will not suffer human institutions to take the place of his own prescribed worship. It is true this is frequently done, for by many what is called natural religion is put in the place of Divine revelation; and God seems not to regard it: but though vengeance is not speedily executed on an evil work, and therefore the hearts of the children of men are set to do wickedness, yet God ceases not to be just; and those who have taken from or added to his words, or put their own inventions in their place, shall be reprov'd and found liars in the great day. His long-suffering leads to repentance; but if men will harden their hearts, and put their own ceremonies, rites, and creeds, in the place of Divine ordinances and eternal truths, they must expect to give an awful account to him who is shortly to judge the quick and the dead. Were the religion of Christ stripped of all that state policy, fleshly interest, and gross superstition have added to it, how plain and simple, and may we not add, how amiable and glorious, would it appear! Well may we say of human inventions in Divine worship what one said of the paintings on old cathedral windows, Their principal tendency is to prevent the light from coming in. Nadab and Abihu would perform the worship of God not according to his command, but in their own way; and God not only would not receive the sacrifice from their hands, but, while encompassing themselves with their own sparks, and warming themselves with their own fire, this had they from the hand of the Lord—they lay down in sorrow, for there went out a fire from the Lord, and devoured them. What is written above is to be understood of persons who make a religion for themselves, leaving Divine revelation; for, being wilfully ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about to establish their own. This is a high

offense in the sight of God. Reader, God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth. Such worshippers the Father seeketh.

CHAPTER 11

Laws concerning clean and unclean animals, 1, 2. Of QUADRUPEDS, those are clean which divide the hoof and chew the cud, 3. Those to be reputed unclean which do not divide the hoof, though they chew the cud, 4-6. Those to be reputed unclean also which, though they divide the hoof, do not chew the cud, 7. Whosoever eats their flesh, or touches their carcasses, shall be reputed unclean, 8. Of FISH, those are clean, and may be eaten which have fins and scales, 9. Those which have not fins and scales to be reputed unclean, 10-12. Of FOWLS, those which are unclean, 13-21. Of INSECTS, the following may be eaten: the bald locust, beetle, and grasshopper, 22. All others are unclean and abominable, their flesh not to be eaten, nor their bodies touched, 23-25. Farther directions relative to unclean beasts, 26-28. Of REPTILES, and some small quadrupeds, those which are unclean, 29, 39. All that touch them shall be unclean, 31; and the things touched by their dead carcasses are unclean also, 32-35. Large fountains, or pits of water, are not defiled by their carcasses, provided a part of the water be drawn out, 36. Nor do they defile seed by accidentally touching it, provided the water which has touched their flesh do not touch or moisten the seed, 37, 38. A beast that dieth of itself is unclean, and may not be touched or eaten, 39, 40. All creeping things are abominable, 41-44. The reason given for these laws, 45-47.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *And the Lord spake unto Moses*— In the preceding chapter the priests are expressly forbidden to drink wine; and the reason for this law is given also, that they might be able at all times to distinguish between clean and unclean, and be qualified to teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord had spoken, chap. 10:10, 11; for as inebriation unfits a person for the regular performance of every function of life, it must be especially sinful in those who minister in holy things, and to whom the teaching of the ignorant, and the cure of souls in general, are intrusted. Scheuchzer has remarked that no Christian state has made any civil law against drunkenness, (he must only mean the German states, for we have

several acts of parliament against it in England,) and that it is only punished by contempt. "Custom," says he, "that tyrant of the human race, not only permits it, but in some sort authorizes the practice, insomuch that we see priests and ministers of the Church ascend the pulpit in a state of intoxication, judges seat themselves upon the benches, physicians attend their patients, and others attempt to perform the different avocations of life, in the same disgraceful state."-Physic. Sacr., vol. iii., p. 64. This is a horrible picture of German manners; and while we deplore the extensive ravages made by this vice, and the disgrace with which its votaries are overwhelmed, we have reason to thank God that it very rarely has ever appeared in the pulpit, and perhaps was never once seen upon the bench, in our own country. Having delivered the law against drinking wine, Moses proceeds to deliver a series of ordinances, all well calculated to prevent the Israelites from mixing with the surrounding nations, and consequently from being contaminated by their idolatry. In chap. 11. he treats of unclean MEATS. In chap. 12., 13., 14., and 15., he treats of unclean PERSONS, GARMENTS, and DWELLINGS. In chap. 16. he treats of the uncleanness of the PRIESTS and the PEOPLE, and prescribes the proper expiations and sacrifices for both. In chap. 17. he continues the subject, and gives particular directions concerning the mode of offering, etc. In chap. 18. he treats of unclean matrimonial connections. In chap. 19. he repeats sundry laws relative to these subjects, and introduces some new ones. In chap. 20. he mentions certain uncleannesses practiced among the idolatrous nations, and prohibits them on pain of death. In chap. 21. he treats of the mourning, marriages, and personal defects of the priests, which rendered them unclean. And in chap. 22. he speaks of unclean sacrifices, or such as should not be offered to the Lord. After this, to the close of the book, many important and excellent political and domestic regulations are enjoined, the whole forming an eccleslastico-political system superior to any thing the world ever saw. Bishop Wilson very properly observes that, "by these laws of clean and unclean animals, etc., God did keep this people separated from the idolatrous world: and this is a standing proof, even to the present day, of the Divine authority of these Scriptures; for no power or art of man could have obliged so great and turbulent a nation to submit to such troublesome precepts as the Jews always have submitted to, had they not been fully convinced, from the

very first, that the command was from God, and that it was to be obeyed at the peril of their souls.”

Verse 3. *Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed*— These two words mean the same thing—a divided hoof, such as that of the ox, where the hoof is divided into two toes, and each toe is cased with horn.

Cheweth the cud— Ruminates; casts up the grass, etc., which had been taken into the stomach for the purpose of mastication. Animals which chew the cud, or ruminates, are provided with two, three or four stomachs. The ox has four: in the first or largest, called the ventriculus or paunch, the food is collected without being masticated, the grass, etc., being received into it as the beast crops it from the earth. The food, by the force of the muscular coats of this stomach, and the liquors poured in, is sufficiently macerated; after which, formed into small balls, it is thrown up by the oesophagus into the mouth, where it is made very small by mastication or chewing, and then sent down into the second stomach, into which the oesophagus or gullet opens, as well as into the first, ending exactly where the two stomachs meet. This is what is termed chewing the cud. The second stomach, which is called the reticulum, honeycomb, bonnet, or king’s hood, has a great number of small shallow cells on its inward surface, of a pentagonal or five-sided form, exactly like the cells in a honey-comb; in this the food is farther macerated, and then pushed onward into the third stomach, called the omasum or many-plies, because its inward surface is covered with a great number of thin membranous partitions. From this the food passes into the fourth stomach, called the abomasum, or rede. In this stomach it is digested, and from the digested mass the chyle is formed, which, being absorbed by the lacteal vessels, is afterwards thrown into the mass of blood, and becomes the principle of nutrition to all the solids and fluids of the body. The intention of rumination, or chewing the cud, seems to be, that the food may be sufficiently comminuted, that, being more fully acted on by the stomachs, it may afford the greatest possible portion of nutritive juices. The word cud is probably not originally Saxon, though found in that language in the same signification in which it is still used. Junius, with great show of probability, derives it from the Cambro-British *chwyd*, a vomit, as it is the ball of food vomited, or thrown up, from the first stomach or paunch through the oesophagus into the mouth, which is called by this name.

Those who prefer a Saxon derivation may have it in the verb [AS] whence our word chew; and so cud might be considered a contraction of chewed, but this is not so likely as the preceding.

Verse 5. *The coney*— שפן shaphan, not the rabbit, but rather a creature nearly resembling it, which abounds in Judea, Palestine, and Arabia, and is called by Dr. Shaw daman Israel, and by Mr. Bruce ashkoko. As this creature nearly resembles the rabbit, with which Spain anciently abounded, Bochart supposes that the Phoenicians might have given it the name of שפניה spaniah, from the multitude of שפנים shephanim (or spanim, as others pronounce it) which were found there. Hence the emblem of Spain is a woman sitting with a rabbit at her feet. See a coin of Hadrian in Scheuchzer.

Verse 6. *The hare*— ארנבת arnebeth, as Bochart and others suppose, from ארה arah, to crop, and ניב nib, the produce of the ground, these animals being remarkable for destroying the fruits of the earth. That they are notorious for destroying the tender blade of the young corn, is well known. It is very likely that different species of these animals are included under the general terms שפן shaphan, and ארנבת arnebeth, for some travelers have observed that there are four or five sorts of these animals, which are used for food in the present day in those countries. See Harmer, vol. iii., p. 331, edit. 1808. Some think the mountain rat, marmot, squirrel, and hedgehog, may be intended under the word shaphan.

Verse 7. *And the swine*— חזיר chazir, one of the most gluttonous, libidinous, and filthy quadrupeds in the universe; and, because of these qualities, sacred to the Venus of the Greeks and Romans, and the Friga of our Saxon ancestors; and perhaps on these accounts forbidden, as well as on account of its flesh being strong and difficult to digest, affording a very gross kind of aliment, apt to produce cutaneous, scorbutic, and scrofulous disorders, especially in hot climates.

Verse 9. *Whatsoever hath fins and scales*— Because these, of all the fish tribe, are the most nourishing; the others which are without scales, or whose bodies are covered with a thick glutinous matter, being in general very difficult of digestion.

Verse 13. *And these-among the fowls-the eagle*— נֶשֶׁר neshar, from nashar, to lacerate, cut, or tear to pieces; hence the eagle, a most rapacious bird of prey, from its tearing the flesh of the animals it feeds on; and for this purpose birds of prey have, in general, strong, crooked talons and a hooked beak. The eagle is a cruel bird, exceedingly ravenous, and almost insatiable.

The ossifrage— Or bone-breaker, from os, a bone, and frango, I break, because it not only strips off the flesh, but breaks the bone in order to extract the marrow. In Hebrew it is called פֶּרֶס peres, from paras, to break or divide in two, and probably signifies that species of the eagle anciently known by the name of ossifraga, and which we render ossifrage.

Ospray— עֹזְנִיָּה oznyah, from עָז azan, to be strong, vigorous; generally supposed to mean the black eagle, such as that described by Homer, Iliad. lib. xxi., ver. 252.

αιετου ουματ' εχων μελανος, του θηρητηρος,
'ος θ' αμα καρτιστος τε και ωκιστος πετεηνων.

“Having the rapidity of the black eagle, that bird of prey, at once the swiftest and the strongest of the feathered race.” Among the Greeks and Romans the eagle was held sacred, and is represented as carrying the thunderbolts of Jupiter. This occurs so frequently, and is so well known, that references are almost needless. See Scheuchzer.

Verse 14. The vulture— דָּאָח daah, from the root to fly, and therefore more probably the kite or glede, from its remarkable property of gliding or sailing with expanded wings through the air. The דָּאָח daah is a different bird from the דַּיָּאָח daiyah, which signifies the vulture. See Bochart, vol. iii., col. 195.

The kite— אֵיָּאָח aiyah, thought by some to be the vulture, by others the merlin. Parkhurst thinks it has its name from the root אָוָּח avah, to covet, because of its rapaciousness; some contend that the kite is meant. That it is a species of the hawk, most learned men allow. See Bochart, vol. iii., col. 192.

Verse 15. *Every raven*— ערב oreb, a general term comprehending the raven, crow, rook, jackdaw, and magpie.

Verse 16. *The owl*— בת היענה bath haiyaanah, the daughter of vociferation, the female ostrich, probably so called from the noise they make. “In the lonesome part of the night,” says Dr. Shaw, “the ostriches frequently make a very doleful and hideous noise, sometimes resembling the roar of the lion; at other times, the hoarser voice of the bull or ox.” He adds, “I have heard them groan as if in the deepest agonies.”-Travels, 4to edition, p. 455. The ostrich is a very unclean animal, and eats its own ordure as soon as it voids it, and of this Dr. Shaw observes, (see above,) it is remarkably fond! This is a sufficient reason, were others wanting, why such a fowl should be reputed to be unclean, and its use as an article of diet prohibited.

The night hawk— תחמס tachmas, from חמס chamas, to force away, act violently and unjustly; supposed by Bochart and Scheuchzer to signify the male ostrich, from its cruelty towards its young; (see Job 39:13-18;) but others, with more reason, suppose it to be the bird described by Hasselquist, which he calls the strix Orientalis, or Oriental owl. “It is of the size of the common owl, living in the ruins and old deserted houses of Egypt and Syria; and sometimes in inhabited houses. The Arabs in Egypt call it Massasa, the Syrians Bana. It is very ravenous in Syria, and in the evenings, if the windows be left open, it flies into the house and kills infants, unless they are carefully watched; wherefore the women are much afraid of it.”- Travels, p. 196. If this is the *fowl intended, this is a sufficient reason why it should be considered an abomination.*

The cuckoo— שחפ shachaph, supposed rather to mean the sea mew; called shachaph, from שחפeth shachepheth, a wasting distemper, or atrophy, (mentioned chap. 26:16; Deuteronomy 28:22,) because its body is the leanest, in proportion to its bones and feathers, of most other birds, always appearing as if under the influence of a wasting distemper. A fowl which, from its natural constitution or manner of life, is incapable of becoming plump or fleshy, must always be unwholesome; and this is reason sufficient why such should be prohibited.

And the hawk— נֵץ nets, from the root נָצַח natsah, to shoot forth or spring forward, because of the rapidity and length of its flight, the hawk being remarkable for both. As this is a bird of prey, it is forbidden, and all others of its kind.

Verse 17. The little owl— כּוֹס cos, the bittern, night-raven or night-owl, according to most interpreters. Some think the onocrotalus or pelican may be intended; for as the word כּוֹס cos signifies a cup in Hebrew, and the pelican is remarkable for a pouch or bag under the lower jaw, it might have had its Hebrew name from this circumstance; but the kaath in the following verse is rather supposed to mean this fowl, and the cos some species of the bubo or owl. See Bochart, vol. iii., col. 272.

The cormorant— שָׁלַךְ shalach, from the root which signifies to cast down; hence the Septuagint καταρρακτης, the cataract, or bird which falls precipitately down upon its prey. It probably signifies the plungeon or diver, a sea fowl, which I have seen at sea dart down as swift as an arrow into the water, and seize the fish which it had discovered while even flying, or rather soaring, at a very great height.

The great owl— יָנְשׁוּף yanshuph, according to the Septuagint and the Vulgate, signifies the ibis, a bird well known and held sacred in Egypt. Some critics, with our translation, think it means a species of owl or night bird, because the word may be derived from נֶשֶׁף nesheph, which signifies the twilight, the time in which owls chiefly fly about. See Bochart, vol. iii., col. 281.

Verse 18. The swan— תִּנְשֵׁמֶת tinshemeth. The Septuagint translate the word by πορφύριον, the porphyryon, purple or scarlet bird. Could we depend on this translation, we might suppose the flamingo or some such bird to be intended. Some suppose the goose to be meant, but this is by no means likely, as it cannot be classed either among ravenous or unclean fowls. Bochart thinks the owl is meant.

The pelican— קָאָת kaath. As קָאָה kaah signifies to vomit up, the name is supposed to be descriptive of the pelican, who receives its food into the pouch under its lower jaw, and, by pressing it on its breast with its bill, throws it up for the nourishment of its young. Hence the fable which

represents the pelican wounding her breast with her bill, that she might feed her young with her own blood; a fiction which has no foundation but in the above circumstance. Bochart thinks the bittern is meant, vol. iii., col. 292.

The gier eagle—**רחם** racham. As the root of this word signifies tenderness and affection, it is supposed to refer to some bird remarkable for its attachment to its young; hence some have thought that the pelican is to be understood. Bochart endeavors to prove that it means the vulture, probably that species called the golden vulture. — Bochart, vol. iii., col. 303.

Verse 19. The stork—**חסידה** chasidah, from **חסד** chasad, which signifies to be abundant in kindness, or exuberant in acts of beneficence; hence applied to the stork, because of its affection to its young, and its kindness in tending and feeding its parents when old; facts attested by the best informed and most judicious of the Greek and Latin natural historians. See Bochart, Scheuchzer, and Parkhurst, under the word **חסד** chasad. It is remarkable for destroying and eating serpents, and on this account might be reckoned by Moses among unclean birds.

The heron—**אנפה** anaphah. This word has been variously understood: some have rendered it the kite, others the woodcock, others the curlew, some the peacock, others the parrot, and others the crane. The root **אנפ** anaph, signifies to breathe short through the nostrils, to snuff, as in anger; hence to be angry: and it is supposed that the word is sufficiently descriptive of the heron, from its very irritable disposition. It will attack even a man in defense of its nest; and I have known a case where a man was in danger of losing his life by the stroke of a heron's bill, near the eye, who had climbed up into a high tree to take its nest. Bochart supposes a species of the eagle to be meant, vol. iii., col. 335.

The lapwing—**דוכיפת** duchiphath, the upupa, hoopoe, or hoop, a crested bird, with beautiful plumage, but very unclean. See Bochart, and Scheuchzer. Concerning the genuine meaning of the original, there is little agreement among interpreters.

The bat— עטלף atalleph, so called, according to Parkhurst, from עט at, to fly, and עלף alaph, darkness or obscurity, because it flies about in the dusk of the evening, and in the night: so the Septuagint νυκτερίς, from νυξ, the night; and the Vulgate vespertilio, from vesper, the evening. This being a sort of monster partaking of the nature of both a bird and beast, it might well be classed among unclean animals, or animals the use of which in food should be avoided.

Verse 20. All fowls that creep— Such as the bat, already mentioned, which has claws attached to its leathern wings, and which serve in place of feet to crawl by, the feet and legs not being distinct; but this may also include all the different kinds of insects, with the exceptions in the following verse.

Going upon all four— May signify no more than walking regularly or progressively, foot after foot as quadrupeds do; for it cannot be applied to insects literally, as they have in general six feet, many of them more, some reputed to have a hundred, hence called centipedes; and some a thousand, hence called millipedes; words which often signify no more than that such insects have a great number of feet.

Verse 21. Which have legs above their feet— This appears to refer to the different kinds of locusts and grasshoppers, which have very remarkable hind legs, long, and with high joints, projecting above their backs, by which they are enabled to spring up from the ground, and leap high and far.

Verse 22. The locust— ארבה arbeh, either from ארב arab, to lie in wait or in ambush, because often immense flights of them suddenly alight upon the fields, vineyards, etc., and destroy all the produce of the earth; or from רבה rabah, he multiplied, because of their prodigious swarms. See a particular account of these insects in the notes, See “Exodus 10:4”.

The bald locust— סלעם solam, compounded, says Mr. Parkhurst, from סלע sala, to cut, break, and עמ am, contiguity; a kind of locust, probably so called from its rugged, craggy form. See the first of Scheuchzer’s plates, vol. iii., p. 100.

The beetle— חרגל chargol. “The Hebrew name seems a derivative from חרג charag, to shake, and רגל regel, the foot; and so to denote the

nimbleness of its motions. Thus in English we call an animal of the locust kind a grasshopper; the French name of which is *souterelle*, from the verb *sauter*, to leap”-Parkhurst. This word occurs only in this place. The beetle never can be intended here, as that insect never was eaten by man, perhaps, in any country of the universe.

The grasshopper— **חגב** *chagab*. Bochart supposes that this species of locust has its name from the Arabic verb [A] *hajaba* to veil; because when they fly, as they often do, in great swarms, they eclipse even the light of the sun. See the notes on “Exodus 10:4”, and the description of ten kinds of locusts in Bochart, vol. iii., col. 441. And see the figures in Scheuchzer, in whose plates 20 different species are represented, vol. iii., p. 100. And see Dr. Shaw on the animals mentioned in this chapter. *Travels*, p. 419, etc., 4to. edition; and when all these are consulted, the reader will see how little dependence can be placed on the most learned conjectures relative to these and the other animals mentioned in Scripture. One thing however is fully evident, viz., that the locust was eaten, not only in those ancient times, in the time of John Baptist, Matthew 3:4, but also in the present day. Dr. Shaw ate of them in Barbary “fried and salted,” and tells us that “they tasted very like crayfish.” They have been eaten in Africa, Greece, Syria, Persia, and throughout Asia; and whole tribes seem to have lived on them, and were hence called *acridophagoi*, or locust-eaters by the Greeks. See Strabo lib. xvi., and Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. xvii., c. 30.

Verse 27. Whatsoever goeth upon his paws— **כפיו** *cappaiv*, his palms or hands, probably referring to those animals whose feet resemble the hands and feet of the human being, such as apes, monkeys, and all creatures of that genus; together with bears, frogs, etc.

Verse 29. The weasel— **חלד** *choled*, from *chalad*, Syr., to creep in. Bochart conjectures, with great propriety, that the mole, not the weasel, is intended by the Hebrew word: its property of digging into the earth, and creeping or burrowing under the surface, is well known.

The mouse— **עחבר** *achbar*. Probably the large field rat, or what is called by the Germans the hamster, though every species of the *mus* genus may be here prohibited.

The tortoise— צב tsab. Most critics allow that the tortoise is not intended here, but rather the crocodile, the frog, or the toad. The frog is most probably the animal meant, and all other creatures of its kind.

Verse 30. The ferret— אנקה anakah, from אנך anak, to groan, to cry out: a species of lizard, which derives its name from its piercing, doleful cry. See Bochart, vol. ii., col. 1066.

The chameleon— כח coach. Bochart contends that this is the [A] waril or guaril, another species of lizard, which derives its name from its remarkable strength and vigor in destroying serpents, the Hebrew כח cach signifying to be strong, firm, vigorous: it is probably the same with the mongoose, a creature still well known in India, where it is often domesticated in order to keep the houses free from snakes, rats, mice, etc.

The lizard— לטאה letaah. Bochart contends that this also is a species of lizard, called by the Arabs [A] wahara, which creeps close to the ground, and is poisonous.

The snail— חמט chomet, another species of lizard, according to Bochart, called [A] huluka by the Arabians, which lives chiefly in the sand. — Vol. ii., col. 1075.

The mole.— תנשמת tinshameth, from נשם nasham, to breathe. Bochart seems to have proved that this is the chameleon, which has its Hebrew name from its wide gaping mouth, very large lungs, and its deriving its nourishment from small animals which float in the air, so that it has been conjectured by some to feed on the air itself. — Vol. iii., col. 1073. A bird of the same name is mentioned ver. 13, which Bochart supposes to be the night-owl. — Vol. iii., col. 286.

Verse 32. Any vessel of wood— Such as the wooden bowls still in use among the Arabs. Or raiment, or skin — any trunks or baskets covered with skins, another part of the furniture of an Arab tent; the goat-skins, in which they churn their milk, may be also intended. Or sack — any hair-cloth used for the purpose of transporting goods from place to place.

Verse 33. And every earthen vessel— Such pitchers as are commonly used for drinking out of, and for holding liquids. M. Deuteronomy la Roque

observes that hair-sacks, trunks, and baskets, covered with skin, are used among the travelling Arabs to carry their household utensils in, which are kettles or pots, great wooden bowls, hand-mills, and pitchers. It is very likely that these are nearly the same with those used by the Israelites in their journeyings in the wilderness, for the customs of these people do not change.

Verse 35. *Ranges for pots*— To understand this, we must observe that the Arabs dig a hole in their tent, about a foot and a half deep; three-fourths of this, says Rauwolff, they lay about with stones, and the fourth part is left open for the purpose of throwing in their fuel. This little temporary building is probably what is here designed by ranges for pots; and this was to be broken down when any unclean thing had fallen upon it. See Harmer, vol. 1., p. 464.

Verse 36. *A fountain or pit, etc.*— This must either refer to running water, the stream of which soon carries off all impurities, or to large reservoirs where the water soon purifies itself; the water in either which touched the unclean thing, being considered as impure, the rest of the water being clean.

Verse 37. *Any sowing seed*— If any part of an impure carcass fall accidentally on seed about to be sown, it shall not on that account be deemed unclean; but if the water put to the seed to prepare it for being sown, shall be touched by such impure carcass, the seed shall be considered as unclean, ver. 38. Probably this may be the meaning of these passages.

Verse 42. *Whatsoever goeth upon the belly*— In the word גַּהֹן *gahOn*, the *vau* holem, in most Hebrew Bibles, is much larger than the other letters; and a Masoretic note is added in the margin, which states that this is the middle letter of the law; and consequently this verse is the middle verse of the Pentateuch.

Whatsoever hath more feet— Than four; that is, all many-footed reptiles, as well as those which go upon the belly having no feet, such as serpents; besides the four-footed smaller animals mentioned above.

Verse 44. *Ye shall-sanctify yourselves*— Ye shall keep yourselves separate from all the people of the earth, that ye may be holy; for I am

holy. And this was the grand design of God in all these prohibitions and commands; for these external sanctifications were only the emblems of the internal purity which the holiness of God requires here, and without which none can dwell with him in glory hereafter. See at the conclusion of this chapter. THE contents of this chapter must furnish many profitable reflections to a pious mind. 1. From the great difficulty of ascertaining what animals are meant in this part of the law, we may at once see that the law itself must be considered as abrogated; for there is not a Jew in the universe who knows what the animals are, a very few excepted, which are intended by these Hebrew words; and therefore he may be repeatedly breaking this law by touching and being touched either by the animals themselves or their produce, such as hair, wool, fur, skin, intestines, differently manufactured, etc., etc. It therefore appears that this people have as little law as they have gospel. 2. While God keeps the eternal interests of man steadily in view, he does not forget his earthly comfort; he is at once solicitous both for the health of his body and his soul. He has not forbidden certain aliments because he is a Sovereign, but because he knew they would be injurious to the health and morals of his people. The close connection that subsists between the body and the soul we cannot fully comprehend; and as little can we comprehend the influence they have on each other. Many moral alterations take place in the mind in consequence of the influence of the bodily organs; and these latter are greatly influenced by the kind of ailment which the body receives. God knows what is in man, and he knows what is in all creatures; he has therefore graciously forbidden what would injure both body and mind, and commanded what is best calculated to be useful to both. Solid-footed animals, such as the horse, and many-toed animals, such as the cat, etc., are here prohibited. Beasts which have bifid or cloven hoofs, such as the ox and sheep, are considered as proper for food, and therefore commanded. The former are unclean, i. e., unwholesome, affording a gross nutriment, often the parent of scorbutic and scrofulous disorders; the latter clean, i. e., affording a copious and wholesome nutriment, and not laying the foundation of any disease. Ruminating animals, i. e., those which chew the cud, concoct their food better than the others which swallow it with little mastication, and therefore their flesh contains more of the nutritious juices, and is more easy of digestion, and consequently of assimilation to the solids and fluids of the human body; on this account they are termed clean,

i. e., peculiarly wholesome, and fit for food. The animals which do not ruminant do not concoct their food so well, and hence they abound with gross animal juices, which yield a comparatively unwholesome nutriment to the human system. Even the animals which have bifid hoofs but do not chew the cud, such as the swine, and those which chew the cud but are not bifid, such as the hare and rabbit, are by Him who knows all things forbidden, because he knew them to be comparatively innutritive. In all this God shows himself as the tender Father of a numerous family, pointing out to his inexperienced, froward, and ignorant children, those kinds of aliments which he knows will be injurious to their health and domestic happiness, and prohibiting them on pain of his highest displeasure. On the same ground he forbade all fish that have not both fins and scales, such as the conger, eel, etc., which abound in gross juices and fat which very few stomachs are able to digest. Who, for instance, that lives solely on swine's flesh, has pure blood and healthy juices? And is it not evident, in many cases, that the man partakes considerably of the nature of the brute on which he exclusively feeds? I could pursue this inquiry much farther, and bring many proofs founded on indisputable facts, but I forbear; for he who might stand most in need of caution, would be the first to take offense. 3. As the body exists only for the sake of the soul, and God feeds and nourishes it through the day of probation, that the soul may here be prepared for the kingdom of heaven; therefore he shows in the conclusion of these ordinances, that the grand scope and design of all was that they might be a holy people, and that they might resemble him who is a holy God. — GOD IS HOLY; and this is the eternal reason why all his people should be holy—should be purified from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. No faith in any particular creed, no religious observance, no acts of benevolence and charity, no mortification, attrition, or contrition, can be a substitute for this. We must be made partakers of the Divine nature. We must be saved from our sins—from the corruption that is in the world, and be made holy within and righteous without, or never see God. For this very purpose Jesus Christ lived, died, and revived, that he might purify us unto himself; that through faith in his blood our sins might be blotted out, and our souls restored to the image of God. — Reader, art thou hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Then blessed art thou, for thou shalt be filled

CHAPTER 12

Ordinances concerning the purification of women after child-birth, 1; after the birth of a son, who is to be circumcised the eighth day, 2, 3. The mother to be considered unclean for forty days, 4. After the birth of a daughter, fourscore days, 5. When the days of her purifying were ended, she was to bring a lamb for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle-dove for a sin-offering, 6, 7. If poor, and not able to bring a lamb, she was to bring either two turtle-doves or two young pigeons, 8.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 2. *If a woman have conceived*— In the extent mentioned here the ordinances of this chapter have little relation to us: and to inquire into their physical reasons, as far as they related to the Jews, could afford but little edification; and to make such a subject sufficiently plain would require such minute examination and circumstantial detail as could scarcely be proper for several readers. All that is necessary to be said the reader will find on ver. 4.

Verse 3. *And in the eighth day*— Before this time the child could scarcely be considered as having strength sufficient to bear the operation; after this time it was not necessary to delay it, as the child was not considered to be in covenant with God, and consequently not under the especial protection of the Divine providence and grace, till this rite had been performed. On circumcision see Clarke's note on "Genesis 17:10". Circumcision was to every man a constant, evident sign of the covenant into which he had entered with God, and of the moral obligations under which he was thereby laid. It was also a means of purity, and was especially necessary among a people naturally incontinent, and in a climate not peculiarly favorable to chastity. This is a light in which this subject should ever be viewed, and in which we see the reasonableness, propriety, expediency, and moral tendency of the ceremony.

Verse 4. *The blood of her purifying*— A few words will make this subject sufficiently plain. 1. God designs that the human female should

bring forth children. 2. That children should derive, under his providence, their being, all their solids and all their fluids, in a word, the whole mass of their bodies, from the substance of the mother. 3. For this purpose he has given to the body of the female an extra quantity of blood and nutritious juices. 4. Before pregnancy this superabundance is evacuated at periodical times. 5. In pregnancy, that which was formerly evacuated is retained for the formation and growth of the fetus, or the general strengthening of the system during the time of pregnancy. 6. After the birth of the child, for seven or fourteen days, more or less according to certain circumstances, that superabundance, no longer necessary for the growth of the child as before, continues to be evacuated: this was called the time of the female's purification among the Jews. 7. When the lacerated vessels are rejoined, this superfluity of blood is returned into the general circulation, and, by a wise law of the Creator, becomes principally useful to the breasts, and helps in the production of milk for the nourishment of the new-born infant. 8. And thus it continues till the weaning of the child, or renewed pregnancy takes place. Here is a series of mercies and wise providential regulations which cannot be known without being admired, and which should be known that the great Creator and Preserver may have that praise from his creatures which his wonderful working demands. The term purifying here does not imply that there is any thing impure in the blood at this or the other times referred to above; on the contrary, the blood is pure, perfectly so, as to its quality, but is excessive in quantity for the reasons above assigned. The idle tales found in certain works relative to the infectious nature of this fluid, and of the female in such times are as impious as they are irrational and absurd.

Verse 6. *When the days of her purifying*— It is not easy to account for the difference in the times of purification, after the birth of a male and female child. After the birth of a boy the mother was considered unclean for forty days; after the birth of a girl, four-score days. There is probably no physical reason for this difference, and it is difficult to assign a political one. Some of the ancient physicians assert that a woman is in the order of nature much longer in completely recovering after the birth of a female than after the birth of a male child. This assertion is not justified either by observation or matter of fact. Others think that the difference in the time of purification after the birth of a male and female is intended to mark the

inferiority of the female sex. This is a miserable reason, and pitifully supported.

She shall bring-a burnt-offering, and-a sin-offering— It is likely that all these ordinances were intended to show man's natural impurity and original defilement by sin, and the necessity of an atonement to cleanse the soul from unrighteousness.

Verse 8. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons— As the Virgin Mary brought only the latter, hence it is evident that she was not able, i. e., she was not rich enough to provide the former; for such a holy woman would not have brought the less offering had she been capable of bringing the greater. How astonishing is this! The only heir to the throne of David was not able to bring a lamb to offer in sacrifice to God! How abominable must SIN be when it required him who was in the form of God thus to empty and to humble himself, yea, even to the death of the cross, in order to make an atonement for it, and to purify the soul from all defilement!

The priest shall make an atonement for her— Every act of man is sinful, but such as proceed from the influence of the grace and mercy of God. Her sorrow in conception, and her pain in bringing forth children, reminded the woman of her original offense; an offense which deserved death, an offense which she could not expiate, and for which a sacrifice must be offered: and in reference to better things the life of an animal must be offered as a ransom for her life. And being saved in childbed, though she deserved to die, she is required, as soon as the days of her separation were ended, to bring a sacrifice according to her ability to the priest, that he might offer it to God as an atonement for her. Thus, wherever God keeps up the remembrance of sin, he keeps up also the memorial of sacrifice, to show that the state of a sinner, howsoever deplorable, is not hopeless, for that he himself has found out a ransom. Every where, in the law and in the Gospel, in every ordinance and in every ceremony, we may see both the justice and the mercy of God. Hence, while we have the knowledge of our sin we have also the knowledge of our cure. Reader, whilst thou art confessing thy own misery do not forget the Lord's mercy; and remember, he saves to the uttermost all that come through Christ unto him.

CHAPTER 13

Laws relative to the leprosy. It is to be known by a rising in the flesh, a scab, or a bright spot, 1, 2. When the priest sees these signs he shall pronounce the man unclean, infected with the leprosy, and unfit for society, 3. Dubious or equivocal signs of this disorder, and how the person is to be treated in whom they appear, 4-8. In what state of this disorder the priest may pronounce a man clean or unclean, 9-13. Of the raw flesh, the sign of the unclean leprosy, 14, 15. Of the white flesh, the sign of the leprosy called clean, 16, 17. Of the leprosy which succeeds a boil, 18-20. Equivocal marks relative to this kind of leprosy, 21, 22. Of the burning boil, 23. Of the leprosy arising out of the burning boil, 24, 25. Equivocal marks relative to this kind of leprosy, 26-28. Of the plague on the head or in the beard, 29. Of the scall, and how it is to be treated, 30-37. Of the plague of the bright white spots, 38, 39. Of the bald head, 40, 41. Of the white reddish sore in the bald head, 42-44. The leper shall rend his clothes, put a patch on his upper lip, and cry unclean, 45. He shall be obliged to avoid society, and live by himself without the camp, 46. Of the garments infected by the leprosy, and the signs of this infection, 47-52. Equivocal marks relative to this infection, and how the garment is to be treated, by washing or by burning, 53-58. Conclusion relative to the foregoing particulars, 59.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 2. The plague of leprosy— This dreadful disorder has its name leprosy, from the Greek **λεπροα**, from **λεπις**, a scale, because in this disease the body was often covered with thin white scales, so as to give it the appearance of snow. Hence it is said of the hand of Moses, Exodus 4:6, that it was leprous as snow; and of Miriam, Numbers 12:10, that she became leprous, as white as snow; and of Gehazi, 2 Kings 5:27, that, being judicially struck with the disease of Naaman, he went out from Elisha's presence a leper as white as snow. See Clarke's note on "Exodus 4:6". In Hebrew this disease is termed **צִרְעָת** tsaraath, from **צָרַע** tsara, to smite or

strike; but the root in Arabic signifies to cast down or prostrate, and in Aethiopic, to cause to cease, because, says Stockius, “it prostrates the strength of man, and obliges him to cease from all work and labor.” There were three signs by which the leprosy was known. 1. A bright spot. 2. A rising (enamelling) of the surface. 3. A scab; the enamelled place producing a variety of layers, or stratum super stratum, of these scales. The account given by Mr. Maundrell of the appearance of several persons whom he saw infected with this disorder in Palestine, will serve to show, in the clearest light, its horrible nature and tendency. “When I was in the Holy Land,” says he, in his letter to the Rev. Mr. Osborn, Fellow of Exeter College, “I saw several that labored under Gehazi’s distemper; particularly at Sichem, (now Naplosu,) there were no less than ten that came begging to us at one time. Their manner is to come with small buckets in their hands, to receive the alms of the charitable; their touch being still held infectious, or at least unclean. The distemper, as I saw it on them, was quite different from what I have seen it in England; for it not only defiles the whole surface of the body with a foul scurf, but also deforms the joints of the body, particularly those of the wrists and ankles, making them swell with a gouty scrofulous substance, very loathsome to look on. I thought their legs like those of old battered horses, such as are often seen in drays in England. The whole distemper, indeed, as it there appeared, was so noisome, that it might well pass for the utmost corruption of the human body on this side the grave. And certainly the inspired penman could not have found out a fitter emblem, whereby to express the uncleanness and odiousness of vice.”-Maundrell’s Travels. Letters at the end. The reader will do well to collate this account with that given from Dr. Mead; See the note on “Exodus 4:6”.

Verse 3. *The priest shall pronounce him unclean.* — וטמא אהו

vetimme otho; literally, shall pollute him, i. e., in the Hebrew idiom, shall declare or pronounce him polluted; and in ver. 23, it is said, the priest shall pronounce him clean, וטהרו הכהן vetiharo hacohen, the priest shall cleanse him, i. e., declare him clean. In this phrase we have the proper meaning of Matthew 16:19: Whatsoever ye bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. By which our Lord intimates that the disciples, from having the keys, i. e., the true knowledge of the doctrine, of the kingdom of heaven, should, from

particular evidences, be at all times able to distinguish between the clean and the unclean, the sincere and the hypocrite; and pronounce a judgment as infallible as the priest did in the case of the leprosy, from the tokens already specified. And as this binding and loosing, or pronouncing fit or unfit for fellowship with the members of Christ, must in the case of the disciples be always according to the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, the sentence should be considered as proceeding immediately from thence, and consequently as Divinely ratified. The priest polluted or cleansed, i. e., declared the man clean or unclean, according to signs well known and infallible. The disciples or ministers of Christ bind or loose, declare to be fit or unfit for Church fellowship, according to unequivocal evidences of innocence or guilt. In the former case, the priest declared the person fit or unfit for civil society; in the latter, the ministers of Christ declare the person against whom the suspicion of guilt is laid, fit or unfit for continued association with the Church of God. The office was the same in both, a declaration of the truth, not from any power that they possessed of cleansing or polluting, of binding or of loosing, but by the knowledge they gained from the infallible signs and evidences produced on the respective cases.

Verse 13. *If the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean*— Why is it that the partial leper was pronounced unclean, and the person totally covered with the disease clean? This was probably owing to a different species or stage of the disease; the partial disease was contagious, the total not contagious. That there are two different species or degrees of the same disease described here, is sufficiently evident. In one, the body was all covered with a white enamelled scurf; in the other, there was a quick raw flesh in the risings. On this account the one might be deemed unclean, i. e., contagious, the other not; for contact with the quick raw flesh would be more likely to communicate the disease than the touch of the hard dry scurf. The ichor proceeding from the former, when brought into contact with the flesh of another, would soon be taken into the constitution by means of the absorbent vessels; but where the whole surface was perfectly dry, the absorbent vessels of another person coming in contact with the diseased man could imbibe nothing, and therefore there was comparatively no danger of infection. Hence that species or stage of the disease that exhibited the quick raw rising was capable of conveying

the infection for the reasons already assigned, when the other was not. Dr. Mead thus accounts for the circumstance mentioned in the text. See on ver. 18. As the leprosy infected bodies, clothes, and even the walls of houses, is it not rational to suppose that it was occasioned by a species of animalcula or vermin burrowing under the skin? Of this opinion there are some learned supporters.

Verse 18. *In the skin thereof, was a boil*— Scheuchzer supposes this and the following verse to speak of phlegmonic, erysipelatous, gangrenous, and phagedenic ulcers, all of which were subjected to the examination of the priest, to see whether they were infectious, or whether the leprosy might not take its origin from them. A person with any sore or disposition to contagion was more likely to catch the infection by contact with the diseased person, than he was whose skin was whole and sound, and his habit good.

Verse 29. *A plague upon the head or the beard*— This refers to a disease in which, according to the Jews, the hair either on the head or the chin dropped out by the roots.

Verse 33. *The scall shall he not shave*— Lest the place should be irritated and inflamed, and assume in consequence other appearances besides those of a leprous infection; in which case the priest might not be able to form an accurate judgment.

Verse 45. *His clothes shall be rent, etc.*— The leprous person is required to be as one that mourned for the dead, or for some great and public calamity. He was to have his clothes rent in token of extreme sorrow; his head was to be made bare, the ordinary bonnet or turban being omitted; and he was to have a covering upon his upper lip, his jaws being tied up With a linen cloth, after the same manner in which the Jews bind up the dead, which custom is still observed among the Jews in Barbary on funeral occasions: a custom which, from Ezekiel 24:17, we learn had prevailed very anciently among the Jews in Palestine. He was also to cry, Unclean, unclean, in order to prevent any person from coming near him, lest the contagion might be thus communicated and diffused through society; and hence the Targumist render it, Be not ye made unclean! Be not ye made unclean! A caution to others not to come near him.

Verse 47. *The garment also*— The whole account here seems to intimate that the garment was fretted by this contagion; and hence it is likely that it was occasioned by a species of small animals, which we know to be the cause of the itch; these, by breeding in the garments, must necessarily multiply their kind, and fret the garments, i. e., corrode a portion of the finer parts, after the manner of moths, for their nourishment. See ver. 52.

Verse 52. *He shall therefore burn that garment*— There being scarcely any means of radically curing the infection. It is well known that the garments infected by the psora, or itch animal, have been known to communicate the disease even six or seven years after the first infection. This has been also experienced by the sorters of rags at some paper mills.

Verse 54. *He shall shut it up seven days more*— To give time for the spreading of the contagion, if it did exist there; that there might be the most unequivocal marks and proofs that the garment was or was not infected.

Verse 58. *It shall be washed the second time*— According to the Jews the first washing was to put away the plague, the second to cleanse it. BOTH among Jews and Gentiles the leprosy has been considered as a most expressive emblem of sin, the properties and circumstances of the one pointing out those of the other. The similitude or parallel has been usually run in the following manner:- 1. The leprosy began with a spot, a simple hidden infection being the cause. 2. This spot was very conspicuous, and argued the source whence it proceeded. 3. It was of a diffusive nature, soon spreading over the whole body. 4. It communicated its infectious nature, not only to the whole of the person's body, but also to his clothes and habitation. 5. It rendered the infected person loathsome, unfit for and dangerous to society because of its infectious nature. 6. The person infected was obliged to be separated from society, both religious and civil; to dwell by himself without the camp or city, and hold commerce with none. 7. He was obliged to proclaim his own uncleanness, publicly acknowledge his defilement, and, sensible of his plague, continue humbled and abased before God and man. How expressive all these are of the nature of sin and the state of a sinner, a spiritual mind will at once perceive. 1. The original infection or corruption of nature is the grand hidden cause, source, and spring of all transgression. 2. Iniquity is a seed that has its growth, gradual increase, and perfection. As the various powers of the

mind are developed, so it diffuses itself, infecting every passion and appetite through their whole extent and operation. 3. As it spreads in the mind, so it diffuses itself through the life; every action partaking of its influence, till the whole conduct becomes a tissue of transgression, because every imagination of the thoughts of a sinner's heart is only evil continually, Genesis 6. This is the natural state of man. 4. As a sinner is infected, so is he infectious; by his precept and example he spreads the infernal contagion wherever he goes; joining with the multitude to do evil, strengthening and being strengthened in the ways of sin and death, and becoming especially a snare and a curse to his own household. 5. That a sinner is abominable in the sight of God and of all good men, that he is unfit for the society of the righteous, and that he cannot, as such, be admitted into the kingdom of God, needs no proof. 6. It is owing to the universality of the evil that sinners are not expelled from society as the most dangerous of all monsters, and obliged to live without having any commerce with their fellow creatures. Ten lepers could associate together, because partaking of the same infection: and civil society is generally maintained, because composed of a leprous community. 7. He that wishes to be saved from his sins must humble himself before God and man, sensible of his own sore and the plague of his heart; confess his transgressions; look to God for a cure, from whom alone it can be received; and bring that Sacrifice by which alone the guilt can be taken away, and his soul be purified from all unrighteousness. See the conclusion of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 14

Introduction to the sacrifices and ceremonies to be used in cleansing the leper, 1-3. Two living birds, cedar-wood, scarlet, and hyssop, to be brought for him who was to be cleansed, 4. One of the birds to be killed, 5; and the living bird, with the cedar-wood, scarlet, and hyssop, to be dipped in the blood, and to be sprinkled on him who had been infected with the leprosy, 6, 7; after which he must wash his clothes, shave his head, eye brows, beard, etc., bathe himself, tarry abroad seven days, 8, 9; on the eighth day he must bring two he-lambs, one ewe lamb, a tenth deal of flour, and a log of oil, 10; which the priest was to present as a trespass-offering, wave-offering, and sin-offering before the Lord, 11-13. Afterwards he was to sprinkle both the blood and oil on the person to be cleansed, 14-18. The atonement made by these offerings, 19, 20. If the person were poor, one lamb, with the flour and oil, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, were only required, 21, 22. These to be presented, and the blood and oil applied as before, 23-32. Laws and ordinances relative to houses infected by the leprosy, 33-48. An atonement to be made in order to cleanse the house, similar to that made for the healed leper, 49-53. A summary of this and the preceding chapter, relative to leprous persons, garments, and houses, 54-56. The end for which these different laws were given, 57.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 3. *The priest shall go forth out of the camp*— As the leper was separated from the people, and obliged, because of his uncleanness, to dwell without the camp, and could not be admitted till the priest had declared that he was clean; hence it was necessary that the priest should go out and inspect him, and, if healed, offer for him the sacrifices required, in order to his re-admission to the camp. As the priest alone had authority to declare a person clean or unclean, it was necessary that the healed person should show himself to the priest, that he might make a declaration that he was clean and fit for civil and religious society, without which, in no case,

could he be admitted; hence, when Christ cleansed the lepers, Matthew 8:2-4, he commanded them to go and show themselves to the priest, etc.

Verse 4. *Two birds alive and clean, etc.*— Whether these birds were sparrows, or turtledoves, or pigeons, we know not; probably any kind of clean bird, or bird proper to be eaten, might be used on this occasion, though it is more likely that turtle-doves or pigeons were employed, because these appear to have been the only birds offered in sacrifice. Of the cedarwood, hyssop, clean bird, and scarlet wool or fillet, were made an aspergillum, or instrument to sprinkle with. The cedar-wood served for the handle, the hyssop and living bird were attached to it by means of the scarlet wool or crimson fillet. The bird was so bound to this handle as that its tail should be downwards, in order to be dipped into the blood of the bird that had been killed. The whole of this made an instrument for the sprinkling of this blood, and when this business was done, the living bird was let loose, and permitted to go whithersoever it would. In this ceremony, according to some rabbins, “the living bird signified that the dead flesh of the leper was restored to soundness; the cedar-wood, which is not easily corrupted, that he was healed of his putrefaction; the scarlet thread, wool, or fillet, that he was restored to his good complexion; and the hyssop, which was purgative and odoriferous, that the disease was completely removed, and the bad scent that accompanied it entirely gone.” Ainsworth, Dodd, and others, have given many of these rabbinical conceits. Of all these purifications, and their accompanying circumstances, we may safely say, because authorized by the New Testament so to do, that they pointed out the purification of the soul through the atonement and Spirit of Christ; but to run analogies between the type and the thing typified is difficult, and precarious. The general meaning and design we sufficiently understand; the particulars are not readily ascertainable, and consequently of little importance; had they been otherwise, they would have been pointed out.

Verse 5. *Over running water.*— Literally, living, that is, spring water. The meaning appears to be this: Some water (about a quarter of a log, an eggshell and a half full, according to the rabbins) was taken from a spring, and put into a clean earthen vessel, and they killed the bird over this water, that the blood might drop into it; and in this blood and water mixed, they dipped the instrument before described, and sprinkled it seven times upon

the person who was to be cleansed. The living or spring water was chosen because it was purer than what was taken from pits or wells, the latter being often in a putrid or corrupt state; for in a ceremony of purifying or cleansing, every thing must be as pure and perfect as possible.

Verse 7. *Shall let the living bird loose*— The Jews teach that wild birds were employed on this occasion, no tame or domestic animal was used. Mr. Ainsworth piously conjectures that the living and dead birds were intended to represent the death and resurrection of Christ, by which an atonement was made to purify the soul from its spiritual leprosy. The bird let loose bears a near analogy to the scapegoat. See chap. 16.

Verse 8. *And shave off all his hair*— That the water by which he was to be washed should reach every part of his body, that he might be cleansed from whatever defilement might remain on any part of the surface of his body. The Egyptian priests shaved the whole body every third day, to prevent all manner of defilement.

Verse 10. *Two he-lambs*— One for a trespass-offering, ver. 12, the other for a burnt-offering, ver. 19, 20.

One ewe-lamb— This was for a sin-offering ver. 19. Three tenth deals— Three parts of an ephah, or three omers; See all these measures explained, “Exodus 16:16”. The three tenth deals of flour were for a minchah, meat or gratitude-offering, ver. 20. The sin-offering was for his impurity; the trespass-offering for his transgression; and the gratitude-offering for his gracious cleansing. These constituted the offering which each was ordered to bring to the priest; see Matthew 8:4.

Verse 12. *Wave-offering*— See Exodus 29:27, and chap. vii., where the reader will find an ample account of all the various offerings and sacrifices used among the Jews.

Verse 14. *Upon the tip of the right ear, etc.*— See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 29:20”.

Verse 21. *And if he be poor-he shall take one lamb*— There could be no cleansing without a sacrifice. On this ground the apostle has properly observed that all things under the law are purged with blood; and that without shedding of blood there is no remission. Even if the person be

poor, he must provide one lamb; this could not be dispensed with:-so every soul to whom the word of Divine revelation comes, must bring that Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. There is no redemption but in his blood.

Verse 34. *When ye be come into the land-and I put the plague of leprosy*— It was probably from this text that the leprosy has been generally considered to be a disease inflicted immediately by God himself; but it is well known that in Scripture God is frequently represented as doing what, in the course of his providence, he only permits or suffers to be done. It is supposed that the infection of the house, as well as of the person and the garments, proceeded from animalcula. See Clarke note on “Leviticus 13:47”, and “Leviticus 13:52”.

Verse 45. *He shall break down the house*— “On the suspicion of a house being infected, the priest examined it, and ordered it to be shut up seven days; if he found the plague, or signs of the plague, (hollow streaks, greenish or reddish,) were not spread, he commanded it to be shut up seven days more. On the thirteenth day he revisited it; and if he found the infected place dim, or gone away, he took out that part of the wall, carried it out to an unclean place, mended the wall, and caused the whole house to be new plastered. It was then shut up a third seven days, and he came on the nineteenth, and if he found that the plague was broken out anew, he ordered the house to be pulled down.” See Ainsworth. From all this may we not learn a lesson of instruction? If the means made use of by God and his ministers for the conversion of a sinner be, through his willful obstinacy, rendered of no avail; if by his evil practices he trample under foot the blood of the covenant wherewith he might have been sanctified, and do despite to the Spirit of God; then God will pull down his house-dislodge his soul from its earthly tabernacle, consign the house, the body, to corruption, and the spirit to the perdition of ungodly men. Reader, see well how it stands with thy soul. God is not mocked: what a man soweth, that shall he reap.

Verse 53. *He shall let go the living bird*— This might as well be called the scape-bird; as the goat, in chap. 16., is called the scape-goat. The rites are similar in both cases, and probably had nearly the same meaning. We have already taken occasion to observe (see the end of the preceding

chapter) that the leprosy was strongly emblematical of sin; to which we may add here:- 1. That the leprosy was a disease generally acknowledged to be incurable by any human means; and therefore the Jews did not attempt to cure it. What is directed to be done here was not in order to cure the leper, but to declare him cured and fit for society. In like manner the contagion of sin, its guilt and its power, can only be removed by the hand of God; all means, without his especial influence, can be of no avail. 2. The body must be sprinkled and washed, and a sacrifice offered for the sin of the soul, before the leper could be declared to be clean. To cleanse the spiritual leper, the Lamb of God must be slain, and the sprinkling of his blood be applied. Without the shedding of this blood there is no remission. 3. When the leper was cleansed, he was obliged to show himself to the priest, whose province it was to pronounce him clean, and declare him fit for intercourse with civil and religious society. When a sinner is converted from the error of his ways, it is the business, as it is the prerogative, of the ministers of Christ, after having duly acquainted themselves with every circumstance, to declare the person converted from sin to holiness, to unite him with the people of God, and admit him to all the ordinances which belong to the faithful. 4. When the leper was cleansed, he was obliged by the law to offer a gift unto the Lord for his healing, as a proof of his gratitude, and an evidence of his obedience. When a sinner is restored to the Divine favor, he should offer continually the sacrifice of a grateful heart, and, in willing obedience, show forth the virtues of Him who has called him from darkness and wretchedness to marvelous light and happiness. Reader, such was the leprosy, its destructive nature and consequences, and the means of removing it; such is the spiritual evil represented by it, such its consequences, and such the means by which alone it can be removed. The disease of sin, inflicted by the devil, can only be cured by the power of God. 1. Art thou a leper? Do the spots of this spiritual infection begin to appear on thee? 2. Art thou young, and only entering into the ways of the world and sin? Stop! bad habits are more easily conquered to-day than they will be tomorrow. 3. Art thou stricken in years, and rooted in transgression? How kind is thy Maker to have preserved thee alive so long! Turn from thy transgressions, humble thy soul before him, confess thine iniquity and implore forgiveness. Seek, and thou shalt find. Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world! 4. Hast thou been cleansed, and hast not

returned to give glory to God? hast not continued in the truth, serving thy Maker and Savior with a loving and obedient heart? How cutting is that word, Were there not TEN cleansed? but where are the NINE? Thou art probably one of them. Be confounded at thy ingratitude, and distressed for thy backsliding; and apply a second time for the healing efficacy of the great Atonement. Turn, thou backslider; for he is married unto thee, and will heal thy backslidings, and will love thee freely. Amen. So be it, Lord Jesus!

CHAPTER 15

Laws concerning uncleanness of men, 1-12. Mode of cleansing, 13-15. Of uncleanness, accidental and casual, 16-15. Laws concerning the uncleanness of women, 10-27. Mode of cleansing, 28-30. Recapitulation of the ordinances relative to the preceding cases, 31-33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 2. When any man hath a running issue— The cases of natural uncleanness, both of men and women, mentioned in this chapter, taken in a theological point of view, are not of such importance to us as to render a particular description necessary, the letter of the text being, in general, plain enough. The disease mentioned in the former part of this chapter appears to some to have been either the consequence of a very bad infection, or of some criminal indulgence; for they find that it might be communicated in a variety of ways, which they imagine are here distinctly specified. On this ground the person was declared unclean, and all commerce and connection with him strictly forbidden. The Septuagint version renders צִיָּבָה *hazzab*, the man with the issue, by ο γονορροϋς, the man with a gonorrhoea, no less than nine times in this chapter; and that it means what in the present day is commonly understood by that disorder, taken not only in its mild but in its worst sense, they think there is little room to doubt. Hence they infer that a disease which is supposed to be comparatively recent in Europe, has existed almost from time immemorial in the Asiatic countries; that it ever has been, in certain measures, what it is now; and that it ever must be the effect of sensual indulgence, and illicit and extravagant intercourse between the sexes. The disgraceful disorder referred to here is a foul blot which the justice of God in the course of providence has made in general the inseparable consequent of these criminal indulgences, and serves in some measure to correct and restrain the vice itself. In countries where public prostitution was permitted, where it was even a religious ceremony among those who were idolaters, this disease must necessarily have been frequent and prevalent. When the

pollutions and libertinism of former times are considered, it seems rather strange that medical men should have adopted the opinion, and consumed so much time in endeavoring to prove it, viz., that the disease is modern. It must have existed, in certain measures, ever since prostitution prevailed in the world; and this has been in every nation of the earth from its earliest era. That the Israelites might have received it from the Egyptians, and that it must, through the Baal-peor and Ashteroth abominations which they learned and practiced, have prevailed among the Moabites, etc., there can be little reason to doubt. Supposing this disease to be at all hinted at here, the laws and ordinances enjoined were at once wisely and graciously calculated to remove and prevent it. By contact, contagion of every kind is readily communicated; and to keep the whole from the diseased must be essential to the check and eradication of a contagious disorder. This was the wise and grand object of this enlightened Legislator in the ordinances which he lays down in this chapter. I grant, however, that it was probably of a milder kind in ancient times; that it has gained strength and virulence by continuance; and that, associated with some foreign causes, it became greatly exacerbated in Europe about 1493, the time in which some have supposed it first began to exist, though there are strong evidences of it in this country ever since the eleventh century.

Verse 11. *And whomsoever he toucheth*— Here we find that the saliva, sitting on the same seat, lying on the same bed, riding on the same saddle, or simple contact, was sufficient to render the person unclean, meaning, possibly, in certain cases, to communicate the disorder; and it is well known that in all these ways the contagion of this disorder may be communicated. Is it not even possible that the effluvia from the body of an infected person may be the means of communicating the disease? Sydenham expressly says that it may be communicated by lactation, handling, the saliva, sweat, and by the breath itself, as well as by those grosser means of which there is no question. But the term unclean, in this and the following cases, is generally understood in a mere legal sense, the rendering a person unfit for sacred ordinances. And as there was a mild kind of gonorrhoea that was brought on by excessive fatigue and the like, it may be that kind only which the law has in view in the above ordinances.

Verse 18. *They shall both bathe themselves*— What a wonderful tendency had these ordinances to prevent all excesses! The pains which such

persons must take, the separations which they must observe, and the privations which, in consequence, they must be exposed to in the way of commerce, traffic, etc., would prevent them from making an unlawful use of lawful things.

Verse 24. The common sense of all mankind has led them to avoid the gross impropriety referred to in this verse; and it has been a general opinion, that off-spring obtained in this way has been infected with leprous, scrofulous, and other deeply radicated diseases, from which they and their posterity have been scarcely ever freed. In chap. 20:18, persons guilty of this are condemned to death; here only to a seven days' separation; because, in the former case, Moses speaks of the act when both the man and woman were acquainted with the situation: in the latter, he speaks of a case where the circumstance was not known till afterwards; at least, so it appears these two places should be understood, so as to be reconciled.

Verse 29. *Two turtles, or two young pigeons*— In all these cases moral pollution was ever considered as being less or more present, as even such infirmities sprang from the original defection of man. On these accounts sacrifices must be offered; and in the case of the woman, one of the birds above mentioned must be sacrificed as a sin-offering, the other as a burnt-offering, ver. 30.

Verse 31. *Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness*— By this separation the cause became less frequent, and the contagion, if it did exist, was prevented from spreading. So pest-houses and fever-wards are constructed for the purpose of separating the infected from the sound; and thus contagion is lessened, and its diffusion prevented.

That they die not— That life may be prolonged by these prudential cares; and that he who is morally and legally unclean, may not presume to enter into the tabernacle of God till purified, lest he provoke Divine justice to consume him, while attempting to worship with a polluted mind and impure hands. 1. How unpromising and how forbidding, at the first view, is this chapter! and yet how full of wise, humane, and moral regulations, manifesting at once the wisdom and kindness of the great Legislator! Every word of God is pure in itself, and of great importance to us. He who

cannot derive instruction from the chapter before him, and be led by a proper consideration of its contents to adore the wisdom and goodness of God, must have either a very stupid or a very vitiated mind. 2. In all these ordinances we may plainly see that God has purity of heart continually in view—that the soul may be holy, he cuts off the occasions of sin; and that men may be obliged to keep within due bounds, and possess their vessels in sanctification and honor, he hedges up their way with briars and thorns, and renders transgression painful, shameful, and expensive. 3. Preventing grace is not less necessary than that which saves and which preserves. These three chapters, avoided and neglected by most, contain lessons of instruction for all; and though many things contained in them belong exclusively to the Jewish people as to the letter, yet in their spirit and gracious design they form a part of those revealed things which are for us and for our children; and although they cannot be made the subject of public oral instruction, yet they are highly necessary to be known, and hence the advantage of reading the Scriptures in regular order in private. May we read so as to understand, and practice what we know, that, being wise unto salvation, we may walk as children of the light and of the day, in whom there shall be no occasion of stumbling!

CHAPTER 16

The solemn yearly expiation for the high priest, who must not come at all times into the holy place, 1, 2. He must take a bullock for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering, bathe himself, and be dressed in his sacerdotal robes, 3, 4. He shall take two goats, one of which is to be determined by lot to be a sacrifice; the other to be a scapegoat, 5-10. He shall offer a bullock for himself and for his family, 11-14. And shall kill the goat as a sin-offering for the people, and sprinkle its blood upon the mercy-seat, and hallow the altar of burnt-offerings, 15-19. The scapegoat shall be then brought, on the head of which he shall lay his hands, and confess the iniquities of the children of Israel; after which the goat shall be permitted to escape to the wilderness, 20-22. After this Aaron shall bathe himself, and make a burnt-offering for himself and for the people, 23-28. This is to be an everlasting statute, and the day on which the atonement is to be made shall be a Sabbath, or day of rest, through all their generations, 29-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. *After the death of the two sons of Aaron*— It appears from this verse that the natural place of this chapter is immediately after the tenth, where probably it originally stood; but the transposition, if it did take place, must be very ancient, as all the versions acknowledge this chapter in the place in which it now stands.

Verse 2. *That he come not at all times into the holy place*— By the holy place we are to understand here what is ordinarily called the Holy of Holies, or most holy place; that place within the veil where the ark of the covenant, etc., were laid up; and where God manifested his presence between the cherubim. In ordinary cases the high priest could enter this place only once in the year, that is, on the day of annual atonement; but in extraordinary cases he might enter more frequently, viz., while in the wilderness, in decamping and encamping, he must enter to take down or adjust the things; and on solemn pressing public occasions, he was obliged

to enter in order to consult the Lord: but he never entered without the deepest reverence and due preparation. That it may appear that the grand subject of this chapter, the ordinance of the scape-goat, typified the death and resurrection of Christ, and the atonement thereby made, I beg leave to refer to Hebrews 9:7-12, and 24-26, which I shall here transcribe, because it is a key to the whole of this chapter. “Into the second [tabernacle] went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come, a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the BLOOD of GOATS and CALVES, but by his OWN BLOOD; he entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; (for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world;) but now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared TO PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF.”

Verse 3. *With a young bullock for a sin-offering*— The bullock was presented as a sin-offering for himself, his family, the whole priesthood, and probably the Levites. The ram was for a burnt-offering, to signify that he and his associates were wholly consecrated, and to be wholly employed in this work of the ministry. The ceremonies with which these two sacrifices were accompanied are detailed in the following verses.

Verse 4. *He shall put on the holy linen coat*— He was not to dress in his pontifical garments, but in the simple sacerdotal vestments, or those of the Levites, because it was a day of humiliation; and as he was to offer sacrifices for his own sins, it was necessary that he should appear in habits suited to the occasion. Hence he has neither the robe, the ephod, the

breastplate, the mitre, etc.; these constituted his dress of dignity as the high priest of God, ministering for others and the representative of Christ: but now he appears, before God as a sinner, offering an atonement for his transgressions, and his garments are those of humiliation.

Verse 7. *And he shall take the two goats*— It is allowed on all hands that this ceremony, taken in all its parts, pointed out the Lord Jesus dying for our sins and rising again for our justification; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. Two goats are brought, one to be slain as a sacrifice for sin, the other to have the transgressions of the people confessed over his head, and then to be sent away into the wilderness. The animal by this act was represented as bearing away or carrying off the sins of the people. The two goats made only one sacrifice, yet only one of them was slain. One animal could not point out both the Divine and human nature of Christ, nor show both his death and resurrection, for the goat that was killed could not be made alive. The Divine and human natures in Christ were essential to the grand expiation: yet the human nature alone suffered, for the Divine nature could not suffer; but its presence in the human nature, while agonizing unto death, stamped those agonies, and the consequent death, with infinite merit. The goat therefore that was slain prefigured his human nature and its death; the goat that escaped pointed out his resurrection. The one shows the atonement for sin, as the ground of justification; the other Christ's victory, and the total removal of sin in the sanctification of the soul. Concerning these ceremonies we shall see farther particulars as we proceed. According to Maimonides fifteen beasts were offered on this day. "The daily, or morning and evening sacrifice, was offered as usual: besides a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs, all burnt-offerings; and a goat for a sin-offering, which was eaten in the evening. Then a bullock for a sin-offering, and this they burnt; and a ram for a burnt-offering: these both for the high priest. Then the ram for the consecration, (see ver. 5) which is called the people's ram. They brought also for the congregation two he-goats; the one for a sin-offering, the other for a scape-goat. Thus all the beasts offered on this great solemn day were FIFTEEN: the two daily sacrifices, one bullock, two rams, and seven lambs: all of these burnt-offerings. Two goats for sin-offerings; one offered without and eaten on the evening, the other offered within and burnt; and one bullock for a sin-offering for the high priest. The service of all these

fifteen beasts is performed on this day by the high priest only.” See Maimonides and Ainsworth on the place.

Verse 8. Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats— The Jews inform us that there were two lots made either of wood, stone, or any kind of metal. On one was written לשם לֶשֶׁם LASHSEM, for the NAME, i. e., יהוה יְהוָה JEHOVAH, which the Jews will neither write nor pronounce: on the other was written לעזאזל לֶעֶזְאֵזֶל LAAZAZEL, for the SCAPE-GOAT: then they put the two lots into a vessel which was called קלפי קַלְפֵי kalpey, the goats standing with their faces towards the west. Then the priest came, and the goats stood before him, one on the right hand and the other on the left; the kalpey was then shaken, and the priest put in both his hands and brought out a lot in each: that which was in his right hand he laid on the goat that was on his right, and that in his left hand he laid on the goat that was on his left; and according to what was written on the lots, the scape-goat and the goat for sacrifice were ascertained. See the Mishna, in Tract. Yoma. The determining this solemn business by lot, the disposal of which is with the Lord, Proverbs 16:33, shows that God alone was to select and point out the person by whom this great atonement was to be made; hence he says: Behold I lay in Zion a stone, elect (that is, chosen by himself) and precious — of infinite value.

Verse 10. To be the scape-goat— עזאזל עֶזְאֵזֶל azazel, from עז עֵז az, a goat, and אזל אָזַל azal, to dismiss; the dismissed or sent away goat, to distinguish it from the goat that was to be offered in sacrifice. Most ancient nations had vicarious sacrifices, to which they transferred by certain rites and ceremonies the guilt of the community at large, in the same manner in which the scapegoat was used by the Jews. The white bull that was sacrificed by the Egyptians to their god Apis was of this kind; they cut off the head of the victim which they had sacrificed, and after having loaded it with execrations, “that if there be any evil hanging over them or the land of Egypt, it may be poured out upon that head,” they either sold it to the Greeks or threw it into the Nile. — See HEROD. Euterp., p. 104, edit. Gale. Petronius Arbiter says that it was a custom among the ancient inhabitants of Marseilles, whenever they were afflicted by any pestilence, to take one of the poorer citizens who offered himself for the purpose, and having fed him a whole year with the purest and best food, they adorned him with

vervain, and clothed him with sacred vestments: they then led him round their city, loading him with execrations; and having prayed that all the evils to which the city was exposed might fall upon him, they then precipitated him from the top of a rock. — Satiricon, in fine. Suidas, under the word **περιψημα**, observes that it was a custom to devote a man annually to death for the safety of the people, with these words, **περιψημα ημων γενου**, Be thou our purifier; and, having said so, to throw him into the sea as a sacrifice to Neptune. It was probably to this custom that Virgil alludes when speaking of the pilot Palinurus, who fell into the sea and was drowned, he says:—

Unum pro multis dabiter caput — AEn., lib. v., ver. 815.

“One life is given for the preservation of many.”

But the nearest resemblance to the scapegoat of the Hebrews is found in the Ashummeed Jugg of the Hindoos, where a horse is used instead of a goat, the description of which I shall here introduce from Mr. Halhed’s Code of Gentoo Laws; Introduction, p. xix. “That the curious,” says he, “may form some idea of this Gentoo sacrifice when reduced to a symbol, as well as from the subsequent plain account given of it in a chapter of the Code, sec. ix., p. 127, an explanation of it is here inserted from Darul ShekÅh’s famous Persian translation of some commentaries upon the four Beids, or original Scriptures of Hindostan. The work itself is extremely scarce, and it was by mere accident that this little specimen was procured:—“The Ashummeed Jugg does not merely consist in the performance of that ceremony which is open to the inspection of the world, namely, in bringing a horse and sacrificing him; but Ashummeed is to be taken in a mystic signification, as implying that the sacrificer must look upon himself to be typified in that horse, such as he shall be described; because the religious duty of the Ashummeed Jugg comprehends all those other religious duties to the performance of which the wise and holy direct all their actions, and by which all the sincere professors of every different faith aim at perfection. The mystic signification thereof is as follows: The head of that unblemished horse is the symbol of the morning; his eyes are the sun; his breath, the wind; his wide-opening mouth is the bish-waner, or that innate warmth which invigorates all the world; his body typifies one entire year; his back, paradise; his belly, the plains; his hoof, this earth; his sides, the

four quarters of the heavens; the bones thereof, the intermediate spaces between the four quarters; the rest of his limbs represent all distinct matter; the places where those limbs meet, or his joints, imply the months, and halves of the months, which are called peche, (or fortnights;) his feet signify night and day; and night and day are of four kinds: 1. The night and day of Brihma; 2. The night and day of angels; 3. The night and day of the world of the spirits of deceased ancestors; 4. The night and day of mortals. These four kinds are typified in his four feet. The rest of his bones are the constellations of the fixed stars, which are the twenty-eight stages of the moon's course, called the lunar year; his flesh is the clouds; his food, the sand; his tendons, the rivers; his spleen and liver, the mountains; the hair of his body, the vegetables; and his long hair, the trees; the forepart of his body typifies the first half of the day, and the hinder part, the latter half; his yawning is the flash of the lightning, and his turning himself is the thunder of the cloud; his urine represents the rain, and his mental reflection is his only speech. The golden vessels which are prepared before the horse is let loose are the light of the day, and the place where those vessels are kept is a type of the ocean of the east; the silver vessels which are prepared after the horse is let loose are the light of the night, and the place where those vessels are kept is a type of the ocean of the west. These two sorts of vessels are always before and after the horse. The Arabian horse, which on account of his swiftness is called Hy, is the performer of the journeys of angels; the Tajee, which is of the race of Persian horses, is the performer of the journeys of the Kundherps, (or good spirits;) the Wazba, which is of the race of the deformed Tazee horses, is the performer of the journeys of the Jins, (or demons;) and the Ashov, which is of the race of Turkish horses, is the performer of the journeys of mankind: this one horse which performs these several services on account of his four different sorts of riders, obtains the four different appellations. The place where this horse remains is the great ocean, which signifies the great spirit of Perm-Atma, or the universal soul, which proceeds also from that Perm-Atma, and is comprehended in the same Perm-Atma. The intent of this sacrifice is, that a man should consider himself to be in the place of that horse, and look upon all these articles as typified in himself; and conceiving the Atma (or Divine soul) to be an ocean, should let all thought of self be absorbed in that Atma." This sacrifice is explained, in sec. ix., p. 127, of the Code of Hindoo Laws, thus:- "An Ashummeed Jugg is when a

person, having commenced a Jugg, (i. e., religious ceremony,) writes various articles upon a scroll of paper on a horse's neck, and dismisses the horse, sending along with the horse a stout and valiant person, equipped with the best necessaries and accoutrements to accompany the horse day and night whithersoever he shall choose to go; and if any creature, either man, genius, or dragon, should seize the horse, that man opposes such attempt, and having gained the victory upon a battle, again gives the horse his freedom. If any one in this world, or in heaven, or beneath the earth, would seize this horse, and the horse of himself comes to the house of the celebrator of the Jugg, upon killing that horse he must throw the flesh of him upon the fire of the Juk, and utter the prayers of his deity; such a Jugg is called a Jugg Ashummeed, and the merit of it as a religious work is infinite." This is a most curious circumstance; and the coincidence between the religious rites of two people who probably never had any intercourse with each other, is very remarkable. I would not however say that the Hindoo ceremony could not have been borrowed from the Jews; (though it is very unlikely;) no more than I should say, as some have done, that the Jewish rite was borrowed from the Egyptian sacrifice to Apis mentioned above, which is still more unlikely. See particularly Clarke's note on "Leviticus 1:4".

Verse 21. Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head, etc.— What this imposition of hands meant see in the notes on "Exodus 29:10", and see on "Leviticus 1:4".

And confess over him all the iniquities-transgressions-sins— The three terms used here, INIQUITIES, **עוונת** avonoth, from **עוה** avah, to pervert, distort, or turn aside; TRANSGRESSIONS, **פשעים** peshaim, from **פשע** pasha, to transgress, to rebel; and SINS, **חטאת** chattaoth, from **חטא** chata, to miss the mark, are supposed by the Jews to comprise every thing that implies a breach of the Divine law, or an offense against God. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 12:13". Maimonides gives us the confession in the following words:—

"O Lord, thy people, the house of Israel, have sinned and done iniquity, and trespassed before thee. O Lord, make atonement now for the iniquities and transgressions and sins that thy people, the house of Israel, have sinned and transgressed against thee; as it is written in the law of Moses

thy servant, saying: That in this day he shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you from all your sins before the Lord, and ye shall be clean.”—See the Mishna, vol. ii., p. 329. When this confession was finished, the goat was sent by a proper hand to the wilderness, and there let loose; and nothing farther was ever heard of it. Did not all this signify that Christ has so carried and borne away our sins, that against them who receive him as the only true atoning sacrifice they should never more be brought to remembrance? On the head of the scape-goat, a piece of scarlet cloth was tied, and the tradition of the Jews states that if God accepted the sacrifice, the scarlet cloth turned white while the goat was led to the desert; but if God had not accepted this expiation, the redness continued, and the rest of the year was spent in mourning. From the foundation of the Church of God it was ever believed by his followers, that there were certain infallible tokens by which he discovered to genuine believers his acceptance of them and their services. This was sometimes done by a fire from heaven consuming the sacrifice; sometimes by an oracular communication to the priest or prophet; and at other times, according to the Jewish account, by changing the fillet or cloth on the head of the scape-goat from scarlet to white: but most commonly, and especially under the Gospel dispensation, he gives this assurance to true believers by the testimony of his Spirit in their consciences, that he has forgiven their iniquities, transgressions, and sins, for his sake who has carried their griefs, and borne their sorrows.

Verse 26. *He that let go the goat-shall wash, etc.*— Not only the person who led him away, but the priest who consecrated him, was reputed unclean, because the goat himself was unclean, being considered as bearing the sins of the whole congregation. On this account both the priest and the person who led him to the wilderness were obliged to wash their clothes and bathe themselves, before they could come into the camp.

Verse 29. *The seventh month, on the tenth day of the month*— The commandment of fasting, and sanctifying this tenth day, is again repeated chapter 23:27-32; but in the last verse it is called the ninth day at even, because the Jewish day began with the evening. The sacrifices which the day of atonement should have more than other days, are mentioned Numbers 29:7-11; and the jubilee which was celebrated every fiftieth year was solemnly proclaimed by sound of trumpet on this tenth day, chap. 25:8, 9. A shadow, says Mr. Ainsworth, of that acceptable year of the

Lord, the year of freedom, which Christ has proclaimed by the trumpet of his Gospel, Luke 4:18-21; 2 Corinthians 6:2. This seventh month was Tisri, and answers to a part of our September and October. It was the seventh of the sacred and the first month of the civil year. THE great day of atonement, and the sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies prescribed for it, were commanded to be solemnized by the Jews through the whole of their dispensation, and as long as God should acknowledge them for his people: yet in the present day scarcely a shadow of these things remains; there is no longer a scape-goat, nor a goat for sacrifice, provided by them in any place. They are sinners, and they are without an atonement. How strange it is that they do not see that the essence of their religion is gone, and that consequently God has thrown them entirely out of covenant with himself! The true expiation, the Christ crucified, they refuse to receive, and are consequently without temple, altar, scape-goat, atonement, or any means of salvation! The state of the Gentile world is bad, but that of the Jews is doubly deplorable. Their total excision excepted, wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. What a proof is this of the truth of the predictions in their own law, and of those in the Gospel of Christ! Who, with the Jews and the Bible before his eyes, can doubt the truth of that Bible as a Divine revelation? Had this people been extinct, we might have doubted whether there were ever a people on the earth that acknowledged such a law, or observed such ordinances; but the people, their law, and their prophets are still in being, and all proclaim what God has wrought, and that he has now ceased to work among them, because they have refused to receive and profit by the great atonement; and yet he preserves them alive, and in a state of complete separation from all the people of the earth in all places of their dispersion! How powerfully does the preservation of the Jews as a distinct people bear testimony at once to the truth of their own law which they acknowledge, and the Gospel of Christ which they reject! 2. But while the Jews sit in thick darkness, because of the veil that is on their hearts, though the light of the glory of God is shining all around them, but not into them because of their unbelief; in what state are those who profess to see their unbelief and obstinacy, acknowledge the truth of the New Testament, and yet are living without an atonement applied to their souls for the removal of their iniquities, transgressions, and sins? These are also in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity. An all-sufficient Savior held out in the New Testament, can do them no more good than a

scape-goat and day of atonement described in the law can do the Jews. As well may a man imagine that the word bread can nourish his body, as that the name Christ can save his soul. Both must be received and applied in order that the man may live. 3. The Jews prepared themselves to get benefit from this most solemn ordinance by the deepest humiliations. According to their canons, they were obliged to abstain from all meat and drink — from the bath — from anointing themselves-to go barefoot- and to be in a state of perfect continency. He who is likely to get benefit for his soul through the redemption that is in Christ, must humble himself under the mighty hand of God, confess his iniquity, abstain from every appearance of evil, and believe on him who died for his offenses, and rose again for his justification. The soul that seeks not shall not find, even under the Gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER 17

The people are commanded to bring all the cattle they intend to kill to the door of the tabernacle, where they are to be made an offering to the Lord; and those who disobey are to be cut off, 1-5. The priest is to sprinkle the blood, 6. They are forbidden to offer sacrifices to devils, 7. The injunction to bring their offerings to the door of the tabernacle is repeated, 8, 9. The eating of blood is solemnly forbidden, 10. It is the life of the beast, and is given to make an atonement for their souls, 11, 12. If a bird or beast be taken in hunting, its blood must be poured out and covered with dust, for the reasons before assigned, 13, 14. None shall eat an animal that dies of itself, or is torn by beasts; if any act otherwise he must bathe his clothes and his flesh, or bear his iniquity, 15, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17.

Verse 4. *And bringeth it not unto the door*— As sacrifice was ever deemed essential to true religion, it was necessary that it should be performed in such a way as to secure the great purpose of its institution. God alone could show how this should be done so as to be pleasing in his sight, and therefore he has given the most plain and particular directions concerning it. The Israelites, from their long residence in Egypt, an idolatrous country, had doubtless adopted many of their usages; and many portions of the Pentateuch seem to have been written merely to correct and bring them back to the purity of the Divine worship. That no blood should be offered to idols, God commands every animal used for food or sacrifice to be slain at the door of the tabernacle. While every animal was slain in this sacrificial way, even the daily food of the people must put them in mind of the necessity of a sacrifice for sin. Perhaps St. Paul had this circumstance in view when he said, Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God, 1 Corinthians 10:31; and, Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. While the Israelites were encamped in the wilderness, it was comparatively easy to prevent all abuses of this Divine institution; and therefore they were all commanded

to bring the oxen, sheep, and goats to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, that they might be slain there, and their blood sprinkled upon the altar of the Lord. But when they became settled in the promised land, and the distance, in many cases, rendered it impossible for them to bring the animals to be slain for domestic uses to the temple, they were permitted to pour out the blood in a sacrificial way unto God at their respective dwellings, and to cover it with the dust; see ver. 13, and Deuteronomy 12:20, 21.

Blood shall be imputed unto that man— Having poured out the blood improperly, he shall be considered as guilty of murder, because that blood, had it been properly and sacrificially employed, might have made atonement for the life of a man.

Verse 7. They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils— They shall not sacrifice לַשֵּׁרִים *lasseirim*, to the hairy ones, to goats. The famous heathen god, Pan, was represented as having the posteriors, horns, and ears of a goat; and the Mendesians, a people of Egypt, had a deity which they worshipped under this form. Herodotus says that all goats were worshipped in Egypt, but the he-goat particularly. It appears also that the different ape and monkey species were objects of superstitious worship; and from these sprang, not only Mendes and Jupiter Ammon, who was worshipped under the figure of a ram, but also Pan and the Sileni, with the innumerable herd of those imaginary beings, satyrs, dryads, hamadryads, etc. etc., all woodland gods, and held in veneration among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans.

After whom they have gone a whoring.— Though this term is frequently used to express idolatry, yet we are not to suppose that it is not to be taken in a literal sense in many places in Scripture, even where it is used in connection with idolatrous acts of worship. It is well known that Baal-Peor and Ashtaroth were worshipped with unclean rites; and that public prostitution formed a grand part of the worship of many deities among the Egyptians, Moabites, Canaanites, Greeks, and Romans. The great god of the two latter nations, Jupiter, was represented as the general corrupter of women; and of Venus, Flora, Priapus, and others, it is needless to speak. That there was public prostitution in the patriarchal times, see Clarke on “Genesis 38:21”. And that there was public

prostitution of women to goats in Egypt, see Herodotus, lib. ii., c. 46, p. 108, edit. Gale, who gives a case of this abominable kind that took place in Egypt while he was in that country. See also many examples in Bochart, vol. ii., col. 641; and see Clarke's note on "Leviticus 20:16".

Verse 11. *For the life of the flesh is in the blood*— This sentence, which contains a most important truth, had existed in the Mosaic writings for 3600 years before the attention of any philosopher was drawn to the subject. This is the more surprising, as the nations in which philosophy flourished were those which especially enjoyed the Divine oracles in their respective languages. That the blood actually possesses a living principle, and that the life of the whole body is derived from it, is a doctrine of Divine revelation, and a doctrine which the observations and experiments of the most accurate anatomists have served strongly to confirm. The proper circulation of this important fluid through the whole human system was first taught by Solomon in figurative language, Ecclesiastes 12:6; and discovered, as it is called, and demonstrated, by Dr. Harvey in 1628; though some Italian philosophers had the same notion a little before. This accurate anatomist was the first who fully revived the Mosaic notion of the vitality of the blood; which notion was afterward adopted by the justly celebrated Dr. John Hunter, professor of anatomy in London, and fully established by him by a great variety of strong reasoning and accurate experiments. To support this opinion Dr. Hunter proves:- 1. That the blood unites living parts in some circumstances as certainly as the yet recent juices of the branch of one tree unite with that of another; and he thinks that if either of these fluids were dead matter, they would act as stimuli, and no union would take place in the animal or vegetable kingdom; and he shows that in the nature of things there is not a more intimate connection between life and a solid than between life and a fluid. 2. He shows that the blood becomes vascular, like other living parts of the body; and he demonstrated this by a preparation in which vessels were clearly seen to arise from what had been a coagulum of blood; for those vessels opened into the stream of the circulating blood, which was in contiguity with this coagulated mass. 3. He proves that if blood be taken from the arm in the most intense cold that the human body can suffer, it will raise the thermometer to the same height as blood taken in the most sultry heat. This is a very powerful argument for the vitality of the blood, as it is well

known that living bodies alone have the power of resisting great degrees of heat and cold, and of maintaining in almost every situation while in health that temperature which we distinguish by the name of animal heat. 4. He proves that blood is capable of being acted upon by a stimulus, as it coagulates on exposure to the air, as certainly as the cavities of the abdomen and thorax become inflamed from the same cause. The more the blood is alive, i. e., the more the animal is in health, the sooner the blood coagulates on exposure; and the more it has lost of the living principle, as in cases of violent inflammation, the less sensible it is to the stimulus produced by being exposed, and coagulates more slowly. 5. He proves that the blood preserves life in different parts of the body. When the nerves going to any part are tied or cut, the part becomes paralytic, and loses all power of motion, but it does not mortify. But let the artery be cut, and then the part dies and mortification ensues. It must therefore be the vital principle of the blood that keeps the part alive; nor does it appear that this fact can be accounted for on any other principle. 6. He thinks this vitality farther proved from the case of a person who was brought to St. George's hospital for a simple fracture of the os humeri, and who died about a month after. As the bones had not united, he injected the arm, and thus found that the coagulated blood which filled the cavity between the extremities of the fractured bones was become vascular, and in some places very much so, which vessels, had it been dead matter, it never could have produced. This system has been opposed, and arguments have been adduced to prove that the principle of vitality exists not in the blood but in the nervous system. But every argument on this ground appears to be done away by the simple consideration that the whole nervous system, as well as every other part of the body, is originally derived from the blood; for is it not from the blood of the mother that the fetus has its being and nourishment in the womb? Do not all the nerves, as well as the brain, etc., originate from that alone? And if it be not vital can it give the principle of vitality to something else, which then exclusively (though the effect of a cause) becomes the principle of vitality to all the solids and fluids of the body? This seems absurd. That the human being proceeded originally from the blood admits of no doubt; and it is natural and reasonable to suppose that as it was the cause under God which generated all the other parts of the body, so it still continues to be the principle of life, and by it alone all the wastes of the system are repaired. Two points relative to this subject

are strongly asserted in Divine revelation, one by MOSES, the other by ST. PAUL. 1. Moses says, The LIFE of the flesh is in the BLOOD, ver. 11. This has been proved by the most indisputable facts. 2. St. Paul says, God hath made of ONE BLOOD all nations of men, Acts 17:26. And this is demonstrated, not only from there being only one pair from whom all the nations of men have been derived, but also from the fact that every human being, from the first-born of Eve to the present hour, has been formed out of and supported by the mother's blood; and that from the agency of this fluid the human body, after being born into the world, has its increment and support. The reason given by God for the law against eating blood is perfectly conclusive: I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood—for the LIFE (נפש nephesh) of the flesh is in the BLOOD, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls (נפשתיכם naphshotheychem, your LIVES:) for it is the blood (because it is the LIFE, נפש nephesh) that maketh an atonement for the soul (בנפש bannephesh, for the life; for the word is the same in all these cases.) By transgression a man forfeits his LIFE to Divine justice, and he must die, did not mercy provide him a substitute. The life of a beast is appointed and accepted by God as a substitute for the sinner's life (in reference to the life of Christ, which was to be given for the life of the world;) but as this life is in the BLOOD, and as the blood is the grand principle of vitality, therefore the blood is to be poured out upon the altar: and thus the life of the beast becomes a substitute for the life of the man. And it is well worthy of being remarked, that Christ not only died for sinners, but our redemption is everywhere attributed to his BLOOD, and the shedding of that blood; and that on the altar of the cross, this might make an atonement for the lives and souls of men, he not only bowed his head, and gave up the ghost, but his side was opened, the pericardium and the heart evidently pierced, that the vital fluid might be poured out from the very seat of life, and that thus the blood, which is the life, should be poured out to make an atonement for the life of the soul. The doctrine of Moses and Paul proves the truth of the doctrine of Harvey and Hunter; and the reasonings and experiments of Harvey and Hunter illustrate and confirm the doctrine of Moses and Paul. — Here then is a farther proof of the truth and authority of Divine revelation. See Clarke's note on "Genesis 9:4"; Dr. J. Corrie's Essay on the Vitality of the Blood; and the article Blood, in the Encyclopaedias.

Verse 14. *Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh*— Independently of the moral reasons given above, we may add, 1. That blood, being highly alkaliescent, especially in hot climates, is subject to speedy putrefaction. 2. That it affords a gross nutriment, being very difficult of digestion, so much so that bull's blood was used in ancient times as poison, "Its extreme viscosity rendering it totally indigestible by the powers of the human stomach." 3. It is allowed that when blood was used in this country in great quantities, the scurvy was more frequent than at other times. 4. It appears from history that those nations who lived most on it were very fierce, savage, and barbarous, such as the Scythians, Tartars, Arabs of the desert, the Scandinavians, etc., etc., some of whom drank the blood of their enemies, making cups of their skulls!

Verse 15. *That which died of itself, or that which was torn*— Because, in both cases, the blood was retained in the body; hence the council at Jerusalem forbade things strangled as well as blood, because in such beasts the blood was coagulated in the veins and arteries. See Acts 15:28-29. Every thing considered, surely there is as little propriety in eating of blood as there is necessity to do it. They who will do otherwise must bear their iniquity. If blood eating be no offense, then they have no sin to answer for. The principal subjects of this chapter have been already so amply handled in the notes, that there is no need to add any thing by way of reflection or improvement.

CHAPTER 18

The people are commanded to avoid the doings of the Egyptians and Canaanites, 1-3. They are to do God's judgments, and to keep his ordinances, that they may live, 4, 5. Marriages with those who are near of kin are prohibited, 6. None to marry with his mother or step-mother, 7, 8; with his sister or step-sister, 9; with his grand-daughter, 10; nor with the daughter of his step-mother, 11; nor with his aunt, by father or mother, 12, 13; nor with his uncle's wife, 14; nor with his daughter-in-law, 15; nor sister-in-law, 16; nor with a woman and her daughter, son's daughter, or daughter's daughter, 17; nor with two sisters at the same time, 18. Several abominations prohibited, 19-23, of which the Canaanites, etc., were guilty, and for which they were cast out of the land, 24, 25. The people are exhorted to avoid these abominations, lest they be treated as the ancient inhabitants of the land were treated, and so cast out, 26-28. Threatenings against the disobedient, 29, and promises to the obedient, 30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 3. *The doings of the land of Egypt—the land of Canaan*— The worshipping of demons, beasts, etc., as mentioned in the preceding chapters, verse 17:7, and the abominations mentioned in this chapter from verse 18:21 to 23.

Verse 6. *Any that is near of kin*— כל שאר בשרו col shear besaro, any remnant of his flesh, i.e., to any particularly allied to his own family, the prohibited degrees in which are specified from the 7th to the 17th verse inclusive. Notwithstanding the prohibitions here, it must be evident that in the infancy of the world, persons very near of kin must have been joined in matrimonial alliances; and that even brothers must have matched with their own sisters. This must have been the case in the family of Adam. In these first instances necessity required this; when this necessity no longer existed, the thing became inexpedient and improper for two reasons: 1. That the duties owing by nature to relatives might not be confounded with

those of a social or political kind; for could a man be a brother and a husband, a son and a husband, at the same time, and fulfill the duties of both? Impossible. 2. That by intermarrying with other families, the bonds of social compact might be strengthened and extended, so that the love of our neighbor, etc., might at once be felt to be not only a maxim of sound policy, but also a very practicable and easy duty; and thus feuds, divisions, and wars be prevented.

Verse 16. *Thy brother's wife*— This was an illegal marriage, unless the brother died childless. In that case it was not only lawful for her to marry her brother-in-law, but he was obliged by the law, Deuteronomy 25:5, to take her to wife.

Verse 18. *A wife to her sister*— Thou shalt not marry two sisters at the same time, as Jacob did Rachel and Leah; but there is nothing in this law that rendered it illegal to marry a sister-in-law when her sister was dead; therefore the text says, Thou shalt not take her in her life time, to vex her, alluding probably to the case of the jealousies and vexations which subsisted between Leah and Rachel, and by which the family peace was so often disturbed. Some think that the text may be so understood as also to forbid polygamy.

Verse 19. *As long as she is put apart*— See Clarke's note on "Leviticus 15:24".

Verse 20. *Thy neighbor's wife*— See Clarke's note on "Exodus 20:14".

Verse 21. *Pass through the fire to Molech*— The name of this idol is mentioned for the first time in this place. As the word מֹלֵךְ molech or melech signifies king or governor, it is very likely that this idol represented the sun; and more particularly as the fire appears to have been so much employed in his worship. There are several opinions concerning the meaning of passing through the fire to Molech. 1. Some think that the semen humanum was offered on the fire to this idol. 2. Others think that the children were actually made a burnt-offering to him. 3. But others suppose the children were not burnt, but only passed through the fire, or between two fires, by way of consecration to him. That some were actually burnt alive to this idol several scriptures, according to the opinion of commentators, seem strongly to intimate; see among others, Psalm

106:38; Jeremiah 7:31, and Ezekiel 23:37-39. That others were only consecrated to his service by passing between two fires the rabbins strongly assert; and if Ahaz had but one son, Hezekiah, (though it is probable he had others, see 2 Chronicles 28:3,) he is said to have passed through the fire to Molech, 2 Kings 16:3, yet he succeeded his father in the kingdom, 2 Kings 18:1, therefore this could only be a consecration, his idolatrous father intending thereby to initiate him early into the service of this demon. See Clarke's note on "Leviticus 20:2".

Verse 22. *With mankind*— This abominable crime, frequent among the Greeks and Romans as well as the Canaanites, may be punished with death in this country.

Verse 23. *With any beast— This abomination is also punishable with death by the laws of this country. Any woman stand before a beast*— That this was often done in Egypt there can be no doubt; and we have already seen, from the testimony of Herodotus, that a fact of this kind actually took place while he was in Egypt. See Clarke's note on "Leviticus 17:7", and See Clarke on "Leviticus 20:16".

Verse 25. *The land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.*— This is a very nervous prosopopoeia or personification; a figure by which any part of inanimate nature may be represented as possessing the passions and reason of man. Here the land is represented as an intelligent being, with a deep and refined sense of moral good and evil: information concerning the abominations of the people is brought to this personified land, with which it is so deeply affected that a nausea is produced, and it vomits out its abominable and accursed inhabitants. It was natural for the inspired penman to make use of such a figure, as the description he was obliged to give of so many and enormous abominations must have affected him nearly in the same way in which he represents the land to be affected.

Verse 30. *Shall ye keep mine ordinance*— The only way to be preserved from all false worship is seriously to consider and devoutly to observe the ordinances of the true religion. He who in the things of God goes no farther than he can say, Thus it is written, and thus it behoves me to do, is never likely to receive a false creed, nor perform a superstitious act of worship.

1. How true is that word, The law of the Lord is PERFECT! In a small compass, and in a most minute detail, it comprises every thing that is

calculated to instruct, direct, convince, correct, and fortify the mind of man. Whatever has a tendency to corrupt or injure man, that it forbids; whatever is calculated to comfort him, promote and secure his best interests, that it commands. It takes him in all possible states, views him in all connections, and provides for his present and eternal happiness. 2. As the human soul is polluted and tends to pollution, the great doctrine of the law is holiness to the Lord: this it keeps invariably in view in all its commands, precepts, ordinances, rites, and ceremonies. And how forcibly in all these does it say, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself! This is the prominent doctrine of the preceding chapter; and this shall be fulfilled in all them who believe, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe. Reader, magnify God for his law, for by it is the knowledge of sin; and magnify him for his Gospel, for by this is the cure of sin. Let the law be thy schoolmaster to bring thee to Christ, that thou mayest be justified by faith; and that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in thee, and that thou mayest walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

CHAPTER 19

Exhortations to holiness, and a repetition of various laws, 1, 2 Duty to parents, and observance of the Sabbath, 3. Against idolatry, 4. Concerning peace-offerings, 5-8. The gleanings of the harvest and vintage to be left for the poor, 9, 10. Against stealing and lying, 11; false swearing, 12; defrauding the hireling, 13. Laws in behalf of the deaf and the blind, 14. Against respect of persons in judgment, 15; tale-bearing, 16; hatred and uncharitableness, 17; revenge, 18; unlawful mixtures in cattle, seed, and garments, 19. Laws relative to the bondmaid that is betrothed, 20-22. The fruit of the trees of the land not to be eaten for the first three years, 23; but this is lawful in the fourth and fifth years, 24, 25. Against eating of blood, and using incantations, 26; superstitious cutting of the hair, 27; and cutting of the flesh in the times of mourning, 28; prostitution, 29. Sabbaths to be revered, 30. Against consulting those who are wizards, and have familiar spirits, 31. Respect must be shown to the aged, 32. The stranger shall not be oppressed, 33, 34. They shall keep just measures, weights, and balances, 35, 36. Conclusion, 37.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 3. *Ye shall fear every man his mother, etc.*— Ye shall have the profoundest reverence and respect for them. See Clarke note on “Genesis 48:12”, and see Clarke note on “Exodus 20:8”, and see Clarke note on “Exodus 20:12”.

Verse 4. *Turn ye not unto idols*— אֱלִילִים *elilim*, literally nothings; and to this St. Paul seems to allude 1 Corinthians 8:4, where he says, We know that an idol is NOTHING in the world.

Verse 5. *Peace-offerings*— See the notes at the conclusion of chap. 7. See “Leviticus 7:38”.

Verse 7. *It is be eaten-on the third day*— See the note on “Leviticus 7:15”.

Verse 9. *When ye reap the harvest*— Liberty for the poor to glean both the corn-fields and vineyards was a Divine institution among the Jews; for the whole of the Mosaic dispensation, like the Christian, breathed love to God and benevolence to man. The poor in Judea were to live by gleanings from the corn-fields and vine yards. To the honor of the public and charitable spirit of the English, this merciful law is in general as much attended to as if it had been incorporated with the Gospel.

Verse 11. *Ye shall not steal, etc.*— See the notes on “Exodus 20:15”.

Verse 13. *The wages-shall not abide with thee all night*— For this plain reason, it is the support of the man’s life and family, and they need to expend it as fast as it is earned.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt not curse the deaf*— Or speak evil of him, because he cannot hear, and so cannot vindicate his own character.

Nor put a stumbling-block before the blind— He who is capable of doing this, must have a heart cased with cruelty. The spirit and design of these precepts are, that no man shall in any case take advantage of the ignorance, simplicity, or inexperience of his neighbor, but in all things do to his neighbor as he would, on a change of circumstances, that his neighbor should do to him.

Verse 16. *Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer*— רכיל *rachil* signifies a trader, a pedlar, and is here applied to the person who travels about dealing in scandal and calumny, getting the secrets of every person and family, and retailing them wherever he goes. A more despicable character exists not: such a person is a pest to society, and should be exiled from the habitations of men.

Neither shalt thou stand against the blood, etc.— Thou shalt not be as a false witness, because by such testimony the blood — the life of an innocent man may be endangered.

Verse 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother*— Thou shalt not only not do him any kind of evil, but thou shalt harbor no hatred in thy heart towards him. On the contrary, thou shalt love him as thyself, ver. 18. Many persons suppose, from misunderstanding our Lord’s words, John 13:34, A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another, etc., that

loving our neighbor as ourselves was first instituted under the Gospel. This verse shows the opinion to be unfounded: but to love another as Christ has loved us, i. e., to lay down our lives for each other, is certainly a new commandment; we have it simply on the authority of Jesus Christ alone.

And not suffer sin upon him.— If thou see him sin, or know him to be addicted to any thing by which the safety of his soul is endangered, thou shalt mildly and affectionately reprove him, and by no means permit him to go on without counsel and advice in a way that is leading him to perdition. In a multitude of cases timely reproof has been the means of saving the soul. Speak to him privately if possible; if not, write to him in such a way that himself alone shall see it.

Verse 19. *Gender with a diverse kind*— These precepts taken literally seem to imply that they should not permit the horse and the she-ass, nor the he-ass and the cow, (as they do in the East,) to couple together; nor sow different kinds of seeds in the same field or garden; nor have garments of silk and woollen, cotton and silk, linen and wool, etc. And if all these were forbidden, there must have been some moral reason for the prohibitions, because domestic economy required several of these mixtures, especially those which relate to seeds and clothing. With respect to heterogeneous mixtures among cattle, there is something very unnatural in it, and it was probably forbidden to prevent excitements to such unnatural lusts as those condemned in the preceding chapter, 18:22, 23. As to seeds, in many cases it would be very improper to sow different kinds in the same plot of ground. It would be improvident to sow oats and wheat together: the latter would be injured, the former ruined. The turnip and carrot would not succeed conjointly, where either of them separately would prosper and yield a good crop; so we may say of many other kinds of seeds; and if this be all that is intended, the counsels are prudential agricultural maxims. As to different kinds of garments, such as the linsey woolsey, the prohibition here might be intended as much against pride and vanity as any thing else; for it is certain that both these articles may be so manufactured in conjunction as to minister to pride, though in general the linsey woolsey or drugget is the clothing of the poor. But we really do not know what the original word שַׂטְנֵי־שָׂרָבִית shaatnez, which we translate linen and woollen, means: it is true that in Deuteronomy 22:11, where it is again

used, it seems to be explained by the words immediately following, Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of linen and woollen together; but this may as well refer to a garment made up of a sort of patchwork differently colored and arranged for pride and for show. A folly of this kind prevailed anciently in this very land, and I shall give a proof of it, taken from a sermon against luxury in dress, composed in the fourteenth century. “As to the first sinne in superfluitie of clothing, soche that maketh it so dere, to the harme of the peple, nat only the cost of enbrauderlng, the disguised endenting, or barring, ounding paling, winding or bending and semblable wast of clothe in vanite. But there is also the costlewe furring in their gounes, so moche pounsing of chesel, to make holes; so moche dagging with sheres foorth; with the superfluitie in length of the forsaied gounes,-to grete dammage of pore folke. — And more ouer-they shewe throughe disguising, in departing of ther hosen in white and red, semeth that halfe ther members were slain. — They departe ther hosen into other colors, as is white and blewe, or white and blacke, or blacke and red, and so forth; than semeth it as by variaunce of color, that the halfe part of ther members ben corrupt by the fire of Saint Anthony, or by canker, or other suche mischaunce.” The Parson’s Tale, in Chaucer, p. 198. Urry’s edit. The reader will pardon the antiquated spelling. “What could exhibit,” says Dr. Henry, “a more fantastical appearance than an English beau of the 14th century? He wore long pointed shoes, fastened to his knees by gold or silver chains; hose of one color on the one leg, and of another color on the other; short breeches which did reach to the middle of his thighs; a coat the one half white, the other half black or blue; a long beard; a silk hood buttoned under his chin, embroidered with grotesque figures of animals, dancing men, etc., and sometimes ornamented with gold and precious stones.” This dress was the height of the mode in the reign of King Edward III. Something of the same kind seems to have existed in the patriarchal times; witness the coat of many colors made by Jacob for his son Joseph. See the note on “Genesis 37:3”. Concerning these different mixtures much may be seen in the Mishna, Tract, Kilaim, and in Ainsworth, and Calmet on this place.

Verse 20. A woman that is a bondmaid— Had she been free, the law required that she should be put to death; (see Deuteronomy 22:24;) but as she was a slave, she is supposed to have less self-command, and therefore

less guilt: but as it is taken for granted she did not make resistance, or did consent, she is to be scourged, and the man is to bring a ram for a trespass-offering.

Verse 23. *Three years shall it be as uncircumcised*— I see no great reason to seek for mystical meanings in this prohibition. The fruit of a young tree cannot be good; for not having arrived at a state of maturity, the juices cannot be sufficiently elaborated to produce fruit excellent in its kind. The Israelites are commanded not to eat of the fruit of a tree till the fifth year after its planting: in the three first years the fruit is unwholesome; in the fourth year the fruit is holy, it belongs to God, and should be consecrated to him, ver. 24; and in the fifth year and afterward the fruit may be employed for common use, ver. 25.

Verse 26. *Neither shall ye use enchantment*— לֹא תִנְחָשׁוּ lo thenachashu. Conjecture itself can do little towards a proper explanation of the terms used in this verse. נָחָשׁ nachash; See note at “Genesis 3:1”, we translate serpent, and with very little propriety; but though the word may not signify a serpent in that place, it has that signification in others. Possibly, therefore, the superstition here prohibited may be what the Greeks called Ophiomanteia, or divination by serpents.

Nor observe times.— וְלֹא תִעֲוֲנוּ velo teonenu, ye shall not divine by clouds, which was also a superstition much in practice among the heathens, as well as divination by the flight of birds. What these prohibitions may particularly refer to, we know not. See Clarke note on “Genesis 41:8”.

Verse 27. *Ye shall not round the corners your heads*— This and the following verse evidently refer to customs which must have existed among the Egyptians when the Israelites sojourned in Egypt; and what they were it is now difficult, even with any probability, to conjecture. Herodotus observes that the Arabs shave or cut their hair round, in honor of Bacchus, who, they say, had his hair cut in this way, lib. iii., cap. 8. He says also that the Macians, a people of Libya, cut their hair round, so as to leave a tuft on the top of the head, lib. iv., cap. 175. In this manner the Chinese cut their hair to the present day. This might have been in honor of some idol, and therefore forbidden to the Israelites. The hair was much used in

divination among the ancients, and for purposes of religious superstition among the Greeks; and particularly about the time of the giving of this law, as this is supposed to have been the era of the Trojan war. We learn from Homer that it was customary for parents to dedicate the hair of their children to some god; which, when they came to manhood, they cut off and consecrated to the deity. Achilles, at the funeral of Patroclus, cut off his golden locks which his father had dedicated to the river god Sperchius, and threw them into the flood:—

στας απανευθε πυρης ξονθην απεκειρατο χαιτην.
την ρα σπερχειω ποταμω τρεφε τηλεθοωσαν·
οχθησας δ' αρα ειπεν, ιδων επι οινοπα ποντον·
σπερχει', αλλως σοι γε πατηρ ηρησατο πηλευς. κ. τ. λ.

Iliad, 1. xxiii., ver. 142, etc.

*But great Achilles stands apart in prayer,
And from his head divides the yellow hair,
Those curling locks which from his youth he vowed,
And sacred threw to Sperchius' honored flood.*

*Then sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,
And rolled his eyes around the watery waste.
Sperchius! whose waves, in mazy errors lost,
Delightful roll along my native coast!*

*To whom we vainly vowed, at our return,
These locks to fall, and hecatombs to burn
So vowed my father, but he vowed in vain,
No more Achilles sees his native plain;*

*In that vain hope these hairs no longer grow;
Patrocius bears them to the shades below.*

POPE.

From Virgil we learn that the topmost lock of hair was dedicated to the infernal gods; see his account of the death of Dido:—

*“Nondum illi flavum Proserpina vertice crinem
Abstulerat, Stygioque caput damnaverat orco
— Hunc ego Diti Sacrum jussa fero; teque isto corpore solvo.
Sic ait, et dextra crinem secat.”*

Æneid, lib. iv., ver. 698.

*The sisters had not cut the topmost hair,
Which Proserpine and they can only know.
Nor made her sacred to the shades below —
This offering to the infernal gods I bear;
Thus while she spoke, she cut the fatal hair.*

DRYDEN.

If the hair was rounded, and dedicated for purposes of this kind, it will at once account for the prohibition in this verse. The corners of thy beard.—

Probably meaning the hair of the cheek that connects the hair of the head with the beard. This was no doubt cut in some peculiar manner, for the superstitious purposes mentioned above. Several of our own countrymen wear this said hair in a curious form; for what purposes they know best: we cannot say precisely that it is the ancient Egyptian custom revived. From the images and paintings which remain of the ancient Egyptians, we find that they were accustomed to shave the whole hair off their face, except merely that upon the chin, which last they cut off only in times of mourning.

Verse 28. *Any cuttings in your flesh for the dead*— That the ancients were very violent in their grief, tearing the hair and face, beating the breast, etc., is well known. Virgil represents the sister of Dido “tearing her face with her nails, and beating her breast with her fists.”

“Unguibus ora soror foedans, et pectora pugnīs.”

AEñ., l. iv., ver. 672.

***Nor print any marks upon you*—** It was a very ancient and a very general custom to carry marks on the body in honor of the object of their worship. All the castes of the Hindoos bear on their foreheads or elsewhere what are called the sectarian marks, which distinguish them, not only in a civil but also in a religious point of view, from each other. Most of the barbarous nations lately discovered have their faces, arms, breasts, etc., curiously carved or tattooed, probably for superstitious purposes. Ancient writers abound with accounts of marks made on the face, arms, etc., in honor of different idols; and to this the inspired penman alludes, Revelation 13:16, 17; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4, where false worshippers are represented as receiving in their hands and in their forehead the marks of

the beast. These were called **στιγματα** stigmata among the Greeks, and to these St. Paul refers when he says, I bear about in my body the MARKS (stigmata) of the Lord Jesus; Galatians 6:17. I have seen several cases where persons have got the figure of the cross, the Virgin Mary, etc., made on their arms, breasts, etc., the skin being first punctured, and then a blue colouring matter rubbed in, which is never afterward effaced. All these were done for superstitious purposes, and to such things probably the prohibition in this verse refers. Calmet, on this verse, gives several examples. See also Mariner's Tonga Islands, vol. i. p. 311-313.

Verse 29. Do not prostitute thy daughter— This was a very frequent custom, and with examples of it writers of antiquity abound. The Cyprian women, according to Justin, gained that portion which their husbands received with them at marriage by previous public prostitution. And the Phoenicians, according to Augustine, made a gift to Venus of the gain acquired by the public prostitution of their daughters, previously to their marriage. “Veneri donum dabant, et prostitutiones filiarum, antequam jungerent eas viris.”-Deuteronomy Civit. Del, lib. xviii., c. 5; and see Calmet.

Verse 31. Regard not them that have familiar spirits— The Hebrew word **אֲבוֹת** oboth probably signifies a kind of engastromuthoi or ventriloquists, or such as the Pythoness mentioned Acts 16:16, 18; persons who, while under the influence of their demon, became greatly inflated, as the Hebrew word implies, and gave answers in a sort of phrensy. See a case of this kind in Virgil, AEneid, l. vi., ver. 46, etc.:—

“ — *Deus ecce, Deus! cui talla fanti
Ante fores, subito non vultus, non color unus,
Non comptae mansere comae; sed pectus anhelum,
Et rabie fera corda tument; majorque videri,
Nec mortale sonans, afflata est numine quando
Jam propiore Dei.*”

— *Invoke the skies, I feel the god, the rushing god, she cries.
While yet she spoke, enlarged her features grew,
Her color changed, her locks dishevelled flew.
The heavenly tumult reigns in every part,
Pants in her breast, and swells her rising heart:
Still swelling to the sight, the priestess glowed,
And heaved impatient of the incumbent god.*

PITT.

Neither seek after wizards— ידענים yiddeonim, the wise or knowing ones, from ידע yada, to know or understand; called wizard in Scotland, wise or cunning man in England; and hence also the wise woman, the white witch. Not only all real dealers with familiar spirits, or necromantic or magical superstitions, are here forbidden, but also all pretenders to the knowledge of futurity, fortune-tellers, astrologers, etc., etc. To attempt to know what God has not thought proper to reveal, is a sin against his wisdom, providence, and goodness. In mercy, great mercy, God has hidden the knowledge of futurity from man, and given him hope — the expectation of future good, in its place. See Clarke’s note on “Exodus 22:18”.

Verse 32. *Before the hoary head*— See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 48:12”.

Verse 33. *If a stranger sojourn*— This law to protect and comfort the stranger was at once humane and politic. None is so desolate as the stranger, and none needs the offices of benevolence and charity more: and we may add that he who is not affected by the desolate state of the stranger has neither benevolence nor charity. It was politic to encourage strangers, as in consequence many came, not only to sojourn, but to settle among the Jews, and thus their political strength became increased; and many of these settlers became at least proselytes of the gate if not proselytes of the covenant, and thus got their souls saved. Hence humanity, sound policy, and religion said, Vex not the stranger; thou shalt love him as thyself. The apostle makes use of a strong argument to induce men to hospitality towards strangers: Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares, Hebrews 13:2. Moses also uses a powerful motive: Ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. The spirit of the precept here laid down, may be well expressed in our Lord’s words: Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you.

Verse 35. *Ye shall do no unrighteousness*— Ye shall not act contrary to the strictest justice in any case, and especially in the four following, which properly understood, comprise all that can occur between a man and his fellow. 1. JUDGMENT in all cases that come before the civil magistrate; he is to judge and decide according to the law. 2. METE-YARD, במדה bammiddah, in measures of length and surface, such as the reed, cubit, foot,

span, hand's breadth, among the Jews; or ell, yard, foot, and inch, among us. 3. WEIGHT, **במשכל** bammishkal, in any thing that is weighed, the weights being all according to the standards kept for the purpose of trying the rest in the sanctuary, as appears from Exodus 30:13; 1 Chronicles 23:29; these weights were the talent, shekel, barleycorn, etc. 4. MEASURE, **במשורה** bammesurah, from which we derive our term. This refers to all measures of capacity, such as the homer, ephah, seah, hin, omer, kab, and log. See all these explained "Exodus 16:16".

Verse 36. *Just balances*— Scales, steel-yard, etc. Weights, **אבנים** abanim, stones, as the weights appear to have been originally formed out of stones. Ephah, hin, etc., see before.

Verse 37. *Shall ye observe all my statutes*— **חקתי** chukkothi, from **חק** chak, to describe, mark, or trace out; the righteousness which I have described, and the path of duty which I have traced out. Judgments, **משפטי** mishpatai, from **שפט** shaphat, to discern, determine, direct, etc.; that which Divine Wisdom has discerned to be best for man, has determined shall promote his best interest, and has directed him conscientiously to use. See the note on "Leviticus 26:15". 1. MANY difficulties occur in this very important chapter, but they are such only to us; for there can be no doubt of their having been perfectly well known to the Israelites, to whom the precepts contained in this chapter were given. Considerable pains however have been taken to make them plain, and no serious mind can read them without profit. 2. The precepts against injustice, fraud, slander, enmity, etc., etc., are well worth the notice of every Christian; and those against superstitious usages are not less so; and by these last we learn, that having recourse to astrologers, fortune-tellers, etc., to get intelligence of lost or stolen goods, or to know the future events of our own lives, or those of others, is highly criminal in the sight of God. Those who have recourse to such persons renounce their baptism, and in effect renounce the providence as well as the word of God. 3. The precepts of humanity and mercy relative to the poor, the hireling, and the stranger, are worthy of our most serious regard. Nor are those which concern weights and measures, traffic, and the whole system of commutative justice, less necessary to be observed for the benefit and comfort of the individual, and the safety and prosperity of the state.

CHAPTER 20

Of giving seed to Molech, and the punishment of this crime, 1-5. Of consulting wizards, etc., 6-8. Of disrespect to parents, 9. Of adultery, 10. Of incestuous mixtures, 11, 12. Bestiality, 13-16. Different cases of incest and uncleanness, 17-21. Exhortations and promises, 22-24. The difference between clean and unclean animals to be carefully observed, 25. The Israelites are separated from other nations, that they may be holy, 26. A repetition of the law against wizards and them that have familiar spirits, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 2. *That giveth any of his seed unto Molech*— To what has been said in the note on chap. 18:21, we may add, that the rabbins describe this idol, who was probably a representative or emblematical personification of the solar influence, as made of brass, in the form of a man, with the head of an ox; that a fire was kindled in the inside, and the child to be sacrificed to him was put in his arms, and roasted to death. Others say that the idol, which was hollow, was divided into seven compartments within; in one of which they put flour, in the second turtle-doves, in the third a ewe, in the fourth a ram, in the fifth a calf, in the sixth an ox, and in the seventh a child, which, by heating the statue on the outside, were all burnt alive together. I question the whole truth of these statements, whether from Jewish or Christian rabbins. There is no evidence of all this in the sacred writings. And there is but presumptive proof, and that not very strong, that human sacrifices were at all offered to Molech by the Jews. The passing through the fire, so frequently spoken of, might mean no more than a simple rite of consecration to the service of this idol. Probably a kind of ordeal was meant, the persons passing suddenly through the flame of a large fire, by which, though they might be burnt or scorched, yet they were neither killed nor consumed. Or they might have passed between two large fires, as a sort of purification. See the notes on “Leviticus 20:14”; See the notes on “Leviticus 18:21”. Caesar, in his history of the Gallic war, lib.

vi., c. 16, mentions a custom of the Druids similar to this. They made an image of wickerwork, inclosed those in it whom they had adjudged to death, and, setting the whole on fire, all were consumed together.

Verse 6. *Familiar spirits*— See the notes on “Leviticus 19:31”; See the notes on “Exodus 22:18”.

Verse 9. *Curseth his father or his mother*— See the notes on “Genesis 48:12”, and See the notes on “Exodus 20:12”. He who conscientiously keeps the fifth commandment can be in no danger of this judgment. The term יקלל *yekallel* signifies, not only to curse, but to speak of a person contemptuously and disrespectfully, to make light of; so that all speeches which have a tendency to lessen our parents in the eyes of others, or to render their judgment, piety, etc., suspected and contemptible, may be here included; though the act of cursing, or of treating the parent with injurious and opprobrious language, is that which is particularly intended.

Verse 10. *Committeth adultery*— To what has been said in the note on See “Exodus 20:14”, we may add, that the word adultery comes from the Latin *adulterium*, which is compounded of *ad*, to or with, and *alter*, another, or, according to Minshieu, of *ad alterius forum*, he that approaches to another man’s bed.

Verse 12. *They have wrought confusion*— See chap. 18., and especially the note on “Leviticus 18:6”.

Verse 14. *They shall be burnt with fire*— As there are worse crimes mentioned here, (see verses 11 and 17,) where the delinquent is ordered simply to be put to death, or to be cut off, it is very likely that the crime mentioned in this verse was not punished by burning alive, but by some kind of branding, by which they were ever after rendered infamous. I need not add that the original, באש שרפו *baesh yishrephu*, may, without violence to its grammatical meaning, be understood as above, though in other places it is certainly used to signify a consuming by fire. But the case in question requires some explanation; it is this: a man marries a wife, and afterward takes his mother-in-law or wife’s mother to wife also: now for this offense the text says all three shall be burnt with fire, and this is understood as signifying that they shall be burnt alive. Now the first wife, we may safely presume, was completely innocent, and was legally

married: for a man may take to wife the daughter if single, or the mother if a widow, and in neither of these cases can any blame attach to the man or the party he marries; the crime therefore lies in taking both. Either, therefore, they were all branded as infamous persons, and this certainly was severe enough in the case of the first wife; or the man and the woman taken last were burnt: but the text says, both he and they; therefore, we should seek for another interpretation of they shall be burnt with fire, than that which is commonly given. Branding with a hot iron would certainly accomplish every desirable end both for punishment and prevention of the crime; and because the Mosaic laws are so generally distinguished by humanity, it seems to be necessary to limit the meaning of the words as above.

Verse 16. *If a woman approach unto any beast*— We have the authority of one of the most eminent historians in the world, Herodotus, to say that this was a crime not unknown in Egypt; yea, that a case of this nature actually took place while he was there. *εγενετο δ' εν τω νο μω τουτω επ' εμεν τουτο το τερας, γυναικι τραγος εμισγετο αναφανδον. τουτο ες επιδειξιν ανθρεπεν απικετο.* Herod. in Euterp., p. 108. Edit. Gale, Lond. 1679. “In this district, within my own recollection, this portentous business took place: a goat coupled so publicly with a woman that every person knew it,” etc. After this, need we wonder that God should have made laws of this nature, when it appears these abominations were not only practiced among the Egyptians, but were parts of a superstitious religious system? This one observation will account for many of those strange prohibitions which we find in the Mosaic law; others, the reasons of which are not so plain, we should see the propriety of equally, had we ampler historic records of the customs that existed in that country.

Verse 22. *The land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out.*— See this energetic prosopopoeia explained in the note on chap. 18:25. From this we learn that the cup of the iniquities of the Canaanitish nations was full; and that, consistently with Divine justice, they could be no longer spared.

Verse 24. *A land that floweth with milk and honey*— See this explained “Exodus 3:8”.

Verse 25. *Between clean beasts and unclean*— See the notes on chap. xi.

Verse 27. *A familiar spirit*— A spirit or demon, which, by magical rites, is supposed to be bound to appear at the call of his employer. See the notes on Genesis 41:8; Exodus 7:11, 22, 25; and Leviticus 19:31. FROM the accounts we have of the abominations both of Egypt and Canaan, we may blush for human nature; for wherever it is without cultivation, and without the revelation of God, it is every thing that is vile in principle and detestable in practice. Nor would any part of the habitable globe materially differ from Egypt and Canaan, had they not that rule of righteousness, the revealed LAW of God, and had not life and immortality been brought to light by the GOSPEL among them. From these accounts, for which we could easily find parallels in ancient Greece and Italy, we may see the absolute need of a Divine revelation, without which man, even in his best estate, differs little from the brute.

CHAPTER 21

The priests shall not mourn for the dead, except for near relatives, such as mother, father, son, daughter, and sister if a virgin, 1-4. They shall not shave their heads nor beards, nor make any cuttings in the flesh, because they are holy unto God, 5, 6. A priest shall not marry a woman who is a whore, profane, or divorced from her husband, 7, 8. Of the priest's daughter who profanes herself, 9. The high priest shall not uncover his head, or rend his clothes, 10; nor go in unto a dead body, 11; nor go out of the sanctuary, 12. Of his marriage and off-spring, 13-15. No person shall be made a priest that has any blemish nor shall any person with any of the blemishes mentioned here be permitted to officiate in the worship of God, 16-24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. *There shall none be defiled for the dead*— No priest shall assist in laying out a dead body, or preparing it for interment. Any contact with the dead was supposed to be of a defiling nature, probably because putrefaction had then taken place; and animal putrefaction was ever held in detestation by all men.

Verse 4. *A chief man among his people*— The word **בעל** baal signifies a master, chief, husband, etc., and is as variously translated here. 1. He being a chief among the people, it would be improper to see him in such a state of humiliation as mourning for the dead necessarily implies. 2. Though a husband he shall not defile himself even for the death of a wife, because the anointing of his God is upon him. But the first sense appears to be the best.

Verse 5. *They shall not make baldness*— See the note on “Leviticus 19:27”. It is supposed that these things were particularly prohibited, because used superstitiously by the Egyptian priests, who, according to Herodotus, shaved the whole body every third day, that there might be no uncleanness about them when they ministered in their temples. This

appears to have been a general custom among the heathen. In the book of Baruch, chap. 6:31, the priests of Babylon are represented sitting in their temples, with their clothes rent, and their heads and beards shaven, and having nothing upon their heads. Every person knows the tonsure of the Catholic priests. Should not this be avoided as an approach to a heathenish custom?

Verse 7. *That is a whore*— A prostitute, though even reclaimed.

Profane— A heathen, or one who is not a cordial believer in the true God.

Put away from her husband— Because this very circumstance might lead to suspicion that the priest and the divorced woman might have been improperly connected before.

Verse 9. *She shall be burnt with fire*.— Probably not burnt alive, but strangled first, and then burnt afterward. Though it is barely possible that some kind of branding may be intended.

Verse 10. *He that is the high priest*— This is the first place where this title is introduced; the title is very emphatic, **הכה הגדול** haccohen haggadol, that priest, the great one. For the meaning of **כה** cohen, see the note on “Genesis 14:18”. As the chief or high priest was a representative of our blessed Lord, therefore he was required to be especially holy; and he is represented as God’s king among the people.

Verse 12. *The crown of the anointing oil — is upon him*— By his office the priest represented Christ in his sacrificial character; by his anointing, the prophetic influence; and by the crown, the regal dignity of our Lord.

Verse 13. *He shall take a wife in her virginity*.— **בתוליה** bethuleyha. This is a full proof that **בתולה** bethulah is the proper Hebrew term for a virgin; from the emphatic root **בתל** bathal, to separate; because such a person was in her separate state, and had never been in any way united to man.

Verse 17. *Whosoever-hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God*.— Never was a wiser, a more rational, and a more expedient law enacted relative to sacred matters. The man who ministers in holy things, who professes to be the interpreter of the will of God, should

have nothing in his person nor in his manner which cannot contribute to render him respectable in the eyes of those to whom he ministers. If, on the contrary, he has any personal defect, any thing that may render him contemptible or despicable, his usefulness will be greatly injured, if not entirely prevented. If however a man have received any damage in the work of God, by persecution or otherwise, his scars are honorable, and will add to his respectability. But if he be received into the ministry with any of the blemishes specified here, he never will and never can have that respect which is essentially necessary to secure his usefulness. Let no man say this is a part of the Mosaic law, and we are not bound by it. It is an eternal law, founded on reason, propriety, common sense, and absolute necessity. The priest, the prophet, the Christian minister, is the representative of Jesus Christ; let nothing in his person, carriage, or doctrine, be unworthy of the personage he represents. A deformed person, though consummate in diplomatic wisdom, would never be employed as an ambassador by any enlightened court, if any fit person, unblemished, could possibly be procured.

Verse 18. A *blind man*— That is, in one eye; for he that was utterly blind could not possibly be employed in such a service. A flat nose, like that of an ape; so the best versions. Any thing superfluous, such as six fingers, six toes, etc.

Verse 19. *Broken-footed, or broken-handed*— Club-footed, bandy-legged, etc.; or having the ankle, wrist, or fingers dislocated.

Verse 20. *Crooked-backed*— Hunch-backed or gibbous. A dwarf, דַּק *dak*, a person too short or too thin, so as to be either particularly observable, or ridiculous in his appearance.

A *blemish in his eye*— A protuberance on the eye, observable spots or suffusions.

Scurvy, or scabbed— A bad habit of body, evidenced by scorbutic or scrofulous affections.

Stones broken— Is ruptured; an infirmity which would render him incapable of fulfilling the duties of his office, which might be often very fatiguing. In the above list of blemishes we meet with some that might render the priest contemptible in the eyes of men, and be the means of

leading them, not only to despise the man, but to despise the ministry itself; and we meet with others that would be a very great impediment in the discharge of his ministerial duties, and therefore any person thus blemished is by this law precluded from the ministry. The blemishes here enumerated have been considered by some in an allegorical point of view, as if only referring to the necessity of moral purity; but although holiness of heart and righteousness of life be essentially necessary in a minister of God, yet an absence of the defects mentioned above is, I fully believe, what God intends here, and for the reasons too which have been already advanced. It must however be granted, that there have been some eminent divines who have been deformed; and some with certain blemishes have been employed in the Christian ministry, and have been useful. The Mosaic rule, however, will admit of but few exceptions, when even examined according to the more extended interpretation of the Christian system. “The Hebrews say there are in all 120 blemishes which disable the priest-eight in the head, two in the neck, nine in the ears, five in the brows, seven in the eyelids, nineteen in the eyes, nine in the nose, nine in the mouth, three in the belly, three in the back, seven in the hands, sixteen in the secrets, eight in any part of the body, eight in the skin, and seven in the strength and in the breath.”-Ainsworth. In ancient times, even among heathens, persons of the most respectable appearance were appointed to the priesthood; and the emperor, both among the ancient Greeks and Romans, was both king and priest. It is reported of Metellus, that, having lost an eye in endeavoring to save the Palladium from the flames, when the temple of Vesta was on fire, he was denied the priesthood, though he had rendered such an excellent piece of service to the public; yet the public opinion was that a priest who was defective in any member was to be avoided as ominous. — See Dodd. “At Elis, in Greece, the judges chose the finest looking man to carry the sacred vessels of the deity; he that was next to him in beauty and elegance led the ox; and the third in personal beauty, etc., carried the garlands, ribbons, wine, and the other matters used for the sacrifice.”-Athen. Deipnisoph., l. xiii., c. 2. Formerly the Church of England was very cautious in admitting to her ministry those who had gross personal defects; but now we find the hump-backed, the jolt-headed, bandy-legged, club-footed, one-eyed, etc., priests even of her high places. Why do our prelates ordain such?

Verse 23. *He shall not go in unto the veil*— The priest with a blemish was not permitted to enter into the holy of holies, nor to burn incense, nor to offer the shew-bread, nor to light the golden candlestick, etc. In short, he was not permitted to perform any essential function of the priesthood. 1. THE great perfection required in the Jewish high priest was intended principally to point out the perfection of that priesthood of which the Jewish was only the type. And yet, as the apostle assures us, that law made nothing perfect, but pointed out that most perfect priesthood and sacrifice by which we draw near to God. 2. As none who had a blemish could enter into the holy of holies, and this holy of holies was a type of the kingdom of God, so nothing that is defiled can enter into heaven; for he gave himself for his Church that he might purify it to himself, and present it at last before the presence of the Divine glory having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, Ephesians 5:27; a passage which evidently refers to the directions in the preceding verse. Reader, art thou become a king and priest unto God and the Lamb? and hast thou obtained, or art thou earnestly seeking, that holiness without which thou canst not see the kingdom of heaven?

CHAPTER 22

Of the uncleanness of the priests, by which they were prevented from ministering in holy things, 1-5. How they should be cleansed, 6, 7. The priest must not eat of any animal that had died of itself, or was torn by wild beasts, but must keep God's ordinances, 8, 9. No stranger, sojourner, nor hired servant shall eat of the holy things, 10. A servant bought with money may eat of them, 11. Who of the priest's family may not eat of them, 12, 13. Of improper persons who partake of the holy things unknowingly, 14-16. Freewill-offerings, and sacrifices in general, must be without blemish, 17-25. The age at which different animals were to be offered to God, 26, 27. No animal and its young shall be offered on the same day, 28. How the sacrifice of thanks-giving was to be offered, 29, 30. All God's testimonies to be observed, and the reason, 31-33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 2. *Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves*— The same subject is continued in this chapter as in the preceding, with this addition, that besides the perfection of the priests, it was indispensably necessary that the sacrifices also should be perfect. In the service of God, according to the law, neither an imperfect offering nor an imperfect offerer could be admitted. What need then of a mediator between a holy God and sinful men! And can we expect that any of our services, however sincere and well-intentioned, can be accepted, unless offered on that living Altar that sanctifies the gift?

Verse 4. *Is a leper, or hath a running issue*— See the case of the leper treated at large in the notes on chapters 13. and 14.; and for other uncleannesses, see the notes on chap. 15:.

Verse 10. *There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing*— For the meaning of the word stranger, see the note on “Exodus 12:43”. The Jews suppose that stranger here means one who has had his ear pierced, (see the note on “Exodus 21:6”.) and that sojourner means a servant who is to go free on the Sabbatical year. Neither of these was permitted to eat of the holy

things, because they were not properly members of the priest's family, and might go out and defile themselves even with the abominations of the heathen; but the servant or slave that was bought with money, ver. 10, might eat of these things, because he was the property of the master for ever. We see that it was lawful, under the Mosaic economy, to have slaves under certain restrictions; but these were taken from among the heathen, and instructed in the true religion: hence we find, as in the above case, that they were reckoned as a part of the priest's own family, and treated as such. They certainly had privileges which did not extend either to sojourners or to hired servants; therefore their situation was incomparably better than the situation of the slaves under different European governments, of whose souls their pitiless possessors in general take no care, while they themselves venture to profess the Christian religion, and quote the Mosaic law in vindication of their system of slavery. How preposterous is such conduct! and how intolerable!

Verse 13. *But if the priest's daughter be a widow—and is returned unto her father's house*— A widow in Bengal not unfrequently returns to her father's house on the death of her husband: the union betwixt her and her own family is never so dissolved as among European nations. Thousands of widows in Bengal, whose husbands die before the consummation of marriage, never leave their parents. — WARD.

Verse 14. *Then he shall put the fifth part thereof unto it*— The holy thing of which he has unknowingly eaten shall be fairly valued, and to this value he shall add one fifth more, and give the whole to the priest.

Verse 20. *Whatsoever hath a blemish*— The same perfection is required in the sacrifice that was required in the priest; see on ver. 2, and the notes on the preceding chapter.

Verse 23. *That hath anything superfluous or lacking*— The term שרוע sarua signifies any thing extended beyond the usual size, and the term קלוט kalut signifies any thing unusually contracted; and both mean any monstrosity, whether in redundance or defect. Such things, it seems, might be offered for a freewill-offering, because that was not prescribed by the law; God left it to a man's piety and gratitude to offer such additional gifts as he could: what the law required was indispensably necessary, because it

pointed out the Gospel economy; but he that made a vow to offer such a sacrifice as the law had not required, could of course bring an imperfect offering. Some contend that the last clause of this verse should be thus read: If thou offer it either for a freewill-offering, or for a vow, it shall not be accepted. It was the opinion of the Jews, and it appears to be correct, that none of these imperfect animals were ever offered on the altar; but the person who made the freewill-offering of such things as he had, sold the animal, and gave its price for the support of the sanctuary.

Verse 24. *Bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut*— That is, no bullock or lamb that is injured in any of the above ways, shall be offered unto the Lord.

Verse 25. *Their corruption is in them*— Viz., they are bruised, crushed, broken, etc.

Verse 27. *When a bullock-is brought forth*— This is a most unfortunate as well as absurd translation. The creature called an ox is a bull castrated; surely then a bullock was never yet brought forth! The original word שׁוֹר *shor* signifies a bull, a bullock, or indeed any thing of the neat kind: here, even common sense required that it should be translated calf; and did I not hold myself sacredly bound to print the text of the common version with scrupulous exactness, I should translate the former clause of this verse thus, and so enter it into the text: When a CALF, or a LAMB, or a KID is brought forth, instead of, When a bullock, a sheep, or a goat is brought forth, the absurdity of which is glaring.

Seven days under the dam— In vindication of the propriety of this precept it may be justly asserted, that the flesh of very young animals is comparatively innutritive, and that animal food is not sufficiently nourishing and wholesome till the animal has arrived at a certain growth, or acquired the perfection of its nature. There is something brutish in eating the young of beast or fowl before the hair and hoofs are perfect in the one, and the feathers and claws in the other. Before this period their flesh is not good for food. See the note on “Leviticus 9:1”.

Verse 28. *Ye shall not kill it and her young in one day*— This precept was certainly intended to inculcate mercy and tenderness of heart; and so the Jews understood it. When it is necessary to take away the lives of

innocent animals for the support of our own, we should do it in such a way as not to blunt our moral feelings; and deplore the necessity, while we feel an express gratitude to God for permission, to do it.

Verse 30. *Leave none of it until the morrow*— See the note on “Leviticus 7:15”.

Verse 32. *Neither shall ye profane my holy name*— God’s name is profaned or rendered common when we treat his commands as we often do those of our fellows, when they do not appear to have self-interest to recommend them. He therefore profanes God’s holy name who does not both implicitly believe and conscientiously obey all his words and all his precepts.

I will be hallowed among the children of Israel— The words children of Israel, בני ישראל beney Yishrael, which so frequently occur, should be translated either the descendants or posterity of Israel, or the people of Israel. The word children has a tendency to beget a false notion, especially in the minds of young people, and lead them to think that children, in the proper sense of the word, i. e., little ones, are meant.

Verse 33. *Brought you out of the land of Egypt*— By such a series of miraculous interferences, to be your God — to save you from all idolatry, false and superstitious worship, teach you the right way, lead and support you in it, and preserve you to my eternal kingdom and glory. God, infinite in his own perfections, has no need of his creatures; but they need him; and, as a source of endless felicity, he opens himself to all his intelligent offspring.

CHAPTER 23

The feast of the Lord, 1, 2. The Sabbath, 3. The passover and unleavened bread, 4-8. The feast of first-fruits, 9-14. The feast of pentecost, 15-21. Gleanings to be left for the poor, 22. The feast of trumpets, 28-25. The great day of atonement, 26-32. The feast of tabernacles, 33-44.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 2. *These are my feasts.*— The original word מועד *moed* is properly applied to any solemn anniversary, by which great and important ecclesiastical, political, or providential facts were recorded; see Clarke on “Genesis 1:14”. Anniversaries of this kind were observed in all nations; and some of them, in consequence of scrupulously regular observation, became chronological epochs of the greatest importance in history: the Olympiads, for example.

Verse 3. *The seventh day is the Sabbath*— This, because the first and greatest solemnity, is first mentioned. He who kept not this, in the most religious manner, was not capable of keeping any of the others. The religious observance of the Sabbath stands at the very threshold of all religion. See Clarke’s note on “Genesis 2:3”.

Verse 5. *The Lord’s passover.*— See this largely explained in the notes on Exodus 12:21-27.

Verse 11. *He shalt wave the sheaf*— He shall move it to and fro before the people, and thereby call their attention to the work of Divine Providence, and excite their gratitude to God for preserving to them the kindly fruits of the earth. See Clarke note on “Exodus 29:27”, and chap. 7. at end.

Verse 14. *Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears*— It is right that God, the dispenser of every blessing, should be acknowledged as such, and the first-fruits of the field, etc., dedicated to him. Concerning the dedication of the first-fruits, see the note on “Exodus 22:29”. Parched ears of corn and green ears, fried, still constitute a part,

and not a disagreeable one, of the food of the Arabs now resident in the Holy Land. See Hasselquist.

Verse 15. *Ye shall count unto you-seven Sabbaths*— That is, from the sixteenth of the first month to the sixth of the third month. These seven weeks, called here Sabbaths, were to be complete, i. e., the forty-nine days must be finished, and the next day, the fiftieth, is what, from the Septuagint, we call pentecost. See the note on “Luke 6:1”.

Verse 22. *Neither shalt thou gather any gleanings*— See the note on “Leviticus 19:9”.

Verse 24. *A memorial of blowing of trumpets*— This is generally called the feast of trumpets; and as it took place on the first day of the seventh month, Tisri, which answers to September, which month was the commencement of what was called the civil year, the feast probably had no other design than to celebrate the commencement of that year, if indeed such a distinction obtained among the ancient Jews. See the note on “Exodus 12:2. Some think creation began at this time.

Verse 28. *A day of atonement*— See the note on “Leviticus 16:2”, etc., where this subject is largely explained.

Verse 34. *The feast of tabernacles*— In this solemnity the people left their houses, and dwelt in booths or tents made of the branches of goodly trees and thick trees, (of what kind the text does not specify,) together with palm-trees and willows of the brook, ver. 40. And in these they dwelt seven days, in commemoration of their forty years’ sojourning and dwelling in tents in the wilderness while destitute of any fixed habitations. In imitation of this feast among the people of God, the Gentiles had their feasts of tents. Plutarch speaks particularly of feasts of this kind in honor of Bacchus, and thinks from the custom of the Jews in celebrating the feast of tabernacles, that they worshipped the god Bacchus, “because he had a feast exactly of the same kind called the feast of tabernacles, *σκηνη*, which they celebrated in the time of vintage, bringing tables out into the open air furnished with all kinds of fruit, and sitting under tents made of vine branches and ivy.”-PLUT. Symp., lib. iv., Q. 6. According to Ovid the feast of Anna Perenna was celebrated much in the same way. Some remained in the open air, others formed to themselves tents and booths made of

branches of trees, over which they spread garments, and kept the festival with great rejoicings.

*“Sub Jove pars durat; pauci tentoria ponunt;
Sunt, quibus e ramis frondea facta easa est.
Pars sibi pro rigidis calamos statuere columnis;
Desuper extentas imposuere togas.”*

Ovid, Fast., lib. ill.

Concerning this feast of tabernacles, see the note on John 7:37, 38; and for the various feasts among the Jews, See the note on “Exodus 23:14”.

Verse 40. *Boughs of goodly trees*— The Jews and many critics imagine the citron-tree to be intended, and by boughs of thick tree the myrtle.

Verse 43. *That your generations may know, etc.*— By the institution of this feast God had two great objects in view: 1. To perpetuate the wonderful display of his providence and grace in bringing them out of Egypt, and in preserving them in the wilderness. 2. To excite and maintain in them a spirit of gratitude and obedience, by leading them to consider deeply the greatness of the favors which they had received from his most merciful hands. SIGNAL displays of the mercy, kindness, and providential care of God should be particularly remembered. When we recollect that we deserve nothing at his hands, and that the debt of gratitude is all the debt we can pay, in it we should be cheerful, fervent, and frequent. An ungrateful heart is an unfeeling, unloving, unbelieving, and disobedient heart. Reader, pray to God that he may deliver thee from its influence and its curse.

CHAPTER 24

Pure olive oil must be provided for the lamps, 1, 2. Aaron is to take care that the lamps be lighted from evening to morning continually, 3, 4. How the shew-bread is to be made and ordered, 5-8. Aaron and his sons shall eat this bread in the holy place, 9. Of the son of Shelomith, an Israelitish woman, who blasphemed the name, 10, 11. He is imprisoned till the mind of the Lord should be known, 12. He is commanded to be stoned to death, 13, 14. The ordinance concerning cursing and blaspheming the Lord, 15, 16. The law against murder, 17. The lex talionis, or law of like for like, repeated, 18-21. This law to be equally binding both on themselves and on strangers, 22. The blasphemer is stoned, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 2. *Pure oil olive*— See every thing relative to this ordinance explained on Exodus 27:20, 21.

Verse 5. *Bake twelve cakes*— See the whole account of the shew-bread in the notes on Exodus 25:30; and relative to the table on which they stood, the golden candlestick and silver trumpets carried in triumph to Rome, see the note on “Exodus 25:31”.

Verse 10. *The son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, etc.*— This is a very obscure account, and is encumbered with many difficulties. 1. It seems strange that a person proceeding from such an illegal mixture should have been incorporated with the Israelites. 2. What the cause of the strife between this mongrel person and the Israelitish man was is not even hinted at. The rabbins, it is true, supply in their way this deficiency; they say he was the son of the Egyptian whom Moses slew, and that attempting to pitch his tent among those of the tribe of Dan, to which he belonged by his mother’s side, ver. 11, he was prevented by a person of that tribe as having no right to a station among them who were true Israelites both by father and mother. In consequence of this they say he blasphemed the name of the Lord. But, 3. The sacred

text does not tell us what name he blasphemed; it is simply said **את השם** **איִקֹב** **vaiyikkob eth hashshem**, he pierced through, distinguished, explained, or expressed the name. (See below, article 10.) As the Jews hold it impious to pronounce the name **יהוה** Yehovah, they always put either **אדני** Adonai, Lord, or **השם** hashshem, THE NAME, in the place of it; but in this sense hashshem was never used prior to the days of rabbinical superstition, and therefore it cannot be put here for the word Jehovah. 4. Blaspheming the name of the Lord is mentioned in ver. 16, and there the proper Hebrew term is used **שם יהוה** shem Yehovah, and not the rabbinical **השם** hashshem, as in ver. 11. 5. Of all the manuscripts collated both by Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi, not one, either of the Hebrew or Samaritan, has the word Jehovah in this place. 6. Not one of the ancient VERSIONS, Targum of Onkelos, Hebraeo-Samaritan, Samaritan version, Syriac, Arabic, Septuagint, or Vulgate Latin, has even attempted to supply the sacred name. 7. Houbigant supposes that the Egypto-Israelitish man did not use the name of the true God at all, but had been swearing by one of his country gods; and if this was the case the mention of the name of a strange god in the camp of Israel would constitute a very high crime, and certainly expose to the punishment mentioned in ver. 14. 8. Probably the word **השם** hashshem was the proper name of some Egyptian deity. 9. The fifteenth verse seems to countenance the supposition that the god whose name was produced on this occasion was not the true God, for it is there said, whosoever curseth his god, **אלהיו** elohaiv, shall bear his sin — shall have the punishment due to him as an idolater; but he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, **שם יהוה** shem Yehovah, shall surely be put to death — when he blasphemeth the name (**שם** shem) he shall die, ver. 16. 10. The verb **נִקַּב** nakab, which we translate blaspheme, signifies to pierce, bore, make hollow; also to EXPRESS or DISTINGUISH by NAME; see Isaiah 62:2; Numbers 1:17; 1 Chronicles 12:31; 16:41; 28:15; or, as the Persian translator has it, [P] sherah kerd, mir an nam, he expounded or interpreted the name. Hence all that we term blasphemy here may only signify the particularizing some false god, i. e., naming him by his name, or imploring his aid as a helper, and when spoken of the true God it may signify using that sacred name as the idolaters did the names of their idols. On blaspheming God, and the nature of blasphemy, see the notes on

“Matthew 9:3”. In whatever point of view we consider the relation which has been the subject of this long note, one thing is sufficiently plain, that he who speaks irreverently of God, of his works, his perfections, his providence, etc., is destitute of every moral feeling and of every religious principle, and consequently so dangerous to society that it would be criminal to suffer him to be at large, though the longsuffering of God may lead him to repentance, and therefore it may be consistent with mercy to preserve his life.

Verse 14. *Lay their hands upon his head*— It was by this ceremony that the people who heard him curse bore their public testimony in order to his being fully convicted, for without this his punishment would not have been lawful. By this ceremony also they in effect said to the man, Thy blood be upon thy own head.

Verse 15. *Whosoever curseth his God*— יקלל אלהיו yekallel Elohaiv, he who makes light of him, who does not treat him and sacred things with due reverence, shall bear his sin — shall have the guilt of this transgression imputed to him, and may expect the punishment.

Verse 16. *Blasphemeth the name of the Lord*— ונקב שם יהוה venokeb shem Yehovah, he who pierces, transfixes, or, as some translate it, expounds, the name of Jehovah; see the note on “Leviticus 24:10”. This being the name by which especially the Divine Essence was pointed out, it should be held peculiarly sacred. We have already seen that the Jews never pronounce this name, and so long has it been disused among them that the true pronounciation is now totally lost; See on the word JEHOVAH, “Exodus 6:3”.

Verse 17. *He that killeth any man*— Blasphemy against God, i. e., speaking injuriously of his name, his attributes, his government, and his revelation, together with murder, is to be punished with death: he that blasphemes God is a curse in society, and he who takes away, wilfully and by malicious intent, the life of any man, should certainly be put to death. In this respect God has absolutely required that life shall go for life.

Verse 20. *Breach for breach*— This is a repetition of the lex talionis, which See explained “Exodus 21:24”.

Verse 22. *Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger as for one of your own country*— Equal laws, where each individual receives the same protection and the same privileges, are the boast only of a sound political constitution. He who respects and obeys the laws has a right to protection and support, and his person and property are as sacred in the sight of justice as the person and property of the prince. He who does not obey the laws of his country forfeits all right and title to protection and privilege; his own actions condemn him, and justice takes him up on the evidence of his own transgressions. He who does what is right need not fear the power of the civil magistrate, for he holds the sword only to punish transgressors. Universal obedience to the laws is the duty of every citizen; none can do more, none should do less: therefore each individual in a well regulated state must have equal rights and privileges in every thing that relates to the safety of his person, and the security of his property. Reader, such was the Mosaic code; such IS the BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

Verse 23. *And stone him with stones.*— We are not to suppose that the culprit was exposed to the unbridled fury of the thousands of Israel; this would be brutality, not justice, for the very worst of tempers and passions might be produced and fostered by such a procedure. The Jews themselves tell us that their manner of stoning was this: they brought the condemned person without the camp, because his crime had rendered him unclean, and whatever was unclean must be put without the camp. When they came within four cubits of the place of execution, they stripped the criminal, if a man, leaving him nothing but a cloth about the waist. The place on which he was to be executed was elevated, and the witnesses went up with him to it, and laid their hands upon him, for the purposes mentioned ver. 14. Then one of the witnesses struck him with a stone upon the loins; if he was not killed with that blow, then the witnesses took up a great stone, as much as two men could lift, and threw it upon his breast. This was the coup de grace, and finished the tragedy. When a man was stoned by the mob, then brutal rage armed every man, justice was set aside, and the will and fury of the people were law, judge, jury, and executioner. Such disgraceful stonings as these were, no doubt, frequent among the Jews. See Calmet's Dict., article STONING, and Ainsworth on this place. WHAT the crime of Shelomith's son was, we cannot distinctly say; doubtless it was some species of blasphemy: however, we find it was a new and

unprecedented case; and as there was no law by which the quantum of guilt could be ascertained, nor consequently the degree of punishment, it was necessary to consult the great Lawgiver on the occasion; the man was therefore secured till the mind of the Lord should be known. Moses, no doubt, had recourse to the tabernacle, and received the directions afterward mentioned from Him who dwelt between the cherubim. In what way the answer of the Lord was communicated we know not, (probably by Urim and Thummim,) but it came in such a manner as to preclude all doubt upon the subject: the man was declared to be guilty, and was sentenced to be stoned to death; and on this occasion a law is made relative to blasphemy in general. However sinful the Jews might have been at this time, we have reason to believe they did not take the name of the Lord in vain, and blasphemy was not known among them. But what shall we say of Christians, so called, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness? Were every blasphemer among us to be stoned to death, how many of the people would fall in every corner of the land! God is longsuffering; may this lead them to repentance! We have excellent laws against all profaneness, but, alas, for our country! they are not enforced; and he who attempts to put the laws in force against profane swearers, Sabbath breakers, etc., is considered a litigious man, and a disturber of the peace of society. Will not God visit for these things? This is not only contempt of God's holy word and commandments, but rebellion against the laws.

CHAPTER 25

The law concerning the Sabbatical or seventh year repeated, 1-7. The law relative to the jubilee, or fiftieth year, and the hallowing of the fiftieth, 8-12. In the year of jubilee every one to return unto his possessions, 13. None to oppress another in buying and selling, 14. Purchases to be rated from jubilee to jubilee, according to the number of years unexpired, 15-17. Promises to obedience, 18, 19. Promises relative to the Sabbatical year, 20-22. No inheritance must be finally alienated, 23, 24. No advantage to be taken of a man's poverty in buying his land, 25-28. Ordinances relative to the selling of a house in a walled city, 29, 30; in a village, 31. Houses of the Levites may be redeemed at any time, 32, 33. The fields of the Levites in the suburbs must not be sold, 34. No usury to be taken from a poor brother, 35-38. If an Israelite be sold to an Israelite, he must not be obliged to serve as a slave, 39, but be as a hired servant or as a sojourner, till the year of jubilee, 40, when he and his family shall have liberty to depart, 41; because God claims all Israelites as his servants, having redeemed them from bondage in Egypt, 42, 43. The Israelites are permitted to have bond-men and bond-women of the heathens, who, being bought with their money, shall be considered as their property, 44-46. If an Israelite, grown poor, be sold to a sojourner who has waxed rich, he may be redeemed by one of his relatives, an uncle or uncle's son, 47-49. In the interim between the jubilees, he may be redeemed; but if not redeemed, he shall go free in the jubilee, 50-54. Obedience enforced by God's right over them as his servants, 55.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 2. *The land keep a Sabbath*— See this ordinance explained, See the note on “Exodus 23:11”. It may be asked here: if it required all the annual produce of the field to support the inhabitants, how could the people be nourished the seventh year, when no produce was received from the fields? To this it may be answered, that God sent his blessing in an especial manner on the sixth year, (see verses 21, 22,) and it brought forth fruit for three years. How astonishing and convincing was this miracle! Could there

possibly be any deception here? No! The miracle speaks for itself, proves the Divine authenticity of the law, and takes every prop and stay from the system that wishes to convict the Mosaic ordinances of imposture. See Exodus 23:11. It is evident from this that the Mosaic law must have had a Divine origin, as no man in his senses, without God's authority, could have made such an ordinance as this; for the sixth year, from its promulgation, would have amply refuted his pretensions to a Divine mission.

Verse 8. *Thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years*— This seems to state that the jubilee was to be celebrated on the forty-ninth year; but in ver. 10 and 11 it is said, Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and, A jubilee shall this fiftieth year be. Probably in this verse Moses either includes the preceding jubilee, and thus with the forty-ninth makes up the number fifty; or he speaks of proclaiming the jubilee on the forty-ninth, and celebrating it on the fiftieth year current. Some think it was celebrated on the forty-ninth year, as is stated in ver. 8; and this prevented the Sabbatical year, or seventh year of rest, from being confounded with the jubilee, which it must otherwise have been, had the celebration of this great solemnity taken place on the fiftieth year; but it is most likely that the fiftieth was the real jubilee.

Verse 11. *A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be*— The literal meaning of the word jubilee, יובל yobel in Hebrew, and יוביל yobil in the Samaritan, has not been well ascertained. Josephus and the rabbins have caused many to err; the former says the word signifies liberty; ελευθεριαν δε σημαίνει τουνομα, Antiq., l. 3, cap. 12, edit. Haverc., vol. 1., p. 184; but the word liberty signifies rather the intention of the institution, than the meaning of the Hebrew term. The rabbins say it signifies a ram's horn, because the trumpets which were used in proclaiming this solemnity were made out of ram's horns. This meaning is adopted in a few places in our translation, but none of the ancient versions acknowledge this sense of the term, the Chaldee excepted. Some derive it from יבל yabal, to bring, carry away, because the Israelites at this time carried away the right of repossessing their inheritances which had been forfeited or alienated. The most natural derivation is from הוביל hobil, to cause to bring back, or recall, because estates, etc., which had been alienated, were then brought

back to their primitive owners. This was a wise and excellent institution, but appears to have been little regarded by the Jews after the Babylonish captivity. Indeed, it is not mentioned under the second temple, and the observance must have ceased among the Jews when they were brought under a foreign yoke. The jubilee seems to have been typical, 1. Of the great time of release, the Gospel dispensation, when all who believe in Christ Jesus are redeemed from the bondage of sin-repossess the favor and image of God, the only inheritance of the human soul, having all debts cancelled, and the right of inheritance restored. To this the prophet Isaiah seems to allude, Isaiah 26:13, and particularly Isaiah 61:1-3. 2. Of the general resurrection. "It is," says Mr. Parkhurst, "a lively prefiguration of the grand consummation of time, which will be introduced in like manner by the trump of God, 1 Corinthians 15:52, when the children and heirs of God shall be delivered from all their forfeitures, and restored to the eternal inheritance allotted to them by their Father; and thenceforth rest from their labors, and be supported in life and happiness by what the field of God shall supply." It is worthy of remark that the jubilee was not proclaimed till the tenth day of the seventh month, on the very day when the great annual atonement was made for the sins of the people; and does not this prove that the great liberty or redemption from thralldom, published under the Gospel, could not take place till the great Atonement, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, had been offered up? See ver. 9.

Verse 14. *Ye shall not oppress one another*— Ye shall take no advantage of each other's ignorance either in buying or selling; for he that buys an article at less than it is worth, or sells one for more than it is worth, taking advantage in both cases of the ignorance of the vender or buyer, is no better than a thief, as he actually robs his neighbor of as much property as he has bought the article at below or sold it above its current value.

Verse 15. *According to the number of years*— The purchases that were to be made of lands were to be regulated by the number of years unelapsed of the current jubilee. This was something like buying the unexpired term of a lease among us; the purchase is always regulated by the number of years between the time of purchase and the expiration of the term.

Verse 20. *What shall we eat the seventh year?*— A very natural question, which could only be laid at rest by the sovereign promise in the next verse:

I will COMMAND my BLESSING upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for THREE YEARS. See on “Leviticus 25:2”.

Verse 23. *The land shall not be sold for ever—the land is mine*— As God in a miraculous manner gave them possession of this land, they were therefore to consider themselves merely as tenants to him; and on this ground he, as the great landholder or lord of the soil, prescribes to them all the conditions on which they shall hold it. This one circumstance was peculiarly favorable to their advancement in religion, in righteousness, and true holiness; for feeling that they had nothing which they could call their own upon earth, they must frequently, by this, be put in mind of the necessity of having a permanent dwelling in the heavenly inheritance, and of that preparation without which it could not be possessed.

Verse 25. *Any of his kin come to redeem it*— The land that was sold might be redeemed, in the interim between jubilee and jubilee, by the former owner or by one of his kinsmen or relatives. This kinsman is called in the text **גוֹאֵל** goel or redeemer; and was not this a lively emblem of the redemption of man by Christ Jesus? That he might have a right to redeem man, he took upon him human nature, and thus became a kinsman of the great family of the human race, and thereby possessed the right of redeeming that fallen nature of which he took part, and of buying back to man that inheritance which had been forfeited by transgression.

Verse 29. *Sell a dwelling house in a walled city*— A very proper difference is put between houses in a city and houses in the country. If a man sold his house in the city, he might redeem it any time in the course of a year; but if it were not redeemed within that time, it could no more be redeemed, nor did it go out even in the jubilee. It was not so with a house in the country; such a house might be redeemed during any part of the interim; and if not redeemed, must go out at the jubilee. The reason in both cases is sufficiently evident; the house in the city might be built for purposes of trade or traffic merely, the house in the country was built on or attached to the inheritance which God had divided to the respective families, and it was therefore absolutely necessary that the same law should apply to the house as to the inheritance. But the same necessity did not hold good with respect to the house in the city: and as we may presume the house in the city was merely for the purpose of trade, when a

man bought such a house, and got his business established there, it would have been very inconvenient for him to have removed; but as it was possible that the former owner might have sold the house rashly, or through the pressure of some very urgent necessity, a year was allowed him, that during that time he might have leisure to reconsider his rash act, or so to get through his pressing necessity as to be able to get back his dwelling. This time was sufficiently long in either of the above cases; and as such occurrences might have been the cause of his selling his house, it was necessary that he might have the opportunity of redeeming his pledge. Again, as the purchaser, having bought the house merely for the purpose of trade, manufacture, etc., must have been at great pains and expense to fit the place for his work, and establish his business, in which himself, his children, and his children's children, were to labor and get their bread; hence it was necessary that he should have some certainty of permanent possession, without which, we may naturally conjecture, no such purchases ever would be made. This seems to be the simple reason of the law in both cases.

Verse 32. *The cities of the Levites*— The law in this and the following verses was also a very wise one. A Levite could not ultimately sell his house: if sold he could redeem it at any time in the interim between the two jubilees; but if not redeemed, it must go out at the following jubilee. And why? “Because Moses framed his laws so much in favor of the priesthood, that they had peculiar privileges?” etc. Just the reverse: they were so far from being peculiarly favored that they had no inheritance in Israel, only their cities, to dwell in: and because their houses in these cities were the whole that they could call their own, therefore these houses could not be ultimately alienated. All that they had to live on besides was from that most precarious source of support, the freewill-offerings of the people, which depended on the prevalence of pure religion in the land.

Verse 36. *Take thou no usury of him*— Usury, at present, signifies unlawful interest for money. Properly, it means the reward or compensation given for the use of a thing, but is principally spoken of money. For the definition of the original term, See the note on “Exodus 22:25”.

Verse 42. *For they are my servants*— As God redeemed every Israelite out of Egyptian bondage, they were therefore to consider themselves as his property, and that consequently they should not alienate themselves from him. It was in being his servants, and devoted to his work, that both their religious and political service consisted. And although their political liberty might be lost, they knew that their spiritual liberty never could be forfeited except by an utter alienation from God. God therefore claims the same right to their persons which he does to their lands; See the note on “Leviticus 25:23”.

Verse 43. *Thou shalt not rule over him with rigor*— What is rigorous service? “Service which is not determined, and service whereof there is no need.” This is the definition given by the Jews; but much more is implied in this command than is expressed here. Labour beyond the person’s strength, or labor too long continued, or in unhealthy or uncomfortable places and circumstances, or without sufficient food, etc., is labor exacted with rigour, and consequently inhuman; and this law is made, not for the Mosaic dispensation and the Jewish people, but for every dispensation and for every people under heaven.

Verse 50. *The price of his sale shall be, etc.*— This was a very equitable law, both for the sojourner to whom the man was sold, and to the Israelite who had been thus sold. The Israelite might redeem himself, or one of his kindred might redeem him; but this must not be done to the prejudice of his master, the sojourner. They were therefore to reckon the years he must have served from that time till the jubilee; and then, taking the current wages of a servant per year at that time, multiply the remaining years by that sum, and the aggregate was the sum to be given to his master for his redemption. The Jews hold that the kindred of such a person were bound, if in their power, to redeem him, lest he should be swallowed up among the heathen; and we find, from Nehemiah 5:8, that this was done by the Jews on their return from the Babylonish captivity: We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, who were sold unto the heathen.

Verse 55. *For unto me the children of Israel are servants*— The reason of this law we have already seen, (See on “Leviticus 25:42”,) but we must look farther to see the great end of it. The Israelites were a typical people; they represented those under the Gospel dispensation who are children of

God by faith in Christ Jesus. But these last have a peculiarity of blessing: they are not merely servants, but they are SONS; though they also serve God, yet it is in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. And to this difference of state the apostle seems evidently to allude, Galatians 4:6, etc.: And because ye are SONS, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a SERVANT, but a SON; and if a SON, then an HEIR of God through Christ; genuine believers in Christ not being heirs of an earthly inheritance, nor merely of a heavenly one, for they are heirs of God. God himself therefore is their portion, without whom even heaven itself would not be a state of consummate blessedness to an immortal spirit. THE jubilee was a wonderful institution, and was of very great service to the religion, freedom, and independence of the Jewish people. "The motive of this law," says Calmet, "was to prevent the rich from oppressing the poor, and reducing them to perpetual slavery; and that they should not get possession of all the lands by way of purchase, mortgage, or, lastly, usurpation. That debts should not be multiplied too much, lest thereby the poor should be entirely ruined; and that slaves should not continue always, they, their wives and children, in servitude. Besides, Moses intended to preserve, as much as possible, personal liberty, an equality of property, and the regular order of families, among the Hebrews. Lastly, he designed that the people should be strongly attached to their country, lands, and inheritances; that they should have an affection for them, and consider them as estates which descended to them from their ancestors which they were to leave to their posterity, without any fear of their going ultimately out of their families." But this institution especially pointed out the redemption of man by Christ Jesus: 1. Through him, he who was in debt to God's justice had his debt discharged, and his sin forgiven. 2. He who sold himself for naught, who was a bondsman of sin and Satan, regains his liberty and becomes a son of God through faith in his blood. 3. He who by transgression had forfeited all right and title to the kingdom of God, becomes an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ. Heaven, his forfeited inheritance, is restored, for the kingdom of heaven is open to all believers; and thus, redeemed from his debt, restored to his liberty, united to the heavenly family, and re-entitled to his inheritance, he goes on his way rejoicing, till he enters the paradise of his Maker, and is for ever with the Lord. Reader, hast thou applied for this redemption? Does not the trumpet

of the jubilee, the glad tidings of salvation by Christ Jesus, sound in the land? Surely it does. Why then continue a bond-slave of sin, a child of wrath, and an heir of hell, when such a salvation is offered unto thee without money and without price? O suffer not this provision to be made ultimately in vain for thee! For what art thou advantaged if thou gain the whole world and lose thy soul?

Verse 3. *If ye walk in my statutes*— For the meaning of this and similar words used in the law, See the note on “Leviticus 26:15”.

Verse 4. *Rain in due season*— What in Scripture is called the early and the latter rain. The first fell in Palestine at the commencement of spring, and the latter in autumn. — Calmet.

Verse 5. *Your threshing shall reach unto the vintage*— According to Pliny, Hist. Nat., l. xviii., c. 18, the Egyptians reaped their barley six months, and their oats seven months, after seed time; for they sowed all their grain about the end of summer, when the overflowings of the Nile had ceased. It was nearly the same in Judaea: they sowed their corn and barley towards the end of autumn, and about the month of October; and they began their barley-harvest after the passover, about the middle of March; and in one month or six weeks after, about pentecost, they began that of their wheat. After their wheat-harvest their vintage commenced. Moses here leads the Hebrews to hope, if they continued faithful to God, that between their harvest and vintage, and between their vintage and seed-time, there should be no interval, so great should the abundance be; and these promises would appear to them the more impressive, as they had just now come out of a country where the inhabitants were obliged to remain for nearly three months shut up within their cities, because the Nile had then inundated the whole country. See Calmet. “This is a nervous and beautiful promise of such entire plenty of corn and wine, that before they could have reaped and threshed out their corn the vintage should be ready, and before they could have pressed out their wine it would be time to sow again. The Prophet Amos, Amos 9:13 expresses the same blessing in the same manner: The ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who soweth seed.”-Dodd.

Verse 11. *I will set my tabernacle among you*— This and the following verse contain the grand promise of the Gospel dispensation, viz. the

presence, manifestation, and indwelling of God in human nature, and his constant in dwelling in the souls of his followers. So John 1:14 the WORD was made flesh, **καὶ ἐσαρκώσεν ἐν ἡμῖν**, and MADE HIS TABERNACLE among us. And to this promise of the law St. Paul evidently refers, 2 Corinthians 6:16-18 and 2 Corinthians 7:1

Verse 15. *If ye shall despise my statutes-abor my judgments*— As these words, and others of a similar import, which point out different properties of the revelation of God, are frequently occurring, I Judge it best to take a general view of them, once for all, in this place, and show how they differ among themselves, and what property of the Divine law each points out.

1. STATUTES. **חֻקֹּת** chukoth, from **חָק** chak, to mark out, define, etc. This term seems to signify the things which God has defined, marked, and traced out, that men might have a perfect copy of pure conduct always before their eyes, to teach them how they might walk so as to please him in all things, which they could not do without such instruction as God gives in his word, and the help which he affords by his Spirit. 2.

JUDGMENTS. **שְׁפָטִים** shephatim, from **שָׁפַט** shaphat, to distinguish, regulate, and determine; meaning those things which God has determined that men shall pursue, by which their whole conduct shall be regulated, making the proper distinction between virtue and vice, good and evil, right and wrong, justice and injustice; in a word, between what is proper to be done, and what is proper to be left undone. 3. COMMANDMENTS. **מִצְוֹת**

mitsvoth, from **צָוָה** tsavah, to command, ordain, and appoint, as a legislator. This term is properly applied to those parts of the law which contain the obligation the people are under to act according to the statutes, judgments, etc., already established, and which prohibit them by penal sanctions from acting contrary to the laws. 4. COVENANT. **בְּרִית** berith, from **בָּרַךְ** bar, to clear, cleanse, or purify; because the covenant, the whole system of revelation given to the Jews, was intended to separate them from all the people of the earth, and to make them holy. Berith also signifies the covenant-sacrifice, which prefigured the atonement made by Christ for the sin of the world, by which he purifies believers unto himself, and makes them a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Besides those four, we may add the following, from other places of Scripture. 5.

TESTIMONIES. **עֵדוּת** edoth, from **עָד** ad, beyond, farther, besides; because

the whole ritual law referred to something farther on or beyond the Jewish dispensation, even to that sacrifice which in the fullness of time was to be offered for the sins of men. Thus all the sacrifices, etc., of the Mosaic law referred to Christ, and bore testimony to him who was to come. 6.

ORDINANCES. **משמרות** mishmaroth, from **שמר** shamar, to guard, keep safe, watch over; those parts of Divine revelation which exhorted men to watch their ways, keep their hearts, and promised them, in consequence, the continual protection and blessing of God their Maker. 7. PRECEPTS. **פקודים** pikkudim, from **פקד** pakad, to overlook, take care or notice of, to visit; a very expressive character of the Divine testimonies, the overseers of a man's conduct, those who stand by and look on to see whether he acts according to the commands of his Master; also the visitors, because God's precepts are suited to all the circumstances of human life; some are applicable in adversity, others in prosperity; some in times of temptation and sadness, others in seasons of spiritual joy and exultation, etc., etc. Thus they may be said to overlook and visit man in all times, places, and circumstances. 8. TRUTH. **אמת** emeth, from **אם** am, to support, sustain, confirm; because God is immutable who has promised, threatened, commanded, and therefore all his promises, threatenings, commandments, etc., are unalterable and eternal. Error and falsity promise to direct and sustain, but they fail. God's word is supported by his own faithfulness, and it supports and confirms them who conscientiously believe it. 9. RIGHTEOUSNESS. **צדקה** tsedakah, from **צדק** which, though not used as a verb in the Hebrew Bible, seems to convey, from its use as a noun, the idea of giving just weight or good measure, see chap. 19:36. This is one of the characters which is attributed to the revelation God makes of himself; (see Psalm 119:137-144;) and by this the impartiality of the Divine testimonies is pointed out. God gives to all their due, and his word distributes to every man according to his state, circumstances, talents, graces, etc.; to none too much, to none too little, to all enough. 10. WORD OF JEHOVAH. **דבר יהוה** debar Yehovah, from **דבר**, dabar, to drive, lead, bring forward, hence to bring forward, or utter one's sentiments; so the word of God is what God has brought forth to man from his own mind and counsel; it is a perfect similitude of his own righteousness, holiness, goodness, and truth. This Divine law is sometimes expressed by:- 11. **אמרה** imrah, speech or word, variously modified from **אמר** amar, to

branch out, because of the interesting details into which the word of God enters in order to instruct man and make him wise unto salvation, or, as the apostle expresses it, “God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake unto the fathers by the prophets,” *πολυμερως και πολυτροπως*, in many distinct parcels, and by various tropes or figures; a curious and elegant description of Divine revelation; Hebrews 1:1. 12. All these collectively are termed the LAW *תורה* torah, or *תורת יהוה* torath Yehovah, the law of the Lord, from *ירה* yarah, to direct, set straight and true, as stones in a building, to teach and instruct, because this whole system of Divine revelation is calculated to direct men to the attainment of present and eternal felicity, to set them right in their notions concerning the supreme God, to order and adjust them in the several departments of civil and religious society, and thus to teach and instruct them in the knowledge of themselves, and in the true knowledge of God. Thus those who receive the truth become the city of the living God—the temple of the Most High, built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. To complete this description of the word law, See the note on “Exodus 12:49”, where other properties of the law of God are specified.

Verse 16. *I will even appoint over you terror, etc.*—How dreadful is this curse! A whole train of evils are here personified and appointed to be the governors of a disobedient people. Terror is to be one of their keepers. How awful a state! to be continually under the influence of dismay, feeling indescribable evils, and fearing worse! Consumption, *שחפת* shachepheth, generally allowed to be some kind of atrophy or marasmus, by which the flesh was consumed, and the whole body dried up by raging fever through lack of sustenance. See the note on “Leviticus 11:16”. How circumstantially were all these threatenings fulfilled in this disobedient and rebellious people! Let a deist read over this chapter and compare it with the state of the Jews since the days of Vespasian, and then let him doubt the authenticity of this word if he can.

Verse 22. *I will also send wild beasts among you*—God fulfilled these threatenings at different times. He sent fiery SERPENTS among them, Numbers 21:6; LIONS, 2 Kings 17:25; BEARS, 2 Kings 2:24, and threatened them with total desolation, so that their land should be overrun with wild beasts, etc., see Ezekiel 5:17. “Spiritually,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “these

are wicked rulers and tyrants that kill and spoil, Proverbs 28:15; Daniel 7:3-6; Psalm 80:13; and false prophets that devour souls, Matthew 7:15; Revelation 13:1, etc. So the prophet, speaking of their punishment by tyrants, says: A LION out of the forest shall slay them; a WOLF of the evening shall spoil them; a LEOPARD shall watch over their cities; every one that goeth out thence shall be torn to pieces, because their transgressions be many. And of their prophets it is said: O Israel, thy prophets are like FOXES in the deserts, Ezekiel 13:4; Jeremiah 8:17; 15:3.”

Verse 26. *Ten women shall bake your bread in one oven*— Though in general every family in the East bakes its own bread, yet there are some public bakehouses where the bread of several families is baked at a certain price. Moses here foretells that the desolation should be so great and the want so pressing that there should be many idle hands to be employed, many mouths to be fed, and very little for each: Ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, etc.

Verse 29. *Ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, etc.*— This was literally fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem. Josephus, WARS of the Jews, book vii., chap. ii., gives us a particular instance in dreadful detail of a woman named Mary, who, in the extremity of the famine during the siege, killed her sucking child, roasted, and had eaten part of it when discovered by the soldiers! See this threatened, Jeremiah 19:9.

Verse 34. *Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths*— This Houbigant observes to be a historical truth. — “From Saul to the Babylonish captivity are numbered about four hundred and ninety years, during which period there were seventy Sabbaths of years; for 7, multiplied by 70, make 490. Now the Babylonish captivity lasted seventy years, and during that time the land of Israel rested. Therefore the land rested just as many years in the Babylonish captivity, as it should have rested Sabbaths if the Jews had observed the laws relative to the Sabbaths of the land.” This is a most remarkable fact, and deserves to be particularly noticed, as a most literal fulfillment of the prophetic declaration in this verse: Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies’ land. May it not be argued from this that the law concerning the Sabbatical year was observed till Saul’s time, as it is only after this period the land enjoyed its rest in the seventy years’ captivity? And if that breach of the

law was thus punished, may it not be presumed it had been fulfilled till then, or else the captivity would have lasted longer, i. e., till the land had enjoyed all its rests, of which it had ever been thus deprived?

Verse 38. *The land of your enemies shall eat you up.*— Does this refer to the total loss of the ten tribes? These are so completely swallowed up in some enemies' land, that nothing concerning their existence or place of residence remains but mere conjecture.

Verse 44. *Neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly.*— Though God has literally fulfilled all his threatenings upon this people in dispossessing them of their land, destroying their polity, overturning their city, demolishing their temple, and scattering themselves over the face of the whole earth; yet he has, in his providence, strangely preserved them as a distinct people, and in very considerable numbers also. He still remembers the covenant of their ancestors, and in his providence and grace he has some very important design in their favor. All Israel shall yet be saved, and, with the Gentiles, they shall all be restored to his favor; and under Christ Jesus, the great Shepherd; become, with them, one grand everlasting fold.

Verse 46. *These are the statutes, and judgments, etc.*— See on ver. 15. This verse appears to be the proper concluding verse of the whole book; and I rather think that the 27th chapter originally followed the 25th. As the law was anciently written upon skins of parchment, sheep or goat skins, pasted or stitched together, and all rolled up in one roll, the matter being written in columns, one of those columns might have been very easily displaced, and thus whole chapters might have been readily interchanged. — It is likely that this might have been the case in the present instance. Others endeavor to solve this difficulty, by supposing that the 27th chapter was added after the book had been finished; and therefore there is apparently a double conclusion, one at the end of the 26th and the other at the end of the 27th chapter. However the above may have been, all the ancient versions agree in concluding both the chapters in nearly the same way; yet the 26th chapter must be allowed to be by far the most natural conclusion of the book. THE most important points in this chapter have already been particularly noticed in the notes; and to those on the 15th, 34th, and 44th verses, the reader is especially referred.

How unwilling is God to cast off his people! and yet how sure is their rejection if they refuse to obey and live to him! No nation has ever been so signally elected as the Jews; and yet no nation has ever been so signally and so awfully reprobated. O Britain, be not high-minded, but fear! Behold here the goodness and severity of God!

CHAPTER 27

Laws concerning vows, 1, 2. Of males and females from twenty to sixty years of age, and their valuation, 3, 4. Of the same from five to twenty years, 5. Of the same from a month to five years of age, 6. Of males and females from sixty years old and upwards, and their valuation, 7. The priest shall value the poor according to his ability, 8. Concerning beasts that are vowed, and their valuation, 9-13. Concerning the sanctification of a house, 14, 15. Concerning the field that is sanctified or consecrated to the Lord, to the year of jubilee, 16-24. Every estimation shall be made in shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, 25. The firstlings of clean beasts, being already the Lord's, cannot be vowed, 26. That of an unclean beast may be redeemed, 27. Every thing devoted to God shall be unalienable and unredeemable, and continue the Lord's property till death, 28, 29. All the tithe of the land is the Lord's, 30; but it may be redeemed by adding a fifth part, 31. The tithe of the herd and the flock is also his, 32. The tenth that passes under the rod shall not be changed, 33. The conclusion of the book, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 2. *When a man shall make a singular vow*— The verse is short and obscure, and may be translated thus: A man who shall have separated a vow, according to thy estimation, of souls unto the Lord; which may be paraphrased thus: He who shall have vowed or consecrated a soul, i. e., a living creature, whether man or beast, if he wish to redeem what he has thus vowed or consecrated, he shall ransom or redeem it according to the priest's estimation; for the priest shall judge of the properties, qualifications, and age of the person or beast, and the circumstances of the person who has vowed it, and shall regulate the value accordingly; and the money shall be put into his hands for the service of the sanctuary. A vow (says Mr. Ainsworth) is a religious promise made unto the Lord, and for the most part with prayer, and paid with thanksgiving, Numbers 21:2, 3; Psalm 66:12, 14. Vows were either of abstinence, such as are spoken of Numbers 30., and the vow of the Nazarite, Numbers 6.; or they were to

give something to the Lord, as sacrifices, Leviticus 7:16, or the value of persons, beasts, houses, or lands, concerning which the law is here given. A man might vow or devote himself, his children, (ver. 5, 6,) his domestics, his cattle, his goods, etc. And in this chapter rules are laid down for the redemption of all these things. But if, after consecrating these things, he refused to redeem them, then they became the Lord's property for ever. The persons continued all their lives devoted to the service of the sanctuary; the goods were sold for the profit of the temple or the priests; the animals, if clean, were offered in sacrifice; if not proper for sacrifice, were sold, and the price devoted to sacred uses. This is a general view of the different laws relative to vows, mentioned in this chapter.

Verse 3. *From twenty years old even unto sixty-fifty shekels*— A man from twenty to sixty years of age, if consecrated to the Lord by a vow, might be redeemed for fifty shekels, which, at 3s. each, amounted to 7ú. 10s. sterling.

Verse 4. *And if it be a female*— The woman, at the same age, vowed unto the Lord, might be redeemed for thirty shekels, 4ú. 10s. sterling, a little more than one half of the value of the man; for this obvious reason, that a woman, if employed, could not be of so much use in the service of the sanctuary as the man, and was therefore of much less value.

Verse 5. *From five years old*— The boy that was vowed might be redeemed for twenty shekels, 3ú. sterling; the girl, for ten shekels, just one half, 1ú. 10s.

Verse 6. *A month old*— The male child, five shekels, 15s., the female, three shekels, 9s. Being both in comparative infancy, they were nearly of an equal value. None were vowed under a month old: the first-born being always considered as the Lord's property, could not be vowed, see ver. 26.

Verse 7. *Sixty years old*— The old man and the old woman, being nearly past labor, were nearly of an equal value; hence the one was estimated at fifteen shekels, 2ú. 5s., the other at ten shekels, 1ú. 10s. This was about the same ratio as that of the children, ver. 5, and for the same reason.

Verse 10. *He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, etc.*— Whatever was consecrated to God by a vow, or purpose of heart, was

considered from that moment as the Lord's property; to change which was impiety; to withhold it, sacrilege. Reader, hast thou ever dedicated thyself, or any part of thy property, to the service of thy Maker? If so, hast thou paid thy vows? Or hast thou altered thy purpose, or changed thy offering? Has he received from thy hands a bad for a good? Wast thou not vowed and consecrated to God in thy baptism? Are his vows still upon thee? Hast thou "renounced the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh?" Dost thou feel thyself bound "to keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?" Was not this thy baptismal covenant? And hast thou renounced IT? Take heed! God is not mocked: that which thou sowest, thou shalt also reap. If thou rob God of thy heart, he will deprive thee of his heaven.

Verse 11. *Any unclean beast*— See on ver. 2.

Verse 13. *Shall add a fifth part*— This was probably intended to prevent rash vows and covetous redemptions. The priest alone was to value the thing; and to whatever his valuation was, a fifth part must be added by him who wished to redeem the consecrated thing. Thus, if the priest valued it at forty shekels, if the former owner redeemed it he was obliged to give forty-eight.

Verse 14. *Shall sanctify his house*— The yearly rent of which, when thus consecrated, went towards the repairs of the tabernacle, which was the house of the Lord.

Verse 16. *Some part of a field*— Though the preceding words are not in the text, yet it is generally allowed they should be supplied here, as it was not lawful for a man to vow his whole estate, and thus make his family beggars, in order to enrich the Lord's sanctuary: this God would not permit. The rabbins teach that the land or field, whether good or bad, was valued at forty-eight shekels, for all the years of the jubilee, provided the field was large enough to sow a homer of barley. The חֹמֶר chomer was different from the עֹמֶר omer: the latter held about three quarts, the former, seventy-five gallons three pints; See the note on "Exodus 16:16". Some suppose that the land was rated, not at fifty shekels for the whole of the years of the jubilee, for this would be but about 3s. per annum; but that it

was rated according to its produce, fifty shekels for every homer of barley it produced.

Verse 21. *As a field devoted*— It is כֶּרֶם cherem, a thing so devoted to God as never more to be capable of being redeemed. See on ver. 29.

Verse 25. *Shekel of the sanctuary*— A standard shekel; the standard being kept in the sanctuary to try and regulate all the weights in the land by. See Genesis 20:16; 23:15.

Verse 28. *No devoted thing -shall be sold or redeemed*— This is the כֶּרֶם cherem, which always meant an absolute unredeemable grant to God.

Verse 29. *Which shall be devoted of men*— Every man who is devoted shall surely be put to death; or, as some understand it, be the Lord's property, or be employed in his service, till death. The law mentioned in these two verses has been appealed to by the enemies of Divine revelation as a proof, that under the Mosaic dispensation human sacrifices were offered to God; but this can never be conceded. Had there been such a law, it certainly would have been more explicitly revealed, and not left in the compass of a few words only, where the meaning is very difficult to be ascertained; and the words themselves differently translated by most interpreters. That there were persons, devoted to destruction under the Mosaic dispensation, is sufficiently evident, for the whole Canaanitish nations were thus devoted by the Supreme Being himself, because the cup of their iniquity was full; but that they were not sacrificed to God, the whole history sufficiently declares. Houbigant understands the passage as speaking of these alone; and says, *Non alios licebat anathemate voveri, quam Chananaeos, quos jusserat Deus ad internecionem deleri.* "It was not lawful to devote any persons to death but the Canaanites, whom God had commanded to be entirely extirpated." This is perfectly correct; but he might have added that it was because they were the most impure idolaters, and because the cup of their iniquity was full. These God commanded to be put to death; and who can doubt his right to do so, who is the Maker of man, and the Fountain of justice? But what has this to do with human sacrifices? Just nothing. No more than the execution of an ordinary criminal, or a traitor, in the common course of justice, has to do with a sacrifice to God. In the destruction of such idolaters, no religious formality

whatever was observed; nor any thing that could give the transaction even the most distant semblance of a sacrifice. In this way Jericho was commanded to be destroyed, Joshua 6:17, and the Amalekites, Deuteronomy 25:19; 1 Samuel 15:3: but in all these cases the people commanded to be destroyed were such sinners as God's justice did not think proper to spare longer. And has not every system of law the same power? And do we not concede such power to the civil magistrate, for the welfare of the state? God, who is the sovereign arbiter of life and death, acts here in his juridical and legislative capacity; but these are victims to justice, not religious sacrifices. It may be necessary just farther to note that two kinds of vows are mentioned in this chapter:- 1. The נדר (see on chap. vii.) which comprehends all those things which, when once devoted, might be redeemed at a certain price, according to the valuation of the priest. 2. The חרם, those things vowed to God of which there remained no power of redemption; they were most holy, i. e., so absolutely devoted to God that they could neither be changed, alienated, nor redeemed: probably because no mental reservation had been made, as in the above case may be supposed. On this ground the word was afterward applied to the most solemn and awful kind of excommunication, meaning a person so entirely devoted to the stroke of vindictive justice, as never to be capable of receiving pardon; and hence the word may be well applied in this sense to the Canaanites, the cup of whose iniquity was full, and who were consigned, without reprieve, to final extermination.

Verse 30. *All the tithe of the land*— This God claims as his own; and it is spoken of here as being a point perfectly settled, and concerning which there was neither doubt nor difficulty. See my view of this subject “Genesis 28:22”, to which I do not see the necessity of adding any thing.

Verse 32. *Whatsoever passeth under the rod*— The signification of this verse is well given by the rabbins: “When a man was to give the tithe of his sheep or calves to God, he was to shut up the whole flock in one fold, in which there was one narrow door capable of letting out one at a time. The owner, about to give the tenth to the Lord, stood by the door with a rod in his hand, the end of which was dipped in vermilion or red ochre. The mothers of those lambs or calves stood without: the door being opened, the young ones ran out to join themselves to their dams; and as they passed out the owner stood with his rod over them, and counted one, two,

three, four, five, etc., and when the tenth came, he touched it with the coloured rod, by which it was distinguished to be the tithe calf, sheep, etc., and whether poor or lean, perfect or blemished, that was received as the legitimate tithe.” It seems to be in reference to this custom that the Prophet Ezekiel, speaking to Israel, says: I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant — you shall be once more claimed as the Lord’s property, and be in all things devoted to his service, being marked or ascertained, by especial providences and manifestations of his kindness, to be his peculiar people.

Verse 34. *These are the commandments*— This conclusion is very similar to that at the end of the preceding chapter. I have already supposed that this chapter should have followed the 25th, and that the 26th originally terminated the book. Mr. Ainsworth, the whole of whose writings are animated with the spirit of piety, concludes this book with the following excellent remarks:- “The tithes in Israel being thus sanctified by the commandment of God to his honor, the maintenance of his ministers, and the relief of the poor, it taught them and teaches us to honor the Lord with our substance, (Proverbs 3:9,) acknowledging him to be the author of all our increase and store; (Deuteronomy 8:13-18; Hosea 2:8;) to honor his MINISTERS, and to communicate unto them in all good things, (1 Timothy 5:17, 18; Galatians 6:6,) that they who sow unto us spiritual things should reap our carnal things, (1 Corinthians 9:11,) and to give ALMS of such things as we have, that all things may be clear unto us, (Luke 11:41,) yea, even to sell that we have, and give alms; to provide ourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. Luke 12:33.” They who forget their Maker, his ministers, and the poor, are never likely to hear that blessed word in the great day: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you; for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink; naked, and ye clothed me; sick and in prison, and ye came unto me.” READER, thou hast now gone through the whole of this most interesting book; a book whose subject is too little regarded by Christians in general. Here thou mayest discover the rigid requisitions of Divine justice, the sinfulness of sin, the exceeding breadth of the commandment, and the end of all human perfection. And now what thinkest thou of that word, “Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law?” Romans 3:19. But who are under the law—the

condemning power of the pure, rigid, moral law of God? Not the Jews only, but every soul of man: all to whom it is sent, and who acknowledge it as a Divine revelation, and have not been redeemed from the guilt of sin by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; for “cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.” By this law then is the knowledge, but not the cure, of sin. Here then what God saith unto thee: “If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what farther need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law; Hebrews 7:11, 12. Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man; Hebrews 8:1, 2. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins; Hebrews 10:4. But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, -neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that, by means of death, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. And without shedding of blood is no remission. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation;” Hebrews 9:11, 12, 15, 22, 28. We see then that Christ was the END of the law for righteousness (for justification) to every one that believeth. “Unto him, therefore, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 1:5, 6.

SECTIONS in the Book of Leviticus, carried on from Exodus, which ends with the TWENTY-THIRD. The TWENTY-FOURTH, called וִיקְרָא valyikra, begins chap. 1:6, and ends chap. 6:7. The TWENTY-FIFTH, called צֹ tsav, begins chap. 6:8, and ends chap. 8:36. The TWENTY-SIXTH, called שְׁמִינִי shemini, begins chap. 9:1, and ends chap. 11:47. The TWENTY-SEVENTH, called תִּזְרִיעַ tazria, begins chap. 12:1, and ends chap. 13:59. The TWENTY-EIGHTH, called מִצְרַע metsora, begins chap. 14:1, and ends chap.

15:33. The TWENTY-NINTH, called אַחֲרֵי מוֹת acharey moth, begins chap. 16:1, and ends chap. 18:30. The THIRTIETH, called קְדוּשִׁים kedoshim, begins chap. 19:1, and ends chap. 20:27. The THIRTY-FIRST, called אֶמֶר emor, begins chap. 21:1, and ends chap. 24:23. The THIRTY-SECOND, called בְּהַר סִינַי behar Sinai, begins chap. 25:1, and ends chap. 26:2. The THIRTY-THIRD, called בְּחֻקֹּתַי bechukkothai, begins chap. 26:3, and ends chap. 27:34. These sections, as was observed on Exodus, have their technical names from some remarkable word, either in the first or second verse of their commencement.

Masoretic Notes On Leviticus

The number of verses in vaiyikra, i. e., Leviticus, is 859. The symbol of which is נִטְ״פּ. פּ pe final stands for 800, נ nun for 50, and ט teth for 9. The middle verse is the 11th of chap. 15.: And he that toucheth the flesh, etc. Its pareshioth, or larger sections, are 10, the memorial symbol of which is taken from Genesis 30:11: בַּא גַּד ba gad, a troop cometh: in which ב beth stands for 2, א aleph for 1, ג gimel for 3, and ד dalet for 4. Its sedarim, or Masoretic sections, are 23. The symbol of which is taken from Psalm 1:2, יְהַגֵּה yehgeh: In thy law shall he MEDITATE day and night. Its perakim, or modern chapters, are 27. The memorial sign which is וַעֲיֵיֶה veeyeh, Genesis 26:3: AND I WILL BE with thee, and will bless thee. The number of its open divisions is 52; of its close divisions, 46: total 98. The memorial sign of which is צַח tsach, {Cant.} So 5:10; My beloved is WHITE and ruddy. In this word צ tsaddi stands for 90, and ח cheth for 8. VERSES 859. WORDS 11, 902. LETTERS computed to be 44, 989.

See the concluding note on GENESIS.

Finished the correction of Exodus and Leviticus, April 2, 1827. — A. CLARKE.

PREFACE TO THE BOOK

OF

NUMBERS

THIS, which is the fourth book in order of the Pentateuch, has been called NUMBERS, from its containing an account of the numbering and marshalling the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness to the promised land. Its ENGLISH name is derived from the title it bears in the VULGATE Latin, Numeri, which is a literal translation of the Greek word ἀριθμοί, its title in the SEPTUAGINT; and from both, our SAXON ancestors called it [AS] numeration, “because in this the children of Israel were numbered,” [AS]. This title, however, does not properly apply to more than the three first chapters, and the 26th. This book, like the preceding, takes its name among the HEBREWS from a distinguishing word in the commencement. It is frequently called וַיְדַבֵּר VAIDABBER, and he spoke, from its initial word; but in most Hebrew Bibles its running title is בְּמִדְבָּר BEMIDBAR, in the wilderness, which is the fifth word in the first verse. The contents of the book of Numbers are briefly the following: On the first day of the first month of the second year after the departure from Egypt, the tabernacle being erected, and it and the priests consecrated, Moses is commanded to make a census or enumeration of the people, the Levites excepted, who were appointed to watch over, guard, pitch, and carry the tabernacle and its holy furniture; chap. i. To form the vast mass of the people into a regular camp, each tribe by itself under its own captain or chief, known by his proper standard, and occupying an assigned place in reference to the tabernacle; chap. ii. Moses is commanded to separate the Levites to the service of the tabernacle, whom God chooses to take, instead of the first-born of every family, which he claimed as his own. When these were selected in their families, etc., the sum amounted to 22, 273; chap. 3. All this tribe is appointed to serve the tabernacle in a variety of offices, each

person from the age of thirty till fifty, after which he was excused from farther service; chap. 4. When these points were settled, God commands them to purify the camp by the expulsion of every unclean person, and establishes the trial of the suspected adulteress by the waters of jealousy; chap. 5. He next institutes the laws relative to Nazarites; and lays down the form according to which the people shall be blessed; chap. 6. Then follows a particular account of the offerings made to the tabernacle by the princes, or chiefs of the twelve tribes, and the amount of those offerings; chap. 7. When this work was finished, the Levites were consecrated to their respective services, and the duration of the service of each ascertained; chap. 8. The passover is commanded to be kept, and the first one is celebrated in the wilderness on the 14th of the first month of the second year after their departure from Egypt; chap. 9. Moses is commanded to make two silver trumpets; he is informed of their use, in what order the different tribes shall march, with the ceremonies at fixing and removing the tabernacle and the departure of the people from the wilderness of Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year of their exodus from Egypt; chap. 10. The people murmuring, the fire of the Lord consumes many of them; it ceases on the intercession of Moses: they murmur again, quails are sent, and they are smitten with a great plague; chap. 11. Miriam and her brother Aaron rise up seditiously against Moses, having conceived some dislike against his Cushite wife, and supposing that he assumed too great an authority over the people: at this sedition the Lord is displeased, and smites Miriam with the leprosy; chap. 12. Twelve spies are sent to examine the promised land; they pass through the whole, return at the end of forty days, and by bringing an evil report, dishearten the people; chap. 13. In consequence of this the whole congregation meditate a return to Egypt: God is displeased, and pronounces that all of them, from twenty years old and upwards, shall die in the wilderness. They repent, attack the Amalekites contrary to the commandment of God, and are discomfited; chap. 14. A number of ordinances and directions are given relative to the manner of conducting the worship of God in the promised land: different laws are repeated, and a Sabbath-breaker stoned to death; chap. 15. Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their associates, form an insurrection against Moses: they are swallowed up by an earthquake: the congregation murmur, and 14, 700 of them are cut off; chap. 16. As a proof that God had called Aaron and his family to the

priesthood, his rod, or staff, buds, and miraculously brings forth blossoms and fruit, and is commanded to be laid up before the testimony; chap. 17. The charges of the priests and Levites, and the portions they were to have of the Lord's offerings, for their support in the work; chap. 18. The ordinances of the red heifer; the water of purification, and its uses; chap. 19. The death of Miriam; the waters of Meribah. The Lord tells Moses that because he did not sanctify him in the eyes of the congregation, he shall not bring the people into the promised land. The king of Edom refuses the Israelites a passage through his territories. Aaron is stripped of his sacerdotal vestments on Mount Hor, and they are put on Eleazar, his son, who is to be a high priest in his stead. Aaron dies, and the people mourn for him thirty days; chap. 20. Arad, one of the Canaanitish kings, attacks Israel, and he and his people are utterly destroyed. The people murmur for lack of bread and water; fiery serpents are sent among them, they repent; are healed by looking at a brazen serpent. They journey and come to Beer, where they find water; Sihon, king of the Amorites, attacks them, and is defeated; so is likewise Og, king of Bashan, and the people possess the lands of both; chap. 21. Balak, king of Moab, sends for Balaam to curse Israel; he departs, is opposed by an angel, and reproved by his ass, whom God, for the purpose, miraculously endued with the gift of speech. He comes to Balak, king of Moab, and shows him that Jehovah had limited his power; chap. 22. Balak offers sacrifices, and Balaam, under the influence of God, prophesies good concerning Israel; chap. 23. Continuing to foretell the prosperity of Israel, and the destruction of their enemies, the king of Moab dismisses Balaam in great wrath; chap. 24. The Israelites, seduced by the women of Moab and Midian, commit fornication and idolatry-the chiefs are hanged-bold act of Phinehas; chap. 25. A second census or enumeration of the people takes place, and the amount is 601, 730, among whom not one of those of the first census was now found except Joshua and Caleb; chap. 26. From the case of the daughters of Zelophehad a law is made to enable daughters to inherit. Moses ascends Mount Abarim, sees the promised land, and constitutes Joshua his successor; chap. 27. A repetition of the laws relative to burnt-offerings, the Sabbath, the passover, first-fruits, etc.; chap. 28. The three solemnities of the seventh month are commanded to be held on the first, tenth, and fourteenth days of the month; chap. 29. Several laws and ordinances concerning vows of different kinds, made by various persons; when they

should be confirmed, and in what cases annulled; chap. 30. Twelve thousand Israelites go against the people of Midian and slay them, their five kings, and Balaam their prophet; and the Israelites take immense booty in persons, cattle, gold, silver, and precious stones, of which they make a great offering to the Lord, because in this contest they lost not one man; chap. 31. The children of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, request to receive for their inheritance the territories of Sihon and Og on the east side of Jordan; their desire is granted on the condition of their going over armed with their brethren, to assist them in conquering the land; chap. 32. A circumstantial account of the forty-two journeys of the Israelites from their departure from Rameses till their arrival at Jordan. They are commanded to expel all the ancient inhabitants; chap. 33. The borders of the land are described, and the persons appointed by God, who should assist Joshua in dividing the land among the nine tribes and half; chap. 34. Forty-eight cities are to be assigned to the Levites, out of the twelve tribes, for their goods and for their cattle: and out of these they were to appoint six cities of refuge for the person who had unawares slain his neighbor; to one of which cities the manslayer was to escape, and tarry there till the death of the high priest; chap. 35. A law established that the daughters to whom the paternal inheritance descends, shall not marry out of their own tribes, lest their inheritances should become alienated and lost by being blended with those of other tribes; chap. 36. See the case of Zelophehad's daughters, chap. 37. In this book, which comprehends the history of between thirty-eight and thirty-nine years, we have in one word a distinct account of the several stages of the Israelites' journey in the wilderness, the various occurrences on the way, their trials, rebellions, punishments, deliverances, conquests, etc., with several laws and ordinances not mentioned in the preceding books, together with a repetition and explanation of some others which had been previously delivered; the whole forming a most interesting history of the justice, mercy, and providence of God.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES

CALLED

NUMBERS

- Year before the common Year of Christ, 1490.
- Julian Period, 3224.
- Cycle of the Sun, 27.
- Dominical Letter, D.
- Cycle of the Moon, 9.
- Indiction, 6.
- Creation from Tisri or September, 2514.

CHAPTER 1

On the first day of the second month of the second year after Israel came out of Egypt, God commands Moses to number all the males of the people from twenty years and upward, who were effective men and able to go to war, 1-3. A chief of each tribe is associated with Moses and Aaron in this business, 4; the names of whom are given, 5-16. Moses assembles the people, who declare their pedigrees according to their families, 17-19. The descendants of REUBEN are numbered, and amount to 46, 500, ver. 20, 21. Those of SIMEON, 59, 300, ver. 22, 23. Those of GAD, 45, 650, ver. 24, 25. Those of JUDAH, 74, 600, ver. 26, 27. Those of ISSACHAR, 54, 400, ver. 28, 29. Those of ZEBULUN, 57, 400, ver. 30, 31. Those of EPHRAIM, 40, 500, ver. 32, 33. Those of MANASSEH, 32, 200, ver. 34, 35. Those of BENJAMIN, 35, 400, ver. 36, 37. Those of DAN, 62, 700, ver. 38, 39. Those of ASHER, 41, 500, ver. 40, 41. Those of NAPHTALI, 53, 400, ver. 42, 43. The amount of all the effective men in Israel, from twenty years old and upward, was 603, 550, ver. 44-46. The LEVITES are not numbered with the

tribes, because they were dedicated to the service of God. Their particular work is specified, 47-54.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The Lord spake unto Moses—on the first day of the second month*— As the tabernacle was erected upon the first day of the first month, in the second year after their coming out of Egypt, Exodus 40:17; and this muster of the people was made on the first day of the second month, in the same year; it is evident that the transactions related in the preceding book must all have taken place in the space of one month, and during the time the Israelites were encamped at Mount Sinai, before they had begun their Journey to the promised land.

Verse 2. *Take ye the sum, etc.*— God, having established the commonwealth of Israel by just and equitable laws, ordained every thing relative to the due performance of his own worship, erected his tabernacle, which was his throne, and the place of his residence among the people, and consecrated his priests who were to minister before him; he now orders his subjects to be mustered, 1. That they might see he had not forgotten his promise to Abraham, but was multiplying his posterity. 2. That they might observe due order in their march toward the promised land. 3. That the tribes and families might be properly distinguished; that all litigations concerning property, inheritance, etc., might, in all future times, be prevented. 4. That the promise concerning the Messiah might be known to have its due accomplishment, when in the fullness of time God should send him from the seed of Abraham through the house of David. And, 5. That they might know their strength for war; for although they should ever consider God as their protector and defense, yet it was necessary that they should be assured of their own fitness, naturally speaking, to cope with any ordinary enemy, or to surmount any common difficulties.

Verse 3. *From twenty years old and upward*— In this census no women were reckoned, nor children, nor strangers, nor the Levites, nor old men, which, collectively, must have formed an immense multitude; the Levites alone amounted to 22, 300. True-born Israelites only are reckoned; such as were able to carry arms, and were expert for war.

Verse 14. *Eliasaph, the son of Deuel.*— This person is called Reuel, chap. 2:14. As the ד dalet is very like the ר resh, it was easy to mistake the one for the other. The Septuagint and the Syriac have Reuel in this chapter; and in chap. 2:14, the Vulgate, the Samaritan, and the Arabic have Deuel instead of Reuel, with which reading a vast number of MSS. concur; and this reading is supported by chap. 10:20; we may safely conclude therefore that דֵּוּאֵל Deuel, not רֵּוּאֵל Reuel, was the original reading. See Kennicott. An ancient Jewish rabbin pretends to solve every difficulty by saying that “Eliasaph was a proselyte; that before he embraced the true faith he was called the son of Reuel, but that after his conversion he was called the son of Deuel.” As Reuel may be translated the breach of God, and Deuel the knowledge of God, I suppose the rabbin grounded his supposition on the different meanings of the two words.

Verse 16. *These were the renowned*— Literally, the called, of the congregation — those who were summoned by name to attend. The order of the tribes In the above enumeration may be viewed thus:—

Sons of Leah

1. Reuben
2. Simeon
3. Judah
4. Issachar
5. Zebulun

Sons of Rachel

6. Ephraim
7. Manasseh
8. Benjamin

1st son of Bilhah, Rachel’s maid

9. Dan

2d son of Zilpah, Leah’s maid

10. Asher

1st son of Zilpah.

11. Gad

2d son of Bilhah.

12. Naphtali

Verse 25. *Forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.*— Mr. Ainsworth has remarked that Gad, the handmaid's son, is the only one of all the tribes whose number ends with fifty, all the others are by thousands, and end with hundreds; which shows God's admirable providence and blessing in multiplying them so, that no odd or broken number was among all the tribes. But See on "Numbers 1:46".

Verse 33. *The tribe of Ephraim-forty thousand and five hundred.*— Ephraim, as he was blessed beyond his eldest brother Manasseh, Genesis 48:20, so here he is increased by thousands more than Manasseh, and more than the whole tribe of Benjamin, and his blessing continued above his brother, Deuteronomy 33:17. And thus the prophecy, Genesis 48:19, was fulfilled: His younger brother (Ephraim) shall be greater than he, (Manasseh.) No word of God can possibly fall to the ground: he alone sees the end from the beginning; his infinite wisdom embraces all occurrences, and it is his province alone to determine what is right, and to predict what himself has purposed to accomplish.

Verse 46. *All they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.*— What an astonishing increase from seventy souls that went down into Egypt, Genesis 46:27, about 215 years before, where latterly they had endured the greatest hardships! But God's promise cannot fail (Genesis 16:5;) and who can resist his will, and bring to naught his counsel? That a comparative view may be easily taken of the state of the tribes, I shall produce them here from the first census mentioned in the first chapter of this book, in their decreasing proportion, beginning with the greatest and proceeding to the least; and in the second census, mentioned chap. 26., where the increase of some and the decrease of others may be seen in one point of view. It may be just remarked, that except in the case of Gad in this chapter, and Reuben in chap. 26., all the numbers are what may be called whole or round numbers, beginning with thousands, and ending with hundreds, Gad and Reuben alone ending with tens; but the Scripture generally uses round numbers, units and fractions being almost constantly disregarded. 1st census, 2d census, ch. 1. ch. 26.

1. Judah 74, 600 76, 500

2. Dan	62, 700	64, 400
3. Simeon	59, 300	22, 200
4. Zebulun	57, 400	60, 500
5. Issachar	54, 400	64, 300
6. Naphtali	53, 400	45, 400
7. Reuben	46, 500	43, 730
8. Gad	45, 650	40, 500
9. Asher	41, 500	53, 400
10. Ephraim	40, 500	32, 500
11. Benjamin	35, 400	45, 600
12. Manasseh	32, 200	52, 700

— Total 603, 550 Total 601, 730 Thus we find Judah, the most populous tribe, and Manasseh the least so; the difference between them being so great as 42, 400, for which no very satisfactory reason can be assigned. In the second census, mentioned chap. 26:34, Judah still has the pre-eminency; and Simeon, the third in number before, is become the least. Now we see also that the little tribe of Manasseh occupies the seventh place for number. Seven of the tribes had an increase; five a decrease. Manasseh had an increase of 20, 500; Judah, 1, 900; Issachar, 9, 900; Zebulun, 3, 100; Benjamin, 10, 200; Dan, 1, 700; Asher, 11, 900. On the contrary there was a decrease in Reuben of 2, 770; in Simeon, 37, 100; Gad, 5, 150; Ephraim, 8, 000; Naphtali, 8, 000. Decrease in the whole, 61, 020 effective men. See on chap. 26.; but balanced with the increase, the decrease was upon the whole 1, 820. On the subject of these enumerations, and the manner in which this vast multitude sprang in about four generations from seventy-five persons, Scheuchzer has some valuable calculations, though liable to some objections, which I shall take the liberty to insert, as they tend to throw considerable light upon the subject. “We find in the writings of Moses three enumerations of the Jewish people, that follow each other pretty closely:- The first, which was made at their departure from Egypt, Exodus 12:37, amounted to 600, 000 One year after, to 603, 550 On entering the land of Canaan, to 601, 730 If we add to the number 603, 550 that of the Levites given us in chap. 3:39, and which amounted to 22, 000 — We shall have for the sum total — 625, 550 “We find the same number, on adding that of each tribe given us in detail, which is the best proof of the exactness of the calculation. “I think I shall afford

the reader some degree of pleasure by presenting him, in this place, the number of each tribe separately, beginning at their earliest ancestors. We shall see, by this means, how faithfully God fulfilled the promise he had made to Abraham, as well as the great utility of the mathematics for the right understanding of the Holy Scriptures. I shall begin with a Genealogical Table of that family which God so wonderfully blessed; and to it I shall afterward add each separate tribe, following the calculation of Reyher, (Math. Mos., p. 222.) And we shall see that the fourth generation, taken with the third, produces the very number mentioned in the text

CHILDREN OF JACOB BY LEAH. Genesis 46:15.

REUBEN

Hanoch

Phallu

Hezron

Carmi

46, 500 Numbers 1:21

SIMEON

Jemuel

Jamin

Ohad

Jachin

Zohar

Shaul

59, 300 Numbers 1:23

LEVI Gershon

Libni

Shemei

7, 500 Numbers 3:22

LEVI Kohath

Izehar

Hebron

Uzziel

8, 600 Numbers 3:26

LEVI Merari

Mahli

Mushi

6, 200 Numbers 3:34

JUDAH

Shelah

Pharez

Zerah

Hazron

Hamul

74, 600 Numbers 1:27

ISSACHAR

Tola

Phuvah

Job

Shimron

54, 400 Numbers 1:29

ZEBULUN

Sered

Elon

Jahleel

57, 400 Numbers 1:31

DINAH**CHILDREN OF JACOB BY ZILPAH Genesis 46:18****GAD**

Ziphion

Haggai

Shuni

Ezbon

Eri

Arodi

Areli

45, 650 Numbers 1:25

ASHER

Jimnah

Ishuah

Isui

Beriah

Heber

Malchial

41, 500 Numbers 1:41

CHILDREN OF JACOB BY RACHEL Genesis 46:22**JOSEPH**

Manasseh 32, 200

Ephraim 40, 500

BENJAMIN

Belah

Becher

Ashbel

Gerah

Naaman

Ehi

Rosh

Muppm

Huppm

Ard

35, 400 Numbers 1:37

CHILDREN OF JACOB BY BILHAH Genesis 46:25**DAN**

Hushim

62, 700 Numbers 1:39

NAPHTALI

Jahzeel

Guni

Jezer

Shillem

53, 400 Numbers 1:43

1. — REUBEN 46, 500

“Let us now descend to the particular enumeration of each tribe. REUBEN had four sons: now if we suppose that one of these four sons had seven, and that each of the other three had eight, we shall find the number 31 for the first Egyptian generation. If we afterward suppose that each of these 31 sons had five sons, the second generation will amount to 155, which, multiplied by 15, will produce 2, 325 for the third generation; and these, multiplied by 19, will make 44, 175 for the fourth; so that the third, together with the fourth, will make 46, 500. We shall have the same product if the given sum, 46, 500, be divided by the most probable number of children, for example, by the number 19; we shall then have 2, 447 for the third generation; which sum being deducted from the sum total, there will remain 44, 053 for the fourth generation, which is exactly the number that is produced in multiplying 2, 440 of the third generation by 18, and the other 7 by 19. If we wish to make the same calculation with respect to the preceding generations, i. e., divide them by the most probable number of children, we shall have the following sums:—

SONS OF REUBEN

I. Generation	31
II. Ditto	215
III. Ditto.	2, 583
IV. Ditto	43, 917
— Amount of generations III and IV.	46, 500

2. — SIMEON 59, 300

“SIMEON had six sons. Let us suppose that each of the three first had six children, and each of the three others seven, we shall have thirty-nine for the first generation. If we multiply 31 of this number by 9, and 8 by 10, we shall have for the second generation 359; of which number, if we multiply 355 by 11, and 4 by 12, the third generation will give us 3, 953. Let us then multiply 3, 948 of these by 14, and 5 of them by 15, and we

shall have for the fourth 55, 347. The third and fourth, added together, will make 59, 300.

3. — LEVI 22, 300

“Gershon, Levi’s eldest son, had two children: let us give to one of these 16 children, and to the other 17, and we shall have 33 for the second generation; 28 of which, multiplied by 15, and 5 by 16, will produce 500 for the third. Multiply each by 14, and these will produce 7, 000; and the third and fourth together, 7, 500. “Kohath, Levi’s second son, had four sons, which form the first line. Give to one of them 10 sons, and 11 to each of the other three, for the second generation there will be 43. Multiply them by 10, there will be 430 for the third; these, multiplied by 19 for the fourth, will produce the number of 8, 170. The third and fourth added together make 8, 600. “Merari, the third son of Levi, had two sons. Give 10 children to each of them, there will then be 20 for the second generation. Now if we say that 10 of these 20 had each 15 sons, and each of the others 16, we shall have 310, which, multiplied by 19, will give us 5, 890 for the fourth; and the two last together, 6, 200. This may be seen by the following example:- Gershonites Kohathites Merarites

I. Generation	2	4	2
II. Ditto	33	43	20
III. Ditto	500	430	310
IV. Ditto.	7, 000	8, 170	5, 890

“Amount of generations III. and IV.: Gershonites, 7, 500; Kohathites, 8, 600; and Merarites, 6, 200-total number of Levites, 22, 300.

4. — JUDAH 74, 600

“The sons of Judah were Shelah, Pharez, and Zerah. His grandsons by Pharez were Hezron and Hamul. Hezron had two sons. Suppose each of them had six children, which will make 12 for the first generation; to eight of whom allow eight children, and nine to each of the others, and there will be 100 for the second generation. To 92 of these then give 18 children, and 19 to the eight others; this will produce for the third generation 1, 808. If we then suppose that 1, 800 of these had each 18 children, and that each of the other eight had 19, the fourth generation will be 32, 552, which, added

to the product of the third, will make the descendants of Hezron amount to 34, 360. "Hamul had two sons, who, multiplied by 10, produce the number of 20 for the second generation: these, multiplied by 20, will make 400 for the third, and these again by 25 will produce 10, 000 for the fourth. And thus the two last generations will amount together to the number of 10, 400.

"If we allow five sons to Shelah, and six to Zerah, we shall have 11 for the first generation. To three of whom allow 10 children and 11 to the other eight, this will give us 118 for the second. To 113 of these give 14, and 15 to the other five, and 1, 657 will be produced for the third. Give 17 to 1, 643, and 18 to the 14 remaining, and for the fourth there will be 28, 183. The third and fourth added together will produce the number of 29, 840. "According to this calculation, all these generations will amount to the following numbers:—

Hezronites	34, 360
Hamulites.	10, 400
Shelanites and Zarhites.	29, 840
Total	74, 600

5. — ISSACHAR 54, 400

"ISSACHAR had five sons. Suppose that three of them had each five children, and the other two, six, we shall have 27 for the first generation. If we then imagine that of these 19 had each nine sons, and each of the other eight 10, the second generation will be 251. Now 241 of these, multiplied by 12, will produce 2, 892, and the 10 others, multiplied by 13, will make 130; consequently the third generation will amount to 3, 022. If 3, 018 of these had each 17 sons, and each of the other four had 18, the fourth generation will be 51, 378; the third and fourth generations, then, will produce a number of 54, 400.

6. — ZEBULUN 57, 400

"Zebulun had three sons. If we suppose that two of them had in all fourteen children, and the third, six, here will be 20 for the first generation. The second will produce 143, on multiplying 17 by 7, and 3 by 8. If we multiply 135 by 16, and 8 by 17, the third will amount to 2, 296. By

multiplying the third by 24, the fourth will give us 55, 104. The two last will produce, together, 57, 400.

7. — GAD 45, 650

“Gad had seven sons.

I. Generation: multiply 3 by 9, and 4 by 10, there will be	67
II. Ditto multiply 61 by 7, and 6 by 8	475
III. Ditto multiply 471 by 8, and 4 by 9	3, 804
IV. Ditto multiply 3, 802 by 11, and 2 by 12	41, 846
— Amount of generations III and IV	45, 650

7. — ASHER 41, 500

“The sons of Asher, Jimnah, Ishua, and Isui, multiplied by 8, produce for the

I. Generation	24
II. Ditto multiply 24 by 8.	192
III. Ditto multiply 182 by 11, and 10 by 12	2, 122
IV. Ditto multiply 2, 118 by 12, and 4 by 13	25, 468
— Amount of generations III and IV	27, 590

“Heber and Malchiel were sons of Beriah. Now these two sons multiplied by 5, give us for I. Generation

I. Generation	10
II. Ditto multiply 10 by 11	110
III. Ditto multiply by 9	990
IV. Ditto multiply by 12	11, 880
— Amount of generations III and IV	12, 870

“Another son of Beriah had in the

I. Generation	1
II. Ditto multiply by 8.	8
III. Ditto multiply by 10	80
IV. Ditto multiply by 12	960
— Amount of generations III and IV.	1, 040

All these generations added together amount to 41, 500

9. — JOSEPH

MANASSEH 32, 200

I. Generation	10
II. Ditto multiply 6 by 13, and 4 by 14	134
III. Ditto multiply 132 by 12, and 2 by 13	1, 610
IV. Ditto multiply by 19	30, 590
— Amount of generations III and IV	32, 200

EPHRAIM 40, 500

I. Generation	16
II. Ditto multiply by 10	160
III. Ditto multiply 152 by 12, and 8 by 13.	1, 928
IV. Ditto multiply 1, 916 by 20, and 12 by 21	38, 572
— Amount of generations III and IV	40, 500

10. — BENJAMIN 35, 400

“He had 10 sons; two of whom, multiplied by 9, and the other 8 by 10, will give for the

I. Generation	98
II. Ditto multiply 95 by 9, and 3 by 10.	885
III. Ditto multiply by 5	4, 425
IV. Ditto multiply by 7	30, 975
— Amount of generations III and IV	35, 400

11. — DAN 62, 700

I. Generation.	11
II. Ditto multiply by 12.	132
III. Ditto multiply by 19	2, 508
IV. Ditto multiply by 24	60, 192
— Amount of generations III and IV	62, 700

12. NAPHTALI 53, 400

“He had 4 sons, the half of whom, multiplied by 7, and the other half by 6, give us for the I. Generation

II. Ditto multiply 16 by 11, and 10 by 12	296
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III. Ditto multiply 288 by 12, and 8 by 13	3, 560
IV. Ditto multiply by 14.	49, 840
— Amount of generations III and IV	53, 400

Total number of all the tribes

I. Reuben	46, 500
II. Simeon	59, 300
III. Levi	22, 300
IV. Judah	74, 600
V. Issachar	54, 400
VI. Zebulun	57, 400
VII. Gad	45, 650
VIII. Asher	41, 500
IX. Manasseh	32, 200
Ephraim	40, 500
X. Benjamin	35, 400
XI. Dan	62, 700
XII. Naphtali	53, 400
— Total	625, 850

“And indeed, without counting the Levites, the number of the Israelites (chap. 1:46) amounts to 603, 550 The Levites (chap. 3:39) amount to.... 22, 300 ----- The whole number together, as above.... 625, 850” In the above calculations, Scheuchzer and Reyher take for granted, 1. That from the going down to Egypt to the exodus there were four generations. 2. That the first two generations had died in Egypt. 3. That the promise of God in multiplying them as the stars of heaven, had taken place particularly in the two last generations. 4. That these two last generations alone form the aggregate sums given in the sacred text. 5. That their method of accounting for this aggregate through the four generations, is not only perfectly natural and mathematical, but strictly accordant with the promises made by God to them, as the sum of each tribe sufficiently proves. 6. That the whole account shows the truth of the Divine promise, the great accuracy of the Jewish lawgiver, and a proof of the inspiration of the sacred writings. But even to these calculations and deductions there may be objections, e. g. “Scheuchzer gives to 2, 508 families of Dan, 24 male children, each above the age of 20: we may fairly allow an equal number of females, and add 5 more under 20, See the note at “Exodus 12:

37", and we have 53 children on the average through all the families of a tribe; whilst to 4, 425 families of Benjamin are allotted 7 males aged 20, and adding 7 females at 5 children, we have 19 children in each family; a tolerable number; but apparently more reasonable than the other."-ANON.

CHAPTER 2

Moses commanded to teach the Israelites how they are to pitch their tents, and erect the ensigns of their fathers' houses, 1, 2. Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, on the EAST, amounting to 186, 400 men, 3-9. Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, on the SOUTH, with 151, 450 men, 10-16. The Levites to be in the midst of the camp, 17. Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, on the WEST, with 108, 100 men, 18-24. Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, on the NORTH, with 157, 600 men, 25-31. The sum total of the whole, 603, 550 men, 32. But the Levites are not included, 33. The people do as the Lord commands them, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 2. Every man-shall pitch by his own standard— Commentators, critics, philosophers, and professional men, have taken a great deal of pains to illustrate this chapter by showing the best method of encampment for such a vast number of men, and the manner in which they conceive the Israelites formed their camp in the wilderness. As God gave them the plan, it was doubtless in every respect perfect; and fully answered the double purpose of convenience and security. Scheuchzer has entered into this subject with his usual ability, and in very considerable detail. Following the plan of Reyher, as in the preceding chapter, he endeavors to ascertain the precise order in which the several tribes were disposed; and as his work is both scarce and dear, the reader will not be displeased-to meet here with a translation of all that refers to the subject.

SCHEUCHZER'S DESCRIPTION AND PLAN OF THE ENCAMPMENTS OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS

“If we form a proper idea of God, of his essence and his attributes, we shall easily perceive that this infinite and supreme Being wills and executes what his Divine wisdom appoints; in a word, we shall see that he is the God of order. This order displays itself in the perfection, arrangement, and assemblage of all created beings; in the construction of the earth which we

inhabit, where every thing is formed in order, number, weight, and measure; and in all bodies, great and small. It is certain that Noah's ark is a perfect model of naval architecture. The temple of Solomon, and that of Ezekiel were likewise masterpieces in their kind. But at present we are to consider the Divine arrangement of the Israelitish camp, and the manner in which it was formed. "The Israelitish army was divided Into three principal divisions. The first, which was the least in extent, but the strongest and the most powerful, occupied the center of the army: this was the throne of God, i. e., the TABERNACLE. The second, which was composed of the priests and Levites, surrounded the first. The third, and the farthest from the center, took in all the other tribes of Israel, who were at least about a mile from the tabernacle. For it appears from Josephus, iii. 4, that the nearest approach they dared make to the ark, except during the time of worship, was a distance of 2, 000 cubits. The reverence due to the Divine Majesty, the numerous army of the Israelites, composed of 600, 000 soldiers, with their families, which made about 3, 000, 000 souls, naturally demanded a considerable extent of ground. We are not to imagine that all these families pitched their tents pellmell, without order, like beasts, or as the troops of Tartary, and the eastern armies; on the contrary, their camp was divided according to the most exact rules. And we cannot even doubt that their camp was laid out, and the place of every division and tribe exactly assigned by some engineers, or geometricians, before the army stopped to encamp, in order that every person might at once find his own quarter, and the road he ought to take to reach the other tents. "Four divisions, which faced the four quarters of the heavens, each with his own ensign, formed the center of the army. JUDAH was placed on the east, and under him he had Issachar and Zebulun; on the south was REUBEN, and under him Simeon and Gad: on the west was Ephraim, and under him Manasseh and Benjamin; finally, DAN was on the north, and he had under him Asher and Naphtali. It has been pretended by some that these four principal divisions were not alone distinguished by their ensigns, but that each particular tribe had likewise its standard or ensign. On this subject we might refer to the Talmudists, who have gone so far as to define the colors, and the figures or arms, of the very ensigns. They pretend that on that of JUDAH a lion was painted, with this inscription: 'Rise, Lord, let thine enemies be dispersed, and let those that hate thee flee before thee;' and they found this description of Judah's ensign in Genesis 49:9. They give

to ISSACHAR an ass, Genesis 49:14; to ZEBULUN a ship, Genesis 49:13; to REUBEN a river, Genesis 49:4, (others give REUBEN the figure of a man;) to SIMEON a sword, Genesis 49:5; to GAD a lion, Deuteronomy 33:20; to EPHRAIM a unicorn, Deuteronomy 33:17; an ox to MANASSEH, Deuteronomy 33:17; a wolf to BENJAMIN, Genesis 49:27; and a serpent to DAN, Genesis 49:17, though others give him an eagle. In short, they pretend that the ensign of ASHER was a handful of corn, Genesis 49:20, and that of NAPHTALI a stag, Genesis 49:21. “To prove that the sums here are correctly added, we have but to join together the detached numbers, and see if they agree with the total. The text will furnish us with an example of this: there was in the quarter of:—

Judah 186, 400 ver. 9

Reuben 151, 450 ver. 16

Ephraim 108, 100 ver. 24

Dan 157, 600 ver. 31

“Among other things we must remark that rule of military tactics which requires that the advanced and rear guards should be stronger than the center. “In a well-regulated camp, cleanliness is considered indispensably necessary; this is particularly remarkable in the Israelitish army, where the most exact order was maintained. Hence every person who had any kind of disease, and those who were reputed unclean, were forbidden to enter it; Numbers 5:2, 3; Deuteronomy 23:10. “Those who have the health of men, and of a whole army confided to them, are not ignorant that diseases may be easily produced by putrid exhalations from excrementitious matter; and that such matter will produce in camps pestilential fevers and dysenteries. For this reason, care should be always taken that offices, at a distance from the camp, be provided for the soldiers, and also that those who are sick should be separated from the others, and sent to hospitals to be properly treated. “In military tactics we find two distinct wings spoken of; the right and the left. The Israelitish army not only had them on one side, as is customary, but on all their four sides. On the eastern side, the tribe of Issachar formed the right, that of Zebulun the left, and that of Judah the center. On the south, Simeon formed the right wing, Gad the left, and Reuben the center. Towards the west, Manasseh composed the right, Benjamin the left, and Ephraim the center. And on the north, Asher was on the right wing, Naphtali on the left wing, and Dan in the center.

Notwithstanding this, however, the army was not in danger of being easily broken; for every tribe being numerous, they were supported by several ranks, in such a manner that the first being broken, the second was capable of making resistance; and if the second gave way, or shared the same fate as the first, it found itself supported by the third, and so on with the rest. The square form in which the Jewish army was ordinarily placed, was the very best for security and defense. The use and importance of the hollow square in military tactics is well known. "For so large a multitude of people, and for so numerous an army, it was needful that all the necessary articles of life should be prepared beforehand, or be found ready to purchase. In these respects nothing was wanting to the Israelites. Their bread came down to them from heaven, and they had besides an abundance of every thing that could contribute to magnificence. If we may credit Josephus, they had amongst them public markets, and a variety of shops. Ant., i. iii. c. 12, sec. 5. The tabernacle being erected, it was placed in the midst of the camp, each of the three tribes stretching themselves on the wings, and leaving between them a sufficient space to pass. "It was, says Josephus, like a well appointed market where every thing was ready for sale in due order, and all sorts of artificers kept their shops; so that this camp might be considered a movable city. "In Exodus 32:27 we likewise find that mention is made of the gates of the camp: 'Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp.' From whence we may certainly conclude that if the camp had gates, the Israelites had also sentinels to guard them. If this be true, we may also believe that they were surrounded with entrenchments, or that at least their gates were defended by some fortifications. Sagittarius (de Jan. Vet., c. 18. 10) pretends that the tabernacle was not only guarded by the Levites, but that there were likewise sentinels at the gates, and at the entrance of the Israelitish camps. See the note on "Exodus 32:27". "If we examine and compare the camp of Israel with that of our most numerous armies, which in these days are composed of 100, 000 or of 150, 000 men, we cannot but consider it of vast extent. The Jews say it was twelve miles in circumference; this is not at all improbable, and consequently the front of each wing must be three miles in extent. But taking in the tents, the soldiers and their numerous families, the beasts of burden, the cattle, and the goods, it certainly must have formed a very considerable inclosure, much more than twelve miles. See the notes on "Exodus 12:37", and See

“Exodus 13:18”. Reyher (Math. Mos., p. 568) assigns to the Tribe of JUDAH, A space of $298 \frac{2}{5}$ cubits in breadth and 250 in length — Which makes 74, 600 square cubits. “We must observe that we are here merely speaking of the ground which the soldiers of this tribe occupied whilst remaining close to each other in their ranks, and that in this computation there is but one cubit square allowed for each man; wherefore, if we take in the arrangement of the soldiers, the tents, the necessary spaces, the families, the beasts of burden, and the movables, a much larger extent of ground is requisite. All those circumstances do not come into Reyher’s calculation. He continues thus:- For the tribe of ISSACHAR, $217 \frac{3}{5}$ cubits in breadth 250 in length — Total 54, 400 square cubits.

For the tribe of GAD, $140 \frac{5}{11}$ cubits in breadth 325 in length — Total 45, 650 square cubits.

For the tribe of ZEBULUN, $229 \frac{3}{4}$ cubits in breadth 250 in length — Total 57, 400 square cubits.

For the tribe of EPHRAIM, $202 \frac{1}{2}$ cubits in breadth 200 in length — Total 40, 500 square cubits.

For the tribe of REUBEN, $143 \frac{1}{5}$ cubits in breadth 325 in length — Total 46, 500 square cubits.

For the tribe of MANASSEH, 161 cubits in breadth 200 in length — Total 32, 200 square cubits.

For the tribe of SIMEON, $182 \frac{6}{13}$ cubits in breadth 325 in length — Total 59, 300 square cubits.

For the tribe of BENJAMIN, 177 cubits in breadth 200 in length — Total 35, 400 square cubits.

For the tribe of DAN, $156 \frac{3}{4}$ cubits in breadth 400 in length — Total 62, 700 square cubits.

For the tribe of ASHER, $103 \frac{3}{4}$ cubits in breadth 400 in length — Total 41, 500 square cubits.

For the tribe of NAPHTALI, $133 \frac{1}{2}$ cubits in breadth 400 in length — Total 53, 400 square cubits.

“If we make the ichnography, or even the scenography, of the camp on this plan, in following it we must first, in the center, form a parallelogram of 100 cubits long and 50 broad for the court of the tabernacle with an empty space all round of 50 cubits broad. We must then place the camp of the Levites in the following order:- To the west, the Gershonites, chap. 3:22, 23. Breadth 30 cubits Length 250 cubits — Total 7, 500

To the south, the Kohathites, chap. 3:28, 29. Breadth 86 cubits Length 100 cubits —Total 8, 600

To the north, the Merarites, chap. 3:34, 35. Breadth 62 cubits Length 100 cubits — Total 6, 200

“On the east we must place tents for Moses, Aaron, and his sons, chap. 3:38.

“At the place where the camp of the Levites ends, a space must be left of 2, 000 square cubits, after which we must take the dimensions of the camp of the twelve tribes.

“This plan is in the main well imagined, but it does not afford an ichnography of sufficient extent. To come more accurately to a proper understanding of this subject, I shall examine the rules that are now in use for encampments, and compare them afterward with what is laid down in the Holy Scriptures, in order that we may hereby form to ourselves an idea of the camp of God, the grandeur and perfection of which surpassed every thing of the kind ever seen. I shall now mention what I am about to propose as the foundation upon which I shall proceed.

“In Exodus 18:21, Deuteronomy 1:15, we find the advice given by Jethro to Moses respecting political government and military discipline: ‘Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.’ [See the note on “Exodus 18:21”.] We may very well compare these tribunes, or rather these chiliarchs, to our colonels, the centurions or hecatontarchs to commanders or captains, the quinquagenaries or pentecontarchs to lieutenants, and the decurions or decarchs to our sergeants. These chiefs, whether they were named magistrates or officers, were each drawn from his own particular tribe, so that it was not permitted to place over one

tribe an officer taken from another. Whatever matter the decarchs could not decide upon or terminate, went to the pentecontarchs, and from thence by degrees to the hecatontarchs, to the chiliarchs, to Moses, and at length to GOD himself, the sovereign head of the army. If we divide the whole army (such as it was at its departure from Egypt) by the numbers already laid down, we shall find 600 chiliarchs, 6, 000 hecatontarchs, 12, 000 pentecontarchs, 60, 000 decarchs, which in all make 78, 600 officers.

Josephus regulates the number of them still more exactly by saying that there were chiefs set over 10, 000, 1, 000, 500, 50, 30, 20, and 10. We find this regulation in *Ant. Jud.*, b. iii., c. 4: ‘Take a review of the army, and appoint chosen rulers over tens of thousands, and then over thousands, then divide them into five hundreds, and again into hundreds, and into fifties, and set rulers over each of them who may distinguish them into thirties, and keep them in order; and at last number them by twenties and by tens, and let there be one commander over each number, to be denominated from the number of those over whom they are rulers.’

‘We ought not to pass over in silence this division by tens, for twice 10 make 20, three times 10, 30, five times 10, 50, ten times 10, 100, ten times 50, 500, ten times 1, 000, 10, 000. It was in this manner, as is pretended, that Cangu, the first of the great Khams, (as he is called,) and after him Tamerlane, drew out an army, i.e., by 10, 100, 1, 000, 10, 000, mentioned in *Alhazen*, c. v. Probably these Tartars borrowed from the very Hebrews themselves this manner of laying out a camp. At all events it is certain that nothing more ancient of the kind can be found than that mentioned in the books of Moses. To distinguish it from that of the Greeks and Romans we may with justice call it the Hebrew castrametation, or, if we judge it more proper, the Divine castrametation, and consequently the most perfect of all. For although Moses places the pentecontarchs in the middle, between the hecatontarchs and the decarchs, i.e., 50 between 100 and 10; and although Josephus afterward places 1, 000 between 500 and 10, 000, and 30 and 20 between 10 and 50, this does not at all derange the progression by tens, which is the foundation of arithmetic. These subaltern officers were equally useful and necessary, as we now see that their number, far from creating confusion, helps maintain order, and that the more there are of them the better is order preserved. According to the modern method of carrying on war, the next in rank to the generals of the army (who have the

supreme command) are field marshals and brigadiers, who command 5, 000 men.

There are then between the chiliarchs or colonels and the hecatontarchs or captains, lieutenant-colonels; and between the hecatontarchs and the decarchs, lieutenant-captains; and these have under them lieutenants and ensigns. “It is certain that this method of distributing an army by tens, and of encamping, which is very concise, has far greater advantages even with respect to expense than the very best plans of the Greeks, Romans, or any other ancient nation. On this subject we have the testimony of Simon Steven, *Castrametat.* c. 1, art. 1, and c. 4. art. 3, *Oper. Math.*, p. 574 and 596, etc. According to this arrangement each soldier, or if more proper, each father of a family, being thus placed by ten and ten in a straight line one after the other, might very easily name themselves first, second, etc. Each troop in like manner might be distinguished by its ensigns, that of 100 might have them small, that of 1, 000 larger, and that of 10, 000 still larger. Every officer, from the lowest subaltern to the general officers of the camp, and even to the generalissimos themselves, had only an easy inspection of ten men each; the decarch had the inspection of 10 soldiers, the hecatontarch of 10 decarchs, and the chiliarch of 10 hecatontarchs. After the chiliarchs, which in no troop can amount to ten, there is the chief or head of each tribe. Each then exactly fulfilling the duty assigned him, we may suppose every thing to be in good order, even were the camp larger and more numerous. The same may be said respecting the contentions that might arise among the soldiers, as well as every thing relative to the general duty of the officers, as to the labors they were to undertake, whether for striking their tents for works of fortification or for making entrenchments. This arrangement might be easily retained in the memory, or a general list be kept of the names of both officers and soldiers to distribute to them their pay, and to keep exact accounts. “It was possible in one moment to know the number of those who were either wanting or were out of their ranks, and to avoid this disorder in future by obliging each man to attend to his duty and keep in his rank. If by chance it happened that any one man wished to desert or had escaped, it was easy to notice him and inflict on him the punishment he merited. The ensigns being distinguished by their marks, and the company being known, it was easy to find any soldier whatever. “The armies themselves might have certain marks to distinguish

them, and by that means they might at once ascertain the person in question; for example: 8. 2. 7. 3. might signify the eighth soldier or father of a family, of the second rank, of the seventh company, in the third chiliad; 7. 3. 5. the halberdier of the decurion or sergeant of the seventh line, in the third company, of the fifth chiliad or thousand; 5. 8. the hecatontarchs or captains of the fifth company, in the eighth chiliad; 7. the chiliarchs or colonels of the seventh rank; 0. finally, the general of the whole army. Farther, by the same means the loss or misplacing of their arms might be prevented. Again, the soldiers might in a very short time be instructed and formed to the exercise of arms, each decad having its sergeant for its master; and the chariots or other carriages might easily be divided amongst several, 10 under the decurion, 100 under the hecatontarch; and by thus following the above method, every thing might be kept in good order.

A PLAN OF THE WHOLE ISRAELITISH CAMP

“We shall finally, in one plate, represent the whole camp of the Israelites, in that order which appears the most proper. For this purpose we must extract the square roots of the preceding spaces, in order that we may be able to assign to each tribe square areas, or rectangular parallelograms. I therefore find for

Reuben 3049 square cubits. Simeon 3443 The Gershonites 1224 The Kohathites 1311 The Merarites 1113 Judah 3862 Issachar 3298 Zebulun 3388 Gad 3019 Asher 2880 Manasseh 2537 Ephraim 2846 Benjamin 2660 Dan 3541 Naphtali 3268

“The tabernacle, which was 100 cubits long and 50 broad, I place in the center of the camp, at the distance of 840 feet from the camp of the Levites, which is placed exactly in the same manner as described in the sacred writings. I find therefore that the whole space of the camp is 259, 600, 000 feet. Now, according to the manner we have just divided the camp for each tribe, the sum total being 125, 210, 000, it follows that the space between the tents contained 134, 390, 000. If, with Eisenschmid, we estimate the Roman mile at 766 French fathoms and two feet, (consequently 21, 141, 604 square feet to a Roman square mile,) the Israelitish camp will contain a little more than 12 such square miles.”

The reader will have the goodness to observe that the preceding observations, as well as the following plate or diagram, which was made by Scheuchzer on the exactest proportions, could not be accurately copied here without an engraved plate; and after all, the common reader could have profited no more by the plate than he can by the diagram. It is not even hoped that disquisitions of this kind can give any thing more than a general idea how the thing probably was; for to pretend to minute exactness, in such cases, would be absurd. The sacred text informs us that such and such tribes occupied the east, such the west, etc., etc.; but how they were arranged individually we cannot pretend absolutely to say. Scheuchzer's plan is such as we may suppose judgment and skill would lay down; but still it is very probable that the plan of the Israelites' castrametation was more perfect than any thing we can well imagine; for as it was the plan which probably God himself laid down, it must be in every respect what it ought to be, for the comfort and safety of this numerous multitude. As there are some differences between the mode of distributing the command of a large army among the British, and that used on the continent, which is followed by Scheuchzer, I shall lay down the descending scale of British commanders, which some may think applies better to the preceding arrangement of the Israelitish army than the other. The command of a large army in the British service is thus divided:- 1. The Commander-in-chief. 2. Lieutenant-generals, who command divisions of the army: (these divisions consist of 2 or 3 brigades each, which, on an average, amount to 5, 000 men.) 3. Major-generals, who command brigades: (these brigades consist of from 2 to 3, 000 men [2, 500 is perhaps the average] according to the strength of the respective regiments of which the brigade is composed.) 4. Colonels in the army, or lieutenant-colonels, who command single regiments; they are assisted in the command of these regiments by the majors of the regiments. [I mention the major, that there may be no break in the descending scale of gradation of ranks, as in the event of the absence of the above two officers, he is the next in command.] 5. Captains who command companies: these companies (on the war establishment) consist of 100 men each, and there are 10 companies in every regiment, consequently a colonel, or lieutenant-colonel, commands 1, 000 men. 6. Lieutenants, of which there Subaltern officers having are 2 to every company. no command, but assisting 7. Ensign; 1 to each company the captain.

1. Commander-in-chief. 2. Lieutenant-generals commanding These are called divisions 5, 000 each. general officers. 3. Major-generals, brigades 2, 500. 4. Colonels, lieutenant-colonels, and majors; 3 officers belonging to each regiment in the service, and are solely employed in the disciplining and commanding the men; these are mounted on horseback, and termed field-officers. 5. 1 Captain 6. 2 Lieutenants to each company. 7. 1 Ensign

Ascending scale of ranks which every officer must pass through.

Ensign Lieutenant Captain to every regiment. Major Lieutenant-colonel Colonel Major-general, brigade-commander. Lieutenant-general, division-commander. General-in-chief, who commands the whole army

CHAPTER 3

The generations of Aaron and Moses, 1-4. The tribe of Levi to minister to the Lord under Aaron and his sons, 5-10. They are taken in the place of the first-born, 11-13. Moses is commanded to number them, 14-16. Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the names of the three heads of families of the Levites, 17. Of Gershon and his family, 18-21. Their number, 7, 500, ver. 22. Their place behind the tabernacle, westward, 23. Their chief, Eliasaph, 24. Their charge, 25, 26. Of Kohath and his family, 27. Their number, 8, 600, ver. 28. Their place, beside the tabernacle, southward, 29. Their chief, Elizaphan, 30. Their charge, 31. The chief of the Levites, Eleazar, son of Aaron, 32. Of Merari and his family, 33. Their number, 6, 200, ver. 34. Their chief, Zuriel, they shall pitch beside the tabernacle, northward, 35. Their charge, 35-37. MOSES and AARON to encamp before the tabernacle, eastward, 38. The amount of all the males among the Levites from a month old and upwards, 22, 000, ver. 39. Moses is commanded to number the first-born, 40; and to take the Levites and their cattle, instead of the first-born of man and beast among the Israelites, 41. Moses numbers the first-born, who amount to 22, 273, ver. 43. As the first-born were 273 more than the Levites, Moses is commanded to take from the people five shekels apiece for them, 44-47, which is to be given to Aaron and his sons, 48. Moses does accordingly, and finds the amount of the money to be 1, 365 shekels, 49, 50, which is given to Aaron and his sons, 51.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *The generations of Aaron and Moses*— Though Aaron and Moses are both mentioned here, yet the family of Aaron alone appears in the list: hence some have thought that the word Moses was not originally in the text. Others think that the words תלדות ואלה *veelleh toledoth*, these are the generations, should be rendered these are the acts, or transactions, or the history of the lives, as the same phrase may be understood in Genesis 2:4; 6:9. However this may be, it is evident that in

this genealogy the family of Aaron are alone mentioned, probably because these belonged to the priesthood. Moses passes by his own family, or immediate descendants; he gave no rank or privilege to them during his life, and left nothing to them at his death. They became incorporated with the Levites, from or amongst whom they are never distinguished. What a strong proof is this of the celestial origin of his religion! Had it been of man, it must have had the gratification of some impure passion for its object; lust, ambition, or avarice: but none of these ever appear during the whole of his administration amongst the Israelites, though he had it constantly in his power to have gratified each. What an essential difference between the religion of the Pentateuch and that of the Koran! The former is God's workmanship; the latter is a motley mixture of all bad crafts, with here and there a portion of heavenly fire, stolen from the Divine altar in the Old and New Testaments, to give some vitality to the otherwise inert mass.

Verse 4. *Nadab and Abihu died*— See the notes on Lev. chap. x.

Verse 6. *Bring the tribe of Levi near*— The original word **הַקָּרֵב** hakreb is properly a sacrificial word, and signifies the presenting of a sacrifice or offering to the Lord. As an offering, the tribe of Levi was given up entirely to the service of the sanctuary, to be no longer their own, but the Lord's property.

Verse 7. *The charge of the whole congregation*— They shall work for the whole congregation; and instead of the first-born.

Verse 8. *All the instruments*— The tabernacle itself and all its contents: see all described, ver. 25, 26, 31, 36, 37. The Levites were to perform the most common and laborious offices. It was their business to take down, put up, and carry the tabernacle and its utensils; for it was the object of their peculiar care. In a word, they were the servants of the priests.

Verse 10. *Aaron and his sons shall wait on their priest's office*— It was the business of the priests to offer the different sacrifices to God; to consecrate the shew-bread, pour out the libations, burn the incense, sprinkle the blood of the victims, and bless the people. In a word, they were the servants of God alone.

Verse 12. *I have taken the Levites-instead of all the first-born*— The Levites are taken for the service of the sanctuary in place of the first-born. The first-born were dedicated to God in commemoration of his slaying the first-born of the Egyptians, and preserving those of the Israelites. Even the cattle of the Levites were taken in place of the first-born of the cattle of the rest of the tribes. See ver. 45. Several reasons have been assigned why God should give this honor to the tribe of Levi in preference to all the others, but they do not seem to me to be conclusive. Their zeal in destroying those who had corrupted the worship of God in the business of the golden calf, Exodus 32:28, has been thought a sufficient reason. A better reason is, that this was the smallest tribe, and they were quite enough for the service. To have had a more numerous tribe at this time would have been very inconvenient. Aaron, says Mr. Ainsworth, being in his priesthood a type of Christ, all these rites are fulfilled in him. For unto Christ God gave children, Hebrews 2:13. And they are a congregation of first-born, whose names are written in heaven, Hebrews 12:23, being of God's own will begotten by the word of truth, that they should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures, James 1:18, to whom he also gives the first-fruits of his Spirit, Romans 8:23. These wait on and follow the Lamb, being first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb, Revelation 14:4; and Christ hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, that we may serve him day and night in his temple, Revelation 1:6; 7:15.

Verse 15. *A month old and upward*— The males of all the other tribes were numbered, from twenty years and upward; had the Levites been numbered in this way, they would not have been nearly equal in number to the firstborn of the twelve tribes. Add to this, that as there must have been first-born of all ages in the other tribes, it was necessary that the Levites, who were to be their substitutes, should be also of all ages; and it appears to have been on this ground, at least partly, that the Levites were numbered from four weeks old and upward.

Verse 16. *Moses numbered them*— Though Moses and Aaron conjointly numbered the twelve tribes, yet Moses alone numbered the Levites; “for as the money with which the first-born of Israel, who exceeded the number of Levites, were redeemed, was to be paid to Aaron and his sons, ver. 48, it was decent that he, whose advantage it was that the number of the

first-born of Israel should exceed, should not be authorized to take that number himself.”-Dodd, from Bishop Kidder.

Verse 22. *Seven thousand and five hundred*— Perhaps originally 𐤒 resh, 200, instead of 𐤕 caph, 500; see the following note.

Verse 39. *Which Moses and Aaron numbered*— The word 𐤓𐤀𐤁𐤀𐤂 veaharon, “and Aaron.” has a point over each of its letters, probably designed as a mark of spuriousness. The word is wanting in the Samaritan, Syriac, and Coptic; it is wanting also in eight of Dr. Kennicott’s MSS., and in four of Deuteronomy Rossi’s. Moses alone, as Houbigant observes, is commanded to take the number of the Levites; see ver. 5, 11, 40, 44, and 51.

All the males-were twenty and two thousand.— This total does not agree with the particulars; for the Gershonites were 7, 500, the Kohathites 8, 600, the Merarites 6, 200, total 22, 300. Several methods of solving this difficulty have been proposed by learned men; Dr. Kennicott’s is the most simple. Formerly the numbers in the Hebrew Bible were expressed by letters, and not by words at full length; and if two nearly similar letters were mistaken for each other, many errors in the numbers must be the consequence. Now it is probable that an error has crept into the number of the Gershonites, ver. 22, where, instead of 7, 500, we should read 7, 200, as 𐤕 caph, 500, might have been easily mistaken for 𐤒 resh, 200, especially if the down stroke of the caph had been a little shorter than ordinary, which is often the case in MSS. The extra 300 being taken off, the total is just 22, 000, as mentioned in the 39th verse.

Verse 43. *All the first-born males-were twenty and two thousand two hundred and threescore and thirteen.*— Thus we find there were 273 first-born beyond the number of the Levites. These are ordered, ver. 46, to be redeemed; and the redemption price is to be five shekels each, ver. 47, about 15s. And this money, amounting to 1, 365 shekels, equal to ú204 15s. English, he took of the first-born of Israel, verse 50. But how was this collected among 22, 273 persons? Rabbi Solomon Jarchi says, “to prevent contention, Moses took 22, 000 slips of parchment, and wrote on each a son of Levi, and 273 others, on which he wrote five shekels; then he mixed them in a basket, and each man took out one; those who drew the slips on

which five shekels were written, paid the money; the others went free.” This is a most stupid and silly tale, for such a mode of settlement never could have been resorted to by an intelligent people. It would have been much more simple to have paid it out of a general fund; and it is very likely that in this way the expense was defrayed. This species of redeeming of men is referred to by St. Peter, 1 Peter 1:18, 19: “Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious (τιμιω αιματι, valuable) blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,” etc. And it is not the first-born only which are thus redeemed, for he, by the grace of God, tasted death for EVERY man; Hebrews 2:9. Reader, give glory to God that such a ransom has been paid for thy soul, and see that, redeemed from thy vain conversation, thy empty, fruitless, and graceless observances, on which thou hast built thy hopes of salvation, thou walk in newness of life, giving thy whole soul with thankfulness unto the Father who hath translated thee from darkness, and placed thee in the kingdom of his beloved Son. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.

CHAPTER 4

Moses is commanded to take the sum of the sons of Kohath from thirty years old and upward, 1-4. The service which they had to perform, 5-15. The office of Eleazar, 16. The family of Kohath to be continued among the Levites, 17-19. They are not to go into the holy of holies, 20. The sum of the sons of Gershon, 21-23. The service they had to perform, 24-27. They are to be under Ithamar, 28. The sum of the sons of Merari, 29, 30. The service they had to perform, 31-33. The sum of all the families of Kohath, 2, 750, ver. 34-37. The sum of the families of Gershon, 2, 630, ver. 38-41. The sum of the families of Merari, 3, 200, ver. 42-45. The sum total of the families of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, 8, 580, ver. 46-49.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 3. *From thirty years old*— In chap. 8:24, the Levites are ordered to enter on the service of the tabernacle at the age of twenty-five years; and in 1 Chronicles 23:24, they were ordered to commence that work at twenty years of age. How can these different times be reconciled? 1. At the time of which Moses speaks here, the Levitical service was exceedingly severe, and consequently required men full grown, strong, and stout, to perform it; the age therefore of thirty years was appointed as the period for commencing this service, the weightier part of which is probably here intended. 2. In chap. 8:24, Moses seems to speak of the service in a general way; the severe, which was to be performed by the full-grown Levites, and the less laborious work which younger men might assist in: hence the age of twenty-five is fixed. 3. In David's time and afterwards, in the fixed tabernacle and temple, the laboriousness of the service no longer existed, and hence twenty years was the age fixed on for all Levites to enter into the work of the sanctuary. The rabbins say that the Levites began to learn to do the service at twenty-five, and that having been instructed five years, they began the public service at thirty, and thus they reconcile the two periods referred to above. We may well suppose that the sons of the prophets continued a considerable time under instructions before they were called fully to exercise themselves in the prophetic office.

Until fifty years old— This was allowing twenty years for public severe service; a very considerate and merciful ordinance. A preacher who devotes his whole time and strength to the service of the Church of God from twenty to fifty or sixty years of age, should be then excused from his severer labor, and maintained at the charge of the sanctuary. This would not only be a great comfort to a worn-out servant of God, but also of great use to the work of the ministry, which, to be faithfully and effectually performed, requires all the powers of the body and mind of man. Old faithful ministers are to be highly respected for their work's sake, and to be supplied with all the necessaries and comforts of life; but how little can they do in the public ministry of the word, however willing to work, when their eye waxes dim and their bodily strength fails! See "Numbers 8:25". Both for their own sakes, and for the good of the Church, they should be excused from a labor to which they must be almost every way inadequate. But notwithstanding this comparative inactivity, their counsels, advice, and experience will always be considered as a treasure to the Church of Christ

Verse 20. When the holy things are covered— Literally, כבלע keballa, when they are swallowed down; which shows the promptitude with which every thing belonging to the holy of holies was put out of sight, for these mysteries must ever be treated with the deepest reverence; and indeed without this they could not have been to them the representatives of heavenly realities. See the concluding note

Verse 36. Those that were numbered— In chapter 3:27, etc., we have an account of the whole number of the Levites, and here of those only who were able to serve the Lord in the sanctuary. By comparing the two places we find the numbers to stand thus:—

KOHATHITES

Able men 2, 750

Unable 5, 850

—Total 8, 600

GERSHONITES

Able men 2, 630

Unable 4, 870

— Total 7, 500

MERARITES

Able men 3, 200

Unable 3, 000

— Total 6, 200

Thus we find that the whole number of the Levites amounted to 22, 300, of whom 3, 580 were fit for service, and 13,720 unfit, being either too old or too young. What an astonishing number of men, all properly ecclesiastics; all performing some service by which God was glorified, and the congregation at large benefited! See Ainsworth. FROM this and the preceding chapter we see the very severe labor which the Levites were obliged to perform while the journeyings of the Israelites lasted. When we consider that there was not less than 10 tons 13 cwt. 24 lb. 14 oz., i. e., almost ten tons and fourteen hundred pounds' weight of metal employed in the tabernacle, (see the notes on Exodus 38.,) besides the immense weight of the skins, hangings, cords, boards, and posts, we shall find it was no very easy matter to transport this movable temple from place to place. The Gershonites, who were 7, 500 men in the service, had to carry the tent, coverings, veils, hangings of the court, etc., etc., chap. 3:25, 26. The Kohathites, who were 8, 600 men, had to carry the ark, table, candlestick, altars, and instruments of the sanctuary, chap. 3:31. The Merarites, who were 6, 200 men, had to carry the boards, bars, pillars, sockets, and all matters connected with these belonging to the tabernacle, with the pillars of the court, their sockets, pins, and cords, chap. 3:36, 37. The tabernacle was an epitome of the temple: the temple and tabernacle were representatives of the Church of the living God, and of the humanity of our blessed Lord. As God dwelt in the tabernacle and temple, so his fullness dwelt in the man Christ Jesus. These again were types of the Christian Church, which is termed the body of Christ, Ephesians 1:23, where he dwells in the plenitude of the graces of his Spirit. Mr. Ainsworth has a very useful note on the 20th verse of this chapter, the most edifying part of which I shall here lay before the reader. He considers the tabernacle and temple, not only as pointing out the old dispensation, the annulling of which was typified by their destruction, but he considers also the former as emblematical of the body of man. "The apostle," says he, "treating of the death of the saints, uses this similitude: 'If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made

with hands, eternal in the heavens. For we that are in THIS TABERNACLE do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life;' 2 Corinthians 5:1-4. So Peter calls his death the putting off of his TABERNACLE, 2 Peter 1:14. And this similitude is very fit; for, as here, in the tabernacle of Moses, the holy things were first covered and taken away, (see ver. 20,) so the soul and its powers are first withdrawn from the body by death. 2. As the curtains and coverings were taken off and folded up, so the skin and flesh of our bodies are pulled off and consumed. 3. As the boards of the tabernacle were disjointed and pulled asunder, so shall our bones and sinews: compare Job's description of the formation of man, chap. 10:8-12; and Solomon's account of his dissolution, Ecclesiastes 12:3, 4. 4. As the disjointed and dissolved tabernacle was afterwards set up again, Numbers 10:21, so shall our bodies in the day of the resurrection; see 1 Corinthians 15:51-54.

CHAPTER 5

The Israelites are commanded to purify the camp by excluding all lepers, and all diseased and unclean persons, 1-3. They do so, 4. Law concerning him who has defrauded another—he shall confess his sin, restore the principal and add besides one fifth of its value, 5-7. If he have no kinsman to whom the recompense can be made, it shall be given unto the Lord, 8. All the holy things offered to the Lord shall be the priest's portion, 9, 10. The law concerning jealousy, 11-14. The suspected woman's offering, 15. She is to be brought before the Lord, 16. The priest shall take holy water, and put it in dust from the floor of the tabernacle, 17. Shall put the offering in her hand, and adjure her, 18-20. The form of the oath, 21, 22; which is to be written on a book, blotted out in the bitter waters, and these the suspected person shall be obliged to drink, 23, 24. The jealousy-offering shall be waved before the Lord, 25, 26. The effect which shall be produced if the suspected person be guilty, 27. The effect if not guilty, 28. Recapitulation, with the purpose and design of the law, 29, 30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 2. Put out of the camp every leper— According to the preceding plan, it is sufficiently evident that each camp had a space behind it, and on one side, whither the infected might be removed, and where probably convenient places were erected for the accommodation of the infected; for we cannot suppose that they were driven out into the naked wilderness. But the expulsion mentioned here was founded, 1. On a purely physical reason, viz., the diseases were contagious, and therefore there was a necessity of putting those afflicted by them apart, that the infection might not be communicated. 2. There was also a spiritual reason; the camp was the habitation of God, and nothing impure should be permitted to remain where he dwelt. 3. The camp was an emblem of the Church, where nothing that is defiled should enter, and in which nothing that is unholy should be tolerated. All lepers — all persevering impenitent sinners, should be driven from the sacred pale, nor should any such ever be permitted to enter.

Verse 4. *And the children of Israel-put them out*— This is the earliest account we have of such separations; and probably this ordinance gave the first idea of a hospital, where all those who are afflicted with contagious disorders are put into particular wards, under medical treatment. Though no mention be made of the situation, circumstances, etc., of those expelled persons, we may certainly infer that they were treated with that humanity which their distressed state required. Though sinners must be separated from the Church of God, yet they should be treated with affectionate regard, because they may be reclaimed. It is too often the case when a man backslides from the way of truth, he is abandoned by all; finding his case desperate, he plunges yet deeper into the mire of sin, and the man who, with tender treatment, might have been reclaimed, becomes incurably hardened. One class says, he cannot finally fall, and shall in due time be restored; another class says, he may finally fall and utterly perish. If the unfortunate person be restored, his recovery is taken as a proof of the first doctrine; if he be not, his wretched end is considered a proof of the second. In the first case the person himself may presume on his restoration as a point infallibly determined in the Divine counsel; or in the second, he may consider his case hopeless, and so abandon himself to profligacy and desperation. Thus both parties leave him, and both opinions (misunderstood certainly) render him secure or desperate; and in either case totally inactive in behalf of his own soul. Who is he that properly estimates the worth of one immortal spirit? He who does will at once feel that, in a state of probation, any man may fall through sin, and any sinner may be renewed again unto repentance, through the infinitely meritorious sacrifice, and all powerfully efficacious grace, of Christ. This truth properly felt equally precludes both presumption and despair, and will induce the followers of God to be active in preserving those who have escaped from the corruption that is in the world, and make them diligent to recover those who have turned back to earth and sin.

Verse 7. *Shall confess their sin*— Without confession or acknowledgment of sin, there was no hope of mercy held out.

He shall recompense— For without restitution, in every possible case, God will not forgive the iniquity of a man's sin. How can any person in a case of defraud, with his neighbor's property in his possession, expect to

receive mercy from the hand of a just and holy God? See this subject considered in the notes on “Genesis 42:38”.

Verse 8. *If the man have no kinsman*— The Jews think that this law respects the stranger and the sojourner only, because every Israelite is in a state of affinity to all the rest; but there might be a stranger in the camp who has no relative in any of the tribes of Israel.

Verse 14. *The spirit of jealousy*— רוּחַ קִנְיָהּ ruach kinah, either a supernatural diabolic influence, exciting him to jealousy, or the passion or affection of jealousy, for so the words may be understood.

Verse 17. *Holy water*— Water out of the laver, called holy because consecrated to sacred uses. This is the most ancient case of the trial by ordeal. See at “Numbers 5:31”.

In an earthen vessel— Supposed by the Jews to be such as had never been previously used.

Dust that is in the floor— Probably intended to point out the baseness of the crime of which she was accused.

Verse 18. *Uncover the woman’s head*— To take off a woman’s veil, and expose her to the sight of men, would be considered a very great degradation in the East. To this St. Paul appears to allude, 1 Corinthians 11:5, 6,10.

Verse 21. *The Lord make thee a curse and an oath*— Let thy name and punishment be remembered and mentioned as an example and terror to all others. Like that mentioned Jeremiah 29:22, 23: “The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbors’ wives.”-Ainsworth.

Verse 22. *Thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot*— What is meant by these expressions cannot be easily ascertained. לַנֶּפֶל יֵרֵד lanpel yarech signifies literally thy thigh to fall. As the thigh, feet, etc., were used among the Hebrews delicately to express the parts which nature conceals, (see Genesis 46:26,) the expression here is probably to be understood in this sense; and the falling down of the thigh here must mean something similar

to the prolapsus uteri, or falling down of the womb, which might be a natural effect of the preternatural distension of the abdomen. In 1 Corinthians 11:29, St. Paul seems to allude to the case of the guilty woman drinking the bitter cursed waters that caused her destruction: He who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (κρίμα, condemnation or judgment) to himself; and there is probably a reference to the same thing in Psalm 109:18, and in Daniel 9:11.

And the woman shall say, Amen, amen.— This is the first place where this word occurs in the common form of a concluding wish in prayer. The root אמן aman signifies to be steady, true, permanent. And in prayer it signifies let it be so — make it steady — let it be ratified. Some have supposed that it is composed of the initial letters of אדני מלך נאמן Adonai Melech Neeman, My Lord the faithful King, but this derivation is both far-fetched and unnecessary.

Verse 23. *The priest shall write these curses — and he shall blot them out*— It appears that the curses which were written down with a kind of ink prepared for the purpose, as some of the rabbins think, without any calx of iron or other material that could make a permanent dye, were washed off the parchment into the water which the woman was obliged to drink, so that she drank the very words of the execration. The ink used in the East is almost all of this kind—a wet sponge will completely efface the finest of their writings. The rabbins say that the trial by the waters of jealousy was omitted after the Babylonish captivity, because adulteries were so frequent amongst them, that they were afraid of having the name of the Lord profaned by being so frequently appealed to! This is a most humiliating confession. “Though,” says pious Bishop Wilson, “this judgment is not executed now on adulteresses, yet they have reason from this to conclude that a more terrible vengeance will await them hereafter without a bitter repentance; these being only a shadow of heavenly things, i. e., of what the Gospel requires of its professors, viz., a strict purity, or a severe repentance.” The pious bishop would not preclude the necessity of pardon through the blood of the cross, for without this the severest repentance would be of no avail.

Verse 24. *The bitter water that causeth the curse*— Though the rabbins think that the priest put some bitter substance in the water, yet as nothing

of the kind is intimated by Moses, we may consider the word as used here metaphorically for affliction, death, etc. These waters were afflicting and deadly to her who drank them, being guilty. In this sense afflictions are said to be bitter, Isaiah 38:17; so also is death, 1 Samuel 15:32: Ecclesiastes 7:26.

Verse 29. *This is the law of jealousies*— And this is the most singular law in the whole Pentateuch: a law that seems to have been copied by almost all the nations of the earth, whether civilized or barbarian, as we find that similar modes of trial for suspected offenses were used when complete evidence was wanting to convict; and where it was expected that the object of their worship would interfere for the sake of justice, in order that the guilty should be brought to punishment, and the innocent be cleared. For general information on this head see at the end of this chapter. {See “Numbers 5:31”.}

Verse 31. *This woman shall bear her iniquity*— That is, her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot; See “Numbers 5:22”. But if not guilty after such a trial, she had great honor, and, according to the rabbins, became strong, healthy, and fruitful; for if she was before barren, she now began to bear children; if before she had only daughters, she now began to have sons; if before she had hard travail, she now had easy; in a word, she was blessed in her body, her soul, and her substance: so shall it be done unto the holy and faithful woman, for such the Lord delighteth to honor; see 1 Timothy 2:15. ON the principal subject of this chapter. I shall here introduce a short account of the trial by ordeal, as practiced in different parts of the world, and which is supposed to have taken its origin from the waters of jealousy. The trial by what was afterwards called ORDEAL is certainly of very remote antiquity, and was evidently of Divine appointment. In this place we have an institution relative to a mode of trial precisely of that kind which among our ancestors was called ordeal; and from this all similar trials in Asia, Africa, and Europe, have very probably derived their origin. Ordeal, Latin, ordalium, is, according to Verstegan, from the Saxon [AS], ordal and ordel, and is derived by some from [AS], great, and DAEL, judgment, signifying the greatest, most solemn, and decisive mode of judgment. — Hickes. Others derive it from the Francic or Teutonic Urdela, which signifies simply to judge. But Lye, in his Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, derives the term from [AS], which is often in

Anglo-Saxon, a privative particle, and [AS], distinction or difference; and hence applied to that kind of judgment in which there was no respect of persons, but every one had absolute justice done him, as the decision of the business was supposed to belong to GOD alone. It always signified an appeal to the immediate interposition of GOD, and was therefore called *Judicium Dei*, God's Judgment; and we may naturally suppose was never resorted to but in very important cases, where persons accused of great crimes protested their innocence, and there was no sufficient evidence by which they could be cleared from the accusation, or proved to be guilty of the crime laid to their charge. Such were the cases of jealousy referred to in this chapter. The rabbins who have commented on this text give us the following information: When any man, prompted by the spirit of jealousy, suspected his wife to have committed adultery, he brought her first before the judges, and accused her of the crime; but as she asserted her innocency, and refused to acknowledge herself guilty, and as he had no witnesses to produce, he required that she should be sentenced to drink the waters of bitterness which the law had appointed; that God, by this means, might discover what she wished to conceal. After the judges had heard the accusation and the denial, the man and his wife were both sent to Jerusalem, to appear before the Sanhedrin, who were the sole judges in such matters. The rabbins say that the judges of the Sanhedrin, at first endeavored with threatenings to confound the woman, and cause her to confess her crime; when she still persisted in her innocence, she was led to the eastern gate of the court of Israel, where she was stripped of the clothes she wore, and dressed in black before a number of persons of her own sex. The priest then told her that if she knew herself to be innocent she had no evil to apprehend; but if she were guilty, she might expect to suffer all that the law threatened: to which she answered, Amen, amen. The priest then wrote the words of the law upon a piece of vellum, with ink that had no vitriol in it, that it might be the more easily blotted out. The words written on the vellum were, according to the rabbins, the following:- "If a strange man have not come near thee, and thou art not polluted by forsaking the bed of thy husband, these bitter waters which I have cursed will not hurt thee: but if thou have gone astray from thy husband, and have polluted thyself by coming near to another man, may thou be accursed of the Lord, and become an example for all his people; may thy thigh rot, and thy belly swell till it burst! may these cursed

waters enter into thy belly, and, being swelled therewith, may thy thigh putrefy!" After this the priest took a new pitcher, filled it with water out of the brazen bason that was near the altar of burnt-offering, cast some dust into it taken from the pavement of the temple, mingled something bitter, as wormwood, with it, and having read the curses above mentioned to the woman, and received her answer of Amen, he scraped off the curses from the vellum into the pitcher of water. During this time another priest tore her clothes as low as her bosom, made her head bare, untied the tresses of her hair, fastened her torn clothes with a girdle below her breasts, and presented her with the tenth part of an ephah, or about three pints of barley-meal, which was in a frying pan, without oil or incense. The other priest, who had prepared the waters of jealousy, then gave them to be drank by the accused person, and as soon as she had swallowed them, he put the pan with the meal in it into her hand. This was waved before the Lord, and a part of it thrown into the fire of the altar. If the woman was innocent, she returned with her husband; and the waters, instead of incommoding her, made her more healthy and fruitful than ever: if on the contrary she were guilty, she was seen immediately to grow pale, her eyes started out of her head, and, lest the temple should be defiled with her death, she was carried out, and died instantly with all the ignominious circumstances related in the curses, which the rabbins say had the same effect on him with whom she had been criminal, though he were absent and at a distance. They add, however, that if the husband himself had been guilty with another woman, then the waters had no bad effect even on his criminal wife; as in that case the transgression on the one part was, in a certain sense, balanced by the transgression on the other. There is no instance in the Scriptures of this kind of ordeal having ever been resorted to; and probably it never was during the purer times of the Hebrew republic. God had rendered himself so terrible by his judgments, that no person would dare to appeal to this mode of trial who was conscious of her guilt; and in case of simple adultery, where the matter was either detected or confessed, the parties were ordered by the law to be put to death. But other ancient nations have also had their trials by ordeal. We learn from Ferdusi, a Persian poet, whose authority we have no reason to suspect, that the fire ordeal was in use at a very early period among the ancient Persians. In the famous epic poem called the Shah Nameh of this author, who is not improperly styled the Homer of Persia, under the title

Dastan Seeavesh ve Soodabeh, The account of Seeavesh and Soodabeh, he gives a very remarkable and circumstantial account of a trial of this kind. It is very probable that the fire ordeal originated among the ancient Persians, for by them fire was not only held sacred, but considered as a god, or rather as the visible emblem of the supreme Deity; and indeed this kind of trial continues in extensive use among the Hindoos to the present day. In the code of Gentoo laws it is several times referred to under the title of Purrah Reh, but in the Shah Nameh, the word [H] Soogend is used, which signifies literally an oath, as the persons were obliged to declare their innocence by an oath, and then put their veracity to test by passing through the [H] kohi atesh, or fire pile; see the Shah Nameh in the title Dastan Seeavesh ve Soodabeh, and Halhed's code of Gentoo laws; Preliminary Discourse, p. lviii., and chap. v., sec. iii., pp. 117, etc. A circumstantial account of the different kinds of ordeal practiced among the Hindoos, communicated by Warren Hastings, Esq., who received it from Ali Ibrahim Khan, chief magistrate at Benares, may be found in the Asiatic Researches, vol. i., p. 389. This trial was conducted among this people nine different ways: first, by the balance; secondly, by fire; thirdly, by water; fourthly, by poison; fifthly, by the cosha, or water in which an idol has been washed; sixthly, by rice; seventhly, by boiling oil; eighthly, by red hot iron; ninthly, by images. There is, perhaps, no mode of judiciary decision that has been in more common use in ancient times, than that of ordeal, in some form or other. We find that it was also used by the ancient Greeks 500 years before the Christian era; for in the Antigone of Sophocles, a person suspected by Creon of a misdemeanor, declares himself ready "to handle hot iron, and to walk over fire," in proof of his innocence, which the scholiast tells us was then a very usual purgation.

ἡμεν δ' ετοιμοὶ καὶ μύδρους αἰρεῖν χερσίν,
καὶ πῦρ διερπεῖν, καὶ θεοὺς ὀρκωμοτεῖν. Ver. 270.

The scholiast on this line informs us that the custom in binding themselves by the most solemn oath, was this: they took red hot iron in their hands, and throwing it into the sea, swore that the oath should be inviolate till that iron made its appearance again. Virgil informs us that the priests of Apollo at Soracte were accustomed to walk over burning coals unhurt.

— *Et medium, freti pietate, per ignem
Cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.*

AEn. xi. 787.

Grotius gives many instances of water ordeal in Bithynia, Sardinia, and other places. Different species of fire and water ordeal are said to have prevailed among the Indians on the coast of Malabar; the negroes of Loango, Mosambique, etc., etc., and the Calmuc Tartars.

The first formal mention I find of this trial in Europe is in the laws of King Ina, composed about A. D. 700. See L. 77. entitled, [AS], Decision by hot iron and water. I find it also mentioned in the council of Mentz, A. D. 847; but Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, wrote against it sixty years before this time. It is afterwards mentioned in the council of Trevers, A. D. 895. It did not exist in Normandy till after the Conquest, and was probably first introduced into England in the time of Ina, in whose laws and those of Athelstan and Ethelred, it was afterwards inserted. The ordeal by fire was for noblemen and women, and such as were free born: the water ordeal was for husbandmen, and the meaner classes of the people, and was of two sorts; by cold water and by hot. See the proceedings in these trials declared particularly in the law of King Ina; WILKINS, *Leges Anglo-Saxonae*, p. 27.

Several popes published edicts against this species of trial. Henry III. abolished trials by ordeal in the third year of his reign, 1219. See the act in Rymer, vol. i., p. 228; and see Dugdale's *Origines Juridicales*, fol. 87; Spelman's *Glossary*, Wilkins, Hickes, Lombard, Somner, and Du Cange, art. *Ferrum*.

The ordeal or trial by battle or combat is supposed to have come to us from the Lombards, who, leaving Scandinavia, overran Europe: it is thought that this mode of trial was instituted by Frotha III., king of Denmark, about the time of the birth of Christ; for he ordained that every controversy should be determined by the sword. It continued in Holsatia till the time of Christian III., king of Denmark, who began his reign in 1535. From these northern nations the practice of duels was introduced into Great Britain.

I need scarcely add, that this detestable form of trial was the foundation of the no less detestable crime of duelling, which so much disgraces our age and nation, a practice that is defended only by ignorance, false honor, and injustice: it is a relic of barbarous superstition, and was absolutely unknown to those brave and generous nations, the Greeks and Romans, whom it is so much the fashion to admire; and who, in this particular, so well merit our admiration!

The general practice of duelling is supposed to have taken its rise in 1527, at the breaking up of a treaty between the Emperor Charles V. and Francis I. The former having sent a herald with an insulting message to Francis, the king of France sent back the herald with a cartel of defiance, in which he gave the emperor the lie, and challenged him to single combat: Charles accepted it; but after several messages concerning the arrangement of all the circumstances relative to the combat, the thoughts of it were entirely laid aside. The example of two personages so illustrious drew such general attention, and carried with it so much authority, that it had considerable influence in introducing an important change in manners all over Europe. It was so much the custom in the middle ages of Christianity to respect the cross, even to superstition, that it would have been indeed wonderful if the same ignorant bigotry had not converted it into an ordeal: accordingly we find it used for this purpose in so many different ways as almost to preclude description. Another trial of this kind was the Corsned, or the consecrated bread and cheese: this was the ordeal to which the clergy commonly appealed when they were accused of any crime. A few concluding observations from Dr. Henry may not be unacceptable to the reader:- “If we suppose that few or none escaped conviction who exposed themselves to these fiery trials, we shall be very much mistaken. For the histories of those times contain innumerable examples of persons plunging their naked arms into boiling water, handling red hot balls of iron, and walking upon burning ploughshares, without receiving the least injury. Many learned men have been much puzzled to account for this, and disposed to think that Providence graciously interposed in a miraculous manner for the preservation of injured innocence.

“But if we examine every circumstance of these fiery ordeals with due attention, we shall see sufficient reason to suspect that the whole was a gross imposition on the credulity of mankind. The accused person was

committed wholly to the priest who was to perform the ceremony three days before the trial, in which he had time enough to bargain with him for his deliverance, and give him instructions how to act his part. On the day of trial no person was permitted to enter the church but the priest and the accused till after the iron was heated, when twelve friends of the accuser, and twelve of the accused, and no more, were admitted and ranged along the wall on each side of the church, at a respectful distance. After the iron was taken out of the fire several prayers were said: the accused drank a cup of holy water, and sprinkled his hand with it, which might take a considerable time if the priest were indulgent. The space of nine feet was measured by the accused himself, with his own feet, and he would probably give but scanty measure. He was obliged only to touch one of the marks with the toe of his right foot, and allowed to stretch the other foot as far towards the other mark as he could, so that the conveyance was almost instantaneous. His hand was not immediately examined, but wrapped in a cloth prepared for that purpose three days. May we not then, from all these precautions, suspect that these priests were in possession of some secret that secured the hand from the impression of such a momentary touch of hot iron, or removed all appearances of these impressions in three days; and that they made use of this secret when they saw reason? Such readers as are curious in matters of this kind may find two different directions for making ointments that will have this effect, in the work here quoted. What greatly strengthens these suspicions is, that we meet with no example of any champion of the Church who suffered the least injury from the touch of hot iron in this ordeal: but where any one was so fool-hardy as to appeal to it, or to that of hot water, with a view to deprive the Church of any of her possessions, he never failed to burn his fingers, and lose his cause." I have made the scanty extract above from a very extensive history of the trial by ordeal, which I wrote several years ago, but never published. All the forms of adjuration for the various ordeals of hot water, cold water, red hot iron, bread and cheese, etc., may be seen in the *Codex Legum Antiquarum*, Lindenbrogii, fol. Franc. 1613, p. 1299, etc.

CHAPTER 6

The vow of the Nazarite, 1, 2. In what it consisted, 3-8. When accidentally defiled, how he is to be purified, 9-12. The sacrifices he is to bring, and the rites he is to perform, when the vow of his separation is fulfilled, 13-21. The manner in which the priests are to bless the people, 22-26. The name of the LORD is to be put on the children of Israel, whom He promises to bless, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 2. When either man or woman shall separate, etc.— The word נָזִיר nazir, from נָזַר nazar, to separate, signifies merely a separated person, i. e., one peculiarly devoted to the service of God by being separated from all servile employments. From the Nazarites sprang the Rechabites, from the Rechabites the Essenes, from the Essenes the Anchorites or Hermits, and in imitation of those, the different monastic orders. Some contend strongly that the Nazarite was a type of our Lord; but neither analogy nor proof can be produced. Our blessed Lord both drank wine and touched the dead, which no Nazarite would do: as to his either shaving his hair or letting it grow, we know nothing. His being called a Nazarene, Matthew 2:23, is nothing to the purpose, as it can mean no more than either that he was an inhabitant of Nazareth, which was a place of no credit, and therefore used as a term of reproach; or that he was in a general sense consecrated to the service of God — so were Samson, Samuel, Jeremiah, and John Baptist; or rather, that he was the נֶצֶר netser or BRANCH, Isaiah 11:1, and צֶמַח tsemach, Zechariah 3:8; 6:12, which is quite a different word; but this title is expressly applied to our blessed Lord by the above prophets; but in no place do they or any other prophets call him a Nazarite, in the sense in which נָזִיר nazir is used. Indeed it could not in truth be applied to him, as the distinguishing marks of a Nazarite never belonged to him. He was, it is true, the נֶצֶר netser or branch out of the root of Jesse, the genuine heir to the throne of David, whose dominion should extend over the universe, who should be King of

kings, and Lord of Lords; but the word **ναζωραιος**, Matthew 2:23, signifies merely a Nazoraean, or inhabitant of Nazareth.

Verse 3. *No vinegar of wine, etc.*— **יַמֵּץ** *chomets* signifies fermented wine, and is probably used here to signify wine of a strong body, or any highly intoxicating liquor. Dr. Lightfoot supposes that the **LEPER** being the most defiled and loathsome of creatures, was an emblem of the wretched, miserable state of man by the fall; and that the **NAZARITE** was the emblem of man in his state of innocence. Wine and grapes are here particularly forbidden to the Nazarite because, as the doctor thinks, being an emblem of man in his paradisaical state, he was forbidden that tree and its fruits by eating of which Adam fell; for the doctor, as well as the Jewish rabbins, believed the tree of knowledge to have been none other than the vine.

Vinegar of strong drink— See the note on “Leviticus 10:9”.

Verse 5. *There shall no razor come upon his head*— The vow of the Nazarite consisted in the following particulars:- 1. He consecrated himself in a very especial and extraordinary manner to God. 2. This was to continue for a certain season, probably never less than a whole year, that he might have a full growth of hair to burn in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace-offering, ver. 18. 3. During the time of his separation, or nazarate, he drank no wine nor strong drink; nor used any vinegar formed from any inebriating liquor, nor ate the flesh or dried grapes, nor tasted even the kernels or husks of any thing that had grown upon the vine. 4. He never shaved his head, but let his hair grow, as the proof of his being in this separated state, and under vows of peculiar austerity. 5. He never touched any dead body, nor did any of the last offices, even to his nearest kin; but was considered as the priests, who were wholly taken up with the service of God, and regarded nothing else. 6. All the days of his separation he was holy, ver. 8. During the whole time he was to be incessantly employed in religious acts.

Verse 7. *The consecration of his God is upon his head.*— Literally, The separation of his God is upon his head; meaning his hair, which was the proof and emblem of his separation. Now as the hair of the Nazarite was a token of his subjection to God through all the peculiarities of his nazarate, a woman, who is married, is considered as a Nazarite for life, i. e., separated from all others, and joined to one husband who is her lord; hence

St. Paul, probably alluding to this circumstance, says, 1 Corinthians 11:10: The woman ought to have power upon her head, i. e., wear her hair and veil; for this hair is a proof of her nazarate, and of her being in subjection to her husband, as the Nazarite was under subjection to the LORD by the rule of his order.

Verse 10. *Two turtles, or two young pigeons*— The same kind of offering made by him who had an issue, Leviticus 15:14, etc.

Verse 18. *Shall take the hair-and put it in the fire*— The hair was permitted to grow for this purpose; and as the Nazarite was a kind of sacrifice, offered to God through the whole term of his nazarate or separation, and no human flesh or blood could be offered on the altar of the Lord, he offered his hair at the conclusion of his separation, as a sacrifice—that hair which was the token of his complete subjection to the Lord, and which was now considered as the Lord’s property. The Hindoos, after a vow, do not cut their hair during the term of their vow; but at the expiration of it they shave it off at the place where the vow was made.

That the hair of the head was superstitiously used among different nations, we have already had occasion to remark; (See the notes on “Leviticus 19:27”;) and that the Gentiles might have learned this from the Jews is possible, though some learned men think that this consecration of the hair to a deity was in use among the heathens before the time of Moses, and in nations who had no intercourse or connection with the Jews.

Verse 21. *This is the law of the Nazarite*— We learn from Maimonides, in his Treatise of the Nazarite, that a man might become a Nazarite in behalf of another; that is, might assist him in bearing the expenses of the sacrifices, etc. “A son may fulfill the vow his deceased father hath made, but did not live to accomplish:-He that saith, upon me be the shaving of a Nazarite, he is bound to bring the offerings of shaving for cleanness, and may offer them by the hand of what Nazarite he will. If he say, Upon me be half the oblations of a Nazarite, then he bringeth half the offerings by what Nazarite he will, and that Nazarite payeth his offerings out of that which is his.”

“By this,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “we may see the reason of that which James said to Paul, though he had no Nazarite’s vow upon him: ‘We have four men who have a vow on them; they take and sanctify thyself with them, and BE AT CHARGES WITH THEM, that they may shave their heads, etc. Then Paul took the men, and the next day, sanctifying himself with them, entered into the temple to signify the accomplishment of the days of sanctification, (or Nazariteship,) until that an offering should be offered for every one of them;’ see Acts 21:23-26. For though Paul had not vowed or fulfilled a Nazariteship himself, yet might he contribute with them, and partake of their charges about the sacrifices.”

Verse 23. *On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel*— The prayer which God makes for his followers, and puts into their mouth, we are sure must be right; and to it, when sincerely, faithfully, and fervently offered, we may confidently expect an answer. If he condescended to give us a form of blessings or a form of prayer, we may rest assured that he will accept what he himself has made. This consideration may produce great confidence in them who come with either prayer or praise to the throne of grace, both of which should be, as far as circumstances will admit, in the very words of Scripture; for we can readily attach a consequence to the words of God, which we shall find difficult to attach to the best ordered words of men. Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord. What words? Why those which God immediately puts into their mouths. Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips; we shall then give the sacrifices of which our lips have spoken, when we made our vows unto thee. See Hosea 14:2.

Verse 24. *The Lord bless thee*— There are three forms of blessing here, any or all of which the priests might use on any occasion. The following is a verbal translation:- 1. May Jehovah bless thee and preserve thee! 2. May Jehovah cause his faces to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! 3. May Jehovah lift up his faces upon thee, and may be put prosperity unto thee! This is a very comprehensive and excellent prayer, and may be paraphrased thus:- 1. May God speak good unto thee, by giving thee his excellent promises! (See the note on “Genesis 2:3”.) May he preserve thee in the possession of all the good thou hast, and from all the evil with which thou art threatened! 2. May the Holy Trinity illuminate thy heart, giving thee the true knowledge of thyself and of thy Maker; and may he show

thee his graciousness in pardoning thy sins, and supporting thy soul! 3. May God give thee communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit, with a constant sense of his approbation; and grant thee prosperity in thy soul, and in all thy secular affairs! This I suppose to be the spirit and design of this form of benediction. Others will doubtless interpret it after their manner. Several wise and learned men believe that the mystery of the Holy Trinity is not obscurely hinted at in it. God the FATHER blesses and keeps his followers. God the SON is gracious unto sinners in remitting their offenses, which he died to blot out. God the HOLY SPIRIT takes of the things which are Christ's, and shows them unto genuine Christians, and diffuses the peace of God in their hearts. In a word, Christ, the gift of the Father by the energy of the Holy Spirit, came to bless every one of us by turning us away from our iniquities.

1. EVERY genuine Christian is a true Nazarite. He is separated from the world, and dedicated solely to the service of God. 2. His life is a life of self-denial; he mortifies and keeps the flesh in obedience to the Spirit. 3. All this enters into the spirit of his baptismal vow; for in that he promises to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh-to keep God's holy word and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of his life. 4. The person who is faithful has the blessing of God entailed upon him. Thus shall ye bless the children of Israel, etc., etc. See the notes on ver. 5 and 7.

CHAPTER 7

When the tabernacle was fully set up, it appeared that the princes of the twelve tribes had prepared six covered wagons, drawn by two oxen each, one wagon for two tribes, for the service of the tabernacle, 1-3. Moses is commanded to receive this offering, and distribute the whole to the Levites according to their service, 4, 5. Moses does so, and gives two wagons and four oxen to the sons of Gershon, 6, 7; and four wagons and eight oxen to the sons of Merari, 8. The sons of Kohath have none, because they were to bear the ark, etc., on their shoulders, 9. Each prince is to take a day for presenting his offerings, 10, 11. On the first day Nahshon, of the tribe of JUDAH, offers a silver charger, a silver bowl, a golden spoon, a young bullock, a ram, a lamb, and a kid, for a SIN-OFFERING; two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs, for a PEACE-OFFERING, 12-17. On the second day Nethaneel, of the tribe of ISSACHAR, offers the like, 18-23. On the third day Eliab, of the tribe of ZEBULUN, offers the like, 24-29. On the fourth day Elizur, of the tribe of REUBEN, offers the like, 30-35. On the fifth day Shelumiel, of the tribe of SIMEON, made a similar offering, 36-41. On the sixth day Eliasaph, of the tribe of GAD, made his offering, 42-47. On the seventh day Elishama, of the tribe of EPHRAIM, made his offering, 48-53. On the eighth day Gamaliel, of the tribe of MANASSEH, made his offering, 54-59. On the ninth day Abidan, of the tribe of BENJAMIN, made his offering, 60-65. On the tenth day Ahiezer, of the tribe of DAN, made his offering, 66-71. On the eleventh day Pagiel, of the tribe of ASHER, made his offering, 72-77. On the twelfth day Ahira, of the tribe of NAPHTALI, made the same kind of offering, 78-83. The sum total of all vessels and cattle which were offered was twelve silver chargers, and twelve silver bowls; twelve golden spoons; twelve bullocks, twelve rams, and twelve kids; twenty-four bullocks, sixty rams, sixty he-goats, and sixty lambs, 84-88. The offerings being ended, Moses goes into the tabernacle, and hears the voice of the Lord from the mercy-seat, 89.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *On the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle*— The transactions mentioned in this chapter took place on the second day of the second month of the second year after their departure from Egypt; and the proper place of this account is immediately after the tenth chapter of Leviticus.

Verse 3. *Six covered wagons*— שש עגלות צב shesh egloth tsab, six tilted wagons, the Septuagint translate εξ αμαξας λαμπηνικας, with which the Coptic agrees; but what lampenic chariots were, no person pretends to know. Covered or tilted is probably the meaning of the original. The wagons were given for the more convenient exporting of the heavier parts of the tabernacle, which could not be conveniently carried on men's shoulders.

Verse 5. *According to his service*.— That is, distribute them among the Levites as they may need them, giving most to those who have the heaviest burdens to bear.

Verse 7. *Two wagons-unto the sons of Gershon*— The Gershonites carried only the curtains, coverings, and hangings, chap. 4:25. And although this was a cumbersome carriage, and they needed the wagons, yet it was not a heavy one.

Verse 8. *Four wagons-unto the sons of Merari*— Because they had the boards, bars, pillars, and sockets of the tabernacle to carry, chap. 4:31, 32, therefore they had as many more wagons as the Gershonites.

Verse 9. *Unto the sons of Kohath he gave none*— Because they had the charge of the ark, table, candlestick, altars, etc., chap. 4:5-15, which were to be carried upon their shoulders; for those sacred things must not be drawn by beasts.

Verse 10. *And the princes offered*— Every prince or chief offered in the behalf, and doubtless at the expense, of his whole tribe.

Verse 13. *One silver charger*— קערת kaarath, a dish, or deep bowl, in which they kneaded the paste. See Exodus 25:29. ***One silver bowl***— מזרק mizrak, a bason, to receive the blood of the sacrifice in. See on "Exodus 27:3".

Verse 14. *One spoon*—כֶּסֶף caph, a censer, on which they put the incense. See Exodus 25:29. It is worthy of remark that the different tribes are represented here as bringing their offerings precisely in the same order in which they encamped about the tabernacle. See chap. 2. and chap. 10.

1. JUDAH	the chief	Nahshon, ver. 12
2. ISSACHAR		Nethaneel, 18 East
3. ZEBULUN		Eliab, 24
4. REUBEN		Elizur, 30
5. SIMEON		Shelumiel, 36 South
6. GAD		Eliasaph, 42
7. EPHRAIM		Elishama, 48
8. MANASSEH		Gamaliel, 54 West
9. BENJAMIN		Abidan, 60
10. DAN		Ahiezer, 66
11. ASHER.		Pagiel, 72 North
12. NAPHTALI		Ahira, 78

It is worthy of remark also, that every tribe offers the same kind of offering, and in the same quantity, to show, that as every tribe was equally indebted to God for its support, so each should testify an equal sense of obligation. Besides, the vessels were all sacrificial vessels, and the animals were all clean animals, such as were proper for sacrifices; and therefore every thing was intended to point out that the people were to be a holy people, fully dedicated to God, and that God was to dwell among them; hence there were fine flour and oil, for a meat-offering, ver. 13. A bullock, a ram, and a lamb, for a burnt-offering, ver. 15, 16. Five oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs, for a peace-offering, ver. 17. Thus, as the priests, altars, etc., were anointed, and the tabernacle dedicated, so the people, by this offering, became consecrated to God. Therefore every act here was a religious act. “Thus,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “by sacrifices of all sorts, figuring the death of Christ, and the benefits that were to be received thereby, they reconciled and made themselves and theirs acceptable to God, and were made partakers of his grace, to remission of sins, and sanctification through faith, and in the work of the Holy Ghost, in the communion and feeling whereof they rejoiced before God.”

Verse 48. *On the seventh day*— Both Jewish and Christian writers have been surprised that this work of offering went forward on the seventh day, which they suppose to have been a Sabbath, as well as on the other days. But 1. There is no absolute proof that this seventh day of offering was a Sabbath. 2. Were it even so, could the people be better employed than in thus consecrating themselves and their services to the Lord? We have already seen that every act was a religious act; and we may rest assured that no day was too holy for the performance of such acts as are recorded here.

Verse 72. *On the eleventh day*— The Hebrew form of expression, here and in the 78th verse, has something curious in it. ביום עשתי עשר יום beyom ashtey asar yom, In the day, the first and tenth day; עשר יום ביום שנים beyom sheneym asar yom, In the day, two and tenth day. But this is the idiom of the language, and to an original Hebrew our almost anomalous words eleventh and twelfth, by which we translate the original, would appear as strange as his, literally translated, would appear to us. In reckoning after twelve, it is easy to find out the composition of the words thirteen, as three and ten, fourteen, four and ten, and so on; but eleven and twelve bear scarcely any analogy to ten and one, and ten and two, which nevertheless they intend. But this is a subject of philology rather than of Biblical criticism.

Verse 84. *This was the dedication of the altar, in the day, etc.*— Meaning here the time in which it was dedicated; for as each tribe had a whole day for its representative or prince to present the offerings it had provided, consequently the dedication, in which each had his day, must have lasted twelve days: the words therefore, in this text, refer to the last day or twelfth, in which this dedication was completed.

Verse 88. *After that it was anointed.*— By the anointing the altar was consecrated to God; by this dedication it was solemnly appointed to that service for which it had been erected.

Verse 89. *To speak with him*— To confer with God, and to receive farther discoveries of his will.

He heard the voice of one speaking unto him— Though Moses saw no similitude, but only heard a voice, yet he had the fullest proof of the

presence as well as of the being of the Almighty. In this way God chose to manifest himself during that dispensation, till the fullness of the time came, in which the WORD was made flesh, and DWELT AMONG US. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

The mercy-seat— See the note on “Exodus 25:17”. As God gave oracular answers from this place, and spoke to Moses as it were face to face, hence the place was called the ORACLE, דְּבִיר debir, or speaking place, from דָּבַר dabar, he spoke, 1 Kings 6:23. And as this mercy-seat represented our blessed Redeemer, so the apostle says that God, who had at sundry times, and in divers manners, SPOKEN in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath, in these last days, SPOKEN unto us by his Son. Hebrews 1:1, 2. Hence the incarnated Christ is the true דְּבִיר debir or oracle, in and by whom God speaks unto man. On this occasion we find there were offered

12 silver chargers each weighing	130 shekels.
12 silver bowls, each	70 shekels.
Total amount of silver vessels	2, 400 shekels.

12 golden spoons, each weighing	10 shekels.
Total amount of golden vessels...	120 shekels.

silver charger at 130 shekels, reduced to troy weight, makes 75 9 16 8/31

A silver bowl, at 70 shekels, amounts to 40 12 21 21/31

Total weight of the 12 chargers. 905 16 3 3/31

Total weight of the 12 bowls 487 14 20 4/31

Total — 1, 393 10 23 7/31

Which, at 5s. per oz., is equal to.. ú348 7s. 9d.

The 12 golden spoons, allowing each to be — 5 16 3 3/31

amount to — 69 13 13 5/31

Which, at ú4 per ounce, is equal to ú278 14s. 2 1/2 d. And added to the amount of the silver..... ú348 7s. 9d. make a total of..... ú627 1s. 11d.

Besides the above there were

Bullocks	12
Rams	12
Lambs	12
Goats	24
Rams	60
He-goats	60
Lambs	60
— Total	240 clean beasts for sacrifice.

By which we may at once see that though the place in which they now sojourned was a wilderness, as to cities, villages, and regular inhabitants, yet there was plenty of pasturage, else the Israelites could not have furnished these cattle, with all the sacrifices necessary for different occasions, and especially for the passover, which was celebrated during their sojourning in the desert, and which itself must have required an immense number of lambs, (see chap. 9.,) when each family of the 600, 000 males was obliged to provide one for itself.

CHAPTER 8

Directions how the lamps are to be lighted, 1-3. How the candlestick was formed, 4. The Levites to be consecrated to their service by being cleansed, sprinkled, shaved, purified, and their clothes washed, 5-7. To offer a meat-offering and a sin-offering, 8. The people to put their hands upon them, 9, 10. Aaron is to offer them before the Lord, 11. The Levites to lay their hands on the heads of the bullocks, etc., 12. The Levites are taken to assist Aaron and his sons in the place of all the first-born of Israel, 13-19. Moses and Aaron do as they were commanded, the Levites are presented, purified, and commence their service, 20-22. They are to begin their service at twenty-five years of age, and leave off at fifty, 23-25. After this they shall have the general inspection of the service, 26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 2. *The seven lamps shall give light*— The whole seven shall be lighted at one time, that seven may be ever burning.

Verse 4. *This work of the candlestick, etc.*— See many curious particulars relative to this candlestick, See the note on “Exodus 25:31” and See “Exodus 25:39”. The candlestick itself was an emblem of the Church of Christ; the oil, of the graces and gifts of the Spirit of God; and the light, of those gifts and graces in action among men. See Revelation 1:12-20. God builds his Church and sends forth his Spirit to dwell in it, to sanctify and cleanse it, that it may be shown unto the world as his own workmanship. The seven lights in the candlesticks point out the seven Spirits of God, the Holy Ghost being thus termed, Revelation 3:1, from the variety and abundance of his gifts and influences; seven being used among the Hebrews to denote any thing full, complete, and perfect. A candlestick or lamp without oil is of no use; oil not burning is of no use. So a Church or society of religious people without the influence of the Holy Ghost are dead while they have a name to live; and if they have a measure of this light, and do not let it shine by purity of living and holy zeal before men, their religion is neither useful to themselves nor to others. Reader, it is possible to be in

the Church of God and not be of that Church; it is possible to have a measure of the Spirit and neither profit nor be profited. Feel this dreadful possibility, and pray to God that thou be not a proof of it.

Verse 7. *Sprinkle water of purifying*— מֵי חַטָּאת *mey chattath*, water of sin, or water of the sin-offering. As this purifying water was made by the ashes of the red heifer, cedar-wood, hyssop, and scarlet; and the heifer herself was sacrificed, and her blood sprinkled seven times before the tabernacle, Numbers 19:3-6; she may be considered as a proper sacrifice for sin, and consequently the water thus prepared be termed the water of the sin-offering. As the ashes were kept ready at hand for purifying from all legal pollutions, the preparation might be considered as a concentration of the essential properties of the sin-offering, and might be resorted to at all times with comparatively little expense or trouble, and no loss of time. As there were so many things by which legal pollution might be contracted, it was necessary to have always at hand, in all their dwellings, a mode of purifying at once convenient and unexpensive. As the water by which the Levites were here purified must have been the water prepared from the ashes of the red heifer, this ordinance was undoubtedly instituted before this time, though not described till chap. 19:1-10 of this book; but that chapter might be in connection with any of the preceding ordinances, as well as where it is now found. We see from Hebrews 9:13, 14, that these ashes mingled with water, and sprinkled on the unclean, and which sanctified to the purification of the flesh, were intended to typify the blood of Christ, which purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God, ver. 15; for as without this sprinkling with the water of the sin-offering the Levites were not fit to serve God in the wilderness, so without this sprinkling of the blood of Christ no conscience can be purged from dead works to serve the living God. See the notes on Numbers 19:1-10.

Verse 10. *Shall put their hands upon the Levites*— It has been argued from this that the congregation had a part in the appointment of their own ministers, and that this was done by the imposition of hands. However that may be, it appears that what was done on this occasion meant no more than that the people gave up this whole tribe to God in place of their firstborn; and that by this act they bound themselves to provide for them who, because of their sacred service, could follow no secular work. And

surely it was right, that they who served the altar should live by the altar. The ministers of God perform offices for the people which the people cannot perform for themselves; and nothing can be more reasonable than that the people should give them the necessities and comforts of life while they are thus employed in their behalf.

Verse 17. *For all the first-born — are mine*— See the manner of redeeming the first-born, chap. 18:6.

Verse 21. *And Aaron made an atonement for them*— Though the Levites had been most solemnly consecrated to the Lord's service, and though all legal washings and purifications were duly performed on the occasion, yet they could not approach God till an atonement had been made for them. How strange is it, after all these significations, of the will and purpose of God relative to man, that any priest or any people will attempt to draw nigh to God without an atonement! As sure as God hath spoken it, there is no entrance into the holiest but through the blood of Jesus, Hebrews 10:19, 20.

Verse 24. *From twenty and five years old*— See the note on "Numbers 4:3", where the two terms of twenty-five and thirty years are reconciled.

Verse 26. *To keep the charge, and shall do no service.*— They shall no longer be obliged to perform any laborious service, but act as general directors and counsellors; therefore they were to be near the camp, sing praises to God, and see that no stranger or unclean person was permitted to enter. So the Jews and many other persons have understood this place. 1. If it required so much legal purity to fit the Levites for their work in the tabernacle, can we suppose that it requires less spiritual purity to fit ministers of the Gospel to proclaim the righteousness of the Most High, and administer the sacred ordinances of Christianity to the flock of Christ? If these must be without spot, as the priests before without blemish, and these were only typical men, we may rest assured that a Christian minister requires no ordinary measures of holiness to prepare him for an acceptable and profitable discharge of his office. 2. If the Christian ministry be established to prepare men for the kingdom of God, of the holiness of which the purity of the camp was but a faint emblem, how can any man expect to enter that place of blessedness, who has not his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed with pure water; his life and

conversation agreeable to the sacred precepts laid down in the Gospel of Christ? If the law of Moses were more read in reference to the Gospel, the Gospel itself and its requisitions would be much better understood. Reader, however it may be with thee, Antinomianism is more general among religious people than is usually imagined. What multitudes of all denominations are expecting to enter into the kingdom of God without any proper preparation for the place! Without holiness none shall see the Lord; and from this decision of the Divine justice there shall never be any appeal.

CHAPTER 9

The Israelites are reminded of the law that required them to keep the passover at its proper time, and with all its rites, 1-3. They kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, 4, 5. The case of the men who, being unclean through touching a dead body, could not keep the passover, 6, 7. Moses inquires at the Lord concerning them, 8; and the Lord appoints the fourteenth day of the second month for all those who through any accidental uncleanness, or by being absent on a journey, could not keep it at the usual time, 9-12. Those who neglect to keep this solemn feast to be cut off from among his people, 13. The stranger who wishes to keep the passover is at liberty to do it, 14. The cloud covers the tabernacle both by day and night, from the time of its dedication, 15, 16. This cloud regulates all the encampments and marchings of the Israelites through the wilderness, 17-22. Their journeyings and restings were all directed by the commandment of the Lord, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *The Lord spake unto Moses*— The fourteen first verses of this chapter certainly refer to transactions that took place at the time of those mentioned in the commencement of this book, before the numbering of the people, and several learned men are of opinion that these fourteen verses should be referred back to that place. We have already met with instances where transpositions have very probably taken place, and it is not difficult to account for them. As in very early times writing was generally on leaves of the Egyptian flag papyrus, or on thin laminae of different substances, facts and transactions thus entered were very liable to be deranged; so that when afterwards a series was made up into a book, many transactions might be inserted in wrong places, and thus the exact chronology of the facts be greatly disturbed. MSS. written on leaves of trees, having a hole in each, through which a cord is passed to keep them all in their places, are frequently to be met with in the cabinets of the curious, and many such are now before me, especially in Singalese, Pali, and Burman. Should the cord break, or be accidentally unloosed, it would be exceedingly difficult to

string them all in their proper places; accidents of this kind I have often met with to my very great perplexity, and in some cases found it almost impossible to restore each individual leaf to its own place; for it should be observed that these separate pieces of oriental writing are not always paged like the leaves of our printed books; nor are there frequently any catch-words or signatures at the bottom to connect the series. This one consideration will account for several transpositions, especially in the Pentateuch, where they occur more frequently than in any other part of the sacred writings. Houbigant, who grants the existence of such transpositions, thinks that this is no sufficient reason why the present order of narration should be changed: "It is enough," says he, non ignorare libros eos Mosis esse acta rerum suo tempore gestarum, non historiam filo perpetuo elaboratam," "to know that these books contain an account of things transacted in the days of Moses, though not in their regular or chronological order.'

Verse 3. *According to all the rites of it*— See all those rites and ceremonies largely explained in the notes on Exodus 12

Verse 7. *We are defiled by the dead body of a man*— It is probable that the defilement mentioned here was occasioned by assisting at the burial of some person—a work both of necessity and mercy. This circumstance however gave rise to the ordinance delivered in verses 10-14, so that on particular occasions the passover might be twice celebrated: 1. At its regular time, the 14th of the first month; 2. An extra time, the 14th of the second month. But the man who had no legal hinderance, and did not celebrate it on one or other of these times, was to be cut off from the people of God; and the reason given for this cutting off is, that he brought not the offering of God in his appointed season — therefore that man shall bear his sin, ver. 13. We have already seen, from the authority of St. Paul, that Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us; and that it was his sacrifice that was pointed out by the paschal lamb: on this, therefore, we may observe, that those who do not sooner or later eat the true Passover, and get the salvation procured by the sprinkling of his blood, shall be cut off from among those that shall enter into the rest prepared for the people of God; and for the same reason too; they bring not the offering of God in its appointed season, and therefore they shall bear their sin.

Verse 15. *The cloud covered the tabernacle*— See the whole account of this supernatural cloud largely explained, Exodus 23:21; and Exodus 40:34-38. Calmet observes that the 15th verse, beginning a new subject, should begin a new chapter, as it has no connection with what goes before; and he thinks this chapter, begun with the 15th verse, should end with the 28th verse of the following. { 10:28 }

Verse 21. *Whether-by day or by night*— As the heat of the day is very severe in that same desert, the night season is sometimes chosen for the performance of a journey; though it is very likely that in the case of the Israelites this was seldom resorted to.

Verse 22. *Two days-a month-a year*— It was by the Divine counsel alone that they were directed in all their peregrinations: and from the above words we see that their times of tarrying at different stations were very unequal.

Verse 23. *Kept the charge of the Lord*— When we consider the strong disposition which this people ever testified to follow their own will in all things, we may be well surprised to find them, in these journeyings, so implicitly following the directions of God. There could be no trick or imposture here. Moses, had he been the most cunning of men, never could have imitated the appearances referred to in this chapter. The cloud, and every thing in its motion, was so evidently supernatural, that the people had no doubt of its being the symbol of the Divine presence. GOD chose to keep this people so dependent upon himself, and so submissive to the decisions of his own will, that he would not even give them regular times of marching or resting; they were to do both when and where God saw best. Thus they were ever kept ready for their march, though perfectly ignorant of the time when they should commence it. But this was all well; they had the presence of God with them; the cloud by day and the fire by night demonstrated that God was amongst them. Reader, thou art here a tenant at will to God Almighty. How soon, in what place, or in what circumstances, he may call thee to march into the eternal world, thou knowest not. But this uncertainty cannot perplex thee, if thou be properly subject to the will of God, ever willing to lose thy own in it. But thou canst not be thus subject, unless thou have the testimony of the presence

and approbation of God. How awful to be obliged to walk into the valley of the shadow of death without this! Reader, prepare to meet thy God.

CHAPTER 10

Moses is commanded to make two silver trumpets for calling the assembly, 1, 2. On what occasions these trumpets should be sounded. First, for calling the assembly to the door of the tabernacle, 3. Secondly, to summon the princes and captains of the thousands of Israel, 4. Thirdly, to make the eastern camps strike their tents, 5. Fourthly, to make those on the south do the like, 6. No alarm to be sounded when the congregation only is to be assembled, 7. The sons of Aaron alone shall sound these trumpets, it shall be a perpetual ordinance, 8. Fifthly, the trumpets are to be sounded in the time of war, 9. Sixthly, on festival occasions, 10. On the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, the Israelites began their journey from the wilderness of Sinai, and came to the wilderness of Paran, 11, 12. By the commandment of God to Moses the first division, at the head of which was the standard of JUDAH, marched, first, 13, 14. Under him followed the tribe of ISSACHAR, 15; and after them the tribe of ZEBULUN, 16. Then the Gershonites and Merarites followed with the tabernacle, 17. At the head of the second division was the standard and camp of REUBEN, 18; and under him were that of SIMEON, 19; and that of GAD, 20. Next followed the Kohathites bearing the sanctuary, 21. Then followed the third division, at the head of which was the standard of the camp of EPHRAIM, 22; and under him MANASSEH, 23; and BENJAMIN, 24. At the head of the fourth division was the standard of the camp of DAN, 25; and under him ASHER, 26; and NAPHTALI, 27. This was their ordinary method of marching in the wilderness, 28. Moses entreats Hobab the Midianite to accompany them through the wilderness, 29. He refuses, 30. Moses continues and strengthens his entreaties with reasonings and promises, 31, 32. They depart from Sinai three days' journey, 33. The cloud accompanies them by day and night, 34. The words used by Moses when the ark set forward, 35, and when it rested, 36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 2. *Make thee two trumpets of silver*— The necessity of such instruments will at once appear, when the amazing extent of this numerous army is considered; and how even the sound of two trumpets could reach them all is difficult to conceive; but we may suppose that, when they were sounded, the motion of those that were within reach of that sound taught the others in succession what they should do. As the trumpets were to be blown by the priests only, the sons of Aaron, there were only two, because there were only two such persons to use them at this time, Eleazar and Ithamar. In the time of Joshua there were seven trumpets used by the priests, but these were made, according to our text, of rams' horns, Joshua 6:4. In the time of Solomon, when the priests had greatly increased, there were 120 priests sounding with trumpets, 2 Chronicles 5:12. Josephus intimates that one of these trumpets was always used to call the nobles together, the other to assemble the people; see ver. 4. It is possible that these trumpets were made of different lengths and wideness, and consequently they would emit different tones. Thus the sound itself would at once show which was the summons for the congregation, and which for the princes only. These trumpets were allowed to be emblematical of the sound of the Gospel, and in this reference they appear to be frequently used. Of the fate of the trumpets of the sanctuary, See the note on "Exodus 25:31".

Verse 5. *When ye blow an alarm*— **תְּרוּעָה** *teruah*, probably meaning short, broken, sharp tones, terminating with long ones, blown with both the trumpets at once. From the similarity in the words some suppose that the Hebrew *teruah* was similar to the Roman *taratantara*, or sound of their clarion.

Verse 6. *When ye blow an alarm the second time*— A single alarm, as above stated, was a signal for the eastward division to march; two such alarms, the signal for the south division; and probably three for the west division, and four for the north. It is more likely that this was the case, than that a single alarm served for each, with a small interval between them. The camps, or grand divisions of this great army, always lay, as we have already seen, to the east, south, west, and north: and here the east and

south camps alone are mentioned; the first containing Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; the second, Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. The west and north divisions are not named, and yet we are sure they marched in consequence of express orders or signals, as well as the other two. There appears therefore a deficiency here in the Hebrew text, which is thus supplied by the Septuagint: *και σαλπιετε σημασιαν τριτην, και εξαρουσιν αι παρεμβολαι αι παρεμβαλλουσαι παρα θαλασσαν· και σαλπιετε σημασιαν τεταρτην, και εξαρουσιν αι παρεμβολαι αι παρεμβαλλουσαι προς βορραν*. “And when ye blow a third alarm or signal, the camps on the west shall march: and when ye blow a fourth alarm or signal, the camps on the north shall march.” This addition, however, is not acknowledged by the Samaritan, nor by any of the other versions but the Coptic. Nor are there any various readings in the collections of Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi, which countenance the addition in the above versions. Houbigant thinks this addition so evidently necessary, that he has inserted the Latin in his text, and in a note supplied the Hebrew words, and thinks that these words were originally in the Hebrew text, but happened to be omitted in consequence of so many similar words occurring so often in the same verse, which might dazzle and deceive the eye of a transcriber.

Verse 9. *If ye go to war*— These trumpets shall be sounded for the purpose of collecting the people together, to deliberate about the war, and to implore the protection of God against their enemies.

Ye shall be remembered before the Lord— When ye decamp, encamp, make war, and hold religious festivals, according to his appointment, which appointment shall be signified to you by the priests, who at the command of God, for such purposes, shall blow the trumpets, then ye may expect both the presence and blessing of Jehovah in all that ye undertake.

Verse 10. *In the day of your gladness*— On every festival the people shall be collected by the same means.

Verse 11. *The twentieth day of the second month*— The Israelites had lain encamped in the wilderness of Sinai about eleven months and twenty days; compare Exodus 19:1 with this verse. They now received the order of God to decamp, and proceed towards the promised land; and therefore the Samaritan introduces at this place the words which we find in

Deuteronomy 1:6-8: “The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying: Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount, turn and take your journey,” etc.

Verse 12. *The cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.*— This was three days’ journey from the wilderness of Sinai, (see ver. 33,) and the people had three stations; the first at Kibroth-hattaavah, the second at Hazeroth, chap. 11:35, and the third in the wilderness of Paran, see chap. 12:16. But it is extremely difficult to determine these journeyings with any degree of exactness; and we are often at a loss to know whether the place in question was in a direct or retrograde position from the place previously mentioned.

Verse 14. *The standard-of Judah*— See this order of marching explained at large on chap. 2. The following is the order in which this vast company proceeded in their march:—

JUDAH Issachar Zebulun Gershonites, and Merarites carrying the tabernacle. REUBEN Simeon Gad The Kohathites with the sanctuary. EPHRAIM Manasseh Benjamin DAN Asher Naphtali.

Verse 29. *Moses said unto Hobab*— For a circumstantial account of this person see the notes on Exodus 2:15, 16, 18; 3:1; 4:20, 24; and for the transaction recorded here, and which is probably out of its place, see Exodus 18:5, where the subject is discussed at large.

We are journeying— God has brought us out of thralldom, and we are thus far on our way through the wilderness, travelling towards the place of rest which he has appointed us, trusting in his promise, guided by his presence, and supported by his power. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good. Those who wish to enjoy the heavenly inheritance must walk in the way towards it, and associate with the people who are going in that way. True religion is ever benevolent. They who know most of the goodness of God are the most forward to invite others to partake of that goodness. That religion which excludes all others from salvation, unless they believe a particular creed, and worship in a particular way, is not of God. Even Hobab, the Arab, according to the opinion of Moses, might receive the same blessings which God had promised to Israel, provided he accompanied them in the same way.

The Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.— The name Israel is taken in a general sense to signify the followers of God, and to them all the

promises in the Bible are made. God has spoken good of them, and he has spoken good to them; and not one word that he hath spoken shall fail. Reader, hast thou left thy unhallowed connections in life? Hast thou got into the camp of the Most High? Then continue to follow God with Israel, and thou shalt be incorporated in the heavenly family, and share in Israel's benedictions.

Verse 30. *I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.*— From the strong expostulations in verses 31 and 32, and from Judges 1:16; 4:11, and 1 Samuel 15:6, it is likely that Hobab changed his mind; or that, if he did go back to Midian, he returned again to Israel, as the above scriptures show that his posterity dwelt among the Israelites in Canaan. Reader, after having been almost persuaded to become a Christian, to take Christ, his cross, his reproach, and his crown, for thy portion, art thou again purposing to go back to thy own land, and to thy kindred? Knowest thou not that this land is the place of destruction—that the children of this world, who are not taking God for their portion, are going to perdition? Up, get thee hence, for the Lord will destroy this place by fire; and all who are not of the kindred and family of Christ shall perish at the brightness of his appearing!

Verse 31. *Thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.*— But what need had they of Hobab, when they had the pillar and fire continually to point out their way? Answer: The cloud directed their general journeys, but not their particular excursions. Parties took several journeys while the grand army lay still. (See chap. 13., 20., 31., 32., etc.) They therefore needed such a person as Hobab, who was well acquainted with the desert, to direct these particular excursions; to point them out watering places, and places where they might meet with fuel, etc., etc. What man cannot, under the direction of God's providence, do for himself, God will do in the way of especial mercy. He could have directed them to the fountains and to the places of fuel, but Hobab can do this, therefore let Hobab be employed; and let Hobab know for his encouragement that, while he is serving others in the way of God's providence, he is securing his own best interests. On these grounds Hobab should be invited, and for this reason Hobab should go. Man cannot do God's work; and God will not do the work which he has qualified and commanded man to perform. Thus then the Lord is ever seen, even while he is helping man by man. See some valuable observations on

this subject in Harmer, vol. ii., 286. Instead of, And thou mayest be to us instead of eyes, the Septuagint translate the passage thus: **καὶ εἶη ἐν πρεσβυρίας**, And thou shalt be an elder among us. But Moses probably refers to Hobab's accurate knowledge of the wilderness, and to the assistance he could give them as a guide.

Verse 33. *The ark-went before them*— We find from ver. 21 that the ark was carried by the Kohathites in the center of the army; but as the army never moved till the cloud was taken up, it is said to go before them, i. e., to be the first to move, as without this motion the Israelites continued in their encampments.

Verse 35. *Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered*— If God did not arise in this way and scatter his enemies, there could be no hope that Israel could get safely through the wilderness. God must go first, if Israel would wish to follow in safety.

Verse 36. *Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.*— These were the words spoken by Moses, at the moment the divisions halted in order to pitch their tents. In reference to this subject, and the history with which it is connected, the 68th Psalm seems to have been composed, though applied by David to the bringing the ark from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. See the notes on Psa. lxviii. Many thousands, literally the ten thousand thousands. Unless the ark went with them, and the cloud of the Divine glory with it, they could have neither direction nor safety; unless the ark rested with them, and the cloud of glory with it, they could have neither rest nor comfort. How necessary are the word of God and the Spirit of God for the direction, comfort, and defense of every genuine follower of Christ! Reader, pray to God that thou mayest have both with thee through all the wilderness, through all the changes and chances of this mortal life: if thou be guided by his counsel, thou shalt be at last received into his glory.

CHAPTER 11

The people complain, the Lord is displeased, and many of them are consumed by fire, 1. Moses intercedes for them, and the fire is quenched, 2. The place is called Taberah, 3. The mixed multitude long for flesh, and murmur, 4-6. The manna described, 7-9. The people weep in their tents, and the Lord is displeased, 10. Moses deplores his lot in being obliged to hear and bear with all their murmurings, 11-15. He is commanded to bring seventy of the elders to God that he may endue them with the same spirit, and cause them to divide the burden with him, 16, 17. He is also commanded to inform the people that they shall have flesh for a whole month, 18-20. Moses expresses his doubt of the possibility of this, 21, 22. The Lord confirms his promise, 23. The seventy men are brought to the tabernacle, 24; and the spirit of prophecy rests upon them, 25. Eldad and Medad stay in the camp and prophesy, 26, 27. Joshua beseeches Moses to forbid them, 28. Moses refuses, 29, 30. A wind from the Lord brings quails to the camp, 31, 32. While feeding on the flesh, a plague from the Lord falls upon them, and many of them die, 33. The place is called Kibroth-hattaavah, or the graves of lust, 34. They journey to Hazeroth, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *And when the people complained*— What the cause of this complaining was, we know not. The conjecture of St. Jerome is probable; they complained because of the length of the way. But surely no people had ever less cause for murmuring; they had God among them, and miracles of goodness were continually wrought in their behalf.

It displeased the Lord— For his extraordinary kindness was lost on such an ungrateful and rebellious people. And his anger was kindled — Divine justice was necessarily incensed against such inexcusable conduct.

And the fire of the Lord burnt among them— Either a supernatural fire was sent for this occasion, or the lightning was commissioned against

them, or God smote them with one of those hot suffocating winds which are very common in those countries.

And consumed-in the uttermost parts of the camp.— It pervaded the whole camp, from the center to the circumference, carrying death with it to all the murmurers; for we are not to suppose that it was confined to the uttermost parts of the camp, unless we could imagine that there were none culpable any where else. If this were the same with the case mentioned ver. 4, then, as it is possible that the mixed multitude occupied the outermost parts of the camp, consequently the burning might have been confined to them.

Verse 2. *The fire was quenched*— Was sunk, or swallowed up, as in the margin. The plague, of whatever sort, ceased to act, and the people had respite.

Verse 4. *The mixed multitude*— **הַמִּצְרִיִּם** hasaphsoph, the collected or gathered people. Such as came out of Egypt with the Israelites; and are mentioned Exodus 12:38. This mongrel people, who had comparatively little of the knowledge of God, feeling the difficulties and fatigues of the journey, were the first to complain; and then we find the children of Israel joined them in their complainings, and made a common cause with these demi-Infidels.

Verse 5. *We remember, etc.*— The choice aliments which those murmurers complained of having lost by their leaving Egypt, were the following: fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. A European may smile at such delicacies; but delicacies they were in that country. Their fish is excellent; their cucumbers and water melons highly salubrious and refreshing; and their onions, garlic, etc., exquisitely flavoured, differing as much from vegetables of the same species in these northern climes as a bad turnip does from a good apple. In short, this enumeration takes in almost all the commonly attainable delicacies in those countries.

Verse 7. *The manna was as coriander seed*— Probably this short description is added to show the iniquity of the people in murmuring, while they had so adequate a provision. But the baseness of their minds appears in every part of their conduct. About the bdellium of the ancients the learned are not agreed; and I shall not trouble the reader with

conjectures. See the note on “Genesis 2:12”. Concerning the manna, see the notes on Exodus 16.

Verse 11. — 15. The complaint and remonstrance of Moses in these verses serve at once to show the deeply distressed state of his mind, and the degradation of the minds of the people. We have already seen that the slavery they had so long endured had served to debase their minds, and to render them incapable of every high and dignified sentiment, and of every generous act.

Verse 17. *I will take of the spirit which is upon thee*— From this place Origen and Theodoret take occasion to compare Moses to a lamp, at which seventy others were lighted, without losing any of its brightness. To convince Moses that God had sufficiently qualified him for the work which he had given him to do, he tells him that of the gifts and graces which he has given him he will qualify seventy persons to bear the charge with him. This was probably intended as a gracious reproof. Query. Did not Moses lose a measure of his gifts in this business? And is it not right that he whom God has called to and qualified for some particular office, should lose those gifts which he either undervalues or refuses to employ for God in the way appointed? Is there not much reason to believe that many cases have occurred where the spiritual endowments of particular persons have been taken away and given to others who made a better use of them? Hence the propriety of that exhortation, Revelation 3:11: Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. The gracious God never called a man to perform a work without furnishing him with adequate strength; and to refuse to do it on the pretense of inability is little short of rebellion against God. This institution of the seventy persons to help Moses the rabbins consider as the origin of their grand council called the Sanhedrin. But we find that a council of seventy men, elders of Israel, had existed among the people a year before this time. See Exodus 24:9; see the advice given to Jethro to Moses, Exodus 18:17, etc., and the notes there.

Verse 22. *Shall the flocks and the herds be slain*— There is certainly a considerable measure of weakness and unbelief manifested in the complaints and questions of Moses on this occasion; but his conduct appears at the same time so very simple, honest, and affectionate, that we

cannot but admire it, while we wonder that he had not stronger confidence in that God whose miracles he had so often witnessed in Egypt.

Verse 23. *Is the Lord's hand waxed short?*— Hast thou forgotten the miracles which I have already performed? or thinkest thou that my power is decreased? The power that is unlimited can never be diminished.

Verse 25. *When the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied*— By prophesying here we are to understand their performing those civil and sacred functions for which they were qualified; exhorting the people to quiet and peaceable submission, to trust and confidence in the goodness and providence of God, would make no small part of the duties of their new office. The ideal meaning of the word נָבֵא naba is to pray, entreat, etc. The prophet is called נָבִי nabi, because he prays, supplicates, in reference to God; exhorts, entreats, in reference to man. See on “Genesis 20:7”.

Verse 27. *Eldad and Medad do prophesy, etc.*—

*ELDAD, they said, and MEDAD there,
Irregularly bold,
By Moses uncommission'd, dare
A separate meeting hold!
And still whom none but heaven will own.
Men whom the world decry,
Men authorized by GOD alone,
Presume to prophesy!*

Verse 28. *My lord Moses, forbid them.* —

*How often have I blindly done
What zealous Joshua did,
Impatient to the rulers run,
And cried, “My lords, forbid!
Silence the schismatics, constrain
Their thoughts with ours t' agree,
And sacrifice the souls of men
To idol UNITY!”*

Verse 29. *Enviest thou for my sake?—*

*Moses, the minister of God,
Rebukes our partial love,
Who envy at the gifts bestow'd
On those we disapprove.
We do not our own spirit know,
Who wish to see suppress'd
The men that Jesu's spirit show,
The men whom God hath bless'd.*

Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets—

*SHALL we the Spirit's course restrain,
Or quench the heavenly fire?
Let God his messengers ordain,
And whom he will inspire.*

*Blow as he list, the Spirit's choice
Of instruments we bless;
We will, if Christ be preached, rejoice,
And wish the word success.*

*Can all be prophets then? are all
Commission'd from above?
No; but whome'er the Lord shall call
We joyfully approve.*

*O that the Church might all receive
The spirit of prophecy,
And all in Christ accepted live,
And all in Jesus die!*

Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures, by Charles Wesley, M. A., and Presbyter of the Church of England.

Bristol, 1762. 2 vols. 12mo.

These sentiments are the more particularly remarkable as they come from one who was sufficiently bigoted to what was called ecclesiastical orders and regularity.

Verse 31. *A wind from the Lord*— An extraordinary one, not the effect of a natural cause. And brought quails, a bird which in great companies visits Egypt about the time of the year, March or April, at which the circumstance marked here took place. Mr. Hasselquist, the friend and pupil of the famous Linnaeus, saw many of them about this time of the year, when he was in Egypt. See his Travels, p. 209.

Two cubits high upon the face of the earth.— We may consider the quails as flying within two cubits of the ground; so that the Israelites could easily take as many of them as they wished, while flying within the reach of their hands or their clubs. The common notion is, that the quails were brought round about the camp, and fell there in such multitudes as to lie two feet thick upon the ground; but the Hebrew will not bear this version. The Vulgate has expressed the sense, *Volabantque in aere duobus cubitis altitudine super terram.* “And they flew in the air, two cubits high above the ground.”

Verse 32. *The people stood up, etc.*— While these immense flocks were flying at this short distance from the ground, fatigued with the strong wind and the distance they had come, they were easily taken by the people; and as various flocks continued to succeed each other for two days and a night, enough for a month’s provision might be collected in that time. If the quails had fallen about the tents, there was no need to have stood up two days and a night in gathering them; but if they were on the wing, as the text seems to suppose, it was necessary for them to use despatch, and avail themselves of the passing of these birds whilst it continued. See Harmer, and see the note on “Exodus 16:13”.

And they spread them all abroad— Maillet observes that birds of all kinds come to Egypt for refuge from the cold of a northern winter; and that the people catch them, pluck, and bury them in the burning sand for a few minutes, and thus prepare them for use. This is probably what is meant by spreading them all abroad round the camp.

Some authors think that the word שליים *salvim*, rendered quails in our translation, should be rendered locusts. There is no need of this conjecture; all difficulties are easily resolved without it. The reader is particularly referred to the note on See “Exodus 16:13”.

Verse 33. *The wrath of the Lord was kindled*— In what way, and with what effects, we cannot precisely determine. Some heavy judgment fell upon those murmurers and complainers, but of what kind the sacred writer says nothing.

Verse 34. *Kibroth-hattaavah*— The graves of lust; and thus their scandalous crime was perpetuated by the name of the place.

1. St. JUDE speaks of persons who were murmurers and complainers, walking after their own lusts, Jude 16, and seems to have this people particularly in view, whom the sacred text calls *μεμψιμοιροι*, complainers of their lot. They could never be satisfied; even God himself could not please them, because they were ever preferring their own wisdom to his. God will save us in his own way, or not at all; because that way, being the plan of infinite wisdom, it is impossible that we can be saved in any other. How often have we professed to pray, “Thy will be done!” And how seldom, very seldom, have our hearts and lips corresponded! How careful should we be in all our prayers to ask nothing but what is perfectly consistent with the will of God! Many times our prayers and desires are such that, were they answered, our ruin would be inevitable. “THY will be done!” is the greatest of all prayers; and he who would pray safely and successfully, must at least have the spirit of these words in all his petitions. The Israelites asked flesh when they should not have asked for it; God yields to their murmuring, and the death of multitudes of these murmurers was the consequence! We hear of such punishments, and yet walk in the same way, presuming on God’s mercy, while we continue to provoke his justice. Let us settle it in our minds as an indisputable truth, that God is better acquainted with our wants than we are ourselves; that he knows infinitely better what we need; and that he is ever more ready to hear than we are to pray, and is wont to give more than we can desire or deserve.

2. In no case has God at any time withheld from his meanest followers any of the spiritual or temporal mercies they needed. Were he to call us to

travel through a wilderness, he would send us bread from heaven, or cause the wilderness to smile and blossom as the rose. How strange is it that we will neither believe that God has worked, or will work, unless we see him working!

CHAPTER 12

Miriam and Aaron raise a sedition against Moses, because of the Ethiopian woman he had married, 1, and through jealousy of his increasing power and authority, 2. The character of Moses, 3. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam are suddenly called to the tabernacle, 4. The Lord appears in the pillar of the cloud, and converses with them, 5. Declares his purpose to communicate his will to Moses only, 6-8. His anger is kindled against Miriam, and she is smitten with the leprosy, 9, 10. Aaron deplores his transgression, and entreats for Miriam, 11, 12. Moses intercedes for her, 13. The Lord requires that she be shut out of the camp for seven days, 14. The people rest till she is restored, 15, and afterwards leave Hazeroth, and pitch in the wilderness of Paran, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. *Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses*— It appears that jealousy of the power and influence of Moses was the real cause of their complaint though his having married an Ethiopian woman-**האשה הכשית** haishshah haccushith-THAT WOMAN, the Cushite, probably meaning Zipporah, who was an Arab born in the land of Midian-was the ostensible cause.

Verse 2. *Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?*— It is certain that both Aaron and Miriam had received a portion of the prophetic spirit, (see Exodus 4:15, and 15:20), and therefore they thought they might have a share in the government; for though there was no kind of gain attached to this government, and no honor hut such as came from God, yet the love of power is natural to the human mind; and in many instances men will sacrifice even honor, pleasure, and profit to the lust of power.

Verse 3. *Now the man Moses was very meek*— How could Moses, who certainly was as humble and modest as he was meek, write this encomium upon himself? I think the word is not rightly understood; **ענו** anav, which we translate meek, comes from **ענה** anah, to act upon, to humble, depress,

afflict, and is translated so in many places in the Old Testament; and in this sense it should be understood here: “Now this man Moses was depressed or afflicted more than any man **הָאָדָמָה** haadamah, of that land.” And why was he so? Because of the great burden he had to bear in the care and government of this people, and because of their ingratitude and rebellion both against God and himself: of this depression and affliction, see the fullest proof in the preceding chapter. The very power they envied was oppressive to its possessor, and was more than either of their shoulders could sustain.

Verse 4. *And the Lord spake suddenly*— The sudden interference of God in this business shows at once the importance of the case and his displeasure.

Verse 6. *If there be a prophet*— We see here the different ways in which God usually made himself known to the prophets, viz., by visions-emblematic appearances, and by dreams, in which the future was announced by dark speeches, **בְּחִידוֹת** bechidoth, by enigmas or figurative representations, ver. 8. But to Moses God had communicated himself in a different way—he spoke to him face to face, apparently, showing him his glory: not in dark or enigmatical speeches; this could not be admitted in the case in which Moses was engaged, for he was to receive laws by Divine inspiration, the precepts and expressions of which must all be ad captum vulgi, within the reach of the meanest capacity. As Moses, therefore, was chosen of God to be the lawgiver, so was he chosen to see these laws duly enforced for the benefit of the people among whom he presided.

Verse 7. *Moses-is faithful*— **נֶאֱמָן** neeman, a prefect or superintendent. So Samuel is termed, 1 Samuel 2:35; 3:20; David is so called, 1 Samuel 18:27, Neeman, and son-in-law of the king. Job 12:20, speaks of the Neemanim as a name of dignity. It seems also to have been a title of respect given to ambassadors, Proverbs 13:17; 25:13. Calmet well observes that the word fidelity is often used for an employ, office, or dignity, and refers to 1 Chronicles 9:22, 26, 31; 2 Chronicles 31:12, 15; 34:12, etc. Moses was a faithful, well-trying servant in the house of God, and therefore he uses him as a familiar, and puts confidence in him.

Verse 10. *Miriam became leprous*— It is likely Miriam was chief in this mutiny; and it is probable that it was on this ground she is mentioned first, (see ver. 1,) and punished here, while Aaron is spared. Had he been smitten with the leprosy, his sacred character must have greatly suffered, and perhaps the priesthood itself have fallen into contempt. How many priests and preachers who deserved to be exposed to reproach and infamy, have been spared for the sake of the holy character they bore, that the ministry might not be blamed! But the just God will visit their transgressions in some other way, if they do not deeply deplore them and find mercy through Christ. Nothing tends to discredit the work of God so much as the transgressions and miscarriages of those who minister in holy things.

Verse 14. *If her father had but spit in her face*— This appears to have been done only in cases of great provocation on the part of the child, and strong irritation on the side of the parent. Spitting in the face was a sign of the deepest contempt. See Job 30:10; Isaiah 50:6; Mark 14:65. In a case where a parent was obliged by the disobedient conduct of his child to treat him in this way, it appears he was banished from the father's presence for seven days. If then this was an allowed and judged case in matters of high provocation on the part of a child, should not the punishment be equally severe where the creature has rebelled against the Creator? Therefore Miriam was shut out of the camp for seven days, and thus debarred from coming into the presence of God her father, who is represented as dwelling among the people. To a soul who knows the value and inexpressible blessedness of communion with God, how intolerable must seven days of spiritual darkness be! But how indescribably wretched must their case be who are cast out into outer darkness, where the light of God no more shines, and where his approbation can no more be felt for ever! Reader, God save thee from so great a curse!

Several of the fathers suppose there is a great mystery hidden in the quarrel of Miriam and Aaron with Moses and Zipporah. Origen (and after him several others) speaks of it in the following manner:- "1. Zipporah, a Cushite espoused by Moses, evidently points out the choice which Jesus Christ has made of the Gentiles for his spouse and Church. 2. The jealousy of Aaron and Miriam against Moses and Zipporah signifies the hatred and envy of the Jews against Christ and the apostles, when they saw that the

mysteries of the kingdom of heaven had been opened to the Gentiles, of which they had rendered themselves unworthy. 3. The leprosy with which Miriam was smitten shows the gross ignorance of the Jews, and the ruinous, disordered state of their religion, in which there is neither a head, a temple, nor a sacrifice. 4. Of none hut Jesus Christ can it be said that he was the most meek and patient of men; that he saw God face to face; that he had every thing clearly revealed without enigmatical representations; and that he was faithful in all the house of God.” This, and much more, Origen states in the sixth and seventh homilies on the book of Numbers, and yet all this he considers as little in comparison of the vast mysteries that lie hidden in these accounts; for the shortness of the time, and the magnitude of the mysteries, only permit him “to pluck a few flowers from those vast fields—not as many as the exuberance of those fields afford, but only such as by their odour he was led to select from the rest.” *Licebat tamen ex ingentibus campis paucos flosculos legere, et non quantum ager exuberet, sed quantum odoratui supiciat, carpere.*

Verse 16. *The wilderness of Paran.*— This could not be the same Paran with that mentioned Deuteronomy 1:1, for that was on the borders of the promised land, see the note on Deuteronomy 1:1, 2; they were long near the borders of Canaan, and might have speedily entered into it, had it not been for their provocations and iniquities. They spent thirty-eight years in a journey which might have been accomplished in a few weeks! How many through their unfaithfulness have been many years in gaining that for which, in the ordinary procedure of Divine grace, a few days had been sufficient! How much ground may a man lose in the Divine life by one act of unfaithfulness or transgression! Israel wandered in the wilderness because Israel despised the pleasant land, and did not give credence to the word of the Lord. They would have a golden calf, and they had nothing but tribulation and wo in return,

CHAPTER 13

Twelve men, one out of every tribe, are sent to examine the nature and state of the land of Canaan, 1-3. Their names, 4-16. Moses gives them particular directions, 17-20. They proceed on their journey, 21, 22. Come to Eshcol, and cut down a branch with a cluster of grapes, which they bear between two of them upon a staff, 23, 24. After forty days they return to Paran, from searching the land, and show to Moses and the people the fruit they had brought with them, 25, 26. Their report—they acknowledge that the land is good, but that the inhabitants are such as the Israelites cannot hope to conquer, 27-29. Caleb endeavors to do away the bad impression made, by the report of his fellows, upon the minds of the people, 30. But the others persist in their former statement, 31: and greatly amplify the difficulties of conquest, 32, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 2. *Send thou men, that they may search*— It appears from Deuteronomy 1:19-24 that this was done in consequence of the request of the people, after the following address of Moses: “And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness—and we came unto Kadesh-Barnea; and I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged. And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said: WE WILL SEND MEN BEFORE US, AND THEY SHALL SEARCH US OUT THE LAND and bring us word again, by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come. And the saying pleased me well, and I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe,” etc., etc. Nearly the whole of these verses is added here by the Samaritan.

Every one a ruler— Not any of the princes of the people, (see chap. 1.,) for these names are different from those; but these now sent were men of consideration and importance in their respective tribes.

Verse 13. Sethur, the son of Michael.— It would have been strange had the numerous searches after the explanation of the mystical number 666, Revelation 13:18; 17:5, met with nothing to their purpose in the name of this son of Michael. סֶתוּר Sethur, from סָתַר sathar, to hide or conceal, signifies hidden or mysterious, and includes in it the numerical letters of the No. 666: ם 60, + ת 400, + ו 6, + ר 200, = 666. But of what utility can such expositions be to any subject of history or theology?

Verse 16. And Moses called Oshea Jehoshua.— Oshea, Heb. הוֹשֵׁעַ should be written Hoshea: the word signifies saved, or a savior, or salvation; but הוֹשֵׁעַ, he shall save, or the salvation of God; a letter, says Calmet, of the incommunicable name of God, being added to his former name. This was not the first time in which he had the name Joshua; see Exodus 17:9, and the note there. Some suppose he had this change of name in consequence of his victory over Amalek; see Exodus 17:13, 14.

Verse 18. See the land, what it is— What sort of a COUNTRY it is; how situated; its natural advantages or disadvantages.

And the people-whether they be strong or weak— Healthy, robust, hardy men; or little, weak, and pusillanimous.

Verse 20. The land-whether it be fat or lean— Whether the SOIL be rich or poor; which might be known by its being well wooded, and by the fruits it produced; and therefore they were desired to examine it as to the trees, etc., and to bring some of the fruits with them.

Verse 21. From the wilderness of Zin— The place called; זִין Tsin, here, is different from that called סִן Sin or Seen. Exodus 16:1; the latter was nigh to Egypt, but the former was near Kadesh Barnea, not far from the borders of the promised land.

“The spies having left Kadesh Barnea, which was in the desert of Paran, see ver. 26, they proceeded to the desert of Tsin, all along the land of Canaan, nearly following the course of the river Jordan, till they came to Rehob, a city situated near Mount Libanus, at the northern extremity of the Holy Land, towards the road that leads to Hamath. Thence they returned through the midst of the same land by the borders of the Sidonians and Philistines, and passing by Mount Hebron, rendered famous

by the residence of Abraham formerly, and by the gigantic descendants of Anak at that time, they passed through the valley of the brook of Eshcol, where they cut down the bunch of grapes mentioned ver. 23, and returned to the Israelitish camp after an absence of forty days," ver. 25. See Calmet on this place.

Verse 22. *Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.*— The Zoan of the Scriptures is allowed to be the Tanis of the heathen historians, which was the capital of Lower Egypt. Some think it was to humble the pride of the Egyptians, who boasted the highest antiquity, that this note concerning the higher antiquity of Hebron was introduced by Moses. Some have supposed that it is more likely to have been originally a marginal note, which in process of time crept into the text; but all the versions and all the MSS. that have as yet been collated, acknowledge it.

Verse 23. *They bare it between two upon a staff*— It would be very easy to produce a great number of witnesses to prove that grapes in the promised land, and indeed in various other hot countries, grow to a prodigious size. By Calmet, Scheuchzer, and Harmer, this subject has been exhausted, and to these I may refer the reader. Pliny mentions bunches of grapes in Africa each of which was larger than an infant. Radzvil saw at Rhodes bunches of grapes three quarters of an ell in length, each grape as large as a plum. Dandini saw grapes of this size at Mount Libanus; and Paul Lucas mentions some bunches which he saw at Damascus that weighed above forty-five pounds. From the most authentic accounts the Egyptian grape is very small, and this being the only one with which the Israelites were acquainted, the great size of the grapes of Hebron would appear still more extraordinary. I myself once cut down a bunch of grapes nearly twenty pounds in weight. Those who live in cold climates can scarcely have any conception to what perfection both grapes and other fruits grow in climates that are warm, and where the soil is suitable to them.

From what is mentioned ver. 20, Now the time was the time of the first-ripe grapes, it is very probable that the spies received their orders about the beginning of August, and returned about the middle of September, as in those countries grapes, pomegranates, and figs, are ripe about this time; see Harmer, vol. i., p. 108-110. At Sheeraz, in Persia, I

find from a MS. journal, that the small white grape, askerie, came into season August 6; and pomegranates September 6; and the large red grape, sahibi, September 10.

The spies' carrying the bunch of grapes on a staff between two men was probably not rendered necessary by the size of the bunch or cluster; but to preserve it from being bruised, that the Israelites might have a fair specimen of the fruit As Joshua and Caleb were the only persons who gave a favorable account of the land, it is most likely that they were the persons who had gathered these fruits, and who brought them to the Israelitish camp. And it is likely they were gathered as short a time as possible before their return, that they might not be injured by the length of the time they had been separated from their respective trees.

Verse 27. *We came unto the land, etc.*— It is astonishing that men so dastardly as these should have had courage enough to risk their persons in searching the land. But probably though destitute of valor they had a sufficiency of cunning, and this carried them through. The report they brought was exceedingly discouraging, and naturally tended to produce the effect mentioned in the next chapter. The conduct of Joshua and Caleb was alone magnanimous, and worthy of the cause in which they were embarked.

Verse 32. *Men of a great stature*— אַנְשֵׁי מִדּוֹת *anshey middoth*, men of measures—two men's height; i. e., exceedingly tall men.

Verse 33. *There we saw the giants*— נְפִלִים *nephilim*. It is evident that they had seen a robust, sturdy, warlike race of men, and of great stature; for the asserted fact is not denied by Joshua or Caleb.

Tales of gigantic men are frequent in all countries, but they are generally of such as have lived in times very remote from those in which such tales are told. That there have been giants at different times, in various parts of the earth, there can be no doubt; but that there ever was a nation of men twelve and fourteen feet high, we cannot, should not believe. Goliath appears to have been at least nine feet high: this was very extraordinary. I knew three young men in my own neighborhood, two of them brothers, each of whom was upwards of seven feet, the third was eight feet six inches, and these men were very well proportioned. Others I have seen of

extraordinary stature, but they were generally disproportioned, especially in their limbs. These instances serve to prove the possibility of cases of this nature. The Anakim might appear to the Israelites as a very tall, robust nation; and in comparison of the latter it is very probable that they were so, as it is very likely that the growth of the Israelites had been greatly cramped with their long and severe servitude in Egypt. And this may in some measure account for their alarm. On this subject the reader is desired to turn back to the note on See “Genesis 6:4”.

CANAAN was a type of the kingdom of God; the wilderness through which the Israelites passed, of the difficulties and trials to be met with in the present world. The promise of the kingdom of God is given to every believer; but how many are discouraged by the difficulties in the way! A slothful heart sees dangers, lions, and giants, every where; and therefore refuses to proceed in the heavenly path. Many of the spies contribute to this by the bad reports they bring of the heavenly country. Certain preachers allow “that the land is good, that it flows with milk and honey,” and go so far as to show some of its fruits; but they discourage the people by stating the impossibility of overcoming their enemies. “Sin,” say they, “cannot be destroyed in this life-it will always dwell in you-the Anakim cannot be conquered-we are but as grasshoppers against the Anakim,” etc., etc. Here and there a Joshua and a Caleb, trusting alone in the power of God, armed with faith in the infinite efficacy of that blood which cleanses from all unrighteousness, boldly stand forth and say: “Their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome.” We can do all things through Christ strengthening us: he will purify us unto himself, and give us that rest from sin here which his death has procured and his word has promised. Reader, canst thou not take God at his word? He has never yet failed thee. Surely then thou hast no reason to doubt. Thou hast never yet tried him to the uttermost. Thou knowest not how far and how fully he can save. Do not be dispirited: the sons of Anak shall fall before thee, if thou meet them in the name of the LORD of HOSTS.

CHAPTER 14

The whole congregation weep at the account brought by the spies, 1. They murmur, 2, 3; and propose to make themselves a captain, and go back to Egypt, 4. Moses and Aaron are greatly affected, 5. Joshua and Caleb endeavor to appease and encourage the people, 6-9. The congregation are about to stone them, 10. The glory of the Lord appears, and he is about to smite the rebels with the pestilence, 11, 12. Moses makes a long and pathetic intercession in their behalf, 13-19. The Lord hears and forbears to punish, 20; but purposes that not one of that generation shall enter into the promised land save Joshua and Caleb, 21-24. Moses is commanded to turn and get into the wilderness by way of the Red Sea, 25. The Lord repeats his purpose that none of that generation shall enter into the promised land—that their carcasses shall fall in the wilderness, and that their children alone, with Joshua and Caleb, shall possess the land of the Canaanites, etc., 26-32. As many days as they have searched the land shall they wander years in the desert, until they shall be utterly consumed, 33-35. All the spies save Joshua and Caleb die by a plague, 36-38. Moses declares God's purpose to the people, at which they are greatly affected, 39. They acknowledge their sin, and purpose to go up at once and possess the land, 40. Moses cautions them against resisting the purpose of God, 41-43. They, notwithstanding, presume to go, but Moses and the ark abide in the camp, 44. The Amalekites and Canaanites come down from the mountains, and defeat them, 45.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. *Cried; and-wept that night.*— In almost every case this people gave deplorable evidence of the degraded state of their minds. With scarcely any mental firmness, and with almost no religion, they could bear no reverses, and were ever at their wit's end. They were headstrong, presumptuous, pusillanimous, indecisive, and fickle. And because they

were such, therefore the power and wisdom of God appeared the more conspicuously in the whole of their history.

Verse 4. *Let us make a captain*— Here was a formal renunciation of the authority of Moses, and flat rebellion against God. And it seems from Nehemiah 9:17 that they had actually appointed another leader, under whose direction they were about to return to Egypt. How astonishing is this! Their lives were made bitter, because of the rigor with which they were made to serve in the land of Egypt; and yet they are willing, yea eager, to get back into the same circumstances again! Great evils, when once some time past, affect the mind less than present ills, though much inferior. They had partly forgot their Egyptian bondage, and now smart under a little discouragement, having totally lost sight of their high calling, and of the power and goodness of God.

Verse 6. *And Joshua, etc.*— See on the preceding chapter, See “Numbers 13:33”.

Verse 9. *Their defense*— צלם tsillam, their shadow, a metaphor highly expressive of protection and support in the sultry eastern countries. The protection of God is so called; see Psalm 91:1; 121:5; see also Isaiah 51:16; 49:2; 30:2.

The Arabs and Persians have the same word to express the same thing. [P] nemayeed zulli doulet mamdood bad. “May the shadow of thy prosperity be extended!” [P]

nemayced zulli doulet ber mufareki khayr khwahen mamdood bad. “May the shadow of thy prosperity be spread over the heads of thy well-wishers!” They have also the following elegant distich:—

[P]

[P]

*Sayahat kem mubad az seri ma
Bast Allah zullikem abeda.*

*“May thy protection never be removed from my head!
May God extend thy shadow eternally!”*

Here the Arabic [A] zull answers exactly to the Hebrew צל tsel, both signifying that which overspreads or overshadows. See the note on “Numbers 14:14:.

Verse 10. *The glory of the Lord appeared*— This timely appearance of the Divine glory prevented these faithful servants of God from being stoned to death by this base and treacherous multitude. “Every man is immortal till his work is done,” while in simplicity of heart he is following his God.

Verse 14. *That thy cloud standeth over them*— This cloud, the symbol of the Divine glory, and proof of the Divine presence, appears to have assumed three different forms for three important purposes.

1. It appeared by day in the form of a pillar of a sufficient height to be seen by all the camp, and thus went before them to point out their way in the desert. Exodus 40:38.

2. It appeared by night as a pillar of fire to give them light while travelling by night, which they probably sometimes did; (see chap. 9:21;) or to illuminate their tents in their encampment; Exodus 13:21, 22.

3. It stood at certain times above the whole congregation, overshadowing them from the scorching rays of the sun; and probably at other times condensed the vapours, and precipitated rain or dew for the refreshment of the people. He spread a cloud for their covering; and fire to give light in the night; Psalm 105:39. It was probably from this circumstance that the shadow of the Lord was used to signify the Divine protection, not only by the Jews, but also by other Asiatic nations. See the note on “Numbers 14:9”, and see particularly the note on “Exodus 13:21”.

Verse 18. *The Lord is longsuffering*— See the note on “Exodus 34:6”.

Verse 19. *Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people*— From ver. 13 to ver. 19 inclusive we have the words of Moses’s intercession; they need no explanation, they are full of simplicity and energy; his arguments with God (for he did reason and argue with his Maker) are pointed, cogent, and respectful; and while they show a heart full of humanity, they evidence the deepest concern for the glory of God. The argumentum ad

hominem is here used in the most unexceptionable manner, and with the fullest effect.

Verse 20. *I have pardoned*— That is, They shall not be cut off as they deserve, because thou hast interceded for their lives.

Verse 21. *All the earth shall be filled, etc.*— כָּל הָאָרֶץ kol haarets, all THIS land, i. e., the land of Canaan which was only fulfilled to the letter when the preaching of Christ and his apostles was heard through all the cities and villages of Judea. It does not appear that the whole of the terraqueous globe is meant by this expression in any of the places where it occurs connected with this promise of the diffusion of the Divine light. See Psalm 72:19; Isaiah 40:5; Habakkuk 2:14.

Verse 24. *But my servant Caleb, etc.*— Caleb had another spirit—not only a bold, generous, courageous, noble, and heroic spirit; but the Spirit and influence of the God of heaven thus raised him above human inquietudes and earthly fears, therefore he followed God fully; וַיִּמְלֵא אַחֲרָי vaimalle acharai, literally, he filled after me: God showed him the way he was to take, and the line of conduct he was to pursue, and he filled up this line, and in all things followed the will of his Maker. He therefore shall see the promised land, and his seed shall possess it. A dastardly spirit in the things of God is a heavy curse. How many are retarded in their course, and fall short of the blessings of the Gospel, through magnifying the number and strength of their adversaries, their own weakness and the difficulties of the way, with which we may connect their distrust of the power, faithfulness, and goodness of God! And how many are prevented from receiving the higher degrees of salvation by foolishly attributing insurmountable power, either to their inward corruptions or outward enemies! Only such men as Joshua and Caleb, who take God at his word, and who know that against his wisdom no cunning can stand, and against his might no strength can prevail, are likely to follow God fully, and receive the heights, lengths, breadths, and depths of the salvation of God.

Verse 34. *After the number of the days*— The spies were forty days in searching the land, and the people who rebelled on their evil report are condemned to wander forty years in the wilderness! Now let them make them a captain and go back to Egypt if they can. God had so hedged them

about with his power and providence that they could neither go back to Egypt nor get forward to the promised land! God has provided innumerable spiritual blessings for mankind, but in the pursuit of earthly good they lose them, and often lose the others also! If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the fruit of the land, but not otherwise; unless for your farther punishment God give you your portion in THIS life, and ye get none in the life to come. From so great a curse may God save thee, thou money-loving, honor-hunting, pleasure-taking, thoughtless, godless man!

And ye shall know my breach of promise.— This is certainly a most harsh expression; and most learned men agree that the words אֵת תְּנוּאָתִי eth tenuathi should be translated my vengeance, which is the rendering of the Septuagint, Vulgate, Coptic, and Anglo-Saxon, and which is followed by almost all our ancient English translations. The meaning however appears to be this: As God had promised to bring them into the good land, provided they kept his statutes, ordinances, etc., and they had now broken their engagements, he was no longer held by his covenant; and therefore, by excluding them from the promised land, he showed them at once his annulling of the covenant which they had broken, and his vengeance because they had broken it.

Verse 37. Those men that did bring up the evil report-died— Thus ten of the twelve that searched out the land were struck dead, by the justice of God, on the spot! Caleb, of the tribe of Judah, and Joshua, of the tribe of Ephraim, alone escaped, because they had followed God fully. Let preachers of God's word take heed how they straiten the way of salvation, or render, by unjust description, that way perplexed and difficult which God has made plain and easy.

Verse 40. We-will go up unto the place, etc.— They found themselves on the very borders of the land, and they heard God say they should not enter it, but should be consumed by a forty years' wandering in the wilderness; notwithstanding, they are determined to render vain this purpose of God, probably supposing that the temporary sorrow they felt for their late rebellion would be accepted as a sufficient atonement for their crimes. They accordingly went up, and were cut down by their enemies; and why? God went not with them. How vain is the counsel of man against the wisdom of God! Nature, poor, fallen human nature, is ever running into

extremes. This miserable people, a short time ago, thought that though they had Omnipotence with them they could not conquer and possess the land! Now they imagine that though God himself go not with them, yet they shall be sufficient to drive out the inhabitants, and take possession of their country! Man is ever supposing he can either do all things or do nothing; he is therefore sometimes presumptuous, and at other times in despair. Who but an apostle, or one under the influence of the same Spirit, can say, I can do ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST who strengtheneth me?

CHAPTER 15

Directions concerning the different offerings they should bring unto the Lord when they should come to the land of Canaan, 1-3. Directions relative to the meat-offering, 4; to the drink-offering, 5. Of the burnt-offering, vow-offering, peace-offering, drink-offering, etc., 6-12. All born in the country must perform these rites, 13, and the strangers also, 14-16. They shall offer unto the Lord a heave-offering of the first-fruits of the land, 17-21. Concerning omissions through ignorance, and the sacrifices to be offered on such occasions, 22-29. He who sins presumptuously shall be cut off, 30, 31. History of the person who gathered sticks on the Sabbath, 32. He is brought to Moses and Aaron, 33. They put him in confinement till the mind of the Lord should be known on the case, 34. The Lord commands him to be stoned, 35. He is stoned to death, 36. The Israelites are commanded to make fringes to the borders of their garments, 37, 38. The end for which these fringes were to be made, that they might remember the commandments of the Lord, that they might be holy, 39-41.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 2. *When ye be come into the land*— Some learned men are of opinion that several offerings prescribed by the law were not intended to be made in the wilderness, but in the promised land; the former not affording those conveniences which were necessary to the complete observance of the Divine worship in this and several other respects.

Verse 3. *And will make an offering*— For the different kinds of offerings, sacrifices, etc., see Leviticus 1:2, 7.

Verse 5. *The fourth part of a hin*— The quantity of meal and flour was augmented in proportion to the size of the sacrifice with which it was offered. With a LAMB or a KID were offered one tenth deal of flour, (the tenth part of an ephah, see on “Exodus 29:40”,) the fourth part of a hin of oil, and the fourth part of a hin of wine. With a RAM, two tenth deals of flour, a third part of a hin of oil, and a third part of a hin of wine. With a

BULLOCK, three tenth deals of flour, half a hin of oil, and half a hin of wine. See ver. 4-11.

Verse 14. *If a stranger sojourn*— See the notes on Leviticus 19:33;22:9. When the case of the Jewish people is fairly considered, and their situation with respect to the surrounding idolatrous nations, we shall see the absolute necessity of having but one form of worship in the land. That alone was genuine which was prescribed by the Almighty, and no others could be tolerated, because they were idolatrous. All strangers—all that came to sojourn in the land, were required to conform to it; and it was right that those who did conform to it should have equal rights and privileges with the Hebrews themselves, which we find was the case. But under the Christian dispensation, as no particular form of worship is prescribed, the types and ceremonies of the Mosaic institution being all fulfilled, unlimited toleration should be allowed; and while the sacred writings are made the basis of the worship offered to God, every man should be allowed to worship according to his own conscience, for in this respect every one is

*“Lord of himself, accountable to none
But to his conscience and his God alone.”*

Verse 20. *Ye shall offer-the first of your dough*— Concerning the offerings of first-fruits, see the notes on “Exodus 22:29”.

Verse 24. *If aught be committed by ignorance*— See the notes on Leviticus 4:2, and 5:17. The case here probably refers to the whole congregation; the cases above, to the sin of an individual.

Verse 25. *The priest shall make an atonement*— Even sins committed through ignorance required an atonement; and God in his mercy has provided one for them.

Verse 30. *But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously*— Bold daring acts of transgression against the fullest evidence, and in despite of the Divine authority, admitted of no atonement; the person was to be cut off—to be excluded from God’s people, and from all their privileges and blessings.

Probably the presumption mentioned here implied an utter contempt of the word and authority of God, springing from an idolatrous or atheistical

mind. In such a case all repentance was precluded, because of the denial of the word and being of God. It is probably a case similar to that mentioned Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-31; on which passages see the notes.

Verse 32. *They found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath*—

This was in all likelihood a case of that kind supposed above: the man despised the word of the Lord, and therefore broke his commandment; see ver. 31. On this ground he was punished with the utmost rigor of the law.

Verse 36. *Stoned him*— See the note on “Leviticus 24:23”.

Verse 38. *Bid them-make them fringes*— We learn from ver. 39 that these fringes were emblematical of the various commands of God. That there was any analogy between a fringe and a precept, it would be bold to assert; but when a thing is appointed to represent another, no matter how different, that first object becomes the regular representative or sign of the other. There is no analogy between the term bread and the farinaceous nutritive substance thereby signified; but because this term is used to express and represent that thing, every person thus understands it; and when the word bread is seen or heard, a perfect knowledge, not of the letters which compose that word, but of the thing signified by it, is conveyed to the mind. So the fringes, being appointed by God to represent and bring to mind the commandments of God, ver. 39, the mention or sight of them conveyed the intelligence intended. All the Jews wore these, and so probably did our Lord; see Matthew 9:20, where the word *κρασπε ον* is rather to be understood of the fringe than of the hem of his garment.

CHAPTER 16

The rebellion of Korah and his company against Moses, 1-3. He directs them how to try, in the course of the next day, whom God had called to the priesthood, 4-11. Dathan and Abiram use the most seditious speeches, 12-14. Moses is wroth, 15; and orders Korah and his company to be ready on the morrow with their censers and incense, 16-18. Korah gathers his company together, 19. The glory of the Lord appears, and he threatens to consume them, 20, 21. Moses and Aaron intercede for them, 22. The people are commanded to leave the tents of the rebels, 23-26. They obey, and Korah and his company come out and stand before the door of their tents, 27. Moses in a solemn address puts the contention to issue, 28-30. As soon as he had done speaking, the earth clave and swallowed them, and all that appertained to them, 31-34; and the 250 men who offered incense are consumed by fire, 35. The Lord commands Eleazar to preserve the censers, because they were hallowed, 36-38. Eleazar makes of them a covering for the altar, 39, 40. The next day the people murmur anew, the glory of the Lord appears, and Moses and Aaron go to the tabernacle, 41-43. They are commanded to separate themselves from the congregation, 44, 45. Moses, perceiving that God had sent a plague among them, directs Aaron to hasten and make an atonement, 46. Aaron does so, and the plague is stayed, 47, 48. The number of those who died by the plague, 14, 700 men, 49, 50.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. Now Korah-took men— Had not these been the most brutish of men, could they have possibly so soon forgotten the signal displeasure of God manifested against them so lately for their rebellion. The word men is not in the original; and the verb וַיִּיקַח *vaiyikkach*, and he took, is not in the plural but the singular, hence it cannot be applied to the act of all these chiefs. In every part of the Scripture where this rebellion is referred to it is attributed to Korah, (see chap. 26:3, and Jude 11,) therefore the verb here belongs to him, and the whole verse should be translated thus:-Now Korah, son of Yitsar son of Kohath, son of Levi, HE TOOK even Dathan

and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, son of Peleth, SON OF REUBEN; and they rose up, etc. This makes a very regular and consistent sense, and spares all the learned labor of Father Houbigant, who translates יקח yikkach, by rebellionem fecerunt, they rebelled, which scarcely any rule of criticism can ever justify. Instead of בני ראוב beney Reuben, SONS of Reuben, some MSS. have בן ben, SON, in the singular; this reading, supported by the Septuagint and the Samaritan text, I have followed in the above translation. But as Eliab and Peleth were both Reubenites, the common reading, SONS, may be safely followed.

Verse 3. *Ye take too much upon you*— The original is simply רב לכם rab lachem, too much for you. The spirit of this saying appears to me to be the following:—“Holy offices are not equally distributed: you arrogate to yourselves the most important ones, as if your superior holiness entitled you alone to them; whereas all the congregation are holy, and have an equal right with you to be employed in the most holy services.” Moses retorts this saying ver. 7: Ye take too much upon you, רב לכם rab lachem; Ye have too much already, ye sons of Levi; i.e., by your present spirit and disposition you prove yourselves to be wholly unworthy of any spiritual employment.

Verse 5. *The Lord will show who are his*— It is supposed that St. Paul refers to this place, 2 Timothy 2:19: The foundation of God—the whole sacrificial system, referring to Christ Jesus, the foundation of the salvation of men; standeth sure, notwithstanding the rebellions, intrusions, and false doctrines of men; having this seal—this stamp of its Divine authenticity, The Lord knoweth them that are his; εγὼ οὐκ οἶδα τὸν κύριον ἃς λέγουσιν, a literal translation of וידע יהוה את אשר לו veyoda Yehovah eth asher lo; and both signifying, The Lord approveth of his own; or, will own that which is of his own appointment. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity, alluding to the exhortation of Moses, ver. 26: Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men.

Verse 15. *Respect not thou their offering*— There was no danger of this: they wished to set up a priesthood and a sacrificial system of their own; and God never has blessed, and never can bless, any scheme of salvation which is not of his own appointment. Man is ever supposing that he can

mend his Maker's work, or that he can make one of his own that will do in its place.

Verse 22. *O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh*— **בשר אל אלהי הרוחת לכל** El Elohey haruchoth lechol basar. This address sufficiently proves that these holy men believed that man is a being compounded of flesh and spirit, and that these principles are perfectly distinct. Either the materiality of the human soul is a human fable, or, if it be a true doctrine, these men did not pray under the influence of the Divine Spirit. In chap. 27:16 there is a similar form of expression: Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh. And in Job 12:10: In whose hand is the soul (**נפש** nephesh) of all living; and the spirit (**רוח** ruach) of all flesh of man. Are not these decisive proofs that the Old Testament teaches that there is an immortal spirit in man? “But does not **רוח** ruach signify wind or breath?” Sometimes it does, but certainly not here; for how absurd would it be to say, O God, the God of the breaths of all flesh!

Verse 30. *If the Lord make a new thing*— **ואם בריאה יברא יהוה** veim beriah yibra Yehovah, and if Jehovah should create a creation, i. e., do such a thing as was never done before.

And they go down quick into the pit— **שאלה** sheolah, a proof, among many others, that **שאל** sheol, signifies here a chasm or pit of the earth, and not the place called hell; for it would be absurd to suppose that their houses had gone to hell; and it would be wicked to imagine that their little innocent children had gone thither, though God was pleased to destroy their lives with those of their iniquitous fathers.

Verse 33. *They, and all that appertained to them*— Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and all that appertained to their respective families, went down into the pit caused by this supernatural earthquake; while the fire from the Lord consumed the 250 men that bare censers. Thus there were two distinct punishments, the pit and the fire, for the two divisions of these rebels.

Verse 37. *The censers-are hallowed.*— **קדשו** kadeshu, are consecrated, i. e., to the service of God though in this instance improperly employed.

Verse 41. *On the morrow all the congregation-murmured*— It is very likely that the people persuaded themselves that Moses and Aaron had used some cunning in this business, and that the earthquake and fire were artificial; else, had they discerned the hand of God in this punishment, could they have dared the anger of the Lord in the very face of justice?

Verse 46. *The plague is begun*.— God now punished them by a secret blast, so as to put the matter beyond all dispute; his hand, and his alone, was seen, not only in the plague, but in the manner in which the mortality was arrested. It was necessary that this should be done in this way, that the whole congregation might see that those men who had perished were not the people of the Lord; and that GOD, not Moses and Aaron, had destroyed them.

Verse 48. *He stood between the dead and the living; and the plague, etc.*— What the plague was we know not, but it seems to have begun at one part of the camp, and to have proceeded regularly onward; and Aaron went to the quarter where it was then prevailing, and stood with his atonement where it was now making its ravages, and the plague was stayed; but not before 14, 700 had fallen victims to it, ver. 49.

IF Aaron the high priest, with his censer and incense, could disarm the wrath of an insulted, angry Deity, so that a guilty people, who deserved nothing but destruction, should be spared; how much more effectual may we expect the great atonement to be which was made by the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom Aaron was only the type! The sacrifices of living animals pointed out the death of Christ on the cross; the incense, his intercession. Through his death salvation is purchased for the world; by his intercession the offending children of men are spared. Hence St. Paul, Romans 5:10, says: If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved THROUGH HIS LIFE, i. e., by the prevalence of his continual intercession. 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19: “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

By the awful transactions recorded in this chapter, we may see how jealous God is of the sole right of appointing the way and means of salvation. Had any priesthood, and any kind of service, no matter how solemn and sincere, been equally available in the sight of Divine justice and mercy, God would not have resented in so awful a manner the attempts of Korah and his company in their new service. The way of God's own appointment, the agony and death of Christ, is the only way in which souls can be saved. His is the priesthood, and his is the only available sacrifice. All other modes and schemes of salvation are the inventions of men or devils, and will in the end prove ruinous to all those who trust in them. Reader, forget not the Lord who bought thee.

CHAPTER 17

The twelve chiefs of the tribes are commanded to take their rods, and to write the name of each tribe upon the rod that belonged to its representative; but the name of Aaron is to be written on the rod of the tribe of Levi, 1-3. The rods are to be laid up before the Lord, who promises that the man's rod whom he shall choose for priest shall blossom, 4, 5. The rods are produced and laid up before the tabernacle, 6, 7. Aaron's rod alone buds, blossoms, and bears fruit, 8, 9. It is laid up before the testimony as a token of the manner in which God had disposed of the priesthood, 10, 11. The people are greatly terrified, and are apprehensive of being destroyed, 12, 13.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 2. *And take of every one of them a rod*—מטה matteh, the staff or scepter, which the prince or chief of each tribe bore, and which was the sign of office or royalty among almost all the people of the earth.

Verse 5. *The man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom*— It was necessary that something farther should be done to quiet the minds of the people, and for ever to settle the dispute, in what tribe the priesthood should be fixed. God therefore took the method described in the text, and it had the desired effect; the Aaronical priesthood was never after disputed.

Verse 8. *The rod of Aaron-was budded, etc.*— That is, on the same rod or staff were found buds, blossoms, and ripe fruit. This fact was so unquestionably miraculous, as to decide the business for ever; and probably this was intended to show that in the priesthood, represented by that of Aaron, the beginning, middle, and end of every good work must be found. The buds of good desires, the blossoms of holy resolutions and promising professions, and the ripe fruit of faith, love, and obedience, all spring from the priesthood of the Lord Jesus. It has been thought by some that Aaron's staff (and perhaps the staves of all the tribes) was made out of the amygdala communis, or common almond tree. In a favorable soil and climate it grows to twenty feet in height; is one of the most noble,

flourishing trees in nature: its flowers are of a delicate red, and it puts them forth early in March, having begun to bud in January. It has its name שקד shaken from shakad, to awake, because it buds and flowers sooner than most other trees. And it is very likely that the staves of office, borne by the chiefs of all the tribes, were made of this tree, merely to signify that watchfulness and assiduous care which the chiefs should take of the persons committed, in the course of the Divine providence, to their keeping.

Every thing in this miracle is so far beyond the power of nature, that no doubt could remain on the minds of the people, or the envious chiefs, of the Divine appointment of Aaron, and of the especial interference of God in this case. To see a piece of wood long cut off from the parent stock, without bark or moisture remaining, laid up in a dry place for a single night, with others in the same circumstances—to see such a piece of wood resume and evince the perfection of vegetative life, budding, blossoming, and bringing forth ripe fruit at the same time, must be such a demonstration of the peculiar interference of God, as to silence every doubt and satisfy every scruple. It is worthy of remark that a scepter, or staff of office, resuming its vegetative life, was considered an absolute impossibility among the ancients; and as they were accustomed to swear by their sceptres, this circumstance was added to establish and confirm the oath. A remarkable instance of this we have in HOMER, Iliad, lib. i., ver. 233, etc., where Achilles, in his rage against Agamemnon, thus speaks:—

ἀλλ' ἐκ τοι ἐρεῶ, καὶ ἐπὶ μέγαν ὄρκον ὀμῶμαι
 ναὶ μὰ τοδε σκηπτρον, τὸ μὲν οὐποτέ φυλλα καὶ ὄζους
 φύσει, ἐπειδὴ πρῶτα τομὴν ἐν ὄρεσσι λελοῖπεν,
 οὐδ' ἀναθῆλησει περὶ γὰρ ῥα ἔχαλκος ἔλεψε
 φυλλα τε καὶ φλοιὸν
 ὃ δὲ τοι μέγας ἐσσεταὶ ὄρκος.

*But hearken: I shall swear a solemn oath:
 By this same scepter which shall never bud,
 Nor boughs bring forth, as once; which, having left
 Its parent on the mountain top, what time
 The woodman's axe lopp'd off its foliage green,
 And stripp'd its bark, shall never grow again.*

COWPER.

VIRGIL represents King Latinus swearing in the same way, to confirm his covenant with AENEAS:—

*Ut SCEPTRUM hoc (dextra sceptrum nam forte gerebat)
Nunquam fronde levi fundet virgulta neque umbras,
Cum semel in silvis imo de stirpe recisum.
Matre caret, posuitque comas et brachia ferro;
Olim arbos, nunc artificis manus aere decoro
Includit, patribusque dedit gestare Latinis,
Talibus inter se firmabant foedera dictis.*

AEn., lib. xii., ver. 206-12.

*Even as this royal SCEPTRE (for he bore
A scepter in his hand) shall never more
Shoot out in branches, or renew the birth;
An orphan now, cut from the mother earth
By the keen axe, dishonor'd of its hair,
And cased in brass, for Latian kings to bear.
And thus in public view the peace was tied
With solemn vows, and sworn on either side.*

DRYDEN.

When the circumstance of the rod or scepter being used anciently in this way, and the absolute impossibility of its revivescence so strongly appealed to, is considered, it appears to have been a very proper instrument for the present occasion, for the change that passed on it must be acknowledged as an immediate and incontestable miracle.

Verse 12. Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish.— גַּוְאֵנוּ *gavaenu* signifies not so much to die simply, as to feel an extreme difficulty of breathing, which, producing suffocation, ends at last in death. See the folly and extravagance of this sinful people. At first, every person might come near to God, for all, they thought, were sufficiently holy, and every way qualified to minister in holy things. Now, no one, in their apprehension, can come near to the tabernacle without being consumed, ver. 13. In both

cases they were wrong; some there were who might approach, others there were who might not. God had put the difference. His decision should have been final with them; but sinners are ever running into extremes.

CHAPTER 18

The priests are to bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, 1. The Levites to minister to the priests, and have charge of the tabernacle, 2-4. The priests alone to have the charge of the sanctuary, etc., no stranger to come nigh on pain of death, 5-7 The portion allowed for their maintenance, 8. They shall have every meat-offering; and they shall eat them in the holy place, 9, 10. The wave-offerings, 11. The first-fruits of the oil, wine, and wheat, and whatever is first ripe, and every devoted thing, 12-14; also, all the first-born of men and beasts, 15-18; and heave-offerings, 19. The priests shall have no inheritance, 20. The Levites shall have no inheritance, but shall have the tenth of the produce in Israel, 21-24, of which they are to give a tenth to the priests, taken from the best parts, 25-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. *Thou and thy sons-shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, etc.*— That is, They must be answerable for its legal pollutions, and must make the necessary atonements and expiations. By this they must feel that though they had got a high and important office confirmed to them by a miraculous interference, yet it was a place of the highest responsibility; and that they must not be high-minded, but fear.

Verse 2. *Thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi-may be joined unto thee*— There is a fine paronomasia, or play upon words, in the original. לוי Levi comes from the root לוו lavah, to join to, couple, associate: hence Moses says, the Levites, ילוי yillavu, shall be joined, or associated with the priests; they shall conjointly perform the whole of the sacred office, but the priests shall be principal, the Levites only their associates or assistants. For an explanation of many parts of this chapter, see the notes on several of the passages referred to in the margin.

Verse 15. *The first-born of man-and the firstling of unclean beasts*—

Thus vain man is ranked with the beasts that perish; and with the worst kinds of them too, those deemed unclean.

Verse 16. *Shalt thou redeem-for the money of five shekels*—

Redemption of the first-born is one of the rites which is still practiced among the Jews. According to Leo of Modena, it is performed in the following manner:—When the child is thirty days old, the father sends for one of the descendants of Aaron: several persons being assembled on the occasion, the father brings a cup containing several pieces of gold and silver coin. The priest then takes the child into his arms, and addressing himself to the mother, says: Is this thy son?—MOTHER. Yes. — PRIEST. Hast thou never had another child, male or female, a miscarriage or untimely birth?—MOTHER. No. — PRIEST. This being the case, this child, as first-born, belongs to me. Then, turning to the father, he says: If it be thy desire to have this child, thou must redeem it. — FATHER. I present thee with this gold and silver for this purpose. — PRIEST. Thou dost wish, therefore, to redeem the child?—FATHER. I do wish so to do. — The priest then, turning himself to the assembly, says: Very well; this child, as first-born, is mine, as it is written in Bemidbar, (Numbers 18:16,) Thou shalt redeem the first-born of a month old for five shekels, but I shall content myself with this in exchange. He then takes two gold crowns, or thereabouts, and returns the child to his parents.

Verse 19. *It is a covenant of salt*— That is, an incorruptible, everlasting covenant. As salt was added to different kinds of viands, not only to give them a relish, but to preserve them from putrefaction and decay, it became the emblem of incorruptibility and permanence. Hence, a covenant of salt signified an everlasting covenant. We have already seen that, among the Asiatics, eating together was deemed a bond of perpetual friendship; and as salt was a common article in all their repasts, it may be in reference to this circumstance that a perpetual covenant is termed a covenant of salt; because the parties ate together of the sacrifice offered on the occasion, and the whole transaction was considered as a league of endless friendship. See the note on “Leviticus 2:13.

Verse 20. *I am thy part and thine inheritance*— The principal part of what was offered to God was the portion of the priests, therefore they had

no inheritance of land in Israel; independently of that they had a very ample provision for their support. The rabbins say twenty-four gifts were given to the priests, and they are all expressed in the law. Eight of those gifts the priests ate nowhere but in the sanctuary: these eight are the following:—

1. The flesh of the SIN-OFFERING, whether of beasts or fowls, Leviticus 6:25, 26.
2. The flesh of the TRESPASS-OFFERING, Leviticus 7:1, 6.
3. The PEACE-OFFERINGS of the congregation, Leviticus 23:19, 20.
4. The remainder of the OMER or SHEAF, Leviticus 23:10, etc.
5. The remnants of the MEAT-OFFERINGS of the Israelites, Leviticus 6:16.
6. The two LOAVES, Leviticus 23:17.
7. The SHEW-BREAD, Leviticus 24:9.
8. The LOG of OIL offered by the leper, Leviticus 14:10, etc.

Five of those gifts they ate only in Jerusalem:—

1. The breast and shoulder of the PEACE-OFFERINGS, Leviticus 7:31, 34.
2. The HEAVE-OFFERING of the sacrifice of confession, Leviticus 7:12-14.
3. The HEAVE-OFFERING of the Nazarite's ram, Leviticus 6:17-20.
4. The FIRSTLING of the clean beast, Numbers 18:15; Deuteronomy 15:19, 20.
5. The FIRST-FRUITS, Numbers 18:13.

FIVE gifts were not due unto them by the law, but in the land of Israel only:—

1. The heave-offering or FIRST-FRUITS, Numbers 18:12.
2. The heave-offering of the TITHE, Numbers 18:28.
3. The CAKE, Numbers 15:20.

These three were holy.

4. The first-fruits of the FLEECE, Deuteronomy 18:4.

5. The FIELD of POSSESSION, Numbers 35.

These two were common.

FIVE gifts were due unto them both within and without the land:—

1. The gifts of the BEASTS SLAIN, Deuteronomy 18:3.

2. The redemption of the FIRST-BORN SON, Numbers 18:15.

3. The LAMB for the firstling of an ass, Exodus 4:20; Numbers 18.

4. The restitution of that taken by violence from a stranger, Numbers 5:8.

5. All DEVOTED things, Numbers 18:14.

ONE gift was due unto them from the sanctuary:—

1. The skins of the burnt-offering, and all the skins of the other most holy things, Leviticus 7:8.

In all 24. See Ainsworth.

The gifts which the females of the priests' families had a part in were these:—

1. The heave-offering, or first-fruits.

2. The heave-offering of the tithe.

3. The cake.

4. The gifts of the beast, Deuteronomy 18:3.

5. The first of the fleece.

— See Mishna, Tract. Bicurim, and Ainsworth on the Pentateuch.

Besides all this the priests had the tribute money mentioned Numbers 31:28, 29.

Verse 21. *Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth*— First, the Levites had the tenth of all the productions of the land.

2. They had forty-eight cities, each forming a square of 4, 000 cubits.

3. They had 2, 000 cubits of ground round each city.

Total of the land they possessed, 53, 000 acres.

4. They had the first-fruits and certain parts of all the animals killed in the land.

Canaan contained about 11, 264, 000 acres; therefore the portion possessed by the Levites was rather less than as one to two hundred and twelve; for 11, 264, 000 divided by 53, 000, quotes only $212 \frac{28}{53}$. — See Lowman, Dodd, etc. But though this was a very small proportion for a whole tribe that had consented to annihilate its political existence, that it might wait upon the service of God, and labor for the people's souls; yet let it be considered that what they possessed was the best of the land: and while it was a slender remuneration for their services, yet their portion was such as rendered them independent, and kept them comfortable; so that they could wait on the Lord's work without distraction. This is a proper pattern for the maintenance of the ministers of God: let them have a sufficiency for themselves and families, that there may be no distracting cares; and let them not be encumbered with riches or worldly possessions, that they may not be prevented from taking care of souls.

Verse 28. *Thus ye also shall offer a heave-offering*— As the Levites had the tithes of the whole land, they themselves were obliged to give the tithes of this tithes to the priests, so that this considerably lessened their revenue. And this tithes or tenth they were obliged to select from the best part of the substance they had received, ver. 29, etc. A portion of all must be given to God, as an evidence of his goodness, and their dependence on him. See the end of chap. 20.

CHAPTER 19

The ordinance of the red heifer, 1, 2. She shall be slain by Eleazar without the camp, and her blood sprinkled before the tabernacle, 3, 4. Her whole body and appurtenance shall be reduced to ashes, and while burning, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, shall be thrown into the fire, 5, 6. The priest, and he that burns her, to bathe themselves, and be reputed unclean till the evening, 7, 8. Her ashes to be laid up for a water of purification, 9. How, and in what cases it is to be applied, 10-13. The law concerning him who dies in a tent, or who is killed in the open field, 14-16. How the persons, tent, and vessels are to be purified by the application of these ashes, 17-19. The unclean person who does not apply them, to be cut off from the congregation, 20. This is to be a perpetual statute, 21, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring thee, etc.*—The ordinance of the red heifer was a sacrifice of general application. All the people were to have an interest in it, and therefore the people at large are to provide the sacrifice. This Jewish rite certainly had a reference to things done under the Gospel, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has remarked: “For if,” says he, “the blood of bulls and of goats,” alluding, probably, to the sin-offerings and the scape-goat, “and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!” Hebrews 9:13, 14. As the principal stress of the allusion here is to the ordinance of the red heifer, we may certainly conclude that it was designed to typify the sacrifice of our blessed Lord.

We may remark several curious particulars in this ordinance.

1. A heifer was appointed for a sacrifice, probably, in opposition to the Egyptian superstition which held these sacred, and actually worshipped their great goddess Isis under this form; and this appears the more likely

because males in general were preferred for sacrifice, yet here the female is chosen.

2. It was to be a red heifer, because red bulls were sacrificed to appease the evil demon Typhon, worshipped among the Egyptians. See Spencer.

3. The heifer was to be without spot—having no mixture of any other color. Plutarch remarks, Deuteronomy Iside et de Osiride, that if there was a single hair in the animal either white or black, it marred the sacrifice. See Calmet, and see the note on “Numbers 8:7”.

4. Without blemish—having no kind of imperfection in her body; the other, probably, applying to the hair or color.

5. On which never came yoke, because any animal which had been used for any common purpose was deemed improper to be offered in sacrifice to God. The heathens, who appear to have borrowed much from the Hebrews, were very scrupulous in this particular. Neither the Greeks nor Romans, nor indeed the Egyptians, would offer an animal in sacrifice that had been employed for agricultural purposes. Of this we have the most positive evidence from Homer, Porphyry, Virgil, and Macrobius.

Just such a sacrifice as that prescribed here, does Diomedes vow to offer to Pallas. — Iliad, lib. x., ver. 291.

ὄως νυν μοι εθελουσα παριστασο, και με φυλασσεῦ
σοι δ' αυ εγω ρεξω βουν ηνιν ευρυμετωπον,
αδμητην, ην οσπω υπο ζυγον ηγαγεν ανηρῦ
την τοι εγω ρεξω, χρυσον κερασιν περιχευας.

“So now be present, O celestial maid;

*So still continue to the race thine aid;
A yearling heifer falls beneath the stroke,
Untamed, unconscious of the galling yoke,
With ample forehead and with spreading horns,
Whose tapering tops refulgent gold adorns.”*
Altered from

POPE.

In the very same words Nestor, *Odyss.*, lib. iii., ver. 382, promises a similar sacrifice to Pallas.

The Romans had the same religion with the Greeks, and consequently the same kind of sacrifices; so Virgil, *Georg.* iv., ver. 550.

*Quatuor eximios praestanti corpore tauros
Ducit, et intacta totidem cervice juvencas.*

“— *From his herd he culls
For slaughter four the fairest of his bulls;
Four heifers from his female stock he took,
All fair, and all unknowing of the yoke.*”

— *DRYDEN.*

It is very likely that the Gentiles learnt their first sacrificial rites from the patriarchs; and on this account we need not wonder to find so many coincidences in the sacrificial system of the patriarchs and Jews, and all the neighboring nations.

Verse 9. *For a water of separation*— That is, the ashes were to be kept, in order to be mixed with water, ver. 17, and sprinkled on those who had contracted any legal defilement.

Verse 11. *He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.*— How low does this lay man! He who touched a dead beast was only unclean for one day, Leviticus 11:24, 27, 39; but he who touches a dead man is unclean for seven days. This was certainly designed to mark the peculiar impurity of man, and to show his sinfulness-seven times worse than the vilest animal! O thou son of the morning, how art thou fallen!

Verse 12. *He shall purify himself with it*— **יִתְחַטֵּא בּוֹ** yithchatta bo, literally, he shall sin himself with it. This Hebrew form of speech is common enough among us in other matters. Thus to fleece, to bark, and to skin, do not signify to add a fleece, another bark, or a skin, but to take one away; therefore, to sin himself, in the Hebrew idiom, is not to add sin, but to take it away, to purify. The verb **חָטָא** chata signifies to miss the mark,

to sin, to purify from sin, and to make a sin-offering. See the note on “Genesis 13:13”.

THE Hebrews generally sacrificed males, no matter of what color; but here a heifer, and a heifer of a red color, is ordered. The reason of these circumstances is not very well known.

“The rabbins, with all their boldness,” says Calmet, “who stick at nothing when it is necessary to explain what they do not understand, declare that the cause of this law is entirely unknown; and that Solomon, with all his wisdom, could not find it out.”

Several fathers, as well modern as ancient, profess to understand the whole clearly. 1. The red heifer with them signifies the flesh of our Lord, formed out of an earthly substance. 2. Being without spot, etc., the infinite holiness of Christ. 3. The sex of the animal, the infirmity of our flesh, with which he clothed himself. 4. The red color, his passion. 5. Being unyoked, his being righteous in all his conduct, and never under the yoke of sin. 6. Eleazar’s sacrificing the heifer instead of Aaron, ver. 3, signifies the change of the priesthood from the family of Aaron, in order that a new and more perfect priesthood might take place. 7. The red heifer being taken without the camp (ver. 3) to be slain, points out the crucifixion of our Lord without the city. 8. The complete consuming of the heifer by fire, the complete offering of the whole body and soul of Christ as a sacrifice to God for the sin of man: for as the heifer was without blemish, the whole might be offered to God; and as Christ was immaculate, his whole body and soul were made a sacrifice for sin. 9. As the fire of this sacrifice ascended up to God, so it points out the resurrection and ascension of our blessed Lord. 10. And as the ashes of this victim communicated a legal purity to those who were defiled, so true repentance, signified by those ashes, is necessary for the expiation of the offenses committed after baptism. A great part of this is true in itself; but how little evidence is there that all these things were intended in the ordinance of the red heifer? See on “Numbers 8:7”.

CHAPTER 20

The Israelites come to Zin, and Miriam dies, 1. They murmur for want of water, 2-5. Moses and Aaron make supplication at the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord appears, 6. He commands Moses to take his rod, gather the congregation together, and bring water out of the rock, 7, 8. Moses takes the rod, gathers the Israelites together, chides with them, and smites the rock twice, and the waters flow out plenteously, 9-11. The Lord is offended with Moses and Aaron because they did not sanctify him in the sight of the children of Israel, 12. The place is called Meribah, 13. Moses sends a friendly message to the king of Edom, begging liberty to pass through his territories, 14-17. The Edomites refuse, 18. The Israelites expostulate, 19. The Edomites still refuse, and prepare to attack them, 20, 21. The Israelites go to Mount Hor, 22. Aaron is commanded to prepare for his death, 23, 24. Aaron is stripped on Mount Hor, and his vestments put on Eleazar his son; Aaron dies, 25-28. The people mourn for him thirty days, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. *Then came the children of Israel, etc.*— This was the first month of the fortieth year after their departure from Egypt. See chap. 33:38, compared with ver. 28 of this chapter, and Deuteronomy 1:3. The transactions of thirty-seven years Moses passes by, because he writes not as a historian but as a legislator; and gives us particularly an account of the laws, ordinances, and other occurrences of the first and last years of their peregrinations. The year now spoken of was the last of their journeyings; for from the going out of the spies, chap. 13., unto this time, was about thirty-eight years, Deuteronomy 1:22, 23; 2:14.

Desert of Zin— Calmet contends that this is not the same desert mentioned Exodus 16:1, where Israel had their eighth encampment; that in Exodus being called in the original **סִין** sin, this here **צִין** tsin: but this is no positive proof, as letters of the same organ are frequently interchanged in all languages, and particularly in Hebrew.

And Miriam died there— Miriam was certainly older than Moses. When he was an infant, exposed on the river Nile, she was intrusted by her parents to watch the conduct of Pharaoh's daughter, and to manage a most delicate business, that required much address and prudence. See Exodus 2. It is supposed that she was at the time of her death one hundred and thirty years of age, having been at least ten years old at her brother's birth. The Catholic writers represent her as a type of the Virgin Mary; as having preserved a perpetual virginity; as being legislatrix over the Israelitish women, as Moses was over the men; and as having a large portion of the spirit of prophecy. Eusebius says that her tomb was to be seen at Kadesh, near the city of Petra, in his time. She appears to have died about four months before her brother Aaron, chap. 33:38, and eleven before her brother Moses; so that these three, the most eminent of human beings, died in the space of one year!

Verse 2. And there was no water for the congregation— The same occurrence took place to the children of Israel at Kadesh, as did formerly to their fathers at Rephidim, see Exodus 17:1; and as the fathers murmured, so also did the children.

Verse 12. Because ye believed me not— What was the offense for which Moses was excluded from the promised land? It appears to have consisted in some or all of the following particulars: 1. God had commanded him (ver. 8) to take the rod in his hand, and go and SPEAK TO THE ROCK, and it should give forth water. It seems Moses did not think speaking would be sufficient, therefore he smote the rock without any command so to do. 2. He did this twice, which certainly in this case indicated a great perturbation of spirit, and want of attention to the presence of God. 3. He permitted his spirit to be carried away by a sense of the people's disobedience, and thus, being provoked, he was led to speak unadvisedly with his lips: Hear now, ye REBELS, ver. 10. 4. He did not acknowledge GOD in the miracle which was about to be wrought, but took the honor to himself and Aaron: "Must WE fetch you water out of this rock?" Thus it plainly appears that they did not properly believe in God, and did not honor him in the sight of the people; for in their presence they seem to express a doubt whether the thing could be possibly done. As Aaron appears to have been consenting in the above particulars, therefore he is also excluded from the promised land.

Verse 14. *Sent messengers-unto the king of Edom*— Archbishop Usher supposes that the king now reigning in Edom was Hadar, mentioned Genesis 36:39.

Thus saith thy brother Israel— The Edomites were the descendants of Edom or Esau, the brother of Jacob or Israel, from whom the Israelites were descended.

Verse 17. *We will go by the king's high-way*— This is the first time this phrase occurs; it appears to have been a public road made by the king's authority at the expense of the state.

Verse 21. *Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border*— Though every king has a right to refuse passage through his territories to any strangers; yet in a case like this, and in a time also in which emigrations were frequent and universally allowed, it was both cruelty and oppression in Edom to refuse a passage to a comparatively unarmed and inoffensive multitude, who were all their own near kinsmen. It appears however that it was only the Edomites of Kadesh that were thus unfriendly and cruel; for from Deuteronomy 2:29 we learn that the Edomites who dwelt in Mount Seir treated them in a hospitable manner. This cruelty in the Edomites of Kadesh is strongly reprehended, and threatened by the Prophet Obadiah, Obidiah 10, etc.

Verse 26. *Strip Aaron of his garments*— This was, in effect, depriving him of his office; and putting the clothes on his son Eleazar implied a transfer of that office to him. A transfer of office, from this circumstance of putting the clothes of the late possessor on the person intended to succeed him, was called investing or investment, (clothing;) as removing a person from an office was termed divesting or unclothing. Among the Catholics, and in the Church of England, this same method is used in degrading ecclesiastics. Hence such a degradation is termed by the common people stripping a man of his gown.

Verse 28. *And Aaron died there*— Hence, as Dr. Lightfoot has justly observed, we have an “indisputable proof that the earthly Canaan was not the utmost felicity at which God's promises to the Israelites aimed since the best men among them were excluded from it.”

THE remark of some of the fathers here is worthy of attention: "Neither Moses the representative of the law, nor Miriam the representative of the prophets, nor Aaron the representative of the priesthood and its sacrificial rites, could bring the Israelites into possession of the promised land. This was reserved for Joshua, who was in name and conduct the lively type of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." He alone can bring those who believe in his name into that rest which remains for the people of God.

There are some observations made by Dr. Lightfoot on this and some of the preceding chapters which should be more generally known.

"The place where the people murmured upon the return of the spies was Kadesh-Barnea, Numbers 13:26; 32:8; Deuteronomy 1:19. This place was called Rithmah before, (Numbers 33:18, compared with Numbers 12:16, and Numbers 13:26,) and was so called probably from the juniper trees that grew there; but is now named Kadesh, because the Lord was there sanctified upon the people, as Numbers 20:13; and Barnea, or the wandering son, because here was the decree made of their long wandering in the wilderness. They continued a good space at Kadesh before they removed; for so said Moses, Ye abode in Kadesh many days; or as the Hebrew, According to the days that ye had made abode, namely, at Sinai, Numbers 20:6. And so they spent one whole year there, for so they had done at Sinai. And whereas God commands them at their murmuring to turn back to the Red Sea, (Deuteronomy 1:40,) his meaning was, that at their next march, whensoever it was, they should not go forward unto Canaan, but back again towards the Red Sea, whence they came; (but see on Deuteronomy 1:1.) And they did so, for they wandered by many stations and marches from Kadesh-Barnea till they came to Kadesh-Barnea again, seven or eight and thirty years after they had first left it. These marches, mentioned in chap. xxxiii., were these: From Kadesh or Rithmah to Rimmon Perez, to Libnah, to Rissah, to Kehelathah, to Mount Shapher, to Haradah, to Makheloth, to Tahath, to Tarah, to Mithcah, to Hashmonah, to Moseroth, to Benejaaken, to Horhagidgad, to Jotbathah, to Ebronah, to Ezion-Gaber, to Kadesh again, in the fortieth year. And though it was only eleven days' journey from Horeb, by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-Barnea, (Deuteronomy 1:2,) they made it above thrice eleven years' journey!" Had they trusted in God, and obeyed him, their enemies long ere this would have been discomfited, and themselves

quietly established in possession of the promised inheritance. But they grieved the Spirit of God, and did not believe his promise; and it would have been inconsistent with the whole economy of grace to have introduced unbelievers into that rest which was a type of the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER 21

Arad, a king of the Canaanites, attacks Israel, and makes some prisoners, 1. They devote him and his people to destruction, 2; which they afterwards accomplished, 3. They journey from Hor, and are greatly discouraged, 4. They murmur against God and Moses, and loathe the manna, 5. The Lord sends fiery serpents among them, 6. They repent, and beg Moses to intercede for them, 7. The Lord directs him to make a brazen serpent, and set it on a pole, that the people might look on it and be healed, 8. Moses does so, and the people who beheld the brazen serpent lived, 9. They journey to Oboth, Ije-abarim, Zared, and Arnon, 10-13. A quotation from the book of the wars of the Lord, 14, 15. From Arnon they came to Beer, 16. Their song of triumph, 17-20. Moses sends messengers to the Amorites for permission to pass through their land, 21, 22. Sihon their king refuses, attacks Israel, is defeated, and all his cities destroyed, 23-26. The poetic proverbs made on the occasion, 27-30. Israel possesses the land of the Amorites, 31, 32. They are attacked by Og king of Bashan, 33. They defeat him, destroy his troops and family, and possess his land, 34, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. *The way of the spies*—אֶתְרִים *atharim*. Some think that this signifies the way that the spies took when they went to search the land. But this is impossible, as Dr. Kennicott justly remarks, because Israel had now marched from Meribah-Kadesh to Mount Hor, beyond Ezion-Gaber, and were turning round Edom to the south-east; and therefore the word is to be understood here as the name of a place.

Verse 3. *The Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel*—The whole of this verse appears to me to have been added after the days of Joshua. It is certain the Canaanites were not utterly destroyed at the time here spoken of, for this did not take place till after the death of Moses. If, instead of utterly destroyed them, וַיַּחֲרֵם *vaiyacharem*, we translate they devoted them to utter destruction, it will make a good sense, and not repugnant to

the Hebrew; though some think it more probable that the verse was added afterwards by Joshua or Ezra, in testimony of the fulfillment of God's promise; for Arad, who is mentioned as being destroyed here, is mentioned among those destroyed by Joshua long after, (see Joshua 12:14:) but this is quite consistent with their being devoted to destruction, as this might be fulfilled any time after. See the note on Leviticus 27.

Verse 5. *This light bread.*—הקלקל hakkelokel, a word of excessive scorn; as if they had said, This innutritive, unsubstantial, cheat-stomach stuff.

Verse 6. *Fiery serpents*—הנחשים השרפים hannechashim hasseraaphim. I have observed before, on Gen. iii., that it is difficult to assign a name to the creature termed in Hebrew nachash; it has different significations, but its meaning here and in Gen. iii. is most difficult to be ascertained. Seraphim is one of the orders of angelic beings, Isaiah 6:2, 6; but as it comes from the root שרפ saraph, which signifies to burn, it has been translated fiery in the text. It is likely that St. Paul alludes to the seraphim, Hebrews 1:7: Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a FLAME OF FIRE. The animals mentioned here by Moses may have been called fiery because of the heat, violent inflammation, and thirst, occasioned by their bite; and consequently, if serpents, they were of the prester or dipsas species, whose bite, especially that of the former, occasioned a violent inflammation through the whole body, and a fiery appearance of the countenance. The poet Lucan has well expressed this terrible effect of the bite of the prester, and also of the dipsas, in the ninth book of his Pharsalia, which, for the sake of those who may not have the work at hand, I shall here insert.

Of the mortal effects of the bite of the dipsas in the deserts of Libya he gives the following description:—

*“Signiferum juvenem Tyrreni sanguinis Aulum
Torta caput retro dipsas calcata momordit.
Vix dolor aut sensus dentis fuit: ipsaque laeti
Frons caret invidia: nec quidquam plaga minatur.
Ecce subit virus tacitum, carpitque medullas
Ignis edax, calidaque incendit viscera tabe.*

*Ebibit humorem circum vitalia fusum
 Pestis, et in sicco linguam torrere palato
 Coepit: defessos iret qui sudor in artus
 Non fuit, atque oculos lacrymarum vena refugit.”
 Aulus, a noble youth of Tyrrhene blood,*

*Who bore the standard, on a dipsas trod;
 Backward the wrathful serpent bent her head,
 And, fell with rage, the unheeded wrong repaid.
 Scarce did some little mark of hurt remain,
 And scarce he found some little sense of pain.
 Nor could he yet the danger doubt, nor fear
 That death with all its terrors threatened there.
 When lo! unseen, the secret venom spreads,
 And every nobler part at once invades;
 Swift flames consume the marrow and the brain,
 And the scorched entrails rage with burning pain;
 Upon his heart the thirsty poisons prey,
 And drain the sacred juice of life away.
 No kindly floods of moisture bathe his tongue,
 But cleaving to the parched roof it hung;
 No trickling drops distil, no dewy sweat,
 To ease his weary limbs, and cool the raging heat.*

ROWE.

The effects of the bite of the prester are not less terrible:

*“Nasidium Marsi cultorem torridus agri
 Percussit prester: illi rubor igneus ora
 Succendit, tenditque cutem, pereunte figura,
 Miscens cuncta tumor toto jam corpore major:
 Humanumque egressa modum super omnia membra
 Effiatur sanies, late tollente veneno.”*

*A fate of different kind Nasidius found,
 A burning prester gave the deadly wound;
 And straight, a sudden flame began to spread,
 And paint his visage with a glowing red.
 With swift expansion swells the bloated skin.
 Naught but an undistinguished mass is seen;
 While the fair human form lies lost within.
 The puffy poison spreads, and leaves around,
 Till all the man is in the monster drowned.*

ROWE.

Bochart supposes that the hydrus or chersydrus is meant; a serpent that lives in marshy places, the bite of which produces the most terrible inflammations, burning heat, fetid vomitings, and a putrid solution of the whole body. See his works, vol. iii., col. 421. It is more likely to have been a serpent of the prester or dipsas kind, as the wilderness through which the Israelites passed did neither afford rivers nor marshes, though Bochart endeavors to prove that there might have been marshes in that part; but his arguments have very little weight. Nor is there need of a water serpent as long as the prester or dipsas, which abound in the deserts of Libya, might have abounded in the deserts of Arabia also. But very probably the serpents themselves were immediately sent by God for the chastisement of this rebellious people. The cure was certainly preternatural; this no person doubts; and why might not the agent be so, that inflicted the disease?

Verse 8. *Make thee a fiery serpent*— Literally, make thee a seraph.

And put it upon a pole— על נס *al nes*, upon a standard or ensign.

Verse 9. *And Moses made a serpent of brass*— נחש נחשת *nechash nechosheth*. Hence we find that the word for brass or copper comes from the same root with nachash, which here signifies a serpent, probably on account of the color; as most serpents, especially those of the bright spotted kind, have a very glistening appearance, and those who have brown or yellow spots appear something like burnished brass: but the true meaning of the root cannot be easily ascertained.

On the subject of the cure of the serpent-bitten Israelites, by looking at the brazen serpent, there is a good comment in the book of Wisdom, {Apoch.} chap. 16:4-12, in which are these remarkable words: "They were admonished, having a sign of salvation, (i. e., the brazen serpent,) to put them in remembrance of the commandments of thy law. For he that turned himself towards It was not saved by the THING that he saw, but by THEE, that art the Savior of all." To the circumstance of looking at the brazen serpent in order to be healed, our Lord refers, John 3:14, 15: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The brazen serpent was certainly no type of Jesus Christ; but from our Lord's words we may learn, 1. That as the serpent was lifted up on the pole or ensign, so Jesus Christ was lifted up on the cross. 2. That as the Israelites were to look at the brazen serpent, so sinners must look to Christ for salvation. 3. That as God provided no other remedy than this looking for the wounded Israelites, so he has provided no other way of salvation than faith in the blood of his Son. 4. That as he who looked at the brazen serpent was cured and did live, so he that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall not perish, but have eternal life. 5. That as neither the serpent, nor looking at it, but the invisible power of GOD healed the people, so neither the cross of Christ, nor his merely being crucified, but the pardon he has bought by his blood, communicated by the powerful energy of his Spirit, saves the souls of men. May not all these things be plainly seen in the circumstances of this transaction, without making the serpent a type of Jesus Christ, (the most exceptionable that could possibly be chosen,) and running the parallel, as some have done, through ten or a dozen particulars?

Verse 12. *They pitched in the valley of Zared.*— נַחַל זָרַד nachal zared.

This should be translated the brook Zared, as it is in Deuteronomy 2:13, 14. This stream has its origin in the mountains eastward of Moab, and runs from east to west, and discharges itself into the Dead Sea.

Verse 13. *Arnon*— Another river which takes its rise in the mountains of Moab, and, after having separated the ancient territories of the Moabites and Ammonites, falls into the Dead Sea, near the mouth of Jordan.

Verse 14. *The book of the wars of the Lord*— There are endless conjectures about this book, both among ancients and moderns. Dr. Lightfoot's opinion is the most simple, and to me bears the greatest appearance of being the true one. "This book seems to have been some book of remembrances and directions, written by Moses for Joshua's private instruction for the management of the wars after him. See Exodus 17:14-16. It may be that this was the same book which is called the book of Jasher, i. e., the book of the upright, or a directory for Joshua, from Moses, what to do and what to expect in his wars; and in this book it seems as if Moses directed the setting up of archery, see 2 Samuel 1:18, and warrants Joshua to command the sun, and expect its obedience, Joshua 10:13."

What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon— This clause is impenetrably obscure. All the versions, all the translators, and all the commentators, have been puzzled with it. Scarcely any two agree. The original is **אֵת וַהֵב בְּסוּפָה** eth vaheb besuphah, which our translators render, what he did in the Red Sea, following here the Chaldee Targum; but not satisfied with this version, they have put the most difficult words in English letters in the margin, Vaheb in Suphah. Calmet's conjecture here is ingenious, and is adopted by Houbigant; instead of **וַהֵב** vaheb, he reads **זָרֵד** zared. Now a **ז** zain may be easily mistaken for a **ו** vau, and vice versa; and a **ה** he for a **ר**, resh, if the left limb happened to be a little obliterated, which frequently occurs, not only in MSS., but in printed books; the **ב** beth also might be mistaken for a **ד** daleth, if the ruled line on which it stood happened in that place to be a little thicker or blacker than usual. Thus then **וַהֵב** vaheb might be easily formed out of **זָרֵד** zared, mentioned ver. 12; the whole might then be read, They encamped at the brook Zared, and they came to Suphah, and thence to the brook Arnon. Take the passage as we may, it is evidently defective. As I judge the whole clause to have been a common proverb in those days, and Vaheb to be a proper name, I therefore propose the following translation, which I believe to be the best: From Vaheb unto Suph, and unto the streams of Arnon. If we allow it to have been a proverbial expression, used to point out extensive distance, then it was similar to that well known phrase, From Dan even unto Beersheba.

Verse 17. *Spring up, O well, etc.*— This is one of the most ancient war songs in the world, but is not easily understood, which is commonly the case with all very ancient compositions, especially the poetic. See the remarks “Exodus 15:1”, etc.

Verse 18. *The princes digged the well-with their staves.*— This is not easily understood. Who can suppose that the princes dug this well with their staves? And is there any other idea conveyed by our translation? The word **חפרו** chapharu, which is translated they digged, should be rendered they searched out, which is a frequent meaning of the root; and **במשענתם** bemishanotham, which we render with their staves, should be translated on their borders or confines, from the root **שע** shaan, to lie along. With these corrections the whole song may be read thus:—

*Spring up, O well! Answer ye to it.
The well, the princes searched it out.
The nobles of the people have digged it.
By a decree, upon their own borders*

This is the whole of the quotation from what is called the book of the wars of the Lord. But see Dr. Kennicott’s remarks at the end of this chapter.

Verse 26. *For Heshbon was the city of Sihon, etc.*— It appears therefore that the territory now taken from Sihon by the Israelites was taken from a former king of Moab, in commemoration of which an epikedion or war song was made, several verses of which, in their ancient poetic form, are here quoted by Moses.

Verse 27. *They that speak in proverbs*— **המשלים** hammoshelim, from **משל** mashal, to rule, to exercise authority; hence a weighty proverbial saying, because admitted as an axiom for the government of life. The moshelim of the ancient Asiatics were the same, in all probability, as the Poetae among the Greeks and Latins, the [A] shaara among the Arabs, who were esteemed as Divine persons, and who had their name from [A] shaara, he knew, understood; whose poems celebrated past transactions, and especially those which concerned the military history of their nation. These poets were also termed [A] sahebi deewan, companions or lords of the council of state, because their weighty sayings and universal knowledge

were held in the highest repute. Similar to these were the bards among the ancient Druids, and the Sennachies among the ancient Celtic inhabitants of these nations.

The ode from the 27th to the 30th verse is composed of three parts. The first takes in verses 27 and 28; the second verse 29; and the third verse 30.

The first records with bitter irony the late insults of Sihon and his subjects over the conquered Moabites.

The second expresses the compassion of the Israelites over the desolations of Moab, with a bitter sarcasm against their god Chemosh, who had abandoned his votaries in their distress, or was not able to rescue them out of the hands of their enemies.

The third sets forth the revenge taken by Israel upon the whole country of Sihon, from Heshbon to Dibon, and from Nophah even to Medeba. See Isaiah 15:1, 2.

The whole poem, divided into its proper hemistichs, as it stands in Kennicott's Hebrew Bible, is as follows:—

VERSE 27. PART I

Come ye to Heshbon, let it be rebuilt;
The city of Sihon, let it be established.

VERSE 28

For from Heshbon the fire went out,
And a flame from the city of Sihon:
It hath consumed the city of Moab,
With the lords of the heights of Arnon.

VERSE 29. PART 2

Alas for thee, O Moab!
Thou hast perished, O people of Chemosh!
He hath given up his fugitive sons
And his daughters into captivity,
To the king of the Amorites, Sihon.

VERSE 30. PART 3

But on them have WE lifted destruction,
 From Heshbon even to Dibon;
 We have destroyed even to Nophah,
 The fire did reach to Medebah.
 See Kennicott's Remarks.

Verse 35. *So they smote him, and his sons*— There is a curious note of Dr. Lightfoot here, of which I should think it wrong to deprive the reader.

“Sihon and Og conquered, A. M. 2553. Of the life of Moses, 120. From the Exodus, 40. It is now six and twenty generations from the creation, or from Adam to Moses; and accordingly doth Psalm 136, rehearse the durableness of God's mercy six and twenty times over, beginning the story with the creation, and ending it in the conquest of Sihon and Og. The numerals of the name יהוה Jehovah amount to the sum of six and twenty.”

ON some difficulties in this chapter Dr. Kennicott makes the following observations:—

“This one chapter has several very considerable difficulties; and some verses, as now translated, are remarkably unintelligible, A true state of this chapter is not, however, to be despaired of; and it has in it some circumstances which merit more than common attention. It contains the history of the last part of the travels of the Israelites in their way to the promised land; beginning with them at Mount Hor, the thirty-fourth encampment, and concluding with them, as in their forty-second and last encampment, near Jordan, in the country which they had acquired by conquest over Sihon, king of the Amorites.

“It begins with saying—that King Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the south, (in the land of Canaan, chap. 33:40,) attacked Israel and was defeated, and that Israel destroyed their cities; and that, after destroying these Canaanite cities, and consequently after being in a part of Canaan, a part of the very country they were going to, on the west of the Dead Sea, they returned towards the Red Sea, and near the eastern tongue or gulf of the Red Sea, on the south of Edom, marched round Edom to the east of the Dead Sea, in order to enter Canaan from the east side of Jordan!

“This surprising representation of so vast and dangerous a march, quite unnecessarily performed, is owing to two circumstances. The first is, (chapter 21:1,) the Canaanites heard that Israel was coming by the way of the spies, meaning, by the way the spies went from Kadesh-Barnea into Canaan. But this being impossible, because Israel had now marched from Meribah-Kadesh to Mount Hor, beyond Ezion-gaber, and were turning round Edom, to the south-east; it is happy that the word rendered spies, in our version, is in the Greek a proper name, (Atharim,) which removes that difficulty: and the other difficulty (verses 2, 3) is removed by the Greek version likewise, according to which, the vow made, with the facts subsequent, does not signify destroying the Canaanite cities, but devoting them to destruction at some future time. See Wall’s Crit. Notes.

“It proceeds with saying, that after defeating the Canaanites at Mount Hor, they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, (in the road from Ammon, Midian, etc., to the eastern gulf of the Red Sea,) to compass the land of Edom; that on their murmuring for want both of bread and of water they were punished by fiery serpents, after which they marched to Oboth, and thence to Ije-abarim in the wilderness, east of Moab. The encampments of the Israelites, amounting to forty-two, are recorded all together, in historical succession, in chap. 33., where Ije-abarim is the 38th; Dibon-gad, 39; Almon-Diblathaim, 40; mountains of Abarim, 41; and the plains of Moab, by Jordan, 42. This regular detail in chap. 33. has occasioned great perplexity as to chap. 21., where, after the stations at Oboth and Ije-abarim, in Numbers 21:10, 11, we have, in Numbers 21:19 20, the words Mattanah, Nahaliel, and Bamoth; which are usually considered as the proper names of three places, but widely different from the three proper names after Ije-abarim in the catalogue at chap. 33.

“But there is, in reality, no inconsistency here. In the plain and historical catalogue (chap. 33.) the words are strictly the proper names of the three places; but here the words Mattanah, Nahaliel, and Bamoth follow some lines of poetry, and seem to form a continuation of the song. They evidently express figurative and poetical ideas. The verbs journeyed from and pitched in are not found here, though necessary to prose narration: see verses 10 and 11 here, and chap. 33. Lastly, verse 20th, (in this 21st chapter,) usually supposed to express the last encampment, does not.

Pisgah signifies a hill; and the Israelites could not encamp on the top of any single hill, such as this is described. Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, which looketh toward Jeshimon, (chap. 23:28,) which Peor undoubtedly was in Moab. He took him to another hill in Moab, when he took him (chap. 23:14) to the top of Pisgah, in the field of Zophim. And if the Pisgah or hill in chap. 21:20, was in the country of Balak, it could not point out the last encampment, which was not in Balak's country, but north of Arnon.

“The word Mattanah probably alludes to a place distinguished by some gift or blessing from God. Fagius says: *Nomen loci, ab eventu aquarum quas Dominus ibi dedit, sic appellati; מתנה* nam significat donum-‘The name of the place was so called, from the circumstance of the waters which the Lord gave there; for Mattanah signifies a gift.’ נהל יאל Nahaliel is torrentes Dei; i. e., great streams, particularly seasonable or salutary. And במות Bamoth (ver. 28) may point out any high places of signal benefit in the country of Moab, or it may answer to the last station but one, which was the mountains of Abarim. If, therefore, these words were meant to express poetically some eminent blessing, what blessing was so likely to be then celebrated as copious streams of water? And after they had wandered nearly forty years through many a barren desert, and after (compare Deuteronomy 8:15) having passed through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and drought, where there was no water, it is no wonder they should shout for joy at finding water in plenty, and finding it almost on the banks of Arnon, the last river they were to pass, in their way to their last station, east of Jordan. No wonder they should sing in poetic rapture, that after the wilderness was (Mattanah) the GIFT OF GOD; meaning the great well in Moab, dug by public authority; and no wonder that, after such a gift, there were (Nahaliel) blessed streams, by which they passed, till they came to (Bamoth) the high places from which, perhaps, these streams descended. And the thanksgiving ends, where the blessing was no longer wanted, on their coming down into the valley, along the banks of Arnon, which was then the north boundary of Moab.

“The Israelites had spent no less than thirty-eight years in coming from Kadesh-Barnea to their encampment north of Zared. Here, at this fortieth

station, they were commanded to pass through Moab by **עַר** Ar, the chief city; but were not to stop till they came to the valley on the south of Arnon. At this last station but one they probably continued no longer than was necessary for sending messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, at Heshbon, and receiving his answer. They then crossed the Arnon; and having vanquished Sihon and Og, took possession of the forty-second and last encampment.

“This one chapter has three pieces of poetry, either fragments or complete; and poetry, seldom found in a historical narrative, may be here accounted for from the exuberance of joy which must have affected these wearied travelers, when arriving thus happily near their journey’s end. What occurs first is in ver. 14; and has often been called the fragment of an old Amorite song. But it may have been Amorite or Moabite, or either or neither, for the subject matter of it, as it is generally understood, if indeed it can be said to be understood at all. The words **אָרְנוּ אֶת וְהָבָה בְּסוּפָה וְאֵת הַנְּתָלִים**, usually supposed to contain this fragment, do not signify, as in our English version, What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon. Without enumerating the many interpretations given by others, I shall offer a new one, which seems to make good sense, and a sense very pertinent.

“Observe first, that there must have been a place called Suph, near the conflux of the Arnon and Jordan; because Moses, whilst in that last station, begins Deuteronomy with saying, he was on this side (i. e., east) of Jordan, over against Suph. By this word is not here meant the Red Sea; partly, because that has every where else the word for sea before it, and partly, because of the great distance of the Red Sea now from Moses. The single word, therefore, signifies here some place in itself obscure, because no where mentioned but in these two passages. And yet we cannot wonder that Moses should mention it twice, as the word Suph, introduced in speaking of the two last encampments, recalled to mind the Sea of Suph, so glorious to Israel, near the beginning of their march towards Canaan.

“Moses had now led Israel from the Red Sea to the river Arnon, through many dreadful dangers, partly from hostile nations, partly from themselves; such dangers as no other people ever experienced, and such as no people could have surmounted, without the signal favor of the

Almighty. And here, just before the battles with Sihon and Og, he reminds them of Pharaoh, etc.; and he asserts, that in the history of the wars it shall be recorded that JEHOVAH, who had triumphantly brought Israel through the Sea of Suph, near Egypt, at first, had now conducted him to Suph, near Arnon; that

*JEHOVAH went with him to SUPH,
And he came to the streams of Arnon.*

“This version removes the difficulties urged by Hobbes, page 266, fol. 1750; by Spinoza, page 108, 4to., 1670; and retailed in a deistical pamphlet called *The Doubts of the Infidels*, page 4, 8vo., 1781.

“The general meaning of the next piece of poetry seems to be this: that at some distance from the city of Ar, by which the Israelites were to pass, (Deuteronomy 2:18,) they came to A WELL of uncommon size and magnificence, which seems to have been sought out, built up, and adorned for the public, by the rulers of Moab. And it is no wonder that, on their arrival at such a well, they should look upon it as a blessing from Heaven, and speak of it as a new miracle in their favor.

17. *Then Israel sang this song:—
Spring up, O WELL! Sing ye hitherto!*
18. *THE WELL! princes searched it out;
The nobles of the people have digged it;
By their decree, by their act of government,
So, after the wilderness, was Mattanah!*
19. *And after Mattanah were Nahaliel!
And after Nahaliel were Bamoth!*
20. *And after Bamoth was the valley;
Where, in the country of Moab,
Appareth the top of Pisgah,
Which is over against Jeshimon.*

See Dr. KENNICOTT’S Remarks upon Select Passages in the Old Testament.

CHAPTER 22

The Israelites pitch in the plains of Moab, 1. Balak, king of Moab, is greatly terrified, 2-4; and sends to Balaam, a diviner, to come and curse them, 5, 6. The elders of Moab take a reward and carry it to Balaam, 7. He inquires of the Lord, and is positively ordered not to go with them, 8-12. He communicates this to the elders of Moab, 13. They return to Balak with this information, 14. He sends some of his princes to Balaam with promises of great honor, 15-17. He consults God, and is permitted! to go, on certain conditions, 18-20. Balaam sets off, is opposed by an angel of the Lord, and the Lord miraculously opens the mouth of his ass to reprove him, 21-30. Balaam sees the angel, and is reproved by him, 31-33. He humbles himself, and offers to go back, 34; but is ordered to proceed, on the same conditions as before, 35. The king of Moab goes out to meet him, 36. His address to him, 37. Balaam's firm answer, 38. Balak sacrifices, and takes Balaam to the high places of Baal, that he may see the whole of the Israelitish camp, 39-41.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. *And pitched in the plains of Moab*— They had taken no part of the country that at present appertained to the Moabites; they had taken only that part which had formerly belonged to this people, but had been taken from them by Sihon, king of the Amorites.

On this side Jordan— On the east side. By Jericho, that is, over against it.

Verse 5. *To Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people*— Dr. Kennicott justly remarks, that “the description now given of Balaam’s residence, instead of being particular, agrees with any place in any country where there is a river; for he lived by Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people. But was Pethor then near the Nile in Egypt? Or in Canaan, near Jordan? Or in Mesopotamia, near the Euphrates, and belonging to the Ammonites? This last was in fact the case; and therefore it is well that twelve Hebrew MSS. (with two of Deuteronomy Rossi’s) confirm the Samaritan text here in reading, instead

of עַמּוֹ ammo, his people, עַמּוֹ Ammon, with the Syriac and Vulgate versions.” Houbigant properly contends for this reading; and necessity urges the propriety of adopting it. It should therefore stand thus: by the river of the land of the children of Ammon; and thus it agrees with Deuteronomy 23:4.

Verse 6. *Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people—*

Balaam, once a prophet of the true God, appears to have been one of the Moshelim, (see chap. 21:27,) who had added to his poetic gift that of sorcery or divination. It was supposed that prophets and sorcerers had a power to curse persons and places so as to confound all their designs, frustrate their counsels, enervate their strength, and fill them with fear, terror, and dismay. See Genesis 9:25; Psalm 109:6, 20; Joshua 6:26; Jeremiah 17:5, 6.

Macrobius has a whole chapter Deuteronomy carmine quo evocari solebant dii tutelares, et aut urbes, aut exercitus devoveri. “Of the incantations which were used to induce the tutelary gods to forsake the cities, etc., over which they presided, and to devote cities and whole armies to destruction.” See Saturnal., lib. iii., cap. ix. He gives us two of the ancient forms used in reference to the destruction of Carthage; the first, to call over the protecting deities, was pronounced by the dictator or general, and none other, when they began the siege. It is as follows, literatim et punctatim:—

Si. Deus. si. Dea. est. cui. populus. civitas. que. Karthaginiensis. est in. tutela. te. que. maxime, ille. qui. urbis. hujus. populi. que. tutelam. recepisti. precor. veneror, que. veniam. que. a. vobis. peto. ut. vos. populum. civitatem. que. Karthaginensem. deseratis. loca. templa. sacra. urbem. que. eorum. relinquatis. absque. his. abeatis. ei. que. populo. civitati. que. metum. formidinem. oblivionem. injiciatis. proditi. que. Romam. ad. me. meos. que. veniatis. nostra. que. vobis. loca. templa. sacra. urbs. acceptior. probator. que. sit. mihi. que. populo. que. Romano. militibus. que. meis. praepositi. sitis. ut. sciamus. intelligamus. que. Si. ita. feceritis. voveo. vobis. templa. ludos. que. facturum.

“Whether it be god or goddess, under whose protection the people and city of Carthage are placed; and thee, especially, who hast undertaken to defend this city and people; I pray, beseech, and earnestly entreat that you

would forsake the people and city of Carthage, and leave their places, temples, sacred things, and city, and depart from them: and that you would inspire this people and city with fear, terror, and forgetfulness: and that, coming out from them, you would pass over to Rome, to me, and to mine: and that our places, temples, sacred things, and city may be more agreeable and more acceptable to you: and that you would preside over me, the Roman people, and my soldiers; that we may know and perceive it. If ye will do this, I promise to consecrate to your honor both temples and games.”

The second, to devote the city to destruction, which it was supposed the tutelary gods had abandoned, is the following:

Dis. Pater. Vejovis. Manes. sive. vos. quo. allo. nomine. fas. est. nominare. ut. omnes. iliam. urbem. Karthaginem. exercitum. que. quem. ego. me. sentio. dicere. fuga. formidine. terrore. que. compleatis. qui. que. adversum. legiones. exercitum. que. nostrum. arma. tela. que. ferent. Uti. vos. eum. exercitum. eos. hostes. eos. que. homines. urbes. agros. que. eorum. et. qui. in. his. locis. regionibus. que. agris. urbibus. ve. habitant. abducatis. lumine. supero. privetis. exercitum. que. hostium. urbes. agros. que. eorum. quos. me. sentio. dicere. uti. vos. eas. urbes. agros. que. capita. aetates. que. eorum. devotas. consecratas. que. habeatis. illis. legibus. quibus. quando. que. sunt. maxime. hostes. devoti. eos. que. ego. vicarios. pro. me. fide. magistratu. que. meo. pro. populo. Romano. exercitibus. legionibus. que. nostris. do. devoveo. ut. me. meam. que. fidem. imperium. que. legiones. exercitum. que. nostrum. qui. in. his. rebus. gerundis. sunt. bene. salvos. siritis. esse. Si. haec. ita. faxitis. ut. ego. sciam. sentiam. intelligam. que. tune. quisquis. hoc. votum. faxit. ubi. ubi. faxit. recte. factum. esto. ovibus. atris. tribus. Tellus. mater. te. que. Juppiter. obtestor.

“Dis. Pater. Vejovis. Manes., or by whatsoever name you wish to be invoked, I pray you to fill this city of Carthage with fear and terror; and to put that army to flight which I mention, and which bears arms or darts against OUR legions and armies: and that ye may take away this army, those enemies, those men, their cities and their country, and all who dwell in those places, regions, countries, or cities; and deprive them of the light above: and let all their armies, cities, country, chiefs, and people be held by you consecrated and devoted, according to those laws by which, and at

what time, enemies can be most effectually devoted. I also give and devote them as vicarious sacrifices for myself and my magistracy; for the Roman people, and for all our armies and legions; and for the whole empire, and that all the armies and legions which are employed in these countries may be preserved in safety. If therefore ye will do these things, as I know, conceive, and intend, then he who makes this vow wheresoever and whensoever he shall make it, I engage shall sacrifice three black sheep to thee, O mother Earth, and to thee. O Jupiter.” “When the execrator mentions the earth, he stoops down and places both his hands on it; and when he names Jupiter, he lifts up both his hands to heaven; and when he mentions his vow, he places his hands upon his breast.” Among the ancient records, Macrobius says he found many cities and people devoted in this way. The Romans held that no city could be taken till its tutelary god had forsaken it; or if it could be taken, it would be unlawful, as it would be sacrilegious to have the gods in captivity. They therefore endeavored to persuade the gods of their enemies to come over to their party. Virgil intimates that Troy was destroyed, only because the tutelary gods had forsaken it:—

*Excessere omnes, adytis arisque relictis,
Dii, quibus imperium hoc steterat.*

Æn., lib. ii., ver. 351.

“All the gods, by whose assistance the empire had hitherto been preserved, forsook their altars and their temples.” And it was on this account that the Greeks employed all their artifice to steal away the Palladium, on which they believed the safety of Troy depended.

Tacitus observes that when Suetonius Paulinus prepared his army to cross over into Mona, (Anglesea,) where the Britons and Druids made their last stand, the priestesses, with dishevelled hair, white vestments, and torches in their hands, ran about like furies, devoting their enemies to destruction; and he farther adds that the sight, the attitude, and horrible imprecations of these priestesses had such effect on the Roman soldiers, that for a while they stood still and suffered themselves to be pierced with the darts of the Britons, without making any resistance. Tacit. Ann., l. xiv., c. 29. Many

accounts are related in the Hindoo Pooran of kings employing sages to curse their enemies when too powerful for them. — WARD'S Customs.

The Jews also had a most horrible form of execration, as may be seen in Buxtorf's Talmudical Lexicon under the word □□□. These observations and authorities, drawn out in so much detail, are necessary to cast light on the strange and curious history related in this and the two following chapters.

Verse 7. *The rewards of divination*— Whoever went to consult a prophet took with him a present, as it was on such gratuitous offerings the prophets lived; but here more than a mere present is intended, perhaps every thing necessary to provide materials for the incantation. The drugs, etc., used on such occasions were often very expensive. It appears that Balaam was very covetous, and that he loved the wages of unrighteousness, and probably lived by it; see 2 Peter 2:15.

Verse 8. *I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak*— So it appears he knew the true God, and had been in the habit of consulting him, and receiving oracles from his mouth.

Verse 12. *Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people*— That is, Thou shalt not go with them to curse the people. With them he might go, as we find he afterwards did by God's own command, but not to curse the people; this was wholly forbidden. Probably the command, Thou shalt not go, refers here to that time, viz., the first invitation: and in this sense it was most punctually obeyed by Balaam; see ver. 13.

Verse 14. *Balaam refuseth to come with us*.— “Observe,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “Satan's practice against God's word, seeking to lessen the same, and that from hand to hand, till he bring it to naught. Balaam told the princes less than God told him, and they relate to Balak less than Balaam told them; so that when the answer came to the king of Moab, it was not the word of God, but the word of man; it was simply, Balaam refuseth to come, without ever intimating that God had forbidden him.” But in this Balaam is not to blame; he told the messengers in the most positive manner, Jehovah refuseth to give me leave to go with you, ver. 13; and more explicit he could not be.

Verse 18. *I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God*— Balaam knew God too well to suppose he could reverse any of his purposes; and he respected him too much to attempt to do any thing without his permission. Though he was covetous, yet he dared not, even when strongly tempted both by riches and honors, to go contrary to the command of his God. Many make all the professions of Balaam, without justifying them by their conduct. “They pretend,” says one, “they would not do any thing against the word of God for a house full of gold, and yet will do it for a handful!”

Verse 19. *What the Lord will say unto me more.*— He did not know but God might make a farther discovery of his will to him, and therefore he might very innocently seek farther information.

Verse 20. *If the men come-go with them*— This is a confirmation of what was observed on the twelfth verse; though we find his going was marked with the Divine displeasure, because he wished, for the sake of the honors and rewards, to fulfill as far as possible the will of the king of Moab. Mr. Shuckford observes that the pronoun הוּ hu is sometimes used to denote a person’s doing a thing out of his own head, without regard to the directions of another. Thus in the case of Balaam, when God had allowed him to go with the messengers of Balak, if they came in the morning to call him; because he was more hasty than he ought to have been, and went to them instead of staying till they should come to him, it was said of him, not כִּי הָלַךְ ki halach, that he went, but כִּי הוֹלֵךְ הוּא ki holech hu, i. e., he went of his own head-without being called; and in this, Mr. Shuckford supposes, his iniquity chiefly lay. — Connex., vol. iii., p. 115. How many are restrained from sinning, merely through the fear of God! They would gladly do the evil, but it is forbidden on awful penalties; they wish the thing were not prohibited for they have a strong desire to do it.

Verse 23. *And the ass saw the angel*— When God granted visions those alone who were particularly interested saw them while others in the same company saw nothing; see Daniel 10:7; Acts 9:7.

Verse 26. *And the angel stood in a narrow place*— In this carriage of the angel says Mr. Ainsworth the Lord shows us the proceedings of his judgments against sinners: First he mildly shakes his rod at them but lets

them go untouched. Secondly he comes nearer and touches them with an easy correction as it were wringing their foot against the wall. Thirdly, when all this is ineffectual, he brings them into such straits, that they can neither turn to the right hand nor to the left, but must fall before his judgments, if they do not fully turn to him.

Verse 28. *The Lord opened the mouth of the ass*— And where is the wonder of all this? If the ass had opened her own mouth, and reproved the rash prophet, we might well be astonished; but when God opens the mouth, an ass can speak as well as a man. It is worthy of remark here, that Balaam testifies no surprise at this miracle, because he saw it was the Lord's doing. Of animate and inanimate things receiving for a short time the gift of speech, the heathen mythology furnishes many fictitious examples, with which I do not deem it proper to occupy the reader's time.

Verse 33. *Surely now also I had slain thee*— How often are the meanest animals, and the most trivial occurrences, instruments of the preservation of our lives, and of the salvation of our souls! The messenger of justice would have killed Balaam, had not the mercy of God prevented the ass from proceeding.

Verse 34. *If it displease thee, I will get me back again*.— Here is a proof, that though he loved the wages of unrighteousness, yet he still feared God; and he is now willing to drop the enterprise if God be displeased with his proceeding. The piety of many called Christians does not extend thus far; they see that the thing displeases God, and yet they proceed. Reader, is this thy case?

Verse 38. *The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak*.— Here was a noble resolution, and he was certainly faithful to it: though he wished to please the king, and get wealth and honor, yet he would not displease God to realize even these bright prospects. Many who slander this poor semi-antinomian prophet, have not half his piety.

Verse 40. *And Balak offered oxen, etc.*— This was to gain the favor of his gods, and perhaps to propitiate Jehovah, that the end for which he had sent for Balaam might be accomplished.

Verse 41. *That he might see the utmost part of the people*.— As he thought Balaam must have them all in his eye when he pronounced his

curse, lest it might not extend to those who were not in sight. On this account he took him up into the high places of Baal.

CHAPTER 23

Being arrived at the high places of Baal, (chap. 22:41,) Balaam orders Balak to build seven altars, and prepare oxen and rams for sacrifice, 1, 2. Balaam inquires of the Lord, receives an answer, with which he returns to Balak, 3-10. Balak, finding that this was a prediction of the prosperity of the Israelites, is greatly troubled, 11. Balaam excuses himself, 12. He brings him to another place, where he might see only a part of Israel, and repeats his sacrifices, 13, 14. Balaam again consults the Lord, 15-17. Returns with his answer, and again predicts the glory of Israel, 18-24. Balak is angry, 25; and Balaam again excuses himself. Balak proposes another trial, takes him to another place, and repeats the same sacrifices, 26-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. *Build me here seven altars, etc.*— The oxen and the rams were such as the Mosaic law had ordered to be offered to God in sacrifice; the building of seven altars was not commanded. Some think that these seven altars were built to the seven planets: this is most gratuitously said; of it there is no proof whatever; it is mere trifling, even with conjecture. As seven was a number of perfection, Balaam chose it on this occasion, because he intended to offer a grand sacrifice, and to offer a bullock and a ram upon each of the altars; the whole to be made a burnt-offering at the same time. And as he intended to offer seven bullocks and seven rams at the same time, it could not be conveniently done on one altar, therefore he ordered seven to be built. We need go no farther to find out his reasons.

Verse 3. *Stand by thy burnt-offering*— We have already seen that blessing and cursing in this way were considered as religious rites, and therefore must be always preceded by sacrifice. See this exemplified in the case of Isaac, before he blessed Jacob and Esau, Genesis 27, and the notes there. The venison that was brought to Isaac, of which he did eat, was properly the preparatory sacrifice.

Verse 7. *And he took up his parable*— מְשָלוֹ meshalo, see on chap.

21:27. All these oracular speeches of Balaam are in hemistich metre in the original. They are highly dignified, and may be considered as immediate poetic productions of the Spirit of God; for it is expressly said, ver. 5, that God put the word in Balaam's mouth, and that the Spirit of God came upon him, chap. 24:2.

Verse 8. *How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?*— It was granted on all hands that no incantations nor imprecations could avail, unless God concurred and ratified them. From God's communication to Balaam he saw that God was determined to bless and defend Israel, and therefore all endeavors to injure them must be in vain.

Verse 9. *From the top of the rocks I see him*— That is, from the high places of Baal where he went, chap. 22:41, that he might the more advantageously see the whole camp of Israel.

The people shall dwell alone— They shall ever be preserved as a distinct nation. This prophecy has been literally fulfilled through a period of 3300 years to the present day. This is truly astonishing.

Verse 10. *Let me die the death of the righteous*— Probably Balaam had some presentiment that he should be taken off by a premature death, and therefore he lodges this petition against it. The death of the righteous in those times implied being gathered to one's fathers in a good old age, having seen his children, and children's children; and to this, probably, the latter part of this petition applies: And let my last end be like his, (כַּמֹּהוּ וְתֵי אַחֲרֵיטִי uthehi acharithi chamohu, And let my POSTERITY be like his.) It has been generally supposed that Balaam is here praying for a happy death, such as true Christians die who die in the Lord; and in this way his words are generally applied; but I am satisfied this is not their meaning. The prayer, however, understood in the common way, is a good one, and may be offered to God profitably. A righteous man is one who is saved from his sins, who is justified and sanctified through the blood of the covenant, and who lives, not only an innocent, but also a holy and useful life. He who would die well should live well; for a bad death must be the issue of a bad life.

Verse 13. *Thou shalt see but the utmost part of them*— Balak thought that the sight of such an immense camp had intimidated Balaam, and this he might gather from what he said in the tenth verse: Who can count the dust of Jacob, etc.; he thought therefore that he might get Balaam to curse them in detached parties, till the whole camp should be devoted to destruction by successive execrations.

Verse 17. *What hath the Lord spoken?*— Balak himself now understood that Balaam was wholly under the influence of Jehovah, and would say nothing but what God commanded him; but not knowing Jehovah as Balaam did, he hoped that he might be induced to change his mind, and curse a people whom he had hitherto determined to bless.

Verse 19. *God is not a man, that he should lie*— This seems to be spoken to correct the foregoing supposition of Balak that God could change his mind. Even the heathen would not allow that their supreme god could be caught in a falsity. Hence AESCHYLUS, in *Prometh. vinct.* 1068:—

ψευδηγορειν γαρ ουκ επισταται στομα
το διον, αλλα παν επος τελει.

*“The mouth of Jove knows not to frame a lie;
But every word finds full accomplishment.”*

Verse 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel*— This is a difficult passage; for if we take the words as spoken of the people Israel, as their iniquity and their perverseness were almost unparalleled, such words cannot be spoken of them with strict truth. If we consider them as spoken of the patriarch Jacob and Israel, or of Jacob after he became Israel, they are most strictly true, as after that time a more unblemished and noble character (Abraham excepted) is not to be found in the page of history, whether sacred or profane; and for his sake, and for the sake of his father Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham, God is ever represented as favoring, blessing, and sparing a rebellious and undeserving people; see the note, “Genesis 49:33”. In this way, I think, this difficult text may be safely understood.

There is another way in which the words may be interpreted, which will give a good sense. **ἄσεν** not only signifies iniquity, but most frequently

trouble, labor, distress, and affliction; and these indeed are its ideal meanings, and iniquity is only an accommodated or metaphorical one, because of the pain, distress, etc., produced by sin. **עמל** amal, translated here perverseness, occurs often in Scripture, but is never translated perverseness except in this place. It signifies simply labor, especially that which is of an afflictive or oppressive kind. The words may therefore be considered as implying that God will not suffer the people either to be exterminated by the sword, or to be brought under a yoke of slavery. Either of these methods of interpretation gives a good sense, but our common version gives none.

Dr. Kennicott contends for the reading of the Samaritan, which, instead of **לֹא הִבִּיט** lo hibbit, he hath not seen, has **לֹא אִבַּט** lo abbit, I do not see, I do not discover any thing among them on which I could ground my curse. But the sense above given is to be preferred.

Verse 22. The strength of a unicorn.—**רֵאִים** reem and **רֵאִים** reim. It is generally allowed that there is no such beast in nature as the unicorn; i. e., a creature of the horse kind, with one long rich curled horn in the forehead. The creature painted from fancy is represented as one of the supporters of the royal arms of Great Britain. It is difficult to say what kind of beast is intended by the original word. The Septuagint translate the word **μονοκερως**, the unicorn, or one-horned animal; the Vulgate, sometimes, unicornus; and in the text rhinocerotis, by which the rhinoceros, a creature which has its name from the horn on its nose, is supposed to be meant. That no single-horned animal can be intended by the reem of Moses, is sufficiently evident from this, that Moses, speaking of Joseph, says, “he has the HORNS of A unicorn,” or reem, where the horns are spoken of in the plural, the animal in the singular. The creature referred to is either the rhinoceros, some varieties of which have two horns on the nose, or the wild bull, urus, or buffalo; though some think the beast intended is a species of goat; but the rhinoceros seems the most likely. There is literally a monoceros, or unicorn, with one large curled ivory horn growing horizontally out of his snout; but this is not a land animal, it is the modiodan or nurwal, a marine animal of the whale kind, a horn of which is now before me, measuring seven feet four inches; but I believe the rhinoceros is that intended by the sacred writers.

Verse 23. *There is no enchantment, etc.*— Because God has determined to save them, therefore no enchantment can prevail against them.

According to this time, etc.— I think this clause should be read thus: “As at this time it shall be told to Jacob and to Israel what God worketh;” i. e., this people shall always have prophetic information of what God is about to work. And indeed, they are the only people under heaven who ever had this privilege. When God himself designed to punish them because of their sins, he always forewarned them by the prophets; and also took care to apprise them of all the plots of their enemies against them.

Verse 24. *Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion*— לביא labi, the great, mighty, or old lion, the king of the forest, who is feared and respected by all the other beasts of the field; so shall Israel be the subduer and possessor of the whole land of Canaan. And as a young lion, ארי ari from ארה arah, to tear off, the predatory lion, or the lion in the act of seizing and tearing his prey;—the nations against whom the Israelites are now going shall be no more able to defend themselves against their attacks, than the feeblest beasts of the forest are against the attacks of the strong lion.

Verse 28. *Unto the top of Peor*— Probably the place where the famous Baal-peor had his chief temple. He appears to have been the Priapus of the Moabites, and to have been worshipped with the same obscene and abominable rites.

CHAPTER 24

Balaam, finding that God was determined to bless Israel, seeks no longer for enchantments, 1. The Spirit of God coming upon him, he delivers a most important prophetic parable, 2-9. Balak's anger is kindled against him, and he commands him to depart to his own country, 10, 11. Balaam vindicates his conduct, 12, 13; and delivers a prophecy relative to the future destruction of Moab by the Israelites, 14-17; also of Edom, 18, 19; of the Amalekites, 20; and of the Kenites, 21, 22. Predicts also the destruction of Asshur and Eber, by the naval power of Chittim, which should afterwards be itself destroyed, 23, 24. Balaam and Balak separate, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. *He went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments*— We have already had occasion to observe that the proper meaning of the word נחש nachash is not easily ascertained; see chap. 21:9, and see on Genesis 3:1. Here the plural נחשים nechashim is rendered enchantments; but it probably means no more than the knowledge of future events. When Balaam saw that it pleased God to bless Israel, he therefore thought it unnecessary to apply for any farther prophetic declarations of God's will as he had done before, for he could safely infer every good to this people, from the evident disposition of God towards them.

Verse 2. *The Spirit of God came upon him.*— This Divine afflatus he had not expected on the present occasion, but God had not yet declared the whole of his will.

Verse 3. *He took up his parable*— His prophetic declaration couched in highly poetic terms, and in regular metre, as the preceding were.

The man whose eyes are open— I believe the original שתם shethum, should be translated shut, not open; for in the next verse, where the opening of his eyes is mentioned, a widely different word is used, גלה

galah, which signifies to open or reveal. At first the eyes of Balaam were shut, and so closely too that he could not see the angel who withstood him, till God opened his eyes; nor could he see the gracious intentions of God towards Israel, till the eyes of his understanding were opened by the powers of the Divine Spirit. This therefore he mentions, we may suppose, with humility and gratitude, and to the credit of the prophecy which he is now about to deliver, that the Moabites may receive it as the word of God, which must be fulfilled in due season. His words, in their meaning, are similar to those of the blind man in the Gospel: “Once I was blind, but now I see.”

Verse 4. *Falling into a trance*— There is no indication in the Hebrew that he fell into a trance; these words are added by our translators, but they are not in the original. נפל *nophel* is the only word used, and simply signifies falling, or falling down, perhaps in this instance by way of religious prostration.

Verse 6. *Lign aloes which the Lord hath planted*— Or, as the tents which the Lord hath pitched; for it is the same word, אהלים *ohalim*, which is used in the 5th verse. But from other parts of Scripture we find that the word also signifies a species of tree, called by some the sandal tree, and by others the lignum or wood aloes. This tree is described as being eight or ten feet high, with very large leaves growing at the top; and it is supposed that a forest of those at some distance must bear some resemblance to a numerous encampment. As the word comes from the root אהל *ahal*, which signifies to spread or branch out, and therefore is applied to tents, because of their being extended or spread out on the ground; so when it is applied to trees it must necessarily mean such as were remarkable for their widely-extended branches; but what the particular species is, cannot be satisfactorily ascertained. By the Lord’s planting are probably meant such trees as grow independently of the cultivation of man. — *Nullis hominum cogentibus*; or, as Virgil expresses it,

Sponte sua quae se tollunt in luminis oras.

VIRG., Geor. ii., 47.

“Such as sprung up, spontaneously into the regions of light.”

As cedar trees— Gabriel Sionita, a very learned Syrian Maronite, who assisted in editing the Paris Polyglot, a man worthy of all credit, thus describes the cedars of Mount Lebanon, which he had examined on the spot:—

“The cedar grows on the most elevated part of the mountain, is taller than the pine, and so thick that five men together could scarcely fathom one. It shoots out its branches at ten or twelve feet from the ground; they are large, and distant from each other, and are perpetually green. The cedar distils a kind of gum, to which different effects are attributed. The wood of it is of a brown color, very solid, and incorruptible if preserved from wet. It bears a small apple, like to that of the pine.”

Deuteronomy la Roque relates some curious particulars concerning this tree, which he learned from the Maronites of Mount Libanus: “The branches grow in parallel rows round the tree, but lessen gradually from the bottom to the top, shooting out parallel to the horizon, so that the tree is, in appearance, similar to a cone. As the snows, which fall in vast quantities on this mountain, must necessarily, by their weight on such a vast surface, break down these branches, nature, or rather the God of nature, has so ordered it, that at the approach of winter, and during the snowy season, the branches erect themselves, and cling close to the body of the tree, and thus prevent any quantity of snow from lodging on them.”

Mr. Maundrell, who visited Mount Libanus in 1697, gives the following description of the cedars still growing there:—

“These noble trees grow among the snow, near the highest part of Lebanon, and are remarkable, as well for their own age and largeness as for those frequent allusions to them in the word of God. Some of them are very old, and of a prodigious bulk; others younger, and of a smaller size. Of the former I could reckon only sixteen, but the latter are very numerous. I measured one of the largest, and found it twelve yards and six inches in girth, and yet sound, and thirty-seven yards in the spread of its branches. At about five or six yards from the ground it was divided into five limbs, each of which was equal to a great tree.”-*Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, p. 142.

Verse 7. *He shall pour the water out of his buckets, etc.*— Here is a very plain allusion to their method of raising water in different parts of the East. By the well a tall pole is erected, which serves as a fulcrum to a very long lever, to the smaller end of which a bucket is appended. On the opposite end, which is much larger, are many notches cut in the wood, which serve as steps for a man, whose business it is to climb up to the fulcrum, in order to lower the bucket into the well, which, when filled, he raises by walking back on the opposite arm, till his weight brings the bucket above the well's mouth: a person standing by the well empties the bucket into a trench, which communicates with the ground intended to be watered.

His seed shall be in many waters— Another simple allusion to the sowing of rice. The ground must not only be well watered, but flooded, in order to serve for the proper growth of this grain. The rice that was sown in many waters must be the most fruitful. By an elegant and chaste metaphor all this is applied to the procreation of a numerous posterity.

His king shall be higher than Agag— This name is supposed to have been as common to all the Amalekitish kings as Pharaoh was to those of Egypt. But several critics, with the Septuagint, suppose that a small change has taken place here in the original word, and that instead of מֵאָגַג meagag, than Agag, we should read מִגְּוֹג miggog, than Gog. As Gog in Scripture seems to mean the enemies of God's people, then the promise here may imply that the true worshippers of the Most High shall ultimately have dominion over all their enemies.

Verse 8. *God brought him forth out of Egypt*— They were neither expelled thence, nor came voluntarily away. God alone, with a high hand and uplifted arm, brought them forth. Concerning the unicorn, see "Numbers 23:22".

Verse 9. *He couched, he lay down as a lion, etc.*— See the original terms explained chap. 23:24.

These oracles, delivered by Balaam, are evident prophecies of the victories which the Israelites should gain over their enemies, and of their firm possession of the promised land. They may also refer to the great victories to be obtained by the Lord Jesus Christ, that Lion of the tribe of Judah, over sin, death, and Satan, the grand enemies of the human race; and to that

most numerous posterity of spiritual children which should be begotten by the preaching of the Gospel.

Verse 11. *Lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honor.*— A bitter and impious sarcasm. “Hadst thou cursed this people, I would have promoted thee to great honor; but thou hast chosen to follow the directions of Jehovah rather than mine, and what will he do for thee?”

Verse 15. *The man whose eyes are open*— See on ver. 3. It seems strange that our version should have fallen into such a mistake as to render שֶׁתָּם shethum, open, which it does not signify, when the very sound of the word expresses the sense. The Vulgate has very properly preserved the true meaning, by rendering the clause *cujus obturatus est oculus*, he whose eyes are shut. The Targum first paraphrased the passage falsely, and most of the versions followed it.

Verse 17. *I shall see him, but not now*— Or, I shall see him, but he is not now. I shall behold him, but not nigh—I shall have a full view of him, but the time is yet distant. That is, The person of whom I am now prophesying does not at present exist among these Israelites, nor shall he appear in this generation. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel—a person eminent for wisdom, and formidable for strength and power, shall arise as king among this people. He shall smite the corners of Moab—he shall bring the Moabites perfectly under subjection; (See 2 Samuel 8:2;) and destroy all the children of Sheth. The original word קַרְקַר karkar, from קָרָה karah, to meet, associate, join, blend, and the like, is variously translated; -vastabit, he shall waste, VULGATE. — *προνομευσσει*, shall prey on, SEPT. — *יִשְׁלוֹט* 'yishlot, shall rule over, TARGUM. — Shall shake, ARABIC. — [P] barbend, shall put a yoke on, PERS. — Shall unwall, AINSWORTH, etc., etc.

The Targum of Onkelos translates the whole passage thus: “I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but he is not near. When a king shall arise from the house of Jacob, and the Messiah be anointed from the house of Israel, he shall slay the princes of Moab, and rule over all the children of men.”

The Jerusalem Targum is a little different: “A king shall arise from the house of Jacob, a redeemer and governor from the house of Israel, who

shall slay the chiefs of the Moabites, and empty out and destroy all the children of the East.”

Rabbi Moses ben Maimon has, in my opinion, perfectly hit the meaning of the prophecy in the following paraphrase of the text: “I shall see him, but not now. This is DAVID. — I shall behold him, but not nigh. This is the king MESSIAH. — A Star shall come out of Jacob. This is DAVID. — And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. This is the king MESSIAH. — And shall smite the corners of Moab. This is DAVID, (as it is written, 2 Samuel 8:2: And he smote Moab, casting them down to the ground.)-And shall destroy all the children of Sheth. This is the king MESSIAH, of whom it is written, (Psalm 72:8,) He shall have dominion from sea to sea.”

Verse 18. *And Edom shall be a possession*— That is, to DAVID: as it is said: “And all they of Edom became David’s servants;” 2 Samuel 8:14.

Seir also shall be a possession— That is, unto the king MESSIAH; as it is said: “And saviours shall come upon Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord’s;” Obad., Obidiah 21. See Ainsworth.

Verse 19. *Out of Jacob shall come, etc.*— This is supposed to refer to Christ, because of what is said Genesis 49:10.

It is exceedingly difficult to fix the true sense of this prophecy in all its particulars. Probably the star, ver. 17, is only an emblem of kingly power. Among the Egyptians a star is said to have been the symbol of the Divine Being. The scepter refers to the kingly power in exercise. The corners or outskirts may mean the petty Moabitish governments, as the Chaldee has understood the term. If karkar, which we translate utterly destroy, be not the name of a place here, as it is in Judges 8:10, (which is not very likely,) it may be taken in one of those senses assigned to it, (see on “Numbers 24:17”,) and signify the blending together the children of Sheth, that is, all the inhabitants of the earth; for so the children of Sheth must necessarily be understood, unless we consider it here as meaning some king of the Moabites, according to Grotius, or a city on the borders of Moab, according to Rabbi Nathan. As neither Israel nor the Messiah ever destroyed all the children of men, we must (in order to leave the children of Sheth what they are generally understood to be, all the inhabitants of the

world) understand the whole as a prophecy of the final universal sway of the scepter of Christ, when the middle wall of partition shall be broken down, and the Jews and Gentiles become one united, blended fold, under one shepherd and bishop of their souls.

I cannot think that the meteoric star which guided the wise men of the east to Bethlehem can be intended here; nor do I think that Peter refers to this prophecy when he calls Christ the day star, 2 Peter 1:19; nor that Revelation 2:28, where Christ is called the morning star, nor Revelation 22:16, where he is called the bright and morning star, refers at all to this prophecy of Balaam. Nor do I think that the false Christ who rose in the time of Adrian, and who called himself Barcochab, which literally signifies the son of a star, did refer to this prophecy. If he had, he must have defeated his own intention, because the SON of the star is not THE STAR that should arise, but at the utmost a descendant; and then, to vindicate his right to the Jewish throne, he must show that the person who was called the star, and of whom he pretended to be the son or descendant, had actually reigned before him. As the sun, moon, stars, planets, light, splendours, effulgence, day, etc., were always considered among the Asiatics as emblems of royalty, government, etc., therefore many, both men and women, had these names given to them as titles, surnames, etc. So the queen of Alexander the Great, called Roxana by the Greeks, was a Persian princess, and in her native tongue her name was [P] Roushen, splendor. Hadassah, who became queen to Ahasuerus, in place of the repudiated Vashti, and is called Esther by Europeans in general, was called in the language of Persia [P] Sitareh; from whence by corruption came both Esther, the Persian queen, and our word star. And to waive all farther examples, a Mohammedan prince, at first named Eesouf or Joseph, was called [A] Roushen Akhter when he was raised to the throne, which signifies a splendid or luminous star. This prince, by a joyful reverse of fortune, was brought from a gloomy prison and exalted to the throne of Hindostan; on which account the following couplet was made, in which there is a paronomasia or play on the name Roushen Akhter; and the last line alludes to the history of the patriarch Joseph, who was brought out of prison and exalted to the highest honors in Egypt.

[A]

*Roushen Akhter bood, aknoon mah shud:
Yousef az zendan ber amd shah shud.*

*“He was a bright star, but is now become a moon.
Joseph is brought out of prison, and is become a glorious king.”*

Verse 20. Amalek was the first of the nations— The most ancient and most powerful of all the nations or states then within the view of Balaam; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever, or his posterity **אָחַרִּיתּוֹ** acharitho, shall be destroyed, or shall utterly fail. This oracle began to be fulfilled by Saul, 1 Samuel 15:7, 8, who overthrew the Amalekites, and took their king, Agag, prisoner. Afterwards they were nearly destroyed by David, 1 Samuel 27:8, and they were finally exterminated by the sons of Simeon in the days of Hezekiah, 1 Chronicles 4:41-43; since that time they have ceased to exist as a people, and now no vestige of them remains on the face of the earth; so completely is their posterity cut off, according to this prophecy. The marginal reading does not appear to give the proper sense.

Verse 21. He looked on the Kenites— Commentators are not well agreed who the Kenites were. Dr. Dodd’s opinion is, I think, nearest to the truth. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, is called a priest or prince of Midian, Exodus 3:1, and in Judges 1:16 he is called a Kenite; we may infer, therefore, says he, that the Kenites and the Midianites were the same, or at least that the Kenites and the Midianites were confederate tribes. Some of these we learn from Judg. i., followed the Israelites, others abode still among the Midianites and Amalekites. When Saul destroyed the latter, we find he had no commission against the Kenites, 1 Samuel 15:6, for it appears that they were then a small and inconsiderable people; they had doubtless been wasted, as the text says, though by what means does not appear from history. On the other hand, it may be observed that the Midianites mentioned here lived close to the Dead Sea, at a great distance from the Midian where Jethro lived, which was near Horeb. Perhaps they were a colony or tribe that had migrated from the vicinity of Mount Sinai. It seems that at this time the Kenites occupied a very strong position: Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock; where there is a play on the original word **קֵי**, which signifies both a Kenite and a

nest. High rocks in these countries were generally used as their strong places.

Verse 22. *Until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.*— The Assyrians and Babylonians who carried away captive the ten tribes, 2 Kings 17:6, and the Jews into Babylon, 2 Kings 25., probably carried away the Kenites also. Indeed this seems pretty evident, as we find some Kenites mentioned among the Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity, 1 Chronicles 2:55.

Verse 23. *Who shall live when God doeth this!*— There are two senses in which these words may be taken: -1. That the event is so distant that none then alive could possibly live to see it. 2. That the times would be so distressing and desolating that scarcely any should be able to escape. The words are very similar to those of our Lord, and probably are to be taken in the same sense: “Wo to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days.”

Verse 24. *Ships shall come from the coast of Chittim*— Some think by Chittim the Romans, others the Macedonians under Alexander the Great, are meant. It is certain that the Romans did conquer the Assyrians, including all the people of Syria, Mesopotamia, etc., but Calmet strongly contends that by Chittim Macedonia is meant, and that the prophecy refers to the conquests of Alexander. Chittim was one of the sons of Javan, the son of Japheth, the son of Noah, Genesis 10:4; and his posterity, according to Josephus, Antiq., 1. iii., c. 22, settled in Cilicia, Macedonia, Cyprus, and Italy also; and therefore, says Mr. Ainsworth, the prophecy may imply both the troubles that befell the Assyrians and Jews by the Greeks and Seleucidae, in the troublous days of Antiochus.

And shall afflict Eber— Probably not the Hebrews, as some think, but the people on the other side the Euphrates, from עבר *abar*, to pass over, go beyond; all which people were discomfited, and their empire destroyed by Alexander the Great.

Verse 25. *And Balaam-returned to his place*— Intended to have gone to Mesopotamia, his native country, (see Deuteronomy 23:4,) but seems to have settled among the Midianites, where he was slain by the Israelites; see chap. 31:8.

THOUGH the notes in the preceding chapters have been extended to a considerable length, yet a few additional remarks may be necessary: the reader's attention is earnestly requested to the following propositions:—

1. It appears sufficiently evident from the preceding account that Balaam knew and worshipped the true God.
2. That he had been a true prophet, and appears to have been in the habit of receiving oracles from God.
3. That he practiced some illicit branches of knowledge, or was reputed by the Moabites as a sorcerer, probably because of the high reputation he had for wisdom; and we know that even in our own country, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, persons who excelled their contemporaries in wisdom were reputed as magicians.
4. That though he was a believer in the true God, yet he was covetous; he loved the wages of unrighteousness.
5. That it does not appear that in the case before us he wished to curse Israel when he found they were the servants of the true God.
6. That it is possible he did not know this at first. Balak told him that there was a numerous people come out of Egypt; and as marauders, wandering hordes, freebooters, etc., were frequent in those days, he might take them at first for such spoilers, and the more readily go at Balak's request to consult God concerning them.
7. That so conscientiously did he act in the whole business, that as soon as he found it displeased God he cheerfully offered to return; and did not advance till he had not only the permission, but the authority of God to proceed.
8. That when he came in view of the Israelitish camp he did not attempt to make use of any means of sorcery, evocation of spirits, necromantic spells, etc., to accomplish the wish of Balak.
9. That he did seek to find out the will of the true God, by using those means which God himself had prescribed, viz., supplication and prayer, and the sacrifice of the clean beasts.

10. That though he knew it would greatly displease Balak, yet he most faithfully and firmly told him all that God said on every occasion.

11. That notwithstanding his allowed covetous disposition, yet he refused all promised honors and proffered rewards, even of the most extensive kind, to induce him to act in any respect contrary to the declared will of God.

12. That God on this occasion communicated to him some of the most extraordinary prophetic influences ever conferred on man.

13. That his prophecies are, upon the whole, clear and pointed, and have been fulfilled in the most remarkable manner, and furnish a very strong argument in proof of Divine revelation.

14. That notwithstanding the wicked counsel given to the Midianites, the effects of which are mentioned in the following chapter, on which account he probably lost his life, (chap. 31:8,) the badness of this man's character has been very far overrated; and that it does not appear that he was either a hypocrite, false prophet, or a sorcerer in the common acceptance of the term, and that he risked even life itself in following and fulfilling the will of the Lord!

15. That though it is expressly asserted, chap. 31:16, and Revelation 2:14, that Israel's committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab was brought about by the evil counsel given by Balaam to cast this stumbling-block in their way, yet it does not appear from the text that he had those most criminal intentions which are generally attributed to him; for as we have already seen so much good in this man's character, and that this, and his love of money (and who thinks this a sin?) are almost the only blots in it, it must certainly be consistent with candour and charity to suggest a method of removing at least some part of this blame.

16. I would therefore simply say that the counsel given by Balaam to Balak might have been "to form alliances with this people, especially through the medium of matrimonial connections; and seeing they could not conquer them, to endeavor to make them their friends." Now, though this might not be designed by Balaam to bring them into a snare, yet it was a bad doctrine, as it led to the corruption of the holy seed, and to an unequal yoking with unbelievers; which, though even in a matrimonial way, is as

contrary to sound policy as to the word of God. See the notes on “Numbers 25:3” and See “Numbers 25:6”.

17. That it was the Moabitish women, not Balaam, that called the people to the sacrifice of their gods; and it argued great degeneracy and iniquity in the hearts of the people on so slight an invitation to join so suddenly so impure a worship, and so speedily to cast off the whole form of godliness, with every portion of the fear of the Almighty; therefore the high blame rests ultimately with themselves.

CHAPTER 25

While Israel abode in Shittim the people commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, 1. They become idolaters, 2. The anger of the Lord is kindled against them, and he commands the ringleaders to be hanged, 3, 4. Moses causes the judges to slay the transgressors, 5. Zimri, one of the Israelitish princes of the tribe of Simeon, brings a Midianitish princess, named Cozbi, into his tent, while the people are deploring their iniquity before the tabernacle, 6. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, incensed by this insult to the laws and worship of God, runs after them and pierces them both with a javelin, 7, 8. Twenty-four thousand die of the plague, sent as a punishment for their iniquity, 9. The Lord grants to Phinehas a covenant of peace and an everlasting priesthood, 10-13. The name and quality of the Israelitish man and Midianitish woman, 14, 15. God commands the Israelites to vex and smite the Midianites, who had seduced them to the worship of Baal-peor, 16-18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 3. *Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor*— The same as the Priapus of the Romans, and worshipped with the same obscene rites as we have frequently had occasion to remark.

The joining to Baal-peor, mentioned here, was probably what St. Paul had in view when he said, 2 Corinthians 6:14: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. And this joining, though done even in a matrimonial way, was nevertheless fornication, (see Revelation 2:14,) as no marriage between an Israelite and a Midianite could be legitimate, according to the law of God. See the propositions at the close of the preceding chapter.

Verse 4. *Take all the heads of the people, etc.*— Meaning the chiefs of those who had transgressed; as if he had said, “Assemble the chiefs and judges, institute an inquiry concerning the transgressors, and hang them who shall be found guilty before the Lord, as a matter required by his justice.” Against the sun—in the most public manner, and in daylight.

Dr. Kennicott has remarked that the Samaritan and Hebrew texts must be both taken together, to make the sense here complete: And the Lord said unto Moses, SPEAK unto all the heads of the people; AND LET THEM SLAY THE MEN THAT WERE JOINED TO BAAL-PEOR; and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, etc.

Verse 5. *Slay ye every one his men*— In the different departments where you preside over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, slay all the culprits that shall be found.

Verse 6. *One of the children of Israel*— Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief family in the tribe of Simeon, ver. 14, brought a Midianitish woman, Cozbi, daughter of Zur, head over a people of one of the chief families in Midian, ver. 15. The condition of these two persons plainly proves it to have been a matrimonial alliance, the one was a prince, the other a princess; therefore I must conclude that fornication or whoredom, in the common sense of the word, was not practiced on this occasion. The matter was bad enough, as the marriage was in flat opposition to the law of God; and we need not make it worse by representing the woman as a common prostitute, as the Vulgate and several others have done. In such a case this is absolutely inadmissible. Josephus positively says that Zimri had married Cozbi, *Antiq.*, 1. iv., cap. 6; and if he had not said so, still the thing is nearly self-evident. See “Numbers 24:25”.

The children of Israel, who were weeping— This aggravated the crime, because the people were then in a state of great humiliation, because of the late impure and illegal transactions.

Verse 8. *Thrust both of them through*— Inspired undoubtedly by the Spirit of the God of justice to do this act, which can never be a precedent on any common occasion. An act something similar occurs in our own history. In 1381, in the minority of Richard II., a most formidable insurrection took place in Kent and Essex; about 100, 000 men, chiefly under the direction of Wat Tyler, seized on London, massacred multitudes of innocent people, and were proceeding to the greatest enormities, when the king requiring a conference in Smithfield with the rebel leader, Sir William Walworth, then mayor of London, provoked at the insolence with which Tyler behaved to his sovereign, knocked him off his horse with his mace, after which he was instantly despatched. While his partisans were

bending their bows to revenge the death of their leader, Richard, then only sixteen years of age, rode up to them, and with great courage and presence of mind thus addressed them: "What, my people, will you kill your king! be not concerned for the death of your leader; follow me, and I will be your general." They were suddenly appeased, and the rebellion terminated. The action of Sir William Walworth was that of a zealot, of essential benefit at the time, and justified only by the pressing exigencies of the case.

Verse 9. *Those that died-were twenty and four thousand.*— St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 10:8, reckons only twenty-three thousand; though some MSS. and versions, particularly the latter Syriac and the Armenian, have twenty-four thousand, with the Hebrew text. Allowing the 24, 000 to be the genuine reading, and none of the Hebrew MSS. exhibit any various reading here, the two places may be reconciled thus: 1, 000 men were slain in consequence of the examination instituted ver. 4, and 23, 000 in consequence of the orders given ver. 5; making 24, 000 in the whole. St. Paul probably refers only to the latter number.

Verse 12. — 13. *My covenant of peace-of an everlasting priesthood*— As the word peace implied all kinds of blessings, both spiritual and temporal, it may mean no more here than the promise of God, to grant him and his family the utmost prosperity in reference to both worlds. The everlasting priesthood refers properly to the priesthood of Christ which was shadowed out by the priesthood under the law; no matter in what family it was continued. Therefore the כהנת עולם kehunnath olam, or eternal priesthood, does not merely refer to any sacerdotal ministrations which should be continued in the family of Phinehas, during the Mosaic dispensation, but to that priesthood of Christ typified by that of Aaron and his successors. The priesthood alone is everlasting, and a covenant or grant of that was made to Phinehas, and his descendants. The Jews reckon twelve high priests of the race of Phinehas, from this time to the days of Solomon, nine more from that time to the captivity, (see 1 Chronicles 6:4, 15,) and fifteen from their return to the time of Antiochus Eupator, the last of whom was Onias, slain by Lysias. Ezra, the great priest and scribe, was of this line, Ezra 7:1, 5. The family of Ithamar, uncle of Phinehas, had the priesthood for about 150 years; but it was restored to the family of Phinehas in the person of Zadok the priest, 1 Chronicles 6:50, in which it continued in the whole about 950 years. Probably the Maccabees were of

the same family; but though this is not certain, there is no evidence against it. See Calmet. God therefore sufficiently fulfilled his promise; he gave to him and his descendants almost the utmost temporal length that could be given of that priesthood which is, in its own nature, eternal. Here then the word עולם olam means, not a limited time, but what is eternal in its duration. See the note on “Genesis 21:33”.

Verse 17. *Vex the Midianites, etc.*— See this order fulfilled, chap. 31:1-20. Twelve thousand Israelites attacked the Midianites, destroyed all their cities, slew their five kings, every male, and every grown up woman, and took all their spoils.

CHAPTER 26

Moses and Eleazar are commanded to take the sum of the Israelites, in the plains of Moab, 1-4. Reuben and his posterity, 43, 730, ver. 5-11. Simeon and his posterity, 22, 200, ver. 12-14. Gad and his posterity, 40, 500, ver. 15-18. Judah and his posterity, 76, 500, ver. 19-22. Issachar and his posterity, 64, 300, ver. 23-25. Zebulun and his posterity, 60, 500, ver. 26, 27. Manasseh and his posterity, 52, 700, ver. 28-34. Ephraim and his posterity, 32, 500, ver. 35-37. Benjamin and his posterity, 45, 600, ver. 38-41. Dan and his posterity, 64, 400, ver. 42, 43. Asher and his posterity, 53, 400, ver. 44-47. Naphtali and his posterity, 45, 400, ver. 48-50. Total amount of the twelve tribes, 601, 730, ver. 51. The land is to be divided by lot, and how, 52-56. The Levites and their families, 57, 58. Their genealogy, 59-61. Their number, 23, 000, ver. 62. In this census or enumeration not one man was found, save Joshua and Caleb, of all who had been reckoned 38 years before, the rest having died in the wilderness, 63-65.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 2. *Take the sum of all the congregation*— After thirty-eight years God commands a second census of the Israelites to be made, to preserve the distinction in families, and to regulate the tribes previously to their entry into the promised land, and to ascertain the proportion of land which should be allowed to each tribe. For though the whole was divided by lot, yet the portions were so disposed that a numerous tribe did not draw where the lots assigned small inheritances. See verses 53-56, and also see the note on “Numbers 1:1”.

Verse 10. *Together with Korah*— The Samaritan text does not intimate that Korah was swallowed up, but that he was burnt, as appears in fact to have been the case. And the earth swallowed them up, what time that company died; and the fire devoured Korah with the two hundred and fifty men, who became a sign.

Verse 11. *The children of Korah died not.*— It is difficult to reconcile this place with chap. 16:27, 31-33, where it seems to be intimated that not only the men, but the wives, and the sons, and the little ones of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were swallowed up by the earthquake; see especially ver. 27, collated with 16:33. But the text here expressly says, The children of Korah died not; and on a close inspection of 16:27 of the above-mentioned chapter, we shall find that the sons and the little ones of Dathan and Abiram alone are mentioned. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out-and their wives, and their sons, and their little ones. Here is no mention of the children of Korah, they therefore escaped, while it appears those of Dathan and Abiram perished with their fathers. See the note on “Numbers 16:30”.

Verse 51. *These were the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty.*— The following comparative statement will show how much some of the tribes had increased, and others had diminished, since the enumeration in chap. i.

Reuben 43, 730 to 46, 500=2, 770 decrease

Simeon 22, 200 to 59, 300 = 37, 100 decrease

Gad 40, 500 to 45, 650 5, 150 = decrease

Judah 76, 500 to 74, 600 1, 900 = increase

Issachar 64, 300 to 54, 400 = 9, 900 increase

Zebulun 60, 500 to 57, 400 = 3, 100 increase

Manasseh 52, 700 to 32, 200 = 20, 500 increase

Ephraim 32, 500 to 40, 500 = 8, 000 decrease

Benjamin 45, 600 to 35, 400 = 10, 200 increase

Dan 64, 400 to 62, 700 = 1, 700 increase

Asher 53, 400 to 41, 500 = 11, 900 increase

Naphtali 45, 40 53, 400 = 8, 000 decrease

Total 601, 730 to 603, 550 = 1, 820 decrease on the whole, in 38 years.

Decrease in all, 61, 020. Increase in all, 59, 200.

Let it be observed, 1. That among these there was not a man of the former census, save Joshua and Caleb, see ver. 64, 65. 2. That though there was an increase in seven tribes of not less than 74, 800 men, yet so great was the decrease in the other five tribes, that the balance against the present census is 1, 820, as appears above: thus we find that there was an increase of 601, 728 from 603, 550 in the space of thirty-eight years.

Notwithstanding the amazing increase in some and decrease in other tribes, the same sort of proportion is preserved in the east, west, north, and south divisions, as before; so as to keep the division of Judah, which was always in the front or van, the largest; and the division of Dan, which was always in the rear, the next in number. But it is worthy of remark that as they are now, properly speaking, to commence their grand military operations, so their front, or advanced division, is increased from 186, 400 to 201, 300; and their rear from 157, 600 to 163, 200. The first division is strengthened 14, 900 men, and the last division 5, 600 men. The reasons for this are sufficiently obvious.

Mr. Ainsworth has a curious remark on the number of families in the 12 tribes. "Here are families

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Of Manasseh 8 | 7. Of Reuben 4 |
| 2. Of Benjamin 7 | 8. Of Issachar 4 |
| 3. Of Gad 7 | 9. Of Ephraim 4 |
| 4. Of Simeon 5 | 10. Of Naphtali 4 |
| 5. Of Judah 5 | 11. Of Zebulun 3 |
| 6. Of Asher 5 | 12. Of Dan 1 |

"In all 57; to whom if we add the 12 patriarchs, and Jacob their father, the whole number is 70, the exact number of the souls in Jacob's house that went down to Egypt, Genesis 46:27." In a variety of things in this ancient economy there is a most surprising proportion kept up, which never could have been a fortuitous effect of general causes. But proportion, harmony, and order distinguish all the works of God, both in the natural and moral world.

Verse 55. *The land shall be divided by lot*— The word גורל goral, translated lot, is supposed by some to signify the stone or pebble formerly used for the purpose of what we term casting lots. The word [AS] hlot is Anglo-Saxon, from [AS] to divide, or portion out, i. e., fortuitously: it answers to the Greek κληρος, which some think comes from κλαω to break; because the lot, being a sort of appeal to God, (“The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord,” Proverbs 16:33,) broke off all contentions and litigations relative to the matter in dispute. From this original division of the promised land by lot to the children of Israel, all portions, appointments, offices, shares, or divisions in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters, were termed lots. So in the New Testament, the word κληρος, lot, is used to signify a portion of spiritual blessedness, and κληρονομια, a division by lot, an inheritance; and κληροι, the lotted or appointed persons to different works, shares, etc.; hence our word clergy, κληροι, persons appointed by lot to a lot, portion, or inheritance; see the case of Matthias, Acts 1:26. Persons thus appointed were by accommodation termed inheritors, because originally, when there could be no claims of exclusive right, all lands where a wandering tribe chose to take up its residence were divided by lot, as the promised land in the case before us. So Judah says to Simeon his brother, Judges 1:3: “Come up with me into my lot.” And as God was ever supposed to be the whole disposer in such matters, whatever fell out in the course of God’s providence was called a lot. “This is the lot of them that rob us;” Isaiah 17:14. “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter;” Acts 8:21. A lot in the promised land was evidently typical of a place in eternal glory. “That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance (κληρον, a lot) among them that are sanctified;” Acts 26:18. “Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance, κληρου, of the lot) of the saints in light;” Colossians 1:12. “Which is the earnest of our inheritance, (κληρονομιας, of our allotted portion;”) Ephesians 1:4. “What is the riches of the glory of his inheritance,” (κληρονομιας, allotted portion;) Ephesians 1:18. As therefore the promised land was divided by lot to the believing Israelites, God determining the lot as he saw good, none of the people having any claim on or right to it; so the kingdom of heaven is a lot given by the mere good will of God to them that believe and obey him; for as unbelief and disobedience threw 600, 000 people out of the inheritance of the promised land; so none who disbelieve God’s word, and rebel against his authority,

shall ever enter into the kingdom of heaven. — See Ainsworth. These things happened unto them for examples: see then, reader, that thou fall not after the same example of unbelief.

CHAPTER 27

The daughters of Zelophehad claim their inheritance, 1-4. Moses brings their case before the Lord, 5. He allows their claim, 6, 7; and a law is made to regulate the inheritance of daughters, 8-11. Moses is commanded to go up to Mount Abarim, and view the promised land, 12; is apprised of his death, 13; and because he did not sanctify God at the waters of Meribah, he shall not enter into it, 14. Moses requests the Lord to appoint a person to supply his place as leader of th Israelites, 15-17. God appoints a Joshua, commands Moses to lay his hands upon him, to set him before Eleazar the priest, and give him a charge in the sight of the people, 18-20. Eleazar shall ask counsel for him by Urim, and at his command shall the Israelites go out and come in, 21. Moses does as the Lord commanded him, and consecrates Joshua, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 1. *The daughters of Zelophehad*— The singular case of these women caused an additional law to be made to the civil code of Israel, which satisfactorily ascertained and amply secured the right of succession in cases of inheritance. The law, which is as reasonable as it is just, stands thus: 1. On the demise of the father the estate goes to the sons; 2. If there be no son, the daughters succeed; 3. If there be no daughter, the brothers of the deceased inherit; 4. If there be no brethren or paternal uncles, the estate goes to the brothers of his father; 5. If there be no grand uncles or brothers of the father of the deceased, then the nearest akin succeeds to the inheritance. Beyond the fifth degree the law does not proceed, because as the families of the Israelites were kept distinct in their respective tribes, there must always be some who could be called kinsmen, and were really such, having descended without interruption from the patriarch of the tribe.

Verse 7. *Thou shalt surely give them-an inheritance among their father's brethren*— There is a curious anomaly here in the Hebrew text

which cannot be seen in our translation. In Hebrew they, them, and their, you, ye, and your, are both of the masculine and feminine genders, according as the nouns are to which they are affixed; but these words are of no gender in English. In this verse, speaking of the brethren of the father of those women, the masculine termination **הם** hem, THEIR, is used instead of the feminine, **הן** hen, governed by **בנות** benoth, daughters. So **להם** lahem, to THEM, and **אביהם** abihem, THEIR fathers, masculine, are found in the present text, instead of **להן** lahen and **אביהן** abihen, feminine. Interpreters have sought for a hidden meaning here, and they have found several, whether hidden here or not. One says, “the masculine gender is used because these daughters are treated as if they were heirs male.” Another, “that it is because of their faith and conscientious regard to the ancient customs, and to keep the memory of their father in being, which might well benefit men.” Another, “that it signifies the free gift of God in Christ, where there is neither male nor female, bond or free, for all are one in Christ;” and so on, for where there is no rule there is no end to conjecture. Now the plain truth is, that the masculine is in the present printed text a mistake for the feminine. The Samaritan, which many think by far the most authentic copy of the Pentateuch, has the feminine gender in both places; so also have upwards of fourscore of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi. Therefore all the curious reasons for this anomaly offered by interpreters are only serious trifling on the blunder of some heedless copyists.

While on the subject of mysterious reasons and meanings, some might think it unpardonable if I passed by the mystery of the fall, recovery, and full salvation of man, signified, as some will have it, by the names of Zelophehad and his daughters. “1. Zelophehad’s daughters, claiming a portion in the promised land, may represent believers in Christ claiming an inheritance among the saints in light. 2. These five virgins may be considered as the five wise virgins, (Matthew 25:1-10,) who took oil in their vessels with their lamps, and consequently are types of those who make a wise provision for their eternal state. 3. They are examples of encouragement to weak and destitute believers, who, though they are orphans in this world, shall not be deprived of their heavenly inheritance. 4. Their names are mysterious; for Zelophehad, **צלפחד** TSELOPHCHAD, signifies the shadow of fear or dread. His first daughter, **מחלה** MACHLAH,

infirmity; the second, **נעה** NOAH, wandering; the third, **חגלה** CHOGLAH, turning about or dancing for joy; the fourth, **מלכה** MILCAH, a queen; the fifth, **תרצה** TIRTSAH, well-pleasing or acceptable. By these names we may observe our reviving by grace in Christ; for we are all born of the shadow of fear, (Tselophchad,) being brought forth in sin, and through fear of death being all our life time subject to bondage, Hebrews 2:15. This begets (Machlah) infirmity or sickness-grief of heart for our estate. After which (Noah) wandering about for help and comfort we find it in Christ, by whom our sorrow is turned into joy (Choglah.) He communicates of his royalty (Milcah) to us, making us kings and priests unto God and his Father, Revelation 1:6. So we shall at last be presented unto him glorious and without blemish, being (Tirtsah) well-pleasing and acceptable in his sight.” This is a specimen of pious **INGENUITY**, which has been endeavoring to do the work of an **EVANGELIST** in the Church of God from the time of Origen to the present day.

Verse 12. *Get thee up into this Mount Abarim*— The mountain which Moses was commanded to ascend was certainly Mount Nebo, see Deuteronomy 32:49, etc., which was the same as Pisgah, see Deuteronomy 34:1. The mountains of Abarim, according to Dr. Shaw, are a long ridge of frightful, rocky, precipitous hills, which are continued all along the eastern coast of the Dead Sea, as far as the eye can reach. As in Hebrew **עבר** abar signifies to pass over, Abarim here probably signifies passages; and the ridge in this place had its name in all likelihood from the passage of the Israelites, as it was opposite to these that they passed the Jordan into the promised land.

Verse 14. *Ye rebelled against my commandment*— See the notes on “Numbers 20:12”.

Verse 16. *The Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh*— See the notes on “Numbers 16:22”.

Verse 17. *That the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.*— This is a beautiful expression, and shows us in what light Moses viewed himself among his people. He was their shepherd; he sought no higher place; he fed and guided the flock of God under the

direction of the Divine Spirit, and was faithful in all his Master's house. To this saying of Moses our Lord alludes, Matthew 9:36.

Verse 18. *In whom is the spirit*— This must certainly mean the Spirit of God; and because he was endued with this Spirit, therefore he was capable of leading the people. How miserably qualified is that man for the work of God who is not guided and influenced by the Holy Ghost! God never chooses a man to accomplish his designs but that one whom he himself has qualified for the work.

Verse 20. *And thou shalt put, etc.*— מְחֹדֵעָךְ mechodecha, of thine honor or authority upon him. Thou shalt show to the whole congregation that thou hast associated him with thyself in the government of the people.

Verse 21. *Eleazar the priest shall ask counsel for him*— Here was a remarkable difference between him and Moses. God talked with Moses face to face; but to Joshua only through the medium of the high priest.

Verse 23. *He laid his hands upon him*— As a proof of his being appointed to and qualified for the work. So at the word of Joshua they were to go out, and at his word to come in, ver. 21. And thus he was a type of our blessed Lord as to his mediatorial office, and Divine appointment as man to the work of our salvation; and to this circumstance of the appointment of Joshua to this work, and his receiving of Moses's honor and glory, St. Peter seems to refer in these words, 2 Peter 1:16, 17: "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; HEAR HIM." See Matthew 17:5. But one infinitely greater than either Moses or Joshua is here.

CHAPTER 28

All the offerings of God to be offered in their due season, 1, 2. The continual burnt-offering for the morning, 3-6; and its drink-offering, 7. The continual burnt-offering for the evening, 8. The offerings for the Sabbath, 9, 10. The offerings for the beginning of each month, 11-15. Repetition of the ordinances concerning the passover, 16-25. Ordinances concerning the day of first-fruits or pentecost, 26-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 2. *Command the children of Israel, etc.*— It is not easy to account for the reason of the introduction of these precepts here, which had been so circumstantially delivered before in different parts of the books of Exodus and Leviticus. It is possible that the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly services had been considerably interrupted for several years, owing to the unsettled state of the people in the wilderness, and that it was necessary to repeat these laws for two reasons: 1. Because they were now about to enter into the promised land, where these services must be established and constant. 2. Because the former generations being all dead, multitudes of the present might be ignorant of these ordinances.

In their due season— Moses divides these offerings into:—

1. **DAILY.** The morning and evening sacrifices: a lamb each time, ver. 3, 4.
2. **WEEKLY.** The Sabbath offerings, two lambs of a year old, ver. 9, etc.
3. **MONTHLY.** At the beginning of each month two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of a year old, and a kid for a sin-offering, ver. 11, etc.
4. **ANNUAL.** 1. The passover to last seven days; the offerings, two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of a year old, and a he-goat for a sin-offering, ver. 16, etc. 2. The day of **FIRST-FRUITS.** The sacrifices, the same as on the beginning of the month, ver. 26, etc. With these sacrifices were offered libations, or drink-offerings of strong wine, ver. 7, 14, and minchahs, or meat-offerings, composed of fine flour mingled with oil, ver.

8, 12, etc. For an ample account of all these offerings, see the notes on Lev. vii and Exodus xii.

Verse 7. *Strong wine*— Sikera; see the note on “Leviticus 10:9”, where this is largely explained.

Verse 26. *Day of the first-fruits*— Called also the feast of weeks, and the feast of pentecost. See it explained “Exodus 23:14”, and See “Leviticus 23:15”.

Verse 31. *Without blemish*— This is to be understood as applying, not only to the animals, but also to the flour, wine, and oil; every thing must be perfect in its kind.

CHAPTER 29

The feast of trumpets on the first day of the seventh month, and its sacrifices, 1-6. The feast of expiation, or annual atonement, on the tenth day of the same month, with its sacrifices, 7-11. The feast of tabernacles, held on the fifteenth day of the same month, with its eight days' offerings, 12. The offerings of the first day, thirteen bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs, and one kid, 13-16. The offerings of the second day, twelve bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs, and one kid, 17-19. The offerings of the third day, eleven bullocks; the rest as before, 20-22. The offerings of the fourth day, ten bullocks; the rest as before, 23-25. The offerings of the fifth day, nine bullocks, etc., 26-28. The offerings of the sixth day, eight bullocks, etc., 29-31. The offerings of the seventh day, seven bullocks, etc., 32-34. The offerings of the eighth day, one bullock, one ram, seven lambs, and one goat, 35-38. These sacrifices to be offered, and feasts to be kept, besides vows, freewill-offerings, etc., etc., 39. Moses announces all these things to the people, 40.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. *And in the seventh month, etc.*— This was the beginning of their civil year, and was a time of great festivity, and was ushered in by the blowing of trumpets. It answers to a part of our September. In imitation of the Jews different nations began their new year with sacrifices and festivity. The ancient Egyptians did so; and the Persians still celebrate their [P] nawi rooz, or new year's day, which they hold on the vernal equinox. The first day of the year is generally a time of festivity in all civilized nations. On this day the Israelites offered one young bullock, one ram, seven lambs, and a kid, for a sin-offering, besides minchahs or meat-offerings.

Verse 7. *On the tenth day*— See the notes on “Leviticus 16:29”; and See “Leviticus 23:24”.

Verse 12. *On the fifteenth day of the seventh month*— On this day there was to be a solemn assembly, and for seven days sacrifices were to be

offered; on the first day thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs. On each succeeding day one bullock less, till on the seventh day there were only seven, making in all seventy. What an expensive service! How should we magnify God for being delivered from it! Yet these were all the taxes they had to pay. At the public charge there were annually offered to God, independently of trespass-offerings and voluntary vows, fifteen goats, twenty-one kids, seventy-two rams, one hundred and thirty-two bullocks, and eleven hundred and one lambs! But how little is all this when compared with the lambs slain every year at the passover, which amounted in one year to the immense number of 255, 600 slain in the temple itself, which was the answer that Cestius, the Roman general, received when he asked the priests how many persons had come to Jerusalem at their annual festivals; the priests, numbering the people by the lambs that had been slain, said, “twenty-five myriads, five thousand and six hundred.”-For an account of the feast of tabernacles, see on “Leviticus 23:34”.

Verse 35. *On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly*— This among the Jews was esteemed the chief or high day of the feast, though fewer sacrifices were offered on it than on the others; the people seem to have finished the solemnity with a greater measure of spiritual devotion, and it was on this day of the feast that our blessed Lord called the Jews from the letter to the spirit of the law, proposing himself as the sole fountain whence they could derive the streams of salvation, John 7:37. On the subject of this chapter see the notes on Leviticus 12., 16. and 23.

CHAPTER 30

The law concerning vows of men, 1, 2. Of women under age, and in what cases the father may annul them, 3-5. The vows of a wife, and in what cases the husband may annul them, 6-8. The vows of a widow, or divorced woman, in what cases they may be considered either as confirmed or annulled, 9-15. Recapitulation of these ordinances, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 2. *If a man vow a vow*— A vow is a religious promise made to God. Vows were of several kinds:- 1. Of abstinence or humiliation, see ver. 13; 2. Of the Nazarite, see chap. vi.; 3. Of giving certain things or sacrifices to the Lord, Leviticus 7:16; 4. Of alms given to the poor, see Deuteronomy 23:21.

The law in this chapter must have been very useful, as it both prevented and annulled rash vows, and provided a proper sanction for the support and performance of those that were rationally and piously made. Besides, this law must have acted as a great preventive of lying and hypocrisy. If a vow was properly made, a man or woman was bound, under penalty of the displeasure of God, to fulfill it.

Verse 3. *In her youth*— That is, say the rabbins, under twelve years of age; and under thirteen in case of a young man. Young persons of this age were considered to be under the authority of their parents, and had consequently no power to vow away the property of another. A married woman was in the same circumstances, because she was under the authority of her husband. If however the parents or the husband heard of the vow, and objected to it in the same day in which they heard of it, (ver. 5,) then the vow was annulled; or, if having heard of it, they held their peace, this was considered a ratification of the vow.

A rash vow was never to be kept; “for,” says Philo, and common sense and justice say the same, “he who commits an unjust action because of his

vow adds one crime to another, 1. By making an unlawful vow; 2. By doing an unlawful action.”

Verse 12. *Concerning the bond of her soul*— Her life is at stake if she fulfill not the obligation under which she has laid herself.

Verse 16. *These are the statutes*— It is very probable that this law, like that concerning the succession of daughters, (chap. 27.,) rose from the exigency of some particular case that had just then occurred.

Making vows, in almost any case, is a dangerous business; they seldom do any good, and often much evil. He who does not feel himself bound to do what is fit, right, and just, from the standing testimony of God’s word, is not likely to do it from any obligation he may lay upon his own conscience. If God’s word lack weight with him, his own will prove lighter than vanity. Every man who professes the Christian religion is under the most solemn obligation to devote body, soul, and spirit to God, not only to the utmost extent of his powers, but also as long as he exists. Being baptized, and receiving the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, are additional ratifications of the great, general, Christian vow; but every true follower of Christ should always remember, and frequently renew, his covenant with God.

CHAPTER 31

The command of the Lord to make war on the Midianites, 1, 2. One thousand men are chosen out of each of the twelve tribes, and sent with Phinehas against the Midianites, 3-6. They slay all the males, 7; their five kings and Balaam, 8. They take all the women captives, with the flocks and goods, 9; burn their cities, and bring away the spoil, 10, 11. They bring the captives, etc., to Moses, who is wroth with the officers for sparing the women, who had formerly been the cause of their transgression and punishment, 12-16. He commands all the male children and all the grown up females to be slain, 17, 18. How the soldiers were to purify themselves, 19, 20; and the different articles taken in war, 21-24. They are commanded to take the sum of the prey, to divide it into two parts; one for the 12, 000 warriors, and the other for the rest of the congregation, 25-27. One of 500, both of persons and cattle, of the share of the warriors, to be given to the Lord, 28, 29; and one part of fifty, of the people's share, to be given to the Levites, 30. The sum of the prey remaining after the above division; sheep 675, 000, beeves 72, 000, asses 61, 000, young women 32, 000, ver. 31-35. How the soldiers' part was divided, 36-40. How the part belonging to the congregation was divided, 41-47. The officers report that they had not lost a man in this war, 48, 49. They bring a voluntary oblation to God, of gold and ornaments, 50, 51; the amount of which was 16, 750 shekels, 52, 53. Moses and Eleazar bring the gold into the tabernacle for a memorial, 54.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 2. Gathered unto thy people.— Where? Not in the grave surely. Moses was gathered with none of them, his burial-place no man ever knew. “But being gathered unto one's people means dying.” It does imply dying, but it does not mean this only. The truth is, God considers all those who are dead to men in a state of conscious existence in another world. Therefore he calls himself the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; now God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; because all LIVE to HIM, whether dead to men or not. Moses therefore was to be gathered to

his people-to enter into that republic of Israel which, having died in the faith, fear, and love of God, were now living in a state of conscious blessedness beyond the confines of the grave. See the note on “Genesis 25:8”, and See “Genesis 49:33”.

Verse 3. *Avenge the Lord of Midian.*— It was God’s quarrel, not their own, that they were now to take up. These people were idolaters; idolatry is an offense against GOD; the civil power has no authority to meddle with what belongs to Him, without especial directions, certified in the most unequivocal way. Private revenge, extension of territory, love of plunder, were to have no place in this business; the Lord is to be avenged; and through HIM the children of Israel, (ver. 2,) because their souls as well as their bodies had been well nigh ruined by their idolatry.

Verse 6. *A thousand of every tribe*— Twelve thousand men in the whole. And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar; some think he was made general in this expedition, but this is not likely. The ark and its contents must proceed to this battle, because the battle was the Lord’s, and he dwelt between the cherubim over the ark; and Phinehas, who had before got a grant in the eternal priesthood, was chosen to accompany the ark in place of his father Eleazar, who was probably now too far advanced in years to undergo the fatigue. Who then was general? Joshua, without doubt, though not here mentioned, because the battle being the Lord’s, he alone is to have the supreme direction, and all the glory. Besides, it was an extraordinary war, and not conducted on the common principle, for we do not find that peace was offered to the Midianites, and that they refused it; see Deuteronomy 20:10, etc. In such a case only hostilities could lawfully commence; but they were sinners against GOD; the cup of their iniquity was full, and God thought proper to destroy them. Though a leader there certainly was, and Joshua was probably that leader, yet because God, for the above reason, was considered as commander-in-chief, therefore no one else is mentioned; for it is evident that the sole business of Phinehas was to take care of the holy instruments and to blow with the trumpet.

Verse 8. *Balaam-they slew with the sword.*— This man had probably committed what St. John calls the sin unto death—a sin which God punishes with temporal death, while at the same time he extends mercy to the soul. See the remarks at “Numbers 24:25”.

Verse 17. *Kill every male among the little ones*— For this action I account simply on the principle that God, who is the author and supporter of life, has a right to dispose of it when and how he thinks proper; and the Judge of all the earth can do nothing but what is right. Of the women killed on this occasion it may be safely said, their lives were forfeited by their personal transgressions; and yet even in this case there can be little doubt that God showed mercy to their souls. The little ones were safely lodged; they were taken to heaven and saved from the evil to come.

Verse 23. *The water of separation*— The water in which the ashes of the red heifer were mingled; See “Numbers 8:7”; See “Numbers 19:2”, etc. Garments, whether of cloth or skins, were to be washed. Gold, silver, brass, iron, tin, and lead, to pass through the fire, probably to be melted down.

Verse 28. *And levy a tribute unto the Lord-one soul of five hundred, etc.*— The person to be employed in the Lord’s service, under the Levites—the cattle either for sacrifice, or for the use of the Levites, ver. 30. Some monsters have supposed that one out of every five hundred of the captives was offered in sacrifice to the Lord! but this is abominable. When God chose to have the life of a man, he took it in the way of justice, as in the case of Midianites above, but never in the way of sacrifice.

Verse 32. *The booty*— It appears from the enumeration here that the Israelites, in this war against the Midianites, took 32, 000 female prisoners, 61, 000 asses, 72, 000 beeves, 675, 000 sheep and small cattle; besides the immense number of males who fell in battle, and the women and children who were slain by the Divine command, ver. 17. And it does not appear that in this expedition, a single man of Israel fell! This was naturally to be expected, because the battle was the Lord’s, ver. 49.

As the booty was divided into two equal parts, ver. 22, one for the soldiers employed in the expedition, and the other for those who, being equally willing to be employed, were ordered to stay in the camp; so each of the parties in this booty was to give a certain proportion to the Lord. The soldiers to give to the Lord one out of every five hundred persons, beeves, asses, and sheep, ver. 28. The people, who by staying at home risked nothing, and had no fatigue, were to give one out of fifty of the above, ver. 30. The booty, its divisions among the soldiers and people, the

proportion given by each to the Lord and to the Levites, will be seen in one view by the following table, which I copy from Houbigant.

Total of sheep — 675, 000
 To the soldiers — 337, 500.
 To the Lord from the soldiers — 675.
 To the people — 337, 500.
 To the Levites from the people. — 6, 750.

Total of beeves — 72, 00
 To the soldiers — 36, 000.
 To the Lord from the soldiers — 72.
 To the people — 36, 000.
 To the Levites from the people — 720.

Total of asses — 1, 000
 To the soldiers — 30, 500.
 To the Lord from the soldiers — 61.
 To the people — 30, 500.
 To the Levites from the people — 610.

Total of persons — 32, 000
 To the soldiers.. 16, 000.
 To the Lord from the soldiers — 32.
 To the Levites from the people — 320.
 To the people — 16, 000.

In this table the booty is equally divided between the people and the soldiers; a five-hundredth part being given to the Lord, and a fiftieth part to the Levites.

Verse 50. *We have-brought an oblation for the Lord*— So it appears there was a great deal of booty taken which did not come into the general account; and of this the soldiers, of their own will, made a very extensive offering to God, because he had preserved them from falling in battle. That not one man should have been slain is a most extraordinary circumstance, and powerfully marks the peculiar superintendence of God's especial providence. The Midianites must certainly have made some resistance; but that was ineffectual, because it was against the Lord. When any nation undertakes a crusade against those whom they are pleased to call the

Lord's enemies, let them bring from the contest this proof of their Divine mission, viz., that not one man of them is either lost or missing; and then, and not till then, shall we believe that God hath sent them.

To make an atonement for our souls— That is, to make an acknowledgment to God for the preservation of their lives. The gold offered on this occasion amounted to 16, 750 shekels, equal to 37, 869, 16s. 5d. of our money. See the note on “Exodus 25:39”, where the true value of the shekel is given, and a rule laid down to reduce it to English money.

CHAPTER 32

The Reubenites and Gadites request Moses to give them their inheritance on this side of Jordan, 1-5. Moses expostulates with and reproves them, 6-15. They explain themselves, and propose conditions, with which Moses is satisfied—they are to build cities for their wives and children, and folds for their cattle, and go over Jordan armed with the other tribes, and fight against their enemies till the land is subdued; after which they are to return, 16-27. Moses proposes the business to Eleazar, Joshua, and the elders, 28-30. The Gadites and Reubenites promise a faithful observance of the conditions, 31, 32; on which Moses assigns to them, and the half tribe of Manasseh, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan, 33. The cities built by the Gadites, 34-36. The cities built by the Reubenites, 37, 38. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, expel the Amorites from Gilead, 39, which Moses grants to them, 40. Jair, the son of Manasseh, takes the small towns of Gilead, 41. And Nobah takes Kenath and its villages, 42.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 3. Ataroth, and Dibon, etc.— The places mentioned here belonged to Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, which being conquered by the Israelites, constituted ever after a part of their territories, ver. 33.

Verse 5. *Let this land be given unto thy servants*— Because it was good for pasturage, and they had many flocks, ver. 1.

Verse 12. *Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite*— It was Jephunneh that was the Kenezite, and not Caleb. Kenaz was probably the father of Jephunneh.

Verse 16. *We will build-cities for our little ones*— It was impossible for these, numerous as they might be, to build cities and fortify them for the defense of their families in their absence. Calmet supposes they meant no more than repairing the cities of the Amorites which they had lately taken;

which work might have been very easily accomplished in the time which they spent on this side of Jordan, before they went over with their brethren, to put them in possession of the land.

Verse 17. *Because of the inhabitants of the land.*— These were the Ammonites, Moabites, Idumeans, and the remains of the Midianites and Amorites. But could the women and children even keep the defenced cities, when placed in them? This certainly cannot be supposed possible. Many of the men of war must of course stay behind. In the last census, chap. xxvi., the tribe of Reuben consisted of 43, 730 men; the tribe of Gad, 40, 500; the tribe of Manasseh, 52, 700; the half of which is 26, 350. Add this to the sum of the other two tribes, and the amount is 110, 580. Now from Joshua 4:13 we learn that of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, only 40, 000 armed men passed over Jordan to assist their brethren in the reduction of the land: consequently the number of 70, 580 men were left behind for the defense of the women, the children, and the flocks. This was more than sufficient to defend them against a people already panic struck by their late discomfitures and reverses.

Verse 34. *The children of Gad built-Aroer*— This was situated on the river Arnon, Deuteronomy 2:36; 2 Kings 10:33. It was formerly inhabited by the Emim, a warlike and perhaps gigantic people. They were expelled by the Moabites; the Moabites by the Amorites; and the Amorites by the Israelites. The Gadites then possessed it till the captivity of their tribe, with that of Reuben and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, by the Assyrians, 2 Kings 15:29, after which the Moabites appear to have repossessed it, as they seem to have occupied it in the days of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 48:15-20.

Verse 38. *And Nebo-their names being changed*— That is, Those who conquered the cities called them after their own names. Thus the city Kenath, being conquered by Nobah, was called after his name, ver. 42.

Verse 41. *Havoth-jair.*— That is, the villages or habitations of Jair; and thus they should have been translated. As these two tribes and a half were the first, says Ainsworth, who had their inheritance assigned to them in the promised land, so they were the first of all Israel that were carried captive out of their own land, because of their sins. “For they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after other gods. And

God delivered them into the hands of Pul and Tiglath-Pilneser, kings of Assyria, and they brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and Gozan, unto this day.” See 1 Chronicles 5:25, 26.

CHAPTER 33

The journeyings of the Israelites written out by Moses, according to the commandment of the Lord, 1, 2. They depart from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the day after the passover, the first-born of the Egyptians having been slain, 3, 4. Their forty-two stations enumerated, 5-49. They are authorized to expel all the former inhabitants, and destroy all remnants of idolatry, 50-53. The land is to be divided by lot, 54. Should they not drive out the former inhabitants, they shall be to them as pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides, 55. And if not obedient, God will deal with them as he has purposed to do with the Canaanites, 56.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 2. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys— We may consider the whole book of Numbers as a diary, and indeed the first book of travels ever published. Dr. Shaw, Dr. Pococke, and several others, have endeavored to mark out the route of the Israelites, through this great, dreary, and trackless desert, and have ascertained many of the stages here described. Indeed there are sufficient evidences of this important journey still remaining, for the descriptions of many are so particular that the places are readily ascertained by them; but this is not the case with all. Israel was the Church of God in the wilderness, and its unsettled, wandering state under Moses may point out the unsettled state of religion under the law. Their being brought, after the death of Moses, into the promised rest by Joshua, may point out the establishment, fixedness, and certainty of that salvation provided by Jesus Christ, of whom Joshua, in name and conduct, was a remarkable type. Mr. Ainsworth imagines that the forty-two stations here enumerated, through which the Israelites were brought to the verge of the promised land, and afterwards taken over Jordan into the rest which God had promised, point out the forty-two generations from Abraham unto Christ, through whom the Savior of the world came, by whose blood we have an entrance into the holiest, and enjoy the inheritance among the saints in light. And Mr.

Bromley, in his *Way to the Sabbath of Rest*, considers each name and place as descriptive of the spiritual state through which a soul passes in its way to the kingdom of God. But in cases of this kind fancy has much more to do than judgment.

Verse 3. *From Rameses*— This appears to have been the metropolis of the land of Goshen, and the place of rendezvous whence the whole Israelitish nation set out on their journey to the promised land; and is supposed to be the same as Cairo. See the notes on “Exodus 12:37”.

HERE FOLLOW THE FORTY-TWO STATIONS

STATION 1.

Verse 5. *And pitched in SUCCOTH.*— This name signifies booths or tents, and probably refers to no town or village, but simply designates the place where they pitched their tents for the first time after their departure from Rameses.

STAT. 2.

Verse 6. *ETHAM, which is in the edge of the wilderness.*— This place is not well known; Dr. Shaw supposes it to have been one mile from Cairo. Calmet thinks it is the city of Buthum mentioned by Herodotus, which he places in Arabia, on the frontiers of Egypt.

STAT. 3.

Verse 7. *PI-HAHIROTH*— See on Exodus 14:1, 2. Baal-zephon Calmet supposes to be the Clysmas of the Greeks, and the Kolzum of the Arabians.

STAT. 4.

Verse 8. *And went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham*— Called the wilderness of Shur, Exodus 15:22.

And pitched in MARAH.— Dr. Shaw supposes this place to be at Sedur, over against the valley of Baideah, on the opposite side of the Red Sea.

STAT. 5.

Verse 9. *And came unto ELIM*— A place on the skirts of the deserts of Sin, two leagues from Tor, and nearly thirty from Corondel, a large bay on the east side of the Red Sea. Dr. Shaw, when he visited this place, found but nine of the twelve wells mentioned in the text, and instead of 70 palm trees, he found upwards of 2, 000. See on “Exodus 15:27”.

STAT. 6.

Verse 10. *Encamped by the RED SEA*.— It is difficult to assign the place of this encampment, as the Israelites were now on their way to Mount Sinai, which lay considerably to the east of Elim, and consequently farther from the sea than the former station. It might be called by the Red Sea, as the Israelites had it, as the principal object, still in view. This station however is mentioned nowhere else. By the Red Sea we are not to understand a sea, the waters of which are red, or the sand red, or any thing else about or in it red; for nothing of this kind appears. It is called in Hebrew יָם סוּפִי *yam suph*, which signifies the weedy sea. The Septuagint rendered the original by *θαλασσα εραθρα*, and the Vulgate after it by *mare rubrum*, and the European versions followed these, and, in opposition to etymology and reason, translated it the Red Sea. See the note on “Exodus 10:19”.

STAT. 7.

Verse 11. *The wilderness of SIN*.— This lies between Elim and Mount Sinai. Dr. Shaw and his companions traversed these plains in nine hours.

STAT. 8.

Verse 12. *DOPHKAH*.— This place is not mentioned in Exodus and its situation is not known.

STAT. 9.

Verse 13. *ALUSH*.— Neither is this mentioned in Exodus and its situation is equally unknown.

STAT. 10.

Verse 14. *REPHIDIM*.— Remarkable for the rebellion of the Israelites against Moses, because of the want of water, Exodus 17.

STAT. 11.

Verse 15. *The WILDERNESS OF SINAI*.— Somewhere northward of Mount Sinai, on the straight road to the promised land, to which they now directed their course.

STAT. 12.

Verse 16. *KIBROTH-HATTA AVAH*.— No city, village, etc., but a place in the open desert, which had its name from the plague that fell upon the Israelites, through their murmuring against God, and their inordinate desire of flesh. See on chap. xi. But it appears that the Israelites had traveled three days' journey in order to reach this place, chap. 10:33, and commentators suppose there must have been other stations which are not laid down here, probably because the places were not remarkable.

STAT. 13.

Verse 17. *HAZEROTH*.— This place Dr. Shaw computes to have been about thirty miles distant from Mount Sinai.

STAT. 14.

Verse 18. *RITHMAH*.— This place lay somewhere in the wilderness of Paran, through which the Israelites were now passing. See chap. 13:1, 3. The name signifies the juniper tree; and the place probably had its name from the great number of those trees growing in that district.

STAT. 15.

Verse 19. *RIMMON-PAREZ*.— Unknown.

STAT. 16.

Verse 20. *LIBNAH*.— The situation of this place is uncertain. A city of this name is mentioned Joshua 10:29, as situated between Kadesh-barnea and Gaza.

STAT. 17.

Verse 21. *RISSAH*.— A place mentioned nowhere else in the sacred writings. Its situation utterly uncertain.

STAT. 18.

Verse 22. *KEHELATHAH*.— Utterly unknown; though some conjecture that it might have been the place called Keilah, 1 Samuel 23:1, etc., but this is unlikely.

STAT. 19.

Verse 23. *SHAPHER*.— Where this mountain lay cannot be determined.

STAT. 20.

Verse 24. *HARADAH*.— Unknown, Calmet supposes that it may be the place called Bered, Genesis 16:14, which was in the vicinity of Kadesh.

STAT. 21.

Verse 25. *MAKHELOTH*.— A name found nowhere else in Scripture.

STAT. 22.

Verse 26. *TAHATH*.— Unknown.

STAT. 23.

Verse 27. *TARAH*.— Also unknown.

STAT. 24.

Verse 28. *MITHCAH*.— Calmet conjectures that this may be Mocha, a city in Arabia Petraea.

STAT. 25.

Verse 29. *HASHMONAH*.— Supposed by some to be the same as Azmon, chap. 34:4.

STAT. 26.

Verse 30. *MOSEROTH*.— Situation unknown. In Deuteronomy 10:6 it is said that the Israelites took their journey from Beeroth, the wells of the children of Jaakan, to Mosera, and there Aaron died. If so, Mosera, Moseroth, and Hor, must be different names of the same place; or Moseroth, or Mosera, must have been some town or village near Mount Hor, for there Aaron died. See ver. 38.

STAT. 27.

Verse 31. *BENE-JAAKAN*.— Unknown. The sons of Jaakan. See the preceding verse.

STAT. 28.

Verse 32. *HOR-HAGIDGAD*.— The hole or pit of Gidgad. Unknown. It was a place perhaps remarkable for some vast pit or cavern, from which it took its name.

STAT. 29.

Verse 33. *JOTRATHAH*.— Situation unknown. It is said in Deuteronomy 10:7 to be a land of rivers of waters.

STAT. 30.

Verse 34. *EBRONAH*.— Nowhere else mentioned.

STAT. 31.

Verse 35. EZION-GABER.— Dr. Shaw places this port on the western coast of the Elantic gulf of the Red Sea. It is now called Meenah el Dsahab, or the golden port, by the Arabs; because it was from this place that Solomon sent his ships for gold to Ophir, 1 Kings 9:26. He supposes it to be about sixty miles distant from Mount Sinai. — Travels, p. 322, 4to. edition.

STAT. 32.

Verse 36. ZIN, which is KADESH.— A place remarkable for the death of Miriam the prophetess, and bringing water out of the rock. As this place was on the borders of Edom, the Israelites, being denied permission to pass through their land, which lay on the direct road to the promised land, were obliged to turn to the right to Mount Hor, now called Accaba by the Arabs.

STAT. 33.

Verse 37. HOR.— Famous for the death of Aaron. See on chap. 20. Perhaps Moseroth or Mosera, ver. 30, was a village near this mountain. See the note on “Numbers 33:30”.

STAT. 34.

Verse 41. ZALMONAH.— Probably in the neighborhood of the land of Edom. As צלם tselem signifies an image, this place probably had its name from the brazen serpent set up by Moses. See “Numbers 21:9”, etc. From the same root the word telesm, corruptly called talisman, which signifies a consecrated image, is derived.

STAT. 35.

Verse 42. PUNON.— A place in Idumea. Nowhere else mentioned.

STAT. 36.

Verse 43. OBOTH.— Mentioned before, chap. 21:10.

STAT. 37.

Verse 44. *IJE-ABARIM*.— The heaps of Abarim. See chap. 21:11. Situation uncertain. It is called Iim in the following verse. As the word signifies heaps or protuberances, it probably means tumuil or small hills near some of the fords of Jordan.

STAT. 38.

Verse 45. *DIBON-GAD*.— Supposed to be the same as Dibon, chap. 32:34, and to be situated on the brook Arnon.

STAT. 39.

Verse 46. *ALMON-DIBLATHAIM*.— Situation not known. It belonged to the Moabites in the time of the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah 48:22.

STAT. 40.

Verse 47. *Mountains of ABARIM, before NEBO*.— The mountain on which Moses died. They came to this place after the overthrow of the Amorites. See chap. xxi.

STAT. 41.

Verse 48. *The PLAINS of MOAB*.— This was the scene of the transactions between Balaam and Balak; see chapters 23., 24., 25.

STAT. 42.

Verse 49. *From BETH-JESIMOTH even unto ABEL-SHITTIM*— The former of these places fell to the Reubenites, Joshua 13:15-20. The Israelites were now come to the edge of Jordan, over against Jericho, where they afterwards passed.

For farther information on the subject of these different encampments, the reader is requested to refer to the extracts from Dr. Shaw at the end of the book of Exodus.

Verse 52. *Ye shall-destroy all their pictures*— **משכייתם** maskiyotham, from **שחה** sachah, to be like, or resemble, either pictures, carved work, or

embroidery, as far as these things were employed to exhibit the abominations of idolatry. Molten images **זלמי מסכתם** tsalmey massechotham, metallic talismanical figures, made under certain constellations, and supposed in consequence to be possessed of some extraordinary influences and virtues.

Verse 55. *Shall be pricks in your eyes*— Under these metaphors, the continual mischief that should be done to them, both in soul and body, by these idolaters, is set forth in a very expressive manner. What can be more vexatious than a continual goading of each side, so that the attempt to avoid the one throws the body more forcibly on the other? And what can be more distressing than a continual pricking in the eye, harassing the mind, tormenting the body, and extinguishing the sight? 1. It has been usual among pious men to consider these Canaanites remaining in the land, as emblems of indwelling sin; and it must be granted that what those remaining Canaanites were to the people of Israel, who were disobedient to God, such is indwelling sin to all those who will not have the blood of the covenant to cleanse them from all unrighteousness. For a time, while conscience is tender, such persons feel themselves straitened in all their goings, hindered in all their religious services, and distressed beyond measure because of the law—the authority and power of sin, which they find warring in their members: by and by the eye of their mind becomes obscured by the constant piercings of sin, till at last, fatally persuaded that sin must dwell in them as long as they live, they accommodate their minds to their situation, their consciences cease to be tender, and they content themselves with expecting redemption where and when it has never been promised, viz., beyond the grave! On the subject of the journeyings of the Israelites, the following observations from old Mr. Ainsworth cannot fail to interest the reader. 2. “The TRAVELS of Israel through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water, Deuteronomy 8:15, which was a land of deserts, and of pits, a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt, Jeremiah 2:6, signified the many troubles and afflictions through which we must enter into the kingdom of God, Acts 14:22. The helps, comforts, and deliverances which God gave unto his people in their distresses, are examples of his love and mercy towards his followers; for he comforts

them in all their tribulation, that as the sufferings of Christ abound in them, so their consolation also abounds in Christ, 2 Corinthians 1:5. The punishments which God inflicted upon the disobedient, who perished in the wilderness for their sins, happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 11; Hebrews 3:17, 18, 19; Hebrews 4:1, 2. By the names of their encamping places, and histories adjoined, it appears how Israel came sometimes into straits and troublesome ways, as at Pihahiroth, Exodus 14:2, 3, 10, etc.; and at Zalmonah, Numbers 2:1, 4, etc.; sometimes into large and ample room, as at the plains of Moab; sometimes to places of hunger and thirst, as at Rephidim and Kadesh, Exodus 16., 17.; Numbers 20.; sometimes to places of refreshing, as at Elim and Beer, Exodus 15:27; Numbers 21:16; sometimes where they had wars, as at Rephidim, Kadesh, Edrei, Exodus 17:8; Numbers 21:1, 33; sometimes where they had rest, as at Mount Sinai: sometimes they went right forward, as from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea; sometimes they turned backward, as from Kadesh-barnea to the Red Sea: sometimes they came to mountains, as Sinai, Shapher, Hor-Gidgad; sometimes to valleys, as Tahath, etc.; sometimes to places of bitterness, as Marah; sometimes, of sweetness, as Mithcah. 3. "The SINS which they committed in the wilderness were many and great; as open IDOLATRY by the calf, at Horeb, Exodus 32., and with Baal-peor, Numbers 25. UNBELIEF, at Kadesh, Numbers 14.; and afterwards PRESUMPTUOUS BOLDNESS in the same place; MURMURING against God sundry times, with tempting of Christ, (as the apostle speaks, 1 Corinthians 15.) CONTENTION and REBELLION against their governors often; lusting for flesh to fill their appetites, and loathing manna, the heavenly food; WHOREDOME with the daughters of Moab, and many other provocations; so that this complaint is after made of them, How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Psalm 78:40. All sorts of persons sinned against God; the multitude of people very often; the mixed multitude of strangers among them, Numbers xi. The princes, as the ten spies, Dathan, Abiram, etc. The Levites, as Korah and his company; Miriam the prophetess, Numbers 12.; Aaron the priest with her, besides his sin at Horeb, Exodus 32.; and at the water of Meribah, Numbers 20. Moses also himself at the same place, for which he was excluded from the land of Canaan. 4. "The PUNISHMENTS laid on them by the Lord for their disobedience were many. They died by the

sword of the enemy, as of the Amalekites, Exodus 17., and of the Canaanites, Numbers 14:45; and some by the sword of their brethren, Exodus 32. Some were burned with fire, Numbers 11., 16.; some died with surfeit, Numbers 11.; some were swallowed up alive in the earth, Numbers 16.; some were killed with serpents, Numbers 21.; many died of the pestilence, Numbers 16:46, and chap. 5:25; and generally all that generation which were first mustered, after their coming out of Egypt, perished, Numbers 26:64, 65. God consumed their days in vanity, and their years in terror, Psalm 78:33.

5. “Nevertheless, for his name’s sake, he magnified his MERCIES unto them and their posterity. He had divided the sea, and led them through on dry land, drowning their enemies, Exodus 14. He led them with a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, continually. He gave them manna from heaven daily. He clave the rock, and gave them water for their thirst. He fed them with quails, when they longed for flesh. He sweetened the bitter waters. He saved them from the sword of their enemies. He delivered them from the fiery serpents and scorpions. Their raiment waxed not old upon them, neither did their foot swell for forty years, Deuteronomy 8:4. He delivered them from the intended curse of Balaam, and turned it into a blessing, because he loved them, Numbers 22.; Deuteronomy 23:5. He came down from Mount Sinai, and spake with them from heaven, and gave them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and gave also his good Spirit to instruct them, Nehemiah 9:13, 20. In the times of his wrath he remembered mercy; his eye spared them from destroying them, neither did he make an end of them in the wilderness, Ezekiel 20:17, 22. He gave them kingdoms and nations, and they possessed the lands of their enemies; and he multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and brought them into the land promised unto their forefathers. Nehemiah 9:22, 23. Now whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope, Romans 15:4.” Let him that readeth understand.”

CHAPTER 34

The land of Canaan is described, 1, 2. The south quarter, 3-5. The western border, 6. The north border, 7-9. The east border, 10-12. This land to be divided by lot among the nine tribes and half, 13; two tribes and half, Reuben and Gad, and the half of Manasseh, having already got their inheritance on the east side of Jordan, 14, 15. Eleazar the priest, and Joshua, to assist in dividing the land, 16, 17; and with them a chief out of every tribe, 18. The names of the twelve chiefs, 19-29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 2. *The land of Canaan with the coasts thereof*— All description here is useless. The situation and boundaries of the land of Canaan can only be known by actual survey, or by consulting a good map.

Verse 3. *The salt sea*— The Dead Sea, or lake Asphaltites. See the note on “Genesis 19:25”.

Verse 5. *The river of Egypt*— The eastern branch of the river Nile; or, according to others, a river which is south of the land of the Philistines, and fails into the gulf or bay near Calieh.

Verse 6. *Ye shall even have the great sea for a border*— The Mediterranean Sea, called here the Great Sea, to distinguish it from the Dead Sea, the Sea of Tiberias, etc., which were only a sort of lakes. In Hebrew there is properly but one term, יָם yam, which is applied to all collections of water apparently stagnant, and which is generally translated sea. The Greek of the New Testament follows the Hebrew, and employs, in general, the word θάλασσα, SEA, whether it speaks of the Mediterranean, or of the sea or lake of Galilee.

Verse 11. *The sea of Chinnereth*— The same as the sea of Galilee, sea of Tiberias, and sea of Gennesareth.

Verse 12. *The border shall go down to Jordan*— This river is famous both in the Old and New Testaments. It takes its rise at the foot of Mount

Libanus, passes through the sea of Chinnereth or Tiberias, and empties itself into the lake Asphaltites or Dead Sea, from which it has no outlet. In and by it God wrought many miracles. God cut off the waters of this river as he did those of the Red Sea, so that they stood on a heap on each side, and the people passed over on dry ground. Both Elijah and Elisha separated its waters in a miraculous way, 2 Kings 2:8-14. Naaman, the Syrian general, by washing in it at the command of the prophet, was miraculously cured of his leprosy, 2 Kings 5:10-14. In this river John baptized great multitudes of Jews; and in it was CHRIST himself baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and the voice from heaven proclaimed him the great and only Teacher and Savior of men, Matthew 3:16, 17; Mark 1:5-11.

Verse 13. *This is the land which ye shall inherit by lot*— Much of what is said concerning this land is peculiarly emphatic. It is a land that contains a multitude of advantages in its climate, its soil, situation, etc. It is bounded on the south by a ridge of mountains, which separate it from Arabia, and screen it from the burning and often pestiferous winds which blow over the desert from that quarter. On the west it is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea; on the north, by Mount Libanus, which defends it from the cold northern blasts; and on the east by the river Jordan, and its fertile, well-watered plains. It is described by God himself as “a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive oil and honey; a land wherein there was no scarcity of bread, and where both iron and copper mines abounded,” Deuteronomy 8:7-9: a land finely diversified with hills and valleys, and well watered by the rain of heaven, in this respect widely different from Egypt; a land which God cared for, on which his eyes were continually placed from the beginning to the end of the year; watched over by a most merciful Providence; in a word, a land which flowed with milk and honey, and was the most pleasant of all lands; Deuteronomy 11:11, 12; Ezekiel 20:6. Such was the land, and such were the advantages that this most favored people were called to possess. They were called to possess it by lot that each might be satisfied with his possession, as considering it to be appointed to him by the especial providence of God; and its boundaries

were ascertained on Divine authority, to prevent all covetousness after the territories of others.

Verse 19. etc. And the names of the men-are these— It is worthy of remark that Moses does not follow any order hitherto used of placing the tribes, neither that in chap. 1., nor that in chap. 7., nor that in chap. 26., nor any other; but places them here exactly in that order in which they possessed the land. 1. Judah; 2. Simeon; 3. Benjamin; 4. Dan; 5. Manasseh; 6. Ephraim; 7. Zebulun; 8. Issachar; 9. Asher; 10. Naphtali. Judah is first, having the first lot; and he dwelt in the south part of the land, Joshua 15:1, etc.; and next to him Simeon, because his inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah, Joshua 19:1. Benjamin was third; he had his inheritance by Judah, between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph, Joshua 18:11. Dan was the fourth; his lot fell westward of that of Benjamin, in the country of the Philistines, as may be seen in Joshua 19:40, 41, etc. Fifth, Manasseh; and sixth, by him, his brother Ephraim, whose inheritances were behind that of Benjamin, Joshua 16:7. Next to these dwelt, seventh, Zebulun; and eighth, Issachar; concerning whose lots see Joshua 19:10-17. Ninth, Asher; and tenth, Naphtali; see Joshua 19:24, 32, etc. And as in encamping about the tabernacle they were arranged according to their fraternal relationship, (see chap. 2.,) so they were in the division and inheriting of the promised land. Judah and Simeon, both sons of Leah, dwelt abreast of each other. Benjamin, son of Rachel, and Dan, son of Rachel's maid, dwelt next abreast. Manasseh and Ephraim, both sons of Joseph, son of Rachel, had the next place abreast. Zebulun and Issachar, who dwelt next together, were both sons of Leah; and the last pair were Asher, of Leah's maid, and Naphtali, of Rachel's maid. Thus God, in nominating princes that should divide the land, signified beforehand the manner of their possession, and that they should be so situated as to dwell together as brethren in unity, for the mutual help and comfort of each other. See Ainsworth. In this arrangement there is much skill, judgment, and kindness every where displayed.

CHAPTER 35

The Israelites are commanded to give the Levites, out of their inheritances, cities and their suburbs for themselves and for their cattle, goods, etc., 1-3. The suburbs to be 3, 000 cubits round about from the wall of the city, 4, 5. The cities to be forty-two, to which six cities of refuge should be added, in all forty-eight cities, 6, 7. Each tribe shall give of these cities in proportion to its possessions, 8. These cities to be appointed for the person who might slay his neighbor unawares, 9-12. Of these six cities there shall be three on each side Jordan, 13, 14. The cities to be places of refuge for all who kill a person unawares, whether they be Israelites, strangers, or sojourners, 15. Cases of murder to which the benefit of the cities of refuge shall not extend, 16-21. Cases of manslaughter to which the benefits of the cities of refuge shall extend, 22, 23. How the congregation shall act between the manslayer and the avenger of blood, 24, 25. The manslayer shall abide in the city of refuge till the death of the high priest; he shall then return to the land of his possession, 26-28. Two witnesses must attest a murder before a murderer can be put to death, 29, 30. Every murderer to be put to death, 31. The manslayer is not to be permitted to come to the land of his inheritance till the death of the high priest, 32. The land must not be polluted with blood, for the Lord dwells in it, 33, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 4. And the suburbs of the cities—shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about.

Verse 5. *And ye shall measure from without the city—two thousand cubits, etc.*— Commentators have been much puzzled with the accounts in these two verses. In ver. 4 the measure is said to be 1, 000 cubits from the wall; in ver. 5 the measure is said to be 2, 000 from without the city. It is likely these two measures mean the same thing; at least so it was understood by the Septuagint and Coptic, who have *δισχιλίους πήχεις*, 2, 000 cubits, in the fourth, as well as in the fifth verse; but this reading of the Septuagint

and Coptic is not acknowledged by any other of the ancient versions, nor by any of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi. We must seek therefore for some other method of reconciling this apparently contradictory account. Sundry modes have been proposed by commentators, which appear to me, in general, to require full as much explanation as the text itself. Maimonides is the only one intelligible on the subject. "The suburbs," says he, "of the cities are expressed in the law to be 3, 000 cubits on every side from the wall of the city and outwards. The first thousand cubits are the suburbs, and the 2, 000, which they measured without the suburbs, were for fields and vineyards." The whole, therefore, of the city, suburbs, fields, and vineyards, may be represented by the following diagram:—

Verse 11. *Ye shall appoint-cities of refuge*— The cities of refuge among the Israelites were widely different from the asyla among the Greeks and Romans, as also from the privileged altars among the Roman Catholics. Those among the Hebrews were for the protection of such only as had slain a person involuntarily. The temples and altars among the latter often served for the protection of the most profligate characters. Cities of refuge among the Hebrews were necessary, because the old patriarchal law still remained in force, viz., that the nearest akin had a right to avenge the death of his relation by slaying the murderer; for the original law enacted that whosoever shed man's blood, by man should his blood be shed, Genesis 9:6, and none was judged so proper to execute this law as the man who was nearest akin to the deceased. As many rash executions of this law might take place, from the very nature of the thing, it was deemed necessary to qualify its claims, and prevent injustice; and the cities of refuge were judged proper for this purpose. Nor do we ever read that they were ever found inefficient, or that they were ever abused.

Verse 12. *Until he stand before the congregation in judgment.*— So one of these cities was not a perpetual asylum; It was only a pro tempore refuge, till the case could be fairly examined by the magistrates in the presence of the people, or the elders their representatives; and this was done in the city or place where he had done the murder, Joshua 20:4, 6. If he was found worthy of death, they delivered him to the avenger that he might be slain, Deuteronomy 19:12; if not, they sent him back to the city of refuge, where he remained till the death of the high priest, ver. 25.

Before the cities of refuge were appointed, the altar appears to have been a sanctuary for those who had killed a person unwittingly; see on Exodus 21:13, 14.

Verse 19. *The revenger of blood*—גֹּאֵל הַדָּם goel haddam, the redeemer of blood; the next in blood to him who was slain. See on the preceding verse.

Verse 30. *But one witness shall not testify against any*— This was a just and necessary provision. One may be mistaken, or so violently prejudiced as to impose even on his own judgment, or so wicked as to endeavor through malice to compass the life of his neighbor: but it is not likely that two or more should be of this kind; and even were they, their separate examination would lead to a discovery of the truth, and to their conviction.

Verse 31. *Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer*— No atonement could be made for him, nor any commutation, so as to save him from death. All the laws of the civilized world have either adjudged the murderer to death, or to a punishment equivalent to it; such as perpetual imprisonment, in a dungeon, under ground, on a stone floor, without light, and to be fed on a small portion of bread and water. In such circumstances a man could live but a short time; and though it is not called the punishment of death, yet, from its inevitable consequences, it only differed from it by being a little longer respite than was usual where the punishment of death was awarded. See the note on “Genesis 9:6”.

Verse 32. *Until the death of the priest.*— Probably intended to typify, that no sinner can be delivered from his banishment from God, or recover his forfeited inheritance, till Jesus Christ, the great high priest, had died for his offenses, and risen again for his justification.

Verse 33. *For blood it defileth the land*— The very land was considered as guilty till the blood of the murderer was shed in it. No wonder God is so particularly strict in his laws against murderers, 1. Because he is the author of life, and none have any right to dispose of it but himself. 2. Because life is the time to prepare for the eternal world, and on it the salvation of the soul accordingly depends; therefore it is of infinite consequence to the man that his life be lengthened out to the utmost limits assigned by Divine Providence. As he who takes a man’s life away before his time may be the

murderer of his soul as well as of his body, the severest laws should be enacted against this, both to punish and prevent the crime.

THE Mosaic cities of refuge have in general been considered, not merely as civil institutions, but as types or representations of infinitely better things; and in this light St. Paul seems to have considered them and the altar of God, which was a place of general refuge, as it is pretty evident that he had them in view when writing the following words: "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, (his oath and promise,) in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have FLED for REFUGE to lay HOLD upon the HOPE set before us," Hebrews 6:17, 18. Independently of this, it was a very wise political institute; and while the patriarchal law on this point continued in force, this law had a direct tendency to cool and moderate the spirit of revenge, to secure the proper accomplishment of the ends of justice, and to make way for every claim of mercy and equity. But this is not peculiar to the ordinance of the cities of refuge; every institution of God is distinguished in the same way, having his own glory, in the present and eternal welfare of man, immediately in view.

CHAPTER 36

The inconveniences which might be produced by daughters, inheritances, marrying out of their own tribe, remedied on the recommendation of certain chiefs of the tribe of Joseph, who stated the case of the daughters of Zelophehad, 1-4. The daughters of Zelophehad are commanded to marry in their own tribe, 5, 6; which is to be an ordinance in all similar circumstances, 7-9. The daughters of Zelophehad marry their father's brother's sons, and thus their inheritance is preserved in their own tribe, 10-12. The conclusion of the commandments given by the Lord to the Israelites in the plains of Moab, 13.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 2. *To give the inheritance of Zelophehad-unto his daughters.*— See this case spoken of at large on chap. 27.

Either the first eleven verses of chap. 27. should come in before this chapter, or this chapter should come in immediately after those eleven verses; they certainly both make parts of the same subject.

Here Moses determines that heiresses should marry in their own tribe, that no part of the ancient inheritance might be alienated from the original family.

Verse 6. *Let them marry to whom they think best*— Here was latitude sufficient, and yet a salutary and reasonable restraint, which prevented a vexatious mixture of property and possession.

Verse 8. *Every daughter that possesseth an inheritance*— This law affected none but heiresses; all others were at liberty to marry into any of the other tribes. The priests and Levites, who could have no inheritance, were exempt from the operation of this law. Jehoiada had the king of Judah's daughter to wife, 2 Chronicles 22:11. And another priest had for wife one of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, Ezra 2:61. "By reason

of such marriages,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “there might be kindred between Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, who was of the daughters of Aaron, and Mary the virgin, the mother of our Lord, who was of the lineage of David, and tribe of Judah;” Luke 1:5, 36; Luke 3:23-31.

Verse 11. *Mahlah, Tirza, etc.*— For a curious account of these names, see the notes on “Numbers 27:7”.

Verse 12. *And their inheritance remained in the family*— “By this example, and the law of inheritances in the Holy Land, the people of God,” says Ainsworth, “are taught to hold fast their inheritance in his promises, and their right in Christ, which they hold by faith; that as the Father hath made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance among the saints in light, Colossians 1:12, so they may keep the faith and grace which they have received to the end.”

Verse 13. *These are the commandments, etc.*— See these different terms analyzed and explained, “Leviticus 26:15”.

THUS ends the book of Numbers, containing a series of astonishing providences and events. Scarcely any piece of history in the sacred writings is better calculated to impress the mind of a serious reader with a sense of the goodness and severity of God. In every transaction his holiness and justice appear in closest union with his benevolence and mercy. From such a Being what have the wicked not to fear! From such a Father and Friend what have the upright not to hope! His justice requires him to punish iniquity, but his mercy inclines him to pardon all who truly repent and believe in the Son of his love.

The journeyings of this people, from the time they left Egypt, exhibit a series of providential wonders. Every where, and in every circumstance, God appears: and yet there is no circumstance or occasion that does not justify those signal displays of his GRACE and his JUSTICE. The genuine history of God’s providence must be sought for in this book alone; and as every occurrence happened as an example, we have authority to conclude that in every case where his own glory and the salvation of man are interested, he will interfere and give the fullest proofs that he is the same to-day that he was yesterday, and will continue unchangeable for ever and ever. Reader, are these matters ensamples to thee? Art thou, like the

Israelites, come into the plains of Moab, on the very verge of the promised land? Jordan alone separates thee from the promised inheritance. O, watch and pray, that thou come not short of the glory of God. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; see then that the sting of death, which is sin, be extracted from thy soul, that, being justified by Christ's blood, thou mayest be made an heir according to the hope of an eternal life. Amen, amen.

“I will bring you into the WILDERNESS of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face, like as I pleaded with your fathers in the WILDERNESS of the land of Egypt. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and bring you into the bond of the covenant,” Ezekiel 20:35-37.

“He (Christ) is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance,” Hebrews 9:15.

SECTIONS In the Book of Numbers, carried on from Leviticus, which ends with the THIRTY-THIRD.

The THIRTY-FOURTH, called במדבר **במדבר** bemidbar, begins chap. 1:1, and ends chap. 4:20.

The THIRTY-FIFTH, called נשא **נשא** nasa, begins chap. 4:21, and ends chap. 7:89.

The THIRTY-SIXTH, called בהעלתך **בהעלתך** behaalothecha, begins chap. 8:1, and ends chap. 12:16.

The THIRTY-SEVENTH, called שלח **שלח** shelach, begins chap. 13:1, and ends chap. 15:41.

The THIRTY-EIGHTH, called קרח **קרח** korach, begins chap. 16:1, and ends chap. 18:32.

The THIRTY-NINTH, called חקת **חקת** chukkath, begins chap. 19:1, and ends chap. 22:1.

The FORTIETH, called בלק **בלק** balak, begins chap. 22:2, and ends chap. 25:9.

The FORTY-FIRST, called פִּינְחָס pinechas, begins chap. 25:10, and ends chap. 30:1.

The FORTY-SECOND, called מַטּוֹת mattoth, begins chap. 30:2, and ends chap. 32:42.

The FORTY-THIRD, called מַסְעֵי masey, begins chap. 33:1, and ends chap. 36:13.

MASORETIC Notes on NUMBERS.

The number of verses in this book is 1, 288, of which אַרְפַּח is the symbol: for א aleph stands for 1, 000, ר, resh for 200, פ phe for 80, and ח cheth for 8.

The middle verse is the 20th of chap. 17. And the man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom. (N. B. In our English Bibles this is ver. 5 of chap. 17.) {Numbers 17:5}

Its pareshioth, or larger sections, are 10, expressed by the letters of the word בַּדָּד badad, alone: The Lord ALONE did lead him, Deuteronomy 32:12. ד daleth stands for 4, repeated here, 8, and ב beth for 2.

Its sedarim, or Masoretic sections, are 32, expressed by the word לֵב leb, heart, Psalm 51:12: Create in me a clean HEART, O God; in which word ב beth stands for 2, and ל lamed for 30.

Its chapters are 36, expressed by the word לוּ lu, O! Deuteronomy 32:29: O that they were wise! in which word ל lamed stands for 30, and ו vau for 6.

The number of its open sections is 92; its close or shut sections, 66; together 158; expressed in the memorial word חֶלְכֶּךָ chelkecha: I am THY PORTION; in which word ק koph stands for 100, ל lamed for 30, ח cheth for 20, and ח, cheth for 8.

Though this sort of notations may appear trifling to some, yet to an upright Jew they were of much consequence. The very technical words used in such cases put him always in mind of something in which the glory

of God and the happiness and salvation of his own soul were concerned. See the note at the end of Genesis, {See “Genesis 50:26”} and see the concluding notes on the Book of Deuteronomy. {See “Deuteronomy 34:10”} Revised and corrected for a new edition, August 4th, 1827. — A. CLARKE.

PREFACE TO THE BOOK

OF

DEUTERONOMY

WE have borrowed the name of this book, as in former cases, from the Vulgate Latin, **Δευτερονόμιον**, as the Vulgate has done from the Greek version of the Septuagint, **δευτερονόμιον**, which is a compound term literally signifying the second law, because it seems to contain a repetition of the preceding laws, from which circumstance it has been termed by the rabbins **משנה** mishneh, the iteration or doubling.

It appears that both these names are borrowed from chap. 17:18, where the king is commanded to write him a copy of this law; the original is **משנה התורה** mishneh hattorah, a repetition or doubling of the law, which the Septuagint have translated **το δευτερονόμιον**, this second law, which we, properly enough, translate a copy of the law: but in Hebrew, like the preceding books, it takes its name from its commencement, **אלה הדברים** ELLEH HADDEBARIM, these are the words; and in the best rabbinical Bibles its running title is **ספר דברים** SEPHER DEBARIM, the book of debarim, or the book of the words. Our Saxon ancestors termed it [AS] the after law.

The Book of Deuteronomy contains an account of what passed in the wilderness from the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt to the seventh day of the twelfth month of the same; making in the whole a history of the transactions of exactly five weeks, the months of the Jews being lunar. The history is continued about seven days after the death of Moses; for he began to deliver his first discourse to the people in the plains of Moab the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year, chap. 1:3, and died on the first day of the twelfth month of the same year, aged 120 years.

As the Israelites were now about to enter into the promised land, and many of them had not witnessed the different transactions in the wilderness, the former generations having been all destroyed except Joshua and Caleb; to impress their hearts with a deep sense of their obligation to God, and to prepare them for the inheritance which God had prepared for them. Moses here repeats the principal occurrences of the forty years, now almost elapsed; shows them the absolute necessity of fearing, loving, and obeying God; repeats the ten commandments, and particularly explains each, and the ordinances belonging to them, adding others which he had not delivered before; confirms the whole law in a most solemn manner, with exceeding great and precious promises to them that keep it, and a denunciation of the most awful judgments against those who should break it; renews the covenant between God and the people; prophesies of things which should come to pass in the latter days; blesses each of the tribes, prophetically, with the choicest spiritual and temporal blessings; and then, having viewed the whole extent of the land, from the top of Mount Nebo or Pisgah, he yielded up the ghost, and was privately buried by God, leaving Joshua the son of Nun for his successor.

The Book of Deuteronomy and the Epistle to the Hebrews contain the best comment on the nature, design, and use of the law; the former may be considered as an evangelical commentary on the four preceding books, in which the spiritual reference and signification of the different parts of the law are given, and given in such a manner as none could give who had not a clear discovery of the glory which was to be revealed. It may be safely asserted that very few parts of the Old Testament Scriptures can be read with greater profit by the genuine Christian than the Book of Deuteronomy.

The contents of the different chapters may be thus briefly summed up:—

On the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year, after the departure from Egypt, the Israelites being then on the east side of Jordan, in the land of the Moabites, Moses gives them a brief recapitulation of what took place in the wilderness, from their leaving Mount Horeb till they came to Kadesh; chap. 1.

Their travels from Kadesh till they come to the country of the Amorites, with the defeat of Sihon their king; chap. 2.

The war with Og, king of Bashan, with the dividing his land and that of Sihon among the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; chap. 3.

Moses exhorts them to observe the Divine precepts; threatens those who should violate them; and appoints Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan, to be the cities of refuge on the east side of Jordan; chap. 4.

Repeats the decalogue, and tells the people what effect the publication of it had on their fathers, when God spoke to them from the mount; chap. 5.

Exhorts them to love God with all their heart, and promises them an abundance of good things; chap. 6.

Repeats the command to exterminate the Canaanites, and all vestiges of their idolatry; chap. 7.

Recites the many interpositions of God's kindness which they had received during their forty years' travel in the wilderness, and strongly exhorts them to remember those mercies, and not to forfeit a continuance of his favors by ingratitude and disobedience; chap. 8.

Shows them that they were to pass Jordan in a short time, and that God was about to bring them in, not on account of their goodness, but of his mercy; chap. 9.

Gives an account of the second tables of the law, which he made at the command of God; mentions their journey from Beeroth to Jotbath, the choosing of the Levites, and the necessity of having the heart circumcised; chap. 10.

Continues an account of God's mighty acts in their behalf, and shows the blessings which should come on them who kept his law, and the curse on those who were disobedient. The blessings to be pronounced on Mount Gerizim, and the curses on Mount Ebal; chap. 11.

Commands them to destroy all monuments of idolatry in the land, to offer the different offerings and sacrifices, and to avoid eating of blood; chap. 12.

Ordinances against false prophets, idolatrous cities, etc.; chap. 13.

Forbids their cutting themselves at funerals, recapitulates the law concerning clean and unclean animals, and exhorts them to remember the Levites; chap. 14.

Every seventh year shall be a year of release for the poor of usury; first-born, etc.; chap. 15.

Concerning the annual feasts, passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; the establishment of judges and officers; no groves to be planted near the altar of God; chap. 16.

Idolaters are to be put to death; difficult cases in equity to be referred to the superior judges; of a king and his duties; chap. 17.

All divination is prohibited. The grand promise of an EXTRAORDINARY PROPHET. How false prophets are to be distinguished; chap. 18.

The laws relative to the cities of refuge, and how the intentional murderer is to be treated; chap. 19.

Laws relative to the carrying on of war; who should be sent back from the army, how they are to treat the Canaanites, and how they are to commence sieges, chap. 20.

How to make expiation for an uncertain murder; marriages with captives; rights of the first-born, etc.; chap. 21.

Things lost or strayed are to be restored to their right owners; men and women must not interchange apparel; improper mixtures to be avoided; of the tokens of virginity; adulterers and adulteresses to be put to death; chap. 22.

Eunuchs, bastards, Moabites, and Ammonites, are not to be permitted to enter into the congregation of the Lord. Harlots not to be tolerated; chap. 23.

Laws relative to divorce; privileges of the newly-married man: concerning pledges, wages, gleanings, etc.; chap. 24.

More than forty stripes shall not be given. If a man die childless, his brother shall take his wife. Of weights, measures, etc.; chap. 25.

Different ceremonies to be used in offering the first-fruits; tithes. Of full self-consecration to God; chap. 6.

The words of the law to be written on stones, and to be set up on Mount Ebal. The tribes which stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the obedient, and those which should stand on Mount Ebal to curse the disobedient. Who they are that are to be cursed; chap. 27.

The blessings of those who are faithful; curses against the disobedient; chap. 28.

A recital of the covenant of God, made not only with them, but for their posterity; chap. 29.

Promises of pardon to the penitent; good and evil, life and death, are set before them; chap. 30.

Moses, being now 120 years old, delivers a copy of the law which he had written into the hands of the priests, to be laid up in the ark, and to be publicly read every seventh year; a charge is given to Joshua; chap. 31.

The prophetic and historical song of Moses: he is commanded to go up to Mount Nebo that he may see the promised land; chap. 32.

The prophetic blessing of the twelve tribes. The indescribable happiness of Israel; chap. 33.

Moses views the promised land from the top of Mount Nebo, dies, and is privately buried by the Lord. The Israelites mourn for him thirty days. Joshua takes command of the people. The character of Moses; chap. 34.

At the close of this book I have added a number of useful TABLES, such as no edition of the Bible ever could boast, viz.: Table I. A perpetual table, showing through the course of 13 lunar cycles (which embrace every possible variation) the day of the week with which the Jewish year begins, and on which the passover is held; as also the lengths of the months Marchesvan and Cisleu. Table II. Containing the whole variations in the reading of the Pareshioth or sections of the law for every year of the Jewish cycle of 247 years. Table III. To find, with the help of Table IV., the day of the week upon which any Jewish new moon or festival happens. Table IV. To determine upon what day of the week any Jewish

month commences for any given year; as also the day of the week upon which the Jews celebrate their principal fasts and festivals. Table V. Containing the order of reading the Pareshioth and Haphtaroth for 90 Jewish years, i. e., from A. M. 5572 to A. M. 5661, both inclusive, connected with the corresponding dates in the CHRISTIAN ERA, according to the Gregorian or new style. Table VI. Containing the year of the Jewish lunar cycle, the golden number, the first day of the Jewish pass over, Easter Sunday, and the commencement of each Jewish year according to the Gregorian Calendar, A. D. 1812 to A. D. 1900, both inclusive. All concluded with an explanation of the preceding tables. To them succeeds A Chronology of the Pentateuch, with the Book of Joshua; or a Systematic Arrangement of Events from the creation of ADAM, A. M. 1, to the birth of Peleg, A. M. 1757, and thence to the death of Joshua, A. M. 2561. This chronology includes two tables, viz.: Table I. The birth and death of all the patriarchs, from Adam, A. M. 1, to Rhea, son of Peleg, A. M. 1787. Table II. A chronology of ancient kingdoms synchronized with the sacred history, from A. M. 1757, B. C. 2247, to A. M. 2561, B. C. 1443. The whole so calculated as to prevent the necessity of having recourse to systems of chronology for historic facts in anywise connected with those mentioned in the SACRED WRITINGS.

The great utility of these tables will, I think, be at once evident to every Biblical critic, chronologist, and antiquary; and for the immense labor employed in their construction the editor, no doubt, will have their hearty thanks.

ADAM CLARKE.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES

CALLED

DEUTERONOMY

- Year before the common Year of Christ, 1451
- Julian Period, 3263.
- Cycle of the Sun, 10.
- Dominical Letter, B
- Cycle of the Moon, 10.
- Indiction, 15.
- Creation from Tisri or September, 2553.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the book, 1, 2. Moses addresses the people in the fortieth year after the exodus from Egypt, 3-5; and shows how God had spoken to them in Horeb, and the directions he gave them, 6-8. How, at the commandment of the Lord, he had appointed officers, judges, etc., to share the government with him, 9-18. Of their travels in the terrible wilderness, 19-21. The people's request to have spies sent to search out the land, 22-25. Of their murmuring and rebellion when they heard the report of the spies, 26-28. How Moses encouraged them, 29-33. The displeasure of the Lord against them because of their murmurings, and his purpose to exclude them from the good land, and give it to their children only, 34-40. How they repented, and yet, without the authority of God, went against the Amorites, by whom they were defeated, 41-44. Their return to Kadesh, where they abode many days, 45, 46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *These be the words which Moses spake*— The five first verses of this chapter contain the introduction to the rest of the book: they do not appear to be the work of Moses, but were added probably either by Joshua or Ezra.

On this side Jordan— **בַּעֲבַר** beeber, at the passage of Jordan, i. e., near or opposite to the place where the Israelites passed over after the death of Moses. Though **עֵבֶר** eber is used to signify both on this side and on the other side, and the connection in which it stands can only determine the meaning; yet here it signifies neither, but simply the place or ford where the Israelites passed over Jordan.

In the plain— That is, of Moab; over against the Red Sea—not the Red Sea, for they were now farther from it than they had been: the word sea is not in the text, and the word **סוּף** suph, which we render red, does not signify the Red Sea, unless joined with **יָם** yam, sea; here it must necessarily signify a place in or adjoining to the plains of Moab. Ptolemy mentions a people named Sophonites, that dwelt in Arabia Petraea, and it is probable that they took their name from this place; but see the note from Lightfoot, Numbers 20., at the end.

Paran— This could not have been the Paran which was contiguous to the Red Sea, and not far from Mount Horeb; for the place here mentioned lay on the very borders of the promised land, at a vast distance from the former.

Dizahab.— The word should be separated, as it is in the Hebrew, **דִּי זָהָב** Di Zahab. As Zahab signifies gold, the Septuagint have translated it **τα χρυσια**, the gold mines; and the Vulgate ubi aurum est plurimum, where there is much gold. It is more likely to be the name of a place.

Verse 2. *There are eleven days' journey*— The Israelites were eleven days in going from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea, where they were near the verge of the promised land; after which they were thirty-eight years wandering up and down in the vicinity of this place, not being permitted, because of their rebellions, to enter into the promised rest, though they were the whole of that time within a few miles of the land of Canaan!

Verse 3. *The fortieth year*— This was a melancholy year to the Hebrews in different respects; in the first month of this year Miriam died, Numbers xx.; on the first day of the fifth month Aaron died, Numbers 33:38; and about the conclusion of it, Moses himself died.

Verse 5. *Began Moses to declare this law*— Began, **הוֹאִיל** hoil, willingly undertook; to declare, **בִּאֵר** beer, to make bare, clear, etc., fully to explain, this law. See the conclusion of the preface.

Verse 6. *Ye have dwelt long enough, etc.*— They came to Sinai in the third month after their departure from Egypt, Exodus 19:1, 2; and left it the twentieth of the second month of the second year, so it appears they had continued there nearly a whole year.

Verse 7. *Go to the mount of the Amorites*— On the south of the land of Canaan, towards the Dead Sea.

Land of the Canaanites— That is, Phoenicia, the country of Sidon, and the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea from the country of the Philistines to Mount Libanus. The Canaanites and Phoenicians are often confounded.

The river Euphrates— Thus Moses fixes the bounds of the land, to which on all quarters the territories of the Israelites might be extended, should the land of Canaan, properly so called, be found insufficient for them. Their SOUTH border might extend to the mount of the Amorites; their WEST to the borders of the Mediterranean Sea; their NORTH to Lebanon; and their EAST border to the river Euphrates: and to this extent Solomon reigned; see 1 Kings 4:21. So that in his time, at least, the promise to Abraham was literally fulfilled; see below.

Verse 10. *Ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.*— This was the promise God made to Abraham, Genesis 15:5, 6; and Moses considers it now as amply fulfilled. But was it really so? Many suppose the expression to be hyperbolic; and others, no friends to revelation, think it a vain empty boast, because the stars, in their apprehension, amount to innumerable millions. Let us consider this subject. How many in number are the stars which appear to the naked eye? for it is by what appears to the naked eye we are to be governed in this business, for God brought Abraham forth abroad, i. e., out of doors, and bade him look towards

heaven, not with a telescope, but with his naked eyes, Genesis 15:5. Now I shall beg the objector to come forth abroad, and look up in the brightest and most favorable night, and count the stars—he need not be terrified at their abundance; the more they are, the more he can count; and I shall pledge myself to find a male Israelite in the very last census taken of this people, Numbers 26., for every star he finds in the whole upper hemisphere of heaven. The truth is, only about 3, 010 stars can be seen by the naked eye in both the northern and southern hemispheres; and the Israelites, independently of women and children, were at the above time more than 600, 000. And suppose we even allow that, from the late discoveries of Dr. Herschel and others with telescopes which have magnified between 35 and 36, 000 times, there may be 75 millions of stars visible by the help of such instruments, which is the highest calculation ever made, yet still the Divine word stands literally true: St. Matthew says, chap. i., that the generations from Abraham to Christ were 42; now we find at the second census that the fighting men among the Hebrews amounted to 603, 000; and the Israelites, who have never ceased to be a distinct people, have so multiplied as far to exceed the number of all the fixed stars taken together.

Verse 13. *Take you wise men*—חכמים chachamim, such as had gained knowledge by great labor and study. Understanding נבונים nebonim, persons of discernment, judicious men. Known, ידעים yedaim, persons practiced in the operations of nature, capable of performing curious and important works.

Verse 15. *Captains over thousands, etc.*—What a curious and well-regulated economy was that of the Israelites! See its order and arrangement: 1. GOD, the KING and Supreme Judge; 2. Moses, God's prime minister; 3. The priests, consulting him by Urim and Thummim; 4. The chiefs or princes of the twelve tribes; 5. Chilliarchs, or captains over thousands; 6. Centurions, or captains over hundreds; 7. Tribunes, or captains over fifty men; 8. Decurions, or captains over ten men; and, 9. Officers, persons who might be employed by the different chiefs in executing particular commands. All these held their authority from God, and yet were subject and accountable to each other. See the notes on Numbers ii.

Verse 17. *Ye shall not respect persons*— Heb. faces. Let not the bold, daring countenance of the rich or mighty induce you to give an unrighteous decision; and let not the abject look of the poor man induce you either to favor him in an unrighteous cause, or to give judgment against him at the demand of the oppressor. Be uncorrupt and incorruptible, for the judgment is God's; ye minister in the place of God, act like HIM.

Verse 22. *We will send men before us*— See on Numbers 13.

Verse 28. *Cities-walled up to heaven*— That is, with very high walls which could not be easily scaled. High walls around houses, etc., in these parts of Arabia are still deemed a sufficient defense against the Arabs, who scarcely ever attempt any thing in the way of plunder but on horseback. The monastery on Mount Sinai is surrounded with very high walls without any gate; in the upper part of the wall there is a sort of window, or opening, from which a basket is suspended by a pulley, by which both persons and goods are received into and sent from the place. It is the same with the convent of St. Anthony, in Egypt; and this sort of wall is deemed a sufficient defense against the Arabs, who, as we have already observed, scarcely ever like to alight from their horses.

Verse 30. *The Lord-shall fight for you*— In the Targum of Onkelos, it is, the WORD of the Lord shall fight for you. In a great number of places the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases use the term מִמְרָא דִּי׳׳ meimera dayeya or Yehovah, the Word of the Lord, exactly in the same way in which St. John uses the term λογος Logos in the first chapter of his Gospel. Many instances of this have already occurred.

Verse 34. *The Lord-was wroth*— That is, his justice was incensed, and he evidenced his displeasure against you; and he could not have been a just God if he had not done so.

Verse 36. *Caleb-wholly followed the Lord.*— See on “Numbers 14:24”.

Verse 37. *The Lord was angry with me*— See on “Numbers 20:12”, etc., where a particular account is given of the sin of Moses.

Verse 44. *The Amorites-chased you*— See the note on “Numbers 14:40”: as bees do-by irresistible numbers.

Verse 46. *According unto the days that ye abode there.*— They had been a long time at this place, see Numbers 13:27; 20:1, 14, 21. And some think that the words mean, “Ye abode as long at Kadesh, when you came to it the second time, as ye did at the first.” Or, according to others, “While ye were in that part of the desert, ye encamped at Kadesh.”

1. As one grand object of the law of God was to instruct the people in those things which were calculated to promote their peace and insure their prosperity; and as they were apt to lose sight of their spiritual interests, without a due attention to which their secular interest could not be promoted; Moses, not only in this chapter, but through the whole book, calls upon them to recollect their former miserable situation, in which they held neither life nor property but at the will of a merciless tyrant, and the great kindness and power of God manifested in their deliverance from a bondage that was as degrading as it was oppressive. These things properly remembered would lead them to prize their blessings, and duly appreciate the mercy of their Maker.

2. But it was not only this general display of God’s kindness, in the grand act of their deliverance from Egypt, that he wished them to keep constantly in view, but also that gracious providence which was manifested in every step they took; which directed all their movements, provided for all their wants, continually showing what they should do, how they should do it, and also the most proper time and place for every act, whether religious or civil. By bringing before them in one point of view the history of almost forty years, in which the strangest and most stupendous occurrences had taken place that had ever been exhibited to the world, he took the readiest way to impress their minds, not only with their deep obligation to God, but also to show them that they were a people on whom their Maker had set his heart to do them good, and that if they feared him they should lack nothing that was good. He lays out also before them a history of their miscarriages and rebellion, and the privations and evils they had suffered in consequence, that this might act as a continual warning, and thus become, in the hands of God, a preventive of crimes.

3. If every Christian were thus to call his past life into review, he would see equal proofs of God’s gracious regards to his body and soul; equal proofs of eternal mercy in providing for his deliverance from the galling

yoke and oppressive tyranny of sin, as the Israelites had in their deliverance from Egypt; and equal displays of a most gracious providence, that had also been his incessant companion through all the changes and chances of this mortal life, guiding him by its counsel, that he might be at last received into glory. O reader, remember what God has done for thee during thy forty, fifty, etc., years! He has nourished, fed, clothed, protected, and saved thee. How often and how powerfully has his Spirit striven with thee! How often and how impressively thou hast heard his voice in his Gospel and in his providences! Remember the good resolutions thou hast made, the ingratitude and disobedience that have marked thy life; how his vows are still upon thee, and how his mercy still spares thee! And wilt thou live so as to perish for ever? God forbid! He still waits to be gracious, and rejoices over thee to do thee good. Learn from what is before thee how thou shouldst fear, love, believe in, and obey thy God. The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, is still before the throne; and whosoever cometh unto God through him shall in nowise be cast out. He who believes these things with an upright heart will soon be enabled to live a sanctified life.

CHAPTER 2

Moses continues to relate how they compassed Mount Seir, 1. And the commands they received not to meddle with the descendants of Esau, 2-8; nor to distress the Moabites, 9. Of the Emims, 10, 11; the Horims, 12. Their passage of the brook Zered, 13. The time they spent between Kadesh-barnea and Zered, 14; during which all the men of war that came out of Egypt were consumed, 15, 16. The command not to distress the Ammonites, 17-19. Of the Zamzummims, 20, the Anakims, 21, the Horims, 22, the Avims and Capthorims, all destroyed by the Ammonites, 23. They are commanded to cross the river Arnon, and are promised the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, 24, 25. Of the message sent to Sihon, to request a passage through his territories, 26-29. His refusal, 30. The consequent war, 31, 32. His total overthrow, 33; and extermination of his people, 34. The spoils that were taken, 35. And his land possessed from Aroer to Arnon by the Israelites, 36; who took care, according to the command of God, not to invade any part of the territories of the Ammonites, 37.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 3. *Turn you northward.*— From Mount Seir, in order to get to Canaan. This was not the way they went before, viz., by Kadesh-barnea, but they were to proceed between Edom on the one hand, and Moab and Ammon on the other, so as to enter into Canaan through the land of the Amorites.

Verse 5. *Meddle not with them*— That is, the Edomites. See on Numbers 20:14-21.

Verse 7. *The Lord-hath blessed thee, etc.*— God had given them much property, and therefore they had no need of plunder; they had gold and silver to buy the provender they needed, and therefore God would not permit them to take any thing by violence.

Verse 10. *The Emims dwelt therein*— Calmet supposes that these people were destroyed in the war made against them by Chedorlaomer and his allies, Genesis 14:5. Lot possessed their country after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. They are generally esteemed as giants; probably they were a hardy, fierce, and terrible people, who lived, like the wandering Arabs, on the plunder of others. This was sufficient to gain them the appellation of giants, or men of prodigious stature. See next verse.

Verse 11. *Which also were accounted giants*— This is not a fortunate version. The word is not giants, but רפאים Rephaim, the name of a people. It appears that the Emim, the Anakim, and the Rephaim, were probably the same people, called by different names in the different countries where they dwelt; for they appear originally to have been a kind of wandering free-booters, who lived by plunder. (See on the preceding verse.) It must be granted, however, that there were several men of this race of extraordinary stature. And hence all gigantic men have been called Rephaim. (See on Genesis 6:4, and 14:5.) But we well know that fear and public report have often added whole cubits to men's height. It was under this influence that the spies acted, when they brought the disheartening report mentioned Numbers 13:33.

Verse 12. *The Horims also dwelt in Seir*— The whole of this verse was probably added by Joshua or Ezra.

Verse 20. *That also was accounted a land of giants*— That was accounted the land or territory of the Rephaim.

Zamzummims— Supposed to be the same as the Zuzim, Genesis 14:5. Of these ancient people we know very little; they were probably inconsiderable tribes or clans, “pursuing and pursued, each other's prey,” till at length a stronger totally destroyed or subdued them, and their name became either extinct or absorbed in that of their conquerors. From the 10th to the 12th, and from the 20th to the 23d verse inclusive, we have certain historical remarks introduced which do not seem to have been made by Moses, but rather by Joshua or Ezra. By the introduction of these verses the thread of the narrative suffers considerable interruption. Dr. Kennicott considers both these passages to be interpolations. That they

could not have made a part of the speech of Moses originally, needs little proof.

Verse 29. *As the children of Esau which dwell in Seir*— See the note on “Numbers 20:21”.

Verse 30. *The Lord-hardened his spirit*— See the notes on “Exodus 4:21”, and See “Exodus 9:15”, etc.

Verse 36. *From Aroer-by the brink of the river of Arnon*— See on “Numbers 21:13”, etc.

Verse 37. *Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not*— God gave them their commission; and those only were to be cut off, the cup of whose iniquity was full. Though the Moabites and Ammonites were thus spared, they requited good with evil, for they fought against the Israelites, and cast them out of their possessions, Judges 11:4, 5; 2 Chronicles 20:1, etc., and committed the most shocking cruelties; see Amos 1:13. Hence God enacted a law, that none of these people should enter into the congregation of the Lord even to their tenth generation: see chap. 23:3-6.

CHAPTER 3

The war with OG, king of Bashan, 1, 2. He is defeated, 3. Sixty fortified cities with many unwallied towns taken, 4, 5. The utter destruction of the people, 6. The spoils, 7; and extent of the land taken, 8-10. Account of OG'S iron bedstead, 11. The land given to the Reubenites, Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh, 12, 13. Jair takes the country of Argob, 14. Gilead is given unto Machir, 15. And the rest of the land possessed by the Reubenites and Gadites, 16, 17. The directions given to those tribes, 18-20. The counsel given to Joshua, 21, 22. Moses's prayer to God for permission to go into the promised land, 23-25; and God's refusal, 26. He is commanded to go up to Mount Pisgah to see it, 27; and to encourage Joshua, 28. They continue in the valley opposite to Beth-peor, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 4. *All the region of Argob*— כל חבל ארגוב col chebel Argob, all the cable or cord of Argob; this expression, which is used in various other parts of Scripture, (see, in the original, Amos 7:17; Micah 2:5; Deuteronomy 32:9; Psalm 16:6,) shows that anciently land was measured by lines or cords of a certain length, in a similar way to that by the chain among us, and the schoenus or cord among the Egyptians. Some think that it was the region of Argob that was afterwards called the region of Trachonites.

Verse 9. *Hermon the Sidonians call-Shehir*— I suppose this verse to have been a marginal remark, which afterwards got incorporated with the text, or an addition by Joshua or Ezra.

Verse 11. *Og king of Bashan remained*— Og was the last king of the Amorites; his kingdom appears to have taken its name from the hill of Bashan; the country has been since called Batanaea.

Remnant of giants— Of the Rephaim. See on chap. 2:10, 11.

His bedstead was-of iron— Iron was probably used partly for its strength and durability, and partly to prevent noxious vermin from harbouring in it.

Is it not in Rabbath, of the children of Ammon?— The bedstead was probably taken in some battle between the Ammonites and Amorites, in which the former had gained the victory. The bedstead was carried a trophy and placed in Rabbath, which appears, from 2 Samuel 12:26, to have been the royal city of the children of Ammon.

Nine cubits was the length-four cubits the breadth— Allowing the bedstead to have been one cubit longer than Og, which is certainly sufficient, and allowing the cubit to be about eighteen inches long, for this is perhaps the average of the cubit of a man, then Og was twelve feet high. This may be deemed extraordinary, and perhaps almost incredible, and therefore many commentators have, according to their fancy, lengthened the bedstead and shortened the man, making the former one-third longer than the person who lay on it, that they might reduce Og to six cubits; but even in this way they make him at least nine feet high.

On this subject the rabbins have trifled most sinfully. I shall give one specimen. In the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel on Numbers 21:33-35, it is said that “Og having observed that the camp of the Israelites extended six miles, he went and tore up a mountain six miles in its base, and put it on his head, and carried it towards the camp, that he might throw it on the Israelites and destroy them; but the word of the Lord prepared a worm, which bored a hole in the mountain over his head, so that it fell down upon his shoulders: at the same time his teeth growing out in all directions, stuck into the mountain, so that he could not cast it off his head. Moses, (who was himself ten cubits high,) seeing Og thus entangled, took an axe ten cubits long, and having leaped ten cubits in height, struck Og on the ankle bone, so that he fell and was slain.”

From this account the distance from the sole of Og’s foot to his ankle was thirty cubits in length! I give this as a very slight specimen of rabbinical comment. I could quote places in the Talmud in which Og is stated to be several miles high! This relation about Og I suppose to be also an historical note added by a subsequent hand.

Verse 14. *Bashan-havoth-jair*— Bashan of the cities of Jair; see Numbers 32:41.

Verse 17. *From Chinnereth*— See on “Numbers 34:11”.

Verses 24. — 25. The prayer of Moses recorded in these two verses, and his own reflections on it, ver. 26, are very affecting. He had suffered much both in body and mind in bringing the people to the borders of the promised land; and it was natural enough for him to wish to see them established in it, and to enjoy a portion of that inheritance himself, which he knew was a type of the heavenly country. But notwithstanding his very earnest prayer, and God’s especial favor towards him, he was not permitted to go over Jordan! He had grieved the Spirit of God, and he passed a sentence against him of exclusion from the promised land. Yet he permitted him to see it, and gave him the fullest assurances that the people whom he had brought out of Egypt should possess it. Thus God may choose to deprive those of earthly possessions to whom he is nevertheless determined to give a heavenly inheritance.

Verse 26. *Let it suffice thee*— רב לך rab lach, there is an abundance to thee-thou hast had honor enough already, and may well dispense with going over Jordan. He surely has no reason to complain who is taken from earthly felicity to heavenly glory. In this act God showed to Moses both his goodness and severity.

Verse 28. *But charge Joshua, etc.*— Give him authority in the sight of the people, let them see that he has the same commission which I gave to thee. Encourage him; for he will meet with many difficulties in the work to which he is called. And strengthen him-show him my unfailing promises, and exhort him to put his trust in me alone; for he shall go over before this people, and shall cause them to inherit the land; of this let him rest perfectly assured.

Verse 29. *Beth-peor*.— This was a city in the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites; and as בית beth signifies a house, the place probably had its name from a temple of the god Peor, who was worshipped there. Peor was nearly the same among the Moabites that Priapus was among the Romans-the obscene god of an obscene people. This we have already seen.

IT is very likely that what God speaks here, both concerning Moses and Joshua, was designed to be typical of the procedure of his justice and grace in the salvation of man. 1. The land of Canaan was a type of the kingdom of heaven. 2. The law, which shows the holiness of God and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, could not bring the people to the possession of that kingdom. 3. Moses may probably be considered here as the emblem of that law by which is the knowledge of sin, but not redemption from it 4. Joshua, the same as Jesus, the name signifying a Savior, is appointed to bring the people into the rest which God had provided for them; thus it is by Jesus Christ alone that the soul is saved-fitted for and brought into the possession of the heavenly inheritance, (see John 1:17; Galatians 2:16; 3:12, 13, 24;) for he is the end of the law-the great scope and design of the law, for righteousness-for justification, to them that believe; Romans 10:4. Such a use as this every pious reader may make of the circumstances recorded here, without the danger of pushing analogy or metaphor beyond their reasonable limits.

CHAPTER 4

Exhortations to obedience, 1. Nothing to be added to or taken from the testimonies of God, 2. The people are exhorted to recollect how God had destroyed the ungodly among them, 3; and preserved those who were faithful, 4. The excellence of the Divine law, 5, 6. No nation in the world could boast of any such statutes, judgments, etc., 7, 8. They are exhorted to obedience by the wonderful manifestations of God in their behalf, 9-13. Moses exhorts them to beware of idolatry, and to make no likeness of any thing in heaven or earth as an object of adoration, 14-20. He informs them that he must die in that land as God had refused to let him go into the promised land, being angry with him on their account, 21, 22. Repeats his exhortation to obedience, 23, 24. Predicts the judgments of God against them, should they turn to idolatry, 25-28. Promises of God's mercy to the penitent, 29-31. The grand and unparalleled privileges of the Israelites, 32-40. Moses severs three cities on the east side of Jordan for cities of refuge, 41, 42. Their names, 43. When and where Moses gave these statutes and judgments to Israel, 44-49.

NOTES ON CHAP 4

Verse 1. *Hearken-unto the statutes*— Every thing that concerned the rites and ceremonies of religion; judgments—all that concerned matters of civil right and wrong.

Verse 2. *Ye shall not add*— Any book, chapter, verse or word, which I have not spoken; nor give any comment that has any tendency to corrupt, weaken, or destroy any part of this revelation.

Neither shall ye diminish— Ye shall not only not take away any larger portion of this word, but ye shall not take one jot or tittle from the LAW; it is that word of God that abideth for ever.

Verse 6. *Keep-and do them; for this is your wisdom*— There was no mode of worship at this time on the face or the earth that was not wicked,

obscene, puerile, foolish, or ridiculous, except that established by God himself among the Israelites. And every part of this, taken in its connection and reference, may be truly called a wise and reasonable service.

The nations-and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.— Almost all the nations in the earth showed that they had formed this opinion of the Jews, by borrowing from them the principal part of their civil code. Take away what Asia and Europe, whether ancient or modern, have borrowed from the Mosaic laws, and you leave little behind that can be called excellent.

Verse 9. *Only take heed to thyself*— Be circumspect and watchful.

Keep thy soul diligently— Be mindful of thy eternal interests. Whatever becomes of the body, take care of the soul.

Lest thou forget— God does his work that they may be had in everlasting remembrance; and he that forgets them, forgets his own mercies. Besides, if a man forget the work of God on his soul, he loses that work.

Lest they depart from thy heart— It is not sufficient to lay up Divine things in the memory, they must be laid up in the heart. Thy word have I hidden in my heart, says David, that I might not sin against thee. The life of God in the soul of man can alone preserve the soul to life everlasting; and this grace must be retained all the days of our life. When Adam fell, his condition was not meliorated by the reflection that he had been once in paradise; nor does it avail Satan now that he was once an angel of light. Those who let the grace of God depart from their hearts, lose that grace; and those who lose the grace, fall from the grace; and as some have fallen and risen no more, so may others; therefore, take heed to thyself, etc. Were it impossible for men finally to fall from the grace of God, exhortations of this kind had never been given, because they would have been unnecessary, and God never does an unnecessary thing.

But teach them thy sons— If a man know the worth of his own soul, he will feel the importance of the salvation of the souls of his family. Those who neglect family religion, neglect personal religion; if more attention were paid to the former, even among those called religious people, we should soon have a better state of civil society. On family religion God

lays much stress; and no head of a family can neglect it without endangering the final salvation of his own soul. See the note at the conclusion of Gen. xviii., and that at the end of Gen. xix., and see the note on “Deuteronomy 6:7”.

Verse 15. *Ye saw no manner of similitude*— Howsoever God chose to appear or manifest himself, he took care never to assume any describable form. He would have no image worship, because he is a SPIRIT, and they who worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. These outward things tend to draw the mind out of itself, and diffuse it on sensible, if not sensual, objects; and thus spiritual worship is prevented, and the Holy Ghost grieved. Persons acting in this way can never know much of the religion of the heart.

Verse 16. *The likeness of male or female*— Such as Baal-peor and the Roman Priapus, Ashtaroth or Astarte, and the Greek and Roman Venus; after whom most nations of the world literally went a whoring.

Verse 17. *The likeness of any beast, etc.*— Such as the Egyptian god Apis, who was worshipped under the form of a white bull; the ibis and hawk, among the FOWLS, had also Divine honors paid to them; serpents and the crocodile among REPTILES; besides monkeys, dogs, cats, the scarabaeus, leeks, and onions! See this explained at large, See “Exodus 20:4”.

Verse 19. *When thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars*— The worship of the heavenly bodies was the oldest species of idolatry. Those who had not the knowledge of the true God were led to consider the sun, moon, planets, and stars, as not only self-existing, but the authors of all the blessings possessed by mankind. The knowledge of a rational system of astronomy served to destroy this superstition; and very little of it remains now in the world, except among a few Christian and Mohammedan astrologers; those miserable sinners who endeavor, as much as possible, to revive the old idolatry, while vainly professing to believe in the true God! Nor is it to be doubted that God will proceed with them as he has done of old with the worshippers of the host of heaven. Sound philosophy is next in importance to sound divinity; and next to the study of the work of grace is that of the operations of God in nature; for these visible things make known his eternal power and Godhead.

Verse 20. *Out of the iron furnace*— From this mention of the word iron furnace there can be little doubt that the Israelites were employed in Egypt in the most laborious works of metallurgy. Digging, smelting, and forging of iron in so hot a climate must have been oppressive work indeed.

Verse 21. *The Lord was angry with me*— And if with me, so as to debar me from entering into the promised land, can you think to escape if guilty of greater provocations?

Verse 24. *Thy God is a consuming fire*— They had seen him on the mount as an unconsuming fire, while appearing to Moses, and giving the law; and they had seen him as a consuming fire in the case of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their company. They had, therefore, every good to expect from his approbation, and every evil to dread from his displeasure.

Verse 26. *I call heaven and earth to witness against you*— A most solemn method of adjuration, in use among all nations in the world. So Virgil, *AEn.*, lib. xii., ver. 176, etc.

*Tum pius Aeneas stricto sic ense precatur:
Esto nunc Sol testis et haec mihi terra vocanti—
Fontesque fluviosque voco, quaeque aetheris alti
Religio, et quae caeruleo sunt numina ponto, etc.*

*“Then the great Trojan prince unsheathed his sword,
And thus, with lifted hands, the gods adored:
Thou land for which I wage this war, and thou
Great source of day, be witness to my vow! —
Almighty king of heaven and queen of air,
Propitious now and reconciled by prayer,—
Ye springs, ye floods, ye various powers who lie
Beneath the deep, or tread the golden sky,—
HEAR and ATTEST!”*

PITT.

God and man being called upon to bear testimony to the truth of what was spoken, that if there was any flaw or insincerity, it might be detected; and if any crime, it might not go unpunished. Such appeals to God, for such

purposes, show at once both the origin and use of oaths. See the note on “Deuteronomy 6:13”.

Verse 27. *The Lord shall scatter you among the nations*— This was amply verified in their different captivities and dispersions.

Verse 28. *There ye shall serve gods-wood and stone*— This was also true of the Israelites, not only in their captivities, but also in their own land. And it may now be literally the case with the ten tribes who were carried away captive by the Assyrians, and of whose residence no man at present knows any thing with certainty. That they still exist there can be no doubt; but they are now, most probably, so completely incorporated with the idolaters among whom they dwell, as to be no longer distinguishable: yet God can gather them.

Verse 29. *But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord*— God is longsuffering, and of tender mercy; and waits, ever ready, to receive a backsliding soul when it returns to him. Is not this promise left on record for the encouragement and salvation of lost Israel?

Verse 30. *When thou art in tribulation in the latter days*— Are not these the times spoken of? And is there not still hope for Israel? Could we see them become zealous for their own law and religious observances—could we see them humble themselves before the God of Jacob—could we see them conduct their public worship with any tolerable decency and decorum—could we see them zealous to avoid every moral evil, inquiring the road to Zion, with their faces thitherward; then might we hope that the redemption of Israel was at hand: but alas! there is not the most distant evidence of any thing of the kind, except in a very few solitary instances. They are, perhaps, in the present day, more lost to every sacred principle of their own institutions than they have ever been since their return from the Babylonish captivity. By whom shall Jacob arise? for in this sense he is small—deeply fallen, and greatly degraded.

Verse 33. *Did ever people hear the voice of God*— It seems to have been a general belief that if God appeared to men, it was for the purpose of destroying them; and indeed most of the extraordinary manifestations of God were in the way of judgment; but here it was different; God did appear in a sovereign and extraordinary manner; but it was for the

deliverance and support of the people. 1. They heard his voice speaking with them in a distinct, articulate manner. 2. They saw the fire, the symbol of his presence, the appearances of which demonstrated it to be supernatural. 3. Notwithstanding God appeared so terrible, yet no person was destroyed, for he came, not to destroy, but to save.

Verse 34. *From the midst of another nation*— This was a most extraordinary thing, that a whole people, consisting of upwards of 600, 000 effective men, besides women and children, should, without striking a blow, be brought out of the midst of a very powerful nation, to the political welfare of which their services were so essential; that they should be brought out in so open and public a manner; that the sea itself should be supernaturally divided to afford this mighty host a passage; and that, in a desert utterly unfriendly to human life, they should be sustained for forty years. These were such instances of the almighty power and goodness of God as never could be forgotten.

In this verse Moses enumerates seven different means used by the Almighty in effecting Israel's deliverance.

1. TEMPTATIONS, **מַסּוֹת** massoth, from **נָסָה** nasah, to try or prove; the miracles which God wrought to try the faith and prove the obedience of the children of Israel.
2. SIGNS, **אֹתוֹת** othoth, from **אָתָּה** athah, to come near; such signs as God gave them of his continual presence and especial providence, particularly the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire, keeping near to them night and day, and always directing their journeys, showing them when and where to pitch their tents, etc., etc.
3. WONDERS, **מוֹפְתִים** mophethim, from **יָפַת** yaphath, to persuade; persuasive facts and events, says Parkhurst, whether strictly miraculous, and exceeding the powers of nature, as Exodus 7:9; 11:9, 10; or not, as Isaiah 20:3; Ezekiel 12:6, 11. It probably means typical representations: in this signification the word is used, Zechariah 3:8. Joshua, the high priest, and his companions were **אֲנָשֵׁי מוֹפֵת** anshey mopheth, typical men, raised up by God as types of Christ, and proofs that God would bring his servant THE BRANCH. All the dealings of God with this people, and even

the people themselves, were types-present signifiers of distant facts and future occurrences.

4. WAR, **מִלְחָמָה** milchamah, hostile engagements; such as those with the Amalekites, the Amorites, and the Bashanites, in which the hand of God was seen rather than the hand of man.

5. A MIGHTY HAND, **יָד חֲזָקָה** yad chazakah; one that is strong to deal its blows, irresistible in its operations, and grasps its enemies hard, so that they cannot escape, and protects its friends so powerfully that they cannot be injured. Neither stratagem nor policy was used in this business, but the openly displayed power of God.

6. A STRETCHED-OUT ARM, **זְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה** zeroa netuyah; a series of almighty operations, following each other in quick astonishing succession. Let it be noted that in the Scriptures, 1. The finger of God denotes any manifestation of the Divine power, where effects are produced beyond the power of art or nature. 2. The hand of God signifies the same power, but put forth in a more signal manner. 3. The arm of God, the Divine omnipotence manifested in the most stupendous miracles. 4. The arm of God stretched out, this same omnipotence exerted in a continuation of stupendous miracles, both in the way of judgment and mercy. In this latter sense it appears to be taken in the text: the judgments were poured out on the Egyptians; the mercies wrought in favor of the Israelites.

7. GREAT TERRORS, **מִוְרָאִים גְּדוֹלִים** moraim gedolim; such terror, dismay, and consternation as were produced by the ten plagues, to which probably the inspired penman here alludes: or, as the Septuagint has it, **εὐοραμασιν μεγαλοις**, with great or portentous sights; such as that when God looked out of the cloud upon the Egyptians, and their chariot wheels were taken off, Exodus 14:24, 25. More awful displays of God's judgments, power, and might, were never witnessed by man.

Verse 41. Then Moses severed three cities— See the law relative to the cities of refuge explained, See “Numbers 35:11”, etc.

Verse 43. Bezer in the wilderness— As the cities of refuge are generally understood to be types of the salvation provided by Christ for sinners; so

their names have been thought to express some attribute of the Redeemer of mankind. See them explained Joshua 20:7, 8.

I SUPPOSE the last nine verses of this chapter to have been added by either Joshua or Ezra.

CHAPTER 5

God's covenant with the people in Horeb, 1-4. Moses the mediator of it, 5. A repetition of the ten commandments, 6-21; which God wrote on two tables of stone, 22. The people are filled with dread at the terrible majesty of God, 23-26; and beseech Moses to be their mediator, 27. The Lord admits of their request, 28; and deplores their ungodliness, 29. They are exhorted to obedience, that they may be preserved in the possession of the promised land, 30-33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *And Moses called all Israel, and said—Hear, etc.*— 1. God speaks to the people. 2. The people are called to hear what God speaks. 3. To learn what they heard, that they may be thoroughly instructed in the will of God. 4. To keep God's testimonies ever in mind, and to treasure them up in a believing and upright heart. 5. That they might do them—obey the whole will of God, taking his word for the invariable rule of their conduct. Should not all these points be kept in view by every Christian assembly?

Verse 3. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers (only) but with us (also.)

Verse 6. *I am the Lord thy God*— See these commandments explained in the notes on Exodus 20.

Verse 15. *And remember that thou wast a servant*— In this and the latter clause of the preceding verse Moses adds another reason why one day in seven should be sanctified, viz., that the servants might rest, and this is urged upon them on the consideration of their having been servants in the land of Egypt. We see therefore that God had three grand ends in view by appointing a Sabbath. 1. To commemorate the creation. 2. To give a due proportion of rest to man and beast. When in Egypt they had no rest; their cruel task-masters caused them to labor without intermission; now God had given rest, and as he had showed them mercy, he teaches them to show

mercy to their servants: Remember that thou wast a servant. 3. To afford peculiar spiritual advantages to the soul, that it might be kept in remembrance of the rest which remains at the right hand of God.

Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.—

Here is a variation in the manner of expression, Sabbath day for seventh, owing, it is supposed, to a change of the day at the exodus from Sunday to Saturday, effected upon the gathering of the manna, Exodus 16:23. The Sabbath now became a twofold memorial of the deliverance, as well as of the creation; and this accounts for the new reason assigned for its observance: “Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.” See Dr. A. BAYLEY’S Hebr. and Eng. Bible, and see the note on “Exodus 16:23”.

Verse 21. His field— This clause is not in the tenth commandment as it stands in Exodus 20:17.

Verse 23. — etc. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice— See the notes on “Exodus 20:18”, etc.

Verse 29. O that there were such a heart in them— Or rather, **לבבם זה** **מי ית והיה** **mi yitten vehayah lebabam zeh**, Who will give such a heart to them, that they may fear, etc. They refuse to receive such a heart from me; who then can supply it? If they had not been such perfectly free agents as could either use or abuse their liberty, could God have made the complaint or expressed the earnest desire we find in this verse? He made the human will free; and in spite of all the influence of sin and Satan, he preserves its liberty. Had man no free will, he could neither be punished nor rewarded, because a mere machine, and consequently no more accountable for his actions than the fire for its consuming quality, or the stone for its gravity; the one having burned the house of the righteous, the other having crushed the innocent to death. See the note on “Deuteronomy 29:4”.

Verse 32. Ye shall observe to do— He who marks not the word of God is never likely to fulfill the will of God.

Ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.— The way of truth and righteousness is a right line; a man must walk straight forward who

wishes to go to glory; no crooked or devious path ever led to God or happiness.

Verse 33. *Ye shall walk in all the ways, etc.*— God never gave a commandment to man which he did not design that he should obey. He who selects from the Divine testimonies such precepts as he feels but little inclination to transgress, and lives in the breach of others, sins against the grand legislative authority of God, and shall be treated as a rebel.

That ye may live— תחיו ticheyun, that ye may enjoy life, (for the paragogic nun, at the end of the word, deepens the sense,) that it may be well with you ותוב לכם vetob lachem, and good shall be to you—God will prosper you in all things essential to the welfare of your bodies, and the salvation of your souls.

That ye may prolong your days in the land— That ye may arrive at a good old age, and grow more and more meet for the inheritance among the saints in light.

On this very important verse we may remark, a long life is a great blessing, if a man live to God, because it is in life, and in life alone, that a preparation for eternal glory may be acquired. Those who wish to die soon, have never yet learned to live, and know not the value of life or time. Many have a vain hope that they shall get either in death, or in the other world, a preparation for glory. This is a fatal error. Here, alone, we may acquaint ourselves with God, and receive that holiness without which none can see him. Reader, be thankful to him that thou art still in a state of probation; and pray that thou mayest live for eternity.

CHAPTER 6

The great design of God in giving his laws is, that the people may fear and obey him, that they may continue in peace and prosperity, and be mightily increased, 1-3. The great commandment of the law, 4, 5, which shall be laid up in their hearts, 6; taught to their children, 7; and affixed as a sign to their hands, heads, doors, and gates, 8, 9. How they are to act when they shall come into the promised land, 10-19. How they shall instruct their children, and relate the history to them of God's wonderful acts, 29-25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *Now these are the commandments, etc.*— See the difference between commandments, statutes, judgments, etc., pointed out, See “Leviticus 26:15”.

Do them— That is, live in the continual practice of them; for by this they were to be distinguished from all the nations of the world, and all these were to be in force till the Son of God should come. Whither ye go.

עברים oberim, whither ye pass over, referring to the river Jordan, across which they must pass to get into Canaan.

Verse 2. *That thou mightest fear the Lord*— Respect his sovereign authority as a lawgiver, and ever feel thyself bound to obey him. No man can walk either conscientiously or safely who has not the fear of God continually before his eyes. When this is gone, more than a guardian angel is fled.

Thou, and thy son, and thy son's son— Through all thy successive generations. Whoever fears God will endeavor to bring up his children in the way of righteousness, that they also may fear God, and that pure and undefiled religion may be preserved in his family through all its generations, not only in word, but in practice also.

Verse 3. *Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it*— Literally, Ye shall hear, O Israel, and thou shalt keep to do them. 1. God is to be heard; no obligation without law to found it on, and no law in religion but from God. 2. The commandment must be understood in order to be obeyed. 3. It must be observed-attentively considered, in order to be understood. And, 4. It must be performed, that the end for which it was given may be accomplished, viz., that GOD may be glorified, and that it may be well with the people. What is here spoken applies powerfully to every part of the moral law; God has given IT as a rule of life, therefore obedience to it is indispensably necessary, not to the purchase of salvation, for no human merit can ever extend to that, but it is the way by which both the justice and mercy of God choose to conduct men to heaven. But let it be fully understood that no man can walk in the way of obedience but by and under the influence of the grace of God.

Verse 4. *Hear, O Israel*— שִׁמְעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד shemA Yisrael, Yehovah Eloheinu, Yehovah achad. These words may be variously rendered into English; but almost all possible verbal varieties in the translation (and there can be none other) amount to the same sense: “Israel, hear! Jehovah, our God, is one Jehovah;” or, “Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is one;” or, “Jehovah is our God, Jehovah alone;” or, “Jehovah is our God, Jehovah who is one;” or, “Jehovah, who is our God, is the one Being.” On this verse the Jews lay great stress; it is one of the four passages which they write on their phylacteries, and they write the last letter in the first and last words very large, for the purpose of exciting attention to the weighty truth it contains. It is perhaps in reference to this custom of the Jews that our blessed Lord alludes, Matthew 22:38; Mark 12: 29, 30, where he says, This is the first and great commandment; and this is nearly the comment that Maimonides gives on this place: “Hear, O Israel; because in these words the property, the love, and the doctrine of God are contained.”

Many think that Moses teaches in these words the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. It may be so; but if so, it is not more clearly done than in the first verse of Genesis, to which the reader is referred. When this passage occurs in the Sabbath readings in the synagogue, the whole congregation repeat the last word אֶחָד achad for several minutes together with the loudest vociferations: this I suppose they do to vent a little of their spleen

against the Christians, for they suppose the latter hold three Gods, because of their doctrine of the Trinity; but all their skill and cunning can never prove that there is not a plurality expressed in the word אלהינו Eloheinu, which is translated our God; and were the Christians, when reading this verse, to vociferate Eloheinu for several minutes as the Jews do achad, it would apply more forcibly in the way of conviction to the Jews of the plurality of persons in the Godhead, than the word achad, of one, against any pretended false tenet of Christianity, as every Christian receives the doctrine of the unity of God in the most conscientious manner. It is because of their rejection of this doctrine that the wrath of God continues to rest on them; for the doctrine of the atonement cannot be received, unless the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ is received too. Some Christians have joined the Jews against this doctrine, and some have even outdone them, and have put themselves to extraordinary pains to prove that אלהים Elohim is a noun of the singular number! This has not yet been proved. It would be as easy to prove that there is no plural in language.

Verse 5. *Thou shalt love the Lord, etc.*— Here we see the truth of that word of the apostle, 1 Timothy 1:5: Now the END of the COMMANDMENT is LOVE out of a pure heart, etc. See the whole of the doctrine contained in this verse explained on Matthew 22:36-40.

Verse 6. *Shall be in thine heart*— For where else can love be? If it be not in the heart, it exists not. And if these words be not in the heart—if they are not esteemed, prized, and received as a high and most glorious privilege, what hope is there that this love shall ever reign there?

Verse 7. *Thou shalt teach them diligently*— שׁננתם shinnantam, from שׁן shanan, to repeat, iterate, or do a thing again and again; hence to whet or sharpen any instrument, which is done by reiterated friction or grinding. We see here the spirit of this Divine injunction. God's testimonies must be taught to our children, and the utmost diligence must be used to make them understand them. This is a most difficult task; and it requires much patience, much prudence, much judgment, and much piety in the parents, to enable them to do this good, this most important work, in the best and most effectual manner. See at the end of this chapter.

And shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house— Thou shalt have religion at home, as well as in the temple and tabernacle.

And when thou walkest by the way— Thou shalt be religious abroad as well as at home, and not be ashamed to own God wheresoever thou art.

When thou liest down, and when thou risest up.— Thou shalt begin and end the day with God, and thus religion will be the great business of thy life. O how good are these sayings, but how little regarded!

Verse 8. *Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thins hand*— Is not this an allusion to an ancient and general custom observed in almost every part of the world? When a person wishes to remember a thing of importance, and is afraid to trust to the common operations of memory, he ties a knot on some part of his clothes, or a cord on his hand or finger, or places something out of its usual order, and in view, that his memory may be whetted to recollection, and his eye affect his heart. God, who knows how slow of heart we are to understand, graciously orders us to make use of every help, and through the means of things sensible, to rise to things spiritual.

And they shall be as frontlets— **טפפת** totaphoth seems to have the same meaning as phylacteries has in the New Testament; and for the meaning and description of these appendages to a Jew's dress and to his religion, see the notes on "Exodus 13:9", and See "Matthew 23:5", where a phylactery is particularly described.

Verse 9. *Write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*— The Jews, forgetting the spirit and design of this precept, used these things as superstitious people do amulets and charms, and supposed, if they had these passages of Scripture written upon slips of pure parchment, wrapped round their foreheads, tied to their arm, or nailed to their door-posts, that they should then be delivered from every evil! And how much better are many Christians, who keep a Bible in their house merely that it may keep the devil out; and will have it in their rooms, or under their pillows, to ward off spirits and ghosts in the night? How ingenious is the heart of man to find out every wrong way, and to miss the right!

Verse 12. *Beware lest thou forget the Lord*— In earthly prosperity men are apt to forget heavenly things. While the animal senses have every thing

they can wish, it is difficult for the soul to urge its way to heaven; the animal man is happy, and the desires of the soul are absorbed in those of the flesh. God knows this well; and therefore, in his love to man, makes comparative poverty and frequent affliction his general lot. Should not every soul therefore magnify God for this lot in life? “Before I was afflicted,” says David, “I went astray;” and had it not been for poverty and affliction, as instruments in the hands of God’s grace, multitudes of souls now happy in heaven would have been wretched in hell. It is not too much to speak thus far; because we ever see that the rich and the affluent are generally negligent of God and the interests of their souls. It must however be granted that extreme poverty is as injurious to religion as excessive affluence. Hence the wisdom as well as piety of Agur’s prayer, Proverbs 30:7-9: “Give me neither poverty nor riches, lest I be full and deny thee, or lest I be poor and steal,” etc.

Verse 13. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God*— Thou shalt respect and reverence him as thy Lawgiver and Judge; as thy Creator, Preserver, and the sole object of thy religious adoration.

And serve him— Our blessed Lord, in Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8, quotes these words thus: And him ONLY (αὐτῷ μόνῳ) shalt thou serve. It appears, therefore, that לַבְדּוֹ lebaddo was anciently in the Hebrew text, as it was and is in the SEPTUAGINT, (αὐτῷ μόνῳ,) from which our Lord quoted it. The COPTIC preserves the same reading; so do also the VULGATE, (illi soli,) and the ANGLO-SAXON, ([AS]) Dr. Kennicott argues, that without the word only the text would not have been conclusive for the purpose for which our Lord advanced it; for as we learn from Scripture that some men worshipped false gods in conjunction with the true, the quotation here would not have been full to the point without this exclusive word. It may be proper to observe that the omitted word לַבְדּוֹ lebaddo, retained in the above versions, does not exist in the Hebrew printed text, nor in any MS. hitherto discovered.

Shalt swear by his name.— תִּשְׁבַּע tishshabea, from שָׁבַע shaba, he was full, satisfied, or gave that which was full or satisfactory. Hence an oath and swearing, because appealing to God, and taking him for witness in any case of promise, etc., gave full and sufficient security for the performance; and if done in evidence, or to the truth of any particular fact, it gave full

security for the truth of that evidence. An oath, therefore, is an appeal to God, who knows all things, of the truth of the matter in question: and when a religious man takes such an oath, he gives full and reasonable satisfaction that the thing is so, as stated; for it is ever to be presumed that no man, unless in a state of the deepest degradation, would make such an appeal falsely, for this would imply an attempt to make God a party in the deception.

Verse 14. *Ye shall not go after other gods*— The object of religious worship among every people, whether that object be true or false, is ever considered as the pattern or exemplar to his worshippers. Christians are termed the followers of God; they take God for their pattern, and walk-act, as he does. Hence we see the meaning of the terms in this verse: Ye shall not go after-ye shall not take false gods for your patterns. The Canaanites, Greeks, Romans, etc., were a most impure people, because the objects of their worship were impure, and they went after them, i. e., were like their gods. This serves to show us that such as our Redeemer is, such should we be; and indeed this is the uniform language of God to man: Be ye holy, for I am holy, Leviticus 21:8; Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect, Matthew 5:48.

Verse 15. *A jealous God*— Jehovah has betrothed you to himself as a bride is to her husband. Do not be unfaithful, else that love wherewith he has now distinguished you shall assume the form of jealousy, and so divorce and consume you.

Verse 16. *Ye shall not tempt the Lord*— Ye shall not provoke him by entertaining doubts of his mercy, goodness, providence, and truth.

As ye tempted him in Massah.— How did they tempt him in Massah? They said, Is the Lord among us or not? Exodus 17:1-7. After such proofs as they had of his presence and his kindness, this was exceedingly provoking. Doubting God's kindness where there are so many evidences of it, is highly insulting to God Almighty.

Verse 17. *Ye shall diligently keep, etc.*— On this and the following verse see the note on "Deuteronomy 6:3".

Verse 20. *And when thy son asketh thee, etc.*—“Here,” as Mr. Ainsworth justly remarks, “followeth a brief catechism, containing the grounds of religion.”

What mean the testimonies, etc.—The Hebrew language has no word to express to mean or signify, and therefore uses simply the substantive verb what is, i. e., what mean or signify, etc. The seven thin ears ARE, i. e., signify, seven years of famine. This form of speech frequently occurs.

Verse 25. *It shall be our righteousness*—The evidence that we are under the influence of the fear and love of God. Moses does not say that this righteousness could be wrought without the influence of God’s mercy, nor does he say that they should purchase heaven by it: but, God required them to be conformed to his will in all things, that they might be holy in heart, and righteous in every part of their moral conduct.

1. ON a very important subject in this chapter, it may be necessary to make some farther observations.

A most injurious and destructive maxim has lately been advanced by a few individuals, which it is to be hoped is disowned by the class of Christians to which they belong, though the authors affect to be thought Christians, and rational ones, too; the sum of the maxim is this: “Children ought not to be taught religion for fear of having their minds biased to some particular creed, but they should be left to themselves till they are capable of making a choice, and choose to make one.” This maxim is in flat opposition to the command of God, and those who teach it show how little they are affected by the religion they profess. If they felt it to be good for any thing, they would certainly wish their children to possess it; but they do not teach religion to their children, because they feel it to be of no use to themselves. Now the Christian religion properly applied saves the soul, and fills the heart with love to God and man; for the love of God is shed abroad in the heart of a genuine believer, by the Holy Ghost given to him. These persons have no such love, because they have not the religion that inspires it; and the spurious religion which admits of the maxim above mentioned, is not the religion of God, and consequently better untaught than taught. But what can be said to those parents who, possessing a better faith, equally neglect the instruction of their children in the things of God! They are highly criminal; and if their children perish through neglect, which is very

probable, what a dreadful account must they give in the great day!

PARENTS! hear what the Lord saith unto you: Ye shall diligently teach your children that there is one Lord, Jehovah, Elohim; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: and that they must love him with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might. And as children are heedless, apt to forget, liable to be carried away by sensible things, repeat and re-repeat the instruction, and add line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, carefully studying time, place, and circumstances, that your labor be not in vain: show it in its amiableness, excite attention by exciting interest; show how good, how useful, how blessed, how ennobling, how glorious it is. Whet these things on their hearts till the keenest edge is raised on the strongest desire, till they can say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire besides thee!"

See the notes on "Deuteronomy 4:9", and on Genesis 18., and 29. at the end. 2. Without offense to any, I hope, a few words more may be said on the nature of an oath, in addition to the note, See "Deuteronomy 6:13". The matter is important, and perhaps not well understood by many.

The making an appeal to the Supreme Being, and calling him to witness and record, constitutes the spirit and essence of an oath. It is no matter in what form this appeal is made, whether by putting the hand under the thigh, as among the patriarchs; by the water of the Ganges, as among the Hindoos; on a surat or chapter of the Koran, as among the Mohammedans; on a Hebrew Pentateuch, as among the Jews; on the form of the cross, as among the Roman Catholics; kissing the New Testament, as among Protestants in general; or holding up the hand, and making affirmation, as among the people called Quakers; still the oath is the same, for the appeal is made to God. On this ground (and this is the true ground), the holding up of the hand in a court of justice, is as perfect, as substantial, and as formal an oath, as kissing the New Testament. Why then so many objections against taking an oath in a court of justice by any one particular form, when the same thing is done in spirit, essence, and substance, when God is called to witness and record, though the form be different? When God says, Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt swear by his name, he says, in effect, Thou shalt have no god besides me; thou shalt consider me the fountain of truth, the rewarder of righteousness, and the punisher of perfidy and wickedness. Swear by my name-bind thyself to me; take me

for witness to all thy actions; and act in all things as having me continually before thine eyes, and knowing that for every act and word thou shalt give account to me in the day of judgment. Our Lord's command, Swear not at all, can never relate to an oath in a civil cause, taken according to the definition above given: profane and common swearing, with all light, irreverent oaths and imprecations, and all such oaths as are not required by the civil magistrate, in cases where the Lord is supposed to be witness, are certainly intended in our blessed Lord's prohibition. See on "Deuteronomy 4:26".

CHAPTER 7

With the seven nations that God shall cast out, 1, they shall make no covenant, 2, nor form any matrimonial alliances, 3; lest they should be enticed into idolatry, 4. All monuments of idolatry to be destroyed, 5. The Israelites are to consider themselves a holy people, 6; and that the Lord had made them such, not for their merits, but for his own mercies, 7, 8. They shall therefore love him, and keep his commandments, 9-11. The great privileges of the obedient, 12-24. All idolatry to be avoided, 25, 26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *Seven nations greater and mightier than thou*— In several places of the Hebrew text, each of these seven nations is not enumerated, some one or other being left out, which the Septuagint in general supply. How these nations were distributed over the land of Canaan previously to the entering in of the Israelites, the reader may see in the note on “Joshua 3:10”.

Verse 2. *Thou shalt smite them, etc.*— These idolatrous nations were to be utterly destroyed, and all the others also which were contiguous to the boundaries of the promised land, provided they did not renounce their idolatry and receive the true faith: for if they did not, then no covenant was to be made with them on any secular or political consideration whatever; no mercy was to be shown to them, because the cup of their iniquity also was now full; and they must either embrace, heartily embrace, the true religion, or be cut off.

Verse 3. *Neither shalt thou make marriages, etc.*— The heart being naturally inclined to evil, there is more likelihood that the idolatrous wife should draw aside the believing husband, than that the believing husband should be able to bring over his idolatrous wife to the true faith.

Verse 6. *Thou art a holy people*— And therefore should have no connection with the workers of iniquity.

A special people— סגולה segullah, -Septuagint, λαον περιουσιον, -a peculiar people, a private property. The words as they stand in the Septuagint are quoted by the apostle, 1 Peter 2:9.

Verse 8. *But because the Lord loved you*— It was no good in them that induced God to choose them at this time to be his peculiar people: he had his reasons, but these sprang from his infinite goodness. He intended to make a full discovery of his goodness to the world, and this must have a commencement in some particular place, and among some people. He chose that time, and he chose the Jewish people; but not because of their goodness or holiness.

Verse 12. *The Lord shall keep unto thee the covenant*— So we find their continuance in the state of favor was to depend on their faithfulness to the grace of God. If they should rebel, though God had chosen them through his love, yet he would cast them off in his justice. The elect, we see, may become unfaithful, and so become reprobates. So it happened to 24, 000 of them, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness because they had sinned; yet these were of the elect that came out of Egypt. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.

Verse 22. *Put out those nations-by little and little*— The Israelites were not as yet sufficiently numerous to fill the whole land occupied by the seven nations mentioned ver. 1. And as wild and ferocious animals might be expected to multiply where either there are no inhabitants, or the place is but thinly peopled, therefore God tells them that, though at present, by force of arms, they might be able to expel them, it would be impolitic so to do, lest the beasts of the field should multiply upon them.

Verse 25. *Thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them*— Some of the ancient idols were plated over with gold, and God saw that the value of the metal and the excellence of the workmanship might be an inducement for the Israelites to preserve them; and this might lead, remotely at least, to idolatry. As the idols were accursed, all those who had them, or any thing appertaining to them, were accursed also, ver. 26.

CHAPTER 8

An exhortation to obedience from a consideration of God's past mercies, 1, 2. Man is not to live by bread only, but by every word of God, 3. How God provided for them in the wilderness, 4. The Lord chastened them that they might be obedient, 5, 6. A description of the land into which they were going, 7-9. Cautions lest they should forget God in their prosperity, 10-16, and lest they should attribute that prosperity to themselves, and not to God, 17, 18. The terrible judgments that shall fall upon them, should they prove unfaithful, 19, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 2. *Thou shalt remember all the way*— The various dealings of God with you; the dangers and difficulties to which ye were exposed, and from which God delivered you; together with the various miracles which he wrought for you, and his longsuffering towards you.

Verse 3. *He-suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee*— God never permits any tribulation to befall his followers, which he does not design to turn to their advantage. When he permits us to hunger, it is that his mercy may be the more observable in providing us with the necessaries of life. Privations, in the way of providence, are the forerunners of mercy and goodness abundant.

Verse 4. *Thy raiment waxed not old, etc.*— The plain meaning of this much-tortured text appears to me to be this: “God so amply provided for them all the necessaries of life, that they never were obliged to wear tattered garments, nor were their feet injured for lack of shoes or sandals.” If they had carvers, engravers, silversmiths, and jewellers among them, as plainly appears from the account we have of the tabernacle and its utensils, is it to be wondered at if they also had habit and sandal makers, etc., etc., as we are certain they had weavers, embroiderers, and such like? And the traffic which we may suppose they carried on with the Moabites, or with travelling hordes of Arabians, doubtless supplied them with the materials; though, as they had abundance of sheep and neat cattle, they

must have had much of the materials within themselves. It is generally supposed that God, by a miracle, preserved their clothes from wearing out: but if this sense be admitted, it will require, not one miracle, but a chain of the most successive and astonishing miracles ever wrought, to account for the thing; for as there were not less than 600, 000 males born in the wilderness, it would imply, that the clothes of the infant grew up with the increase of his body to manhood, which would require a miracle to be continually wrought on every thread, and on every particle of matter of which that thread was composed. And this is not all; it would imply that the clothes of the parent became miraculously lessened to fit the body of the child, with whose growth they were again to stretch and grow, etc. No such miraculous interference was necessary.

Verse 8. *A land of wheat, etc.*— On the subject of this verse I shall introduce the following remarks, which I find in Mr. Harmer's *Observations on the Fertility of the Land of Judea*, vol. iii., p. 243.

“Hasselquist tells us that he ate olives at Joppa (upon his first arrival in the Holy Land) which were said to grow on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem; and that, independently of their oiliness, they were of the best kind he had tasted in the Levant. As olives are frequently eaten in their repasts, the delicacy of this fruit in Judea ought not to be forgotten; and the oil that is gotten from these trees much less, because still more often made use of. In the progress of his journey he found several fine vales, abounding with olive trees. He saw also olive trees in Galilee; but none farther, he says, than the mountain where it is supposed our Lord preached his sermon.

“The fig trees in the neighborhood of Joppa, Hasselquist goes on to inform us, were as beautiful as any he had seen in the Levant.

“The reason why pomegranates are distinctly mentioned, in this description of the productions of the land of promise, may be their great usefulness in forming cooling drinks, for they are used among the Asiatics nearly in the same way that we use lemons; see vol. ii., 145.

“Honey is used in large quantities in these countries; and Egypt was celebrated for the assiduous care with which the people there managed their bees. Maillet's account of it is very amusing. ‘There are,’ says he,

‘abundance of bees in that country; and a singular manner of feeding them, introduced by the Egyptians of ancient times, still continues there. Towards the end of October, when the Nile, upon its decrease, gives the peasants an opportunity of sowing the lands, sainfoin is one of the first things sown, and one of the most profitable. As the Upper Egypt is hotter than the Lower, and the inundation there goes sooner off the lands, the sainfoin appears there first. The knowledge they have of this causes them to send their bee-hives from all parts of Egypt, that the bees may enjoy, as soon as may be, the richness of the flowers, which grow in this part of the country sooner than in any other district of the kingdom. The hives, upon their arrival at the farther end of Egypt, are placed one upon another in the form of pyramids, in boats prepared for their reception, after having been numbered by the people who place them in the boats. The bees feed in the fields there for some days; afterwards, when it is believed they have nearly collected the honey and wax, which were to be found for two or three leagues round, they cause the boats to go down the stream, two or three leagues lower, and leave them there, in like manner, such a proportion of time as they think to be necessary for the gathering up the riches of that canton. At length, about the beginning of February, after having gone the whole length of Egypt, they arrive at the sea, from whence they are conducted, each of them, to their usual place of abode; for they take care to set down exactly, in a register, each district from whence the hives were carried in the beginning of the season, their number and the names of the persons that sent them, as well as the number of the boats, where they are ranged according to the places they are brought from. What is astonishing in this affair is, that with the greatest fidelity of memory that can be imagined, each bee finds its own hive, and never makes any mistake. That which is still more amazing to me is, that the Egyptians of old should be so attentive to all the advantages deducible from the situation of their country; that after having observed that all things came to maturity sooner in Upper Egypt, and much later in Lower, which made a difference of above six weeks between the two extremities of their country, they thought of collecting the wax and the honey so as to lose none of them, and hit upon this ingenious method of making the bees do it successively, according to the blossoming of the flowers, and the arrangement of nature.’”

If this solicitude were as ancient as the dwelling of Israel in Egypt, they must have been anxious to know whether honey, about which they took such care in Egypt, was plentiful in the land of promise; and they must have been pleased to have been assured it was. It continues to be produced there in large quantities: Hasselquist, in the progress of his journey from Acra to Nazareth, tells us that he found “great numbers of bees, bred thereabouts, to the great advantage of the inhabitants.” He adds, “they make their bee-hives, with little trouble, of clay, four feet long, and half a foot in diameter, as in Egypt. They lay ten or twelve of them, one on another, on the bare ground, and build over every ten a little roof.” Mr. Maundrell, observing also many bees in the Holy Land, takes notice that by their means the most barren places in other respects of that country become useful, perceiving in many places of the great salt plain near Jericho a smell of honey and wax as strong as if he had been in an apiary.

By Hasselquist’s account it appears, that the present inhabitants of Palestine are not strangers to the use of hives. They are constructed of very different materials from ours, but just the same with the Egyptian hives. They seem to be an ancient contrivance; and indeed so simple an invention must be supposed to be as old as the days of Moses, when arts, as appears from his writings, of a much more elevated nature were known in Egypt. I cannot then well persuade myself to adopt the opinion of some of the learned, that those words of Moses, in Deuteronomy 32:13, He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil cut of the flinty rock, are to be understood of his causing Israel to dwell in a country where sometimes they might find honey-comb in holes of the rock. It is very possible that in that hot country these insects, when not taken due care of, may get into hollow places of the rocks, and form combs there, as they sometimes construct them in ours in hollow trees, though I do not remember to have met with any traveler that has made such an observation. But would this have been mentioned with so much triumph by Moses in this place? The quantities of honey produced after this manner could be but small, compared with what would be collected in hives properly managed; when found, it must often cost a great deal of pains to get the honey out of these little cavities in the hard stone, and much the greatest part must be absolutely lost to the inhabitants. The interpretation is the more strange, because when it is said in the next

clause, “and oil out of the flinty rock,” it is evidently meant that they should have oil produced in abundance by olive trees growing on flinty rocks; and consequently, the sucking honey out of the rock should only mean their enjoying great quantities of honey, produced by bees that collected it from flowers growing among the rocks: the rocky mountains of this country, it is well known, produce an abundance of aromatic plants proper for the purpose. Nor does Asaph, in the close of the eighty-first Psalm, speak, I apprehend, of honey found in cavities of rocks; nor yet is he there describing it as collected from the odoriferous plants that grow in the rocky hills of those countries, if the reading of our present Hebrew copies be right: but the prophet tells Israel that, had they been obedient, God would have fed them with the fat of wheat, and with the rock of honey would he have satisfied them, that is, with the most delicious wheat, and with the richest, most invigorating honey, in large quantities, both for eating and making agreeable drink. Its reviving, strengthening quality appears in the story of Jonathan, Saul’s son, 1 Samuel 14:27; as the using the term rock to signify strength, etc., appears in a multitude of places. The rock of a sword, Psalm 89:43, for the edge of the sword, in which its energy lies, is, perhaps, as strange an expression to western ears.

I shall have occasion to speak of the excellence of the grapes of Judea in a succeeding chapter; I may therefore be excused from pursuing the farther examination of the productions of this country, upon giving my reader a remark of Dr. Shaw’s to this purpose, that it is impossible for pulse, wheat, or grain of any kind, to be richer or better tasted than what is sold at Jerusalem. Only it may not be amiss to add, with respect to this country’s being well watered, that the depth, תהום *tehom*, spoken of in this passage, seems to mean reservoirs of water filled by the rains of winter, and of great use to make their lands fertile; as the second word תעלותיה *tealothaiha* seems to mean wells, or some such sort of conveniences, supplied by springs, and the first word; נהרותיה *naharothaiha* rivers or running streams, whether carrying a larger or smaller body of water. What an important part of this pleasing description, especially in the ears of those that had wandered near forty years in a most dry and parched wilderness! I will only add, without entering into particulars, that the present face of the country answers this description.

Verse 9. *A land whose stones are iron*— Not only meaning that there were iron mines throughout the land, but that the loose stones were strongly impregnated with iron, ores of this metal (the most useful of all the products of the mineral kingdom) being every where in great plenty.

Out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.— As there is no such thing in nature as a brass mine, the word נְחֹשֶׁת *nechosheth* should be translated copper; of which, by the addition of the lapis calaminaris, brass is made. See on “Exodus 25:3”.

Verse 15. *Who led thee through that-terrible wilderness*— See the account of their journeying in the notes, See “Exodus 16:1”, etc.; Numbers 21., etc.

Fiery serpents— Serpents whose bite occasioned a most violent inflammation, accompanied with an unquenchable thirst, and which terminated in death. See on “Numbers 21:6”.

Verse 16. *Who fed thee-with manna*— See this miracle described See “Exodus 16:13”, etc.

Verse 18. *God-giveth thee power to get wealth*— Who among the rich and wealthy believes this saying? Who gives wisdom, understanding, skill, bodily strength, and health? Is it not God? And without these, how can wealth be acquired? Whose is providence? Who gives fertility to the earth? And who brings every proper purpose to a right issue? Is it not God? And without these also can wealth be acquired? No. Then the proposition in the text is self-evident: it is God that giveth power to get wealth, and to God the wealthy man must account for the manner in which he has expended the riches which God hath given him.

CHAPTER 9

The people are informed that they shall shortly pass over Jordan, and that God shall go over before them, to expel the ancient inhabitants, 1-3. They are cautioned not to suppose that it is on account of their righteousness that God is to give them that land, 4-6. They are exhorted to remember their various provocations of the Divine Majesty, especially at Horeb, 7-14; and how Moses interceded for them, and destroyed the golden calf, 15-21. How they murmured at Taberah, 22; and rebelled at Kadesh-barnea, 23; and had been perverse from the beginning, 24. An account of the intercession of Moses in their behalf, 25-29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *Thou art to pass over Jordan this day*— הַיּוֹם haiyom, this time; they had come thirty-eight years before this nearly to the verge of the promised land, but were not permitted at that day or time to pass over, because of their rebellions; but this time they shall certainly pass over. This was spoken about the eleventh month of the fortieth year of their journeying, and it was on the first month of the following year they passed over; and during this interim Moses died.

Verse 5. *For the wickedness of these nations*— So then it was not by any sovereign act of God that these people were cast out, but for their wickedness; they had transgressed the law of their Creator; they had resisted his Spirit, and could no longer be tolerated. The Israelites were to possess their land, not because they deserved it, but first, because they were less wicked than the others; and secondly, because God thus chose to begin the great work of his salvation among men. Thus then the Canaanites were cut off, and the Israelites were grafted in; and the Israelites, because of their wickedness, were afterwards cut off and the Gentiles grafted in. Let the latter not be high-minded, but fear; if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. But let it be remembered that this land was originally their own, and that the present possessors had no legal right to it.

Verse 10. *Tables of stone*— See the notes on “Exodus 31:18”, and See “Exodus 32:15”, See “Exodus 32:16”.

Verse 12. *Thy people-have corrupted themselves*— Debased themselves by making and worshipping an Egyptian idol. See on Exodus 32.

Verse 21. *I took your sin, the calf which ye had made*— See this fully explained “Exodus 32:20”.

Verse 22. *At Kibroth-hattaavah*— See the note on “Numbers 11:34”.

Verse 27. *Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*— As if he had said: “These are their descendants, and the covenant was made with those patriarchs in behalf of these.” God bestows many blessings on comparatively worthless persons, either for the sake of their pious ancestors, or on account of the religious people with whom they are connected; therefore union with the Church of God is a blessing of no common magnitude. The reader will find the grand subject of this chapter explained at large in the notes on Exodus xxxi. and xxxii., to which he is particularly desired to refer.

CHAPTER 10

Moses is commanded to make a second set of tables, 1, 2. He makes an ark, prepares the two tables, God writes on them the ten commandments, and Moses lays them up in the ark, 3-5. The Israelites journey from Beeroth to Mosera, where Aaron dies, 6; and from thence to Gudgodah and Jotbath, 7. At that time God separated the tribe of Levi for the service of the sanctuary, 8, 9. How long Moses stayed the second time in the mount, 10, 11. What God requires of the Israelites, 12-15. Their heart must be circumcised, 16. God's character and conduct, 17, 18. They are commanded to love the stranger, 19; to fear, love, and serve God, 20, because he had done such great things for them and their fathers, 21, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. *Hew thee two tables of stone*— See the notes on “Exodus 34:1”.

Verse 3. *Shittim wood*— See the note on “Exodus 25:5”, and succeeding verses, and on the parallel places in the margin.

Verse 4. *Ten commandments*— See the note on “Exodus 20:1”, etc.

Verse 6. *And the children of Israel took their journey, etc.*— On this and the three following verses see Kennicott's remarks at the end of this chapter.

Verse 12. *Now, Israel, what doth the Lord-require of thee*— An answer is immediately given. God requires,

1. That ye fear him as Jehovah your God; him who made, preserves, and governs you.
2. That ye walk in all his ways-that, having received his precepts, all of which are good and excellent, ye obey the whole; walking in God's ways, not your own, nor in the ways of the people of the land.
3. That ye love him-have confidence in him as your father and friend, have recourse to him in all your necessities, and love him in return for his love.

4. That you serve him-give him that worship which he requires, performing it with all your heart-the whole of your affections, and with all your soul-your will, understanding, and judgment. In a word, putting forth your whole strength and energy of body and soul in the sacred work.

Verse 14. *Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens*— All these words in the original are in the plural number: **ושמי השמים ה השמים** hen hashshamayim, ushemy hashshamayim; behold the heavens and the heavens of heavens. But what do they mean? To say that the first means the atmosphere, the second the planetary system, and the third the region of the blessed, is saying but very little in the way of explanation. The words were probably intended to point out the immensity of God's creation, in which we may readily conceive one system of heavenly bodies, and others beyond them, and others still in endless progression through the whole vortex of space, every star in the vast abyss of nature being a sun, with its peculiar and numerous attendant worlds! Thus there may be systems of systems in endless gradation up to the throne of God!

Verse 16. *Circumcise-the foreskin of your heart*— A plain proof from God himself that this precept pointed out spiritual things, and that it was not the cutting away a part of the flesh that was the object of the Divine commandment, but the purification of the soul, without which all forms and ceremonies are of no avail. Loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, the heart being circumcised to enable them to do it, was, from the beginning, the end, design, and fulfillment of the whole law.

Verse 17. *God of gods, and Lord of lords*— That is, He is the source whence all being and power proceed; every agent is finite but himself; and he can counteract, suspend, or destroy all the actions of all creatures whensoever he pleases. If he determine to save, none can destroy; if he purpose to destroy, none can save. How absolutely necessary to have such a God for our friend!

A great God-mighty— **האל הגבר** hael haggibbor, the mighty God; this is the very title that is given to our blessed Lord and Savior, Isaiah 9:6.

Verse 21. *He is thy praise*— It is an eternal honor to any soul to be in the friendship of God. Why are people ashamed of being thought religious? Because they know nothing of religion. He who knows his Maker may

glory in his God, for without him what has any soul but disgrace, pain, shame, and perdition? How strange is it that those who fear God should be ashamed to own it, while sinners boldly proclaim their relationship to Satan!

Verse 22. *With threescore and ten persons*— And now, from so small a beginning, they were multiplied to more than 600, 000 souls; and this indeed in the space of forty years, for the 603, 000 which came out of Egypt were at this time all dead but Moses, Joshua, and Caleb. How easily can God increase and multiply, and how easily diminish and bring low! In all things, because of his unlimited power, he can do whatsoever he will; and he will do whatsoever is right.

ON a very important subject in this chapter Dr. Kennicott has the following judicious observations:—

“The book of Deuteronomy contains the several speeches made to the Israelites by Moses just before his death, recapitulating the chief circumstances of their history, from their deliverance out of Egypt to their arrival on the banks of Jordan. What in this book he has recorded as spoken will be best understood by comparing it with what he has recorded as done in the previous history; and this, which is very useful as to the other parts of this book, is absolutely necessary as to the part of the tenth chapter here to be considered.

“The previous circumstances of the history necessary to be here attended to are these: In Exodus, chap. 20., God speaks the ten commandments; in chap. 24. Moses, on Mount Sinai, receives the two tables, and is there forty days and nights; in chap. 25., 26., 27, God appoints the service of the tabernacle; in chap. 28. separates Aaron and his sons for the priest’s office, by a statute for ever, to him and his seed after him; in chap. 30. Moses, incensed at the golden calf, breaks the tables; yet he prays for the people, and God orders him to lead them towards Canaan; in chap. 34. Moses carries up two other tables, and stays again forty days and nights. In Numbers, chap. 3., the tribe of Levi is selected; chap. viii., consecrated; chap. 10. and 11. the Israelites march from Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month in the second year; in chap. 13. spies sent; in chap. 14. the men are sentenced to die in the wilderness during the forty years; in chap. 18. the Levites are to have no lot nor large district in Canaan, but to

be the Lord's inheritance; in chap. 20. Aaron dies on Mount Hor; lastly, in the complete catalogue of the whole march (chap. 33.) we are told that they went from Moseroth to Bene-jaakan, thence to Hor-hagidgad, to Jotbathah, to Ebronah, to Ezion-gaber, to Zin, (which is Kadesh,) and thence to Mount Hor, where Aaron died in the fortieth and last year. In Deuteronomy, chap. 9., Moses tells the Israelites, (9:7,) that they had been rebels, from Egypt even to Jordan, particularly at Horeb, (9:8-29,) whilst he was with God, and received the tables at the end of forty days and nights; and that, after breaking the tables, he fasted and interceded for his brethren during a second period of forty days and nights; and this ninth chapter ends with the prayer which he then made. Chapter 10. begins thus: 'At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up,' etc. And from 10:1 to the end of 10:5 he describes the second copy of the ten commandments, as written also by God, and deposited by himself in the ark.

“After this we have now four verses, (10:6, 7,8, and 9,) which not only have no kind of connection with the verses before and after them, but also, as they stand in the present Hebrew text, directly contradict that very text; and the two first of these verses have not, in our Hebrew text, the least connection with the two last of them. Our Hebrew text, (10:6,) says that Israel journeyed from Bene-jaakan to Mosera. Whereas that very text in the complete catalogue, (Numbers 33:31,) says they journeyed from Moseroth to Bene-jaakan. Again: Aaron is here said to have died at Mosera, whereas he died on Mount Hor, the seventh station afterwards; see Numbers 33:38. And again: they are here said to go from Bene-jaakan to Mosera, thence to Gudgodah, and thence to Jotbath; whereas the complete catalogue says, Moseroth to Bene-jaakan, thence to Hor-hagidgad, and thence to Jotbathah. But if the marches could possibly be true as they now stand in these two verses, yet what connection can there be between JOTBATH and the SEPARATION OF THE TRIBE OF LEVI? It is very happy that these several difficulties in the Hebrew text are removed by the SAMARITAN Pentateuch: for that text tells us here rightly that the march was from Moseroth to Bene-jaakan; to Hagidgad, to Jotbathah, to Ebronah, to Ezion-gaber, to Zin, (which is Kadesh,) and thence to Mount Hor, where Aaron died. Again: as the regular deduction of these stations ends with Mount Hor and Aaron's death, we have then

what we had not before, a regular connection with the two next verses, and the connection is this: That when Aaron, the son of Amram, the son of Kohath, the son of LEVI, died, neither the tribe of Levi nor the priesthood was deserted, but God still supported the latter by maintaining the former; and this, not by allotting that tribe any one large part of Canaan, but separate cities among the other tribes, and by allowing them to live upon those offerings which were made by the other tribes to God himself. These four verses therefore, (10:6, 7,8, and 9,) in the same text, stand thus: (10:6,) WHEN the children of Israel journeyed from Moseroth, and encamped in Bene-jaakan; from thence they journeyed and encamped at Hagidgad; from thence they journeyed and encamped in Jotbathah, a land of rivers of water: (7) From thence they journeyed and encamped in Ebronah; in Ezion-gaber; in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh; and then at Mount Hor; And AARON DIED THERE, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered as priest in his stead. (8) At that time the Lord HAD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name unto this day. (9) Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised him.

“But however consistent these four verses are now with themselves, it will be still demanded, What connection have they with the fifth verse before them, and with the tenth verse after them? I confess I cannot discover their least pertinency here, because AARON’S DEATH and LEVI’S SEPARATION seem totally foreign to the speech of Moses in this place. And this speech without these four verses is a regularly connected admonition from Moses to this purpose: that his brethren were for ever to consider themselves as indebted to him, under God, for the renewal of the two tables, and also to his intercession for rescuing them from destruction. The words are these: (chap. 10:4,) ‘The Lord wrote again the ten commandments, and gave them unto me. (5) And I came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark, which I HAD made:-(10) Thus I stayed in the mount according to the first time, forty days and forty nights: and the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also; the Lord would not destroy thee. (11) And the Lord said unto me, Arise, take thy journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land,’ etc. But then, if these four verses were not at first a

part of this chapter, but are evidently interpolated, there arises another inquiry, Whether they are an insertion entirely spurious, or a genuine part of the sacred text, though removed hither out of some other chapter? As they contain nothing singular or peculiar, are of no particular importance, and relate to no subject of disputation, they are not likely to have arisen from fraud or design; but, perfectly coinciding in sense with other passages, they may safely be considered as another instance of a large transposition [86 words] in the present text, arising from accident and want of care. And the only remaining question therefore is, Whether we can discover, though not to demonstration, yet with any considerable degree of probability, the original place of these four verses, that so they may be at last restored to that neighborhood and connection from which they have been, for so many ages, separated?

“It was natural for Moses, in the course of these several speeches to his brethren in Deuteronomy, to embrace the first opportunity of impressing on their memories a matter of such particular importance as the continuation of the priesthood among the Levites after Aaron’s death. And the first proper place seems to be in the second chapter, after the first verse. At chap. 1:19, he speaks of their march from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea, whence they sent the spies into Canaan. He then sets forth their murmurings, and God’s sentence that they should die in the wilderness, and he ends the first chapter with their being defeated by the Amorites, their weeping before the Lord, and abiding many days in KADESH, which is KADESH-BARNEA, near Canaan.

“Chap. 2. begins thus: Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, as the Lord spake unto me: and WE COMPASSED MOUNT SEIR MANY DAYS. Now, the many days, or long time, which they spent in compassing Mount Seir, that is, going round on the south-west coasts of Edom in order to proceed north-east from Edom through Moab to Arnon, must include several of their stations, besides that eminent one at Mount Hor, where Aaron died. And as part of their road, during this long compass, lay through Ezion-gaber, (which was on the eastern tongue of the Red Sea, and the south boundary of Edom,) thence to Zin, (which is KADESH, that is, MERIBAH KADESH,) and thence to Mount Hor, as they marched to the north-east; so it is probable that the five stations preceding that of Ezion-gaber were on the extremity of

Mount Seir, to the south-west. And if their first station at entering the south-west borders of Edom, and beginning to compass Mount Seir, was Moseroth, this gives the reason wanted why Moses begins this passage at Moseroth, and ends it with Aaron's death at Mount Hor. And this will discover a proper connection between the four dislocated verses and the context here. — Deuteronomy 1:46: 'So ye abode in Kadesh (Barnea) many days.' Chap. 2:1: 'Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, as the Lord spake unto me; and WE COMPASSED MOUNT SEIR MANY DAYS.'

“For the children of Israel journeyed from Moseroth, and pitched in Bene-jaakan: from thence they journeyed and pitched in Hagidgad: from thence they journeyed and pitched in Jotbathah, a land of rivers of water: from thence they journeyed and pitched in Ebronah: from thence they journeyed and pitched in Ezion-gaber: from thence they journeyed and pitched in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh: from thence they journeyed and pitched in Mount Hor, and Aaron died there, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered as priest in his stead. At that time the Lord had separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto him, and to bless in his name unto this day. Wherefore, Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised him.’

“And this paragraph being thus inserted at the end of the first verse, the second begins a new paragraph, thus: And the Lord spake unto me, saying, Ye have compassed this mountain long enough; turn you northward-through the east side of Seir (or Edom) towards Moab on the north. See ver. 4-8.” -Kennicott's Remarks, p. 74.

These remarks should not be hastily rejected.

CHAPTER 11

The people are exhorted to obedience from a consideration of God's goodness to their fathers in Egypt, 1-4, and what he did in the wilderness, 5, and the judgment on Dathan and Abiram, 6, and from the mercies of God in general, 7-9. A comparative description of Egypt and Canaan, 19-12. Promises to obedience, 13-15. Dissuasives from idolatry, 16, 17. The words of God to be laid up in their hearts, to be for a sign on their hands, foreheads, gates, etc., 18, taught to their children, made the subject of frequent conversation, to the end that their days may be multiplied, 19-21. If obedient, God shall give them possession of the whole land, and not one of their enemies shall be able to withstand them, 22-25. Life and death, a blessing and a curse, are set before them, 26-28. The blessings to be put on Mount Gerizim and the curses on Mount Ebal, 29, 30. The promise that they should pass over Jordan, and observe these statutes in the promised land, 31, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *Thou shalt love the Lord*— Because without this there could be no obedience to the Divine testimonies, and no happiness in the soul; for the heart that is destitute of the love of God, is empty of all good, and consequently miserable. See the note on “Deuteronomy 10:12”.

Verse 6. *What he did unto Dathan, etc.*— See the notes on Numbers 16.

Verse 8. *Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments*— Because God can execute such terrible judgments, and because he has given such proofs of his power and justice; and because, in similar provocations, he may be expected to act in a similar way; therefore keep his charge, that he may keep you unto everlasting life.

Verse 10. *Wateredst it with thy foot*— Rain scarcely ever falls in Egypt, and God supplies the lack of it by the inundations of the Nile. In order to water the grounds where the inundations do not extend, water is collected in ponds, and directed in streamlets to different parts of the field where

irrigation is necessary. It is no unusual thing in the East to see a man, with a small mattock, making a little trench for the water to run by, and as he opens the passage, the water following, he uses his foot to raise up the mould against the side of this little channel, to prevent the water from being shed unnecessarily before it reaches the place of its destination. Thus he may be said to water the ground with his foot. See several useful observations on this subject in Mr. Harmer, vol. i., pp. 23-26, and vol. iii., p. 141. "For watering land an instrument called janta is often used in the north of Bengal: It consists of a wooden trough, about fifteen feet long, six inches wide, and ten inches deep, which is placed on a horizontal beam lying on bamboos fixed in the bank of a pond or river in the form of a gallows. One end of the trough rests upon the bank, where a gutter is prepared to carry off the water, and the other is dipped into the water by a man standing on a stage near that end, and plunging it in with his foot. A long bamboo, with a large weight of earth at the farther end of it, is fastened to that end of the janta near the river, and passing over the gallows, poises up the janta full of water, and causes it to empty itself into the gutter." This, Mr. Ward supposes, illustrates this passage. See Hindoo Customs, etc., vol. iii., p. 104. But after all, the expression, wateredst it with thy foot, may mean no more than doing it by labor; for, as in the land of Egypt there is scarcely any rain, the watering of gardens, etc., must have been all artificial. But in Judea it was different, as there they had their proper seasons of rain. The compound word **ברגל** beregel, with, under, or by the foot, is used to signify any thing under the power, authority, etc., of a person; and this very meaning it has in the sixth verse, all the substance that was in their possession, is, literally, all the substance that was under their feet, **ברגליהם** beragleyhem, that is, in their power, possession, or what they had acquired by their labor.

Verse 14. *The rain-in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain*—By the first or former rain we are to understand that which fell in Judea about November, when they sowed their seed, and this served to moisten and prepare the ground for the vegetation of the seed. The latter rain fell about April, when the corn was well grown up, and served to fill the ears, and render them plump and perfect. Rain rarely fell in Judea at any other seasons than these. If the former rain were withheld, or not sent in due season, there could be no vegetation: if the latter rain were withheld, or not

sent in its due season, there could be no full corn in the ear, and consequently no harvest. Of what consequence then was it that they should have their rain in due season! God, by promising this provided they were obedient, and threatening to withhold it should they be disobedient, shows that it is not a general providence that directs these things, but that the very rain of heaven falls by particular direction, and the showers are often regulated by an especial providence.

Verse 18. *Therefore shall ye lay up these my words*— See chap. 6:4-8, and see on “Exodus 13:9”.

Verse 24. *From the river*— Euphrates, which was on the east, to the uttermost sea—the Mediterranean, which lay westward of the promised land. This promise, notwithstanding the many provocations of the Israelites, was fulfilled in the time of Solomon, for “he reigned over all the kings from the river (Euphrates) even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.” See 2 Chronicles 9:26, and the note, See “Numbers 34:12”.

Verse 26. *Behold, I set before you—a blessing and a curse*— If God had not put it in the power of this people either to obey or disobey; if they had not had a free will, over which they had complete authority, to use it either in the way of willing or nilling; could God, with any propriety, have given such precepts as these, sanctioned with such promises and threatenings? If they were not free agents, they could not be punished for disobedience, nor could they, in any sense of the word, have been rewardable for obedience. A STONE is not rewardable because, in obedience to the laws of gravitation, it always tends to the center; nor is it punishable be cause, in being removed from that center, in its tending or falling towards it again it takes away the life of a man.

That God has given man a free, self-determining WILL, which cannot be forced by any power but that which is omnipotent, and which God himself never will force, is declared in the most formal manner through the whole of the sacred writings. No argument can affect this, while the Bible is considered as a Divine revelation; no sophistry can explain away its evidence, as long as the accountableness of man for his conduct is admitted, and as long as the eternal bounds of moral good and evil remain, and the essential distinctions between vice and virtue exist. If ye will obey,

(for God is ever ready to assist,) ye shall live; if ye will disobey and refuse that help, ye shall die. So hath Jehovah spoken, and man cannot reverse it.

Verse 29. *Thou shalt put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and the curse upon Mount Ebal.*— The etymology of these names may be supposed to cast some light on this institution. גֵּרִיזִים gerizzim, from גָּרַז garaz, to cut, cut off, cut down; hence גֵּרִיזִים gerizzim, the cutters down, fellers, and reapers or harvest-men, this mountain being supposed to have its name from its great fertility, or the abundance of the crops it yielded, which is a possible case. Of עֵיבָל ebal or eybal the root is not found in Hebrew; but in Arabic [A] abala signifies rough, rugged, curled, etc.; and [A] abalo, from the same root, signifies white stones, and a mountain in which such stones are found; [A] alabalo, the mount of white stones. See Giggeius and Golius. And as it is supposed that the mountain had this name because of its barrenness, on this metaphorical interpretation the sense of the passage would appear to be the following: God will so superintend the land, and have it continually under the eye of his watchful providence, that no change can happen in it but according to his Divine counsel, so that its fertility shall ever be the consequence of the faithful obedience of its inhabitants, and a proof of the blessing of God upon it; on the contrary, its barrenness shall be a proof that the people have departed from their God, and that his curse has in consequence fallen upon the land. See the manner of placing these blessings and curses, chap. 27:12, etc. That Gerizim is very fruitful, and that Ebal is very barren, is the united testimony of all who have traveled in those parts. See Ludolf, Reland, Rab, Benjamin, and Mr. Maundrell. Sychem lies in the valley between these two mountains.

THAT the land of Judea was naturally very fertile, can scarcely be supposed by any who considers the accounts given of it by travelers; with the exception of a few districts, the whole land is dry, stony, and barren, and particularly all the southern parts of Judea, and all the environs of Jerusalem, most of which are represented as absolutely incapable of cultivation. How then could it ever support its vast number of inhabitants? By the especial providence of God. While God kept that people under his continual protection, their land was a paradise; they lent to all nations and borrowed from none. What has it been since? A demi-solitude, because

that especial blessing no longer descends upon it. No land, says Calmet, was more fertile while under the benediction of God; none more barren when under his curse. Its present state is a proof of the declaration of Moses, chap. 28:23: "The heaven over their head is brass; the earth under their feet, iron." The land itself, in its present state is an ample proof of the authenticity of the Pentateuch. Should facts of this kind be lost sight of by any who read the sacred writings?

CHAPTER 12

All monuments of idolatry in the promised land to be destroyed, 1-3; and God's service to be duly performed, 4-7. The difference between the performance of that service in the wilderness and in the promised land, 8-11. The people are to be happy in all their religious observances, 12. The offerings must be brought to the place which God appoints, and no blood is to be eaten, 13-16. The tithe of corn, wine, oil, etc., to be eaten in the place that God shall choose, 17, 18. The Levite must not be forsaken, 19. All clean beasts may be eaten, but the blood must be poured out before the Lord, and be eaten on no pretense whatever, 29-25. Of vows, burnt-offerings, etc., 26, 27. These precepts are to be carefully obeyed, 28. Cautions against the abominations of the heathen, 29-31. Nothing to be added to or diminished from the word of God, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 3. *Ye shall overthrow their altars*— Where unholy sacrifices have been offered; and break their pillars, probably meaning statues and representations of their gods cut out of stone; and burn their groves, such as those about the temple of Ashtarothe, the Canaanitish Venus, whose impure rites were practiced in different parts of the inclosures or groves round her temples; and ye shall hew down the graven images, probably implying all images carved out of wood; and destroy the names of them, which were no doubt at first graven on the stones, and carved on the trees, and then applied to the surrounding districts. In various instances the names of whole mountains, valleys, and districts were borrowed from the gods worshipped there.

Verse 14. *The place which the Lord shall choose*— To prevent idolatry and bring about a perfect uniformity in the Divine worship, which at that time was essentially necessary; because every rite and ceremony had a determinate meaning, and pointed out the good things which were to come, therefore one place must be established where those rites and ceremonies should be carefully and punctually observed. Had it not been so, every

man would have formed his worship according to his own mind, and the whole beauty and importance of the grand representative system would have been destroyed, and the Messiah and the glories of his kingdom could not have been seen through the medium of the Jewish ritual. For uniformity in every part of the Divine worship the same necessity does not now exist; because that which was typified is come, and the shadows have all fled away. Yet, when it can be obtained, how desirable is it that all sincere Christians should with one mouth, as well as with one heart, glorify their common Lord and Savior!

Verse 15. *Thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates*— With the proviso that the blood be poured out on the ground. 1. The blood should not be eaten. 2. It should be poured out by way of sacrifice. I think this is the meaning; and not that they should pour out the blood with as little ceremony and respect as they poured water upon the ground, which is the meaning according to Calmet and others.

The roebuck, and-the hart— It is very likely that by צִבִי tsebi the antelope is meant; and by אֵיִל aiyal, the hart or deer. This is the opinion of Dr. Shaw; and from the report of travelers we learn that both these animals are found in that desert to the present day. See Harmer, vol. iv., p. 25, etc. Of the propriety of eating clean animals there could be no question, but the blood must be poured out; yet there were cases in which they might kill and eat in all their gates, cities, and dwellings—such as the roebuck and the hart, or all clean wild beasts, for these being taken in hunting, and frequently shot by arrows, their blood could not be poured out at the altar. Therefore the command appears to take in only such tame beasts as were used for food.

Verse 19. *Forsake not the Levite*— These had no inheritance, and were to live by the sanctuary: if therefore the offerings were withheld by which the Levites were supported, they of course must perish. Those who have devoted themselves to the service of God in ministering to the salvation of the souls of men, should certainly be furnished at least with all the necessaries of life. Those who withhold this from them sin against their own mercies, and that ordinance of God by which a ministry is established for the salvation of souls.

Verse 23. *For the blood is the life*— And the life being offered as an atonement, consequently the blood should not be eaten. See the notes on “Leviticus 17:11”, where the subject of the vitality of the blood is largely considered.

Verse 31. *Their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire*— Almost all the nations in the world agreed in offering human victims to their gods on extraordinary occasions, by which it is evident that none of those nations had any right notion of the Divine nature. How necessary, then, was the volume of revelation, to teach men what that religion is with which God can be well pleased! The Hindoos to this day offer human victims to their goddess Cali, and at the temple of Jaggernaut; and yet, notwithstanding this, there are found certain persons who, while they profess Christianity, are absolutely unwilling to send the Hindoos the Gospel of Christ, because they think it would not be politically wise! But the wisdom of this world has ever been foolishness with God; and in spite of all this infidel policy, the word of the Lord shall have free course and be glorified.

CHAPTER 13

Of false prophets and their lying signs, 1-6. Of those who endeavor to entice and seduce people to idolatry, 7-8. The punishment of such, 9-11. Of cities perverted from the pure worship of God, 12-14. How that city is to be treated, 15. All the spoil of it to be destroyed, 16. Promises to them who obey these directions, 17, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. *If there arise among you a prophet*— Any pretending to have a Divine influence, so as to be able perfectly to direct others in the way of salvation; or a dreamer of dreams—one who pretends that some deity has spoken to him in the night-season; and giveth thee a sign, **אוֹת** oth, what appears to be a miraculous proof of his mission; or a wonder, **מוֹפֵת** mopheth, some type or representation of what he wishes to bring you over to: as some have pretended to have received a consecrated image from heaven; hence the origin of the Palladium, Numa's Shields, and many of the deities among the Hindoos. But here the word seems to mean some portentous sign, such as an eclipse, which he who knew when it would take place might predict to the people who knew nothing of the matter, and thereby accredit his pretensions.

Verse 3. *The Lord your God proveth you*— God permits such impostors to arise to try the faith of his followers, and to put their religious experience to the test; for he who experimentally knows God cannot be drawn away after idols. He who has no experimental knowledge of God, may believe any thing. Experience of the truths contained in the word of God can alone preserve any man from Deism, or a false religion. They who have not this are a prey to the pretended prophet, and to the dreamer of dreams.

Verse 6. *If thy brother-or thy son*— The teacher of idolatry was to be put to death; and so strict was this order that a man must neither spare nor conceal his brother, son, daughter, wife, nor friend, because this was the

highest offense that could be committed against God, and the most destructive to society; hence the severest laws were enacted against it.

Verse 13. *Children of Belial*— בליעל, from בל bal, not, and יעל yaal, profit; -Sept. ανδρες παρανομοι, lawless men; -persons good for nothing to themselves or others, and capable of nothing but mischief.

Verse 15. *Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants*— If one city were permitted to practice idolatry, the evil would soon spread, therefore the contagion must be destroyed in its birth.

Verse 17. *And there shall cleave naught of the cursed thing*— As God did not permit them to take the spoils of these idolatrous cities, they could be under no temptation to make war upon them. It could only be done through a merely religious motive, in obedience to the command of God, as they could have no profit by the subversion of such places. How few religious wars would there ever have been in the world had they been regulated by this principle: “Thou shalt neither extend thy territory, nor take any spoils!”

CHAPTER 14

The Israelites are not to adopt superstitious customs in mourning, 1, 2. The different kinds of clean and unclean animals, 3-20. Nothing to be eaten that dieth of itself, 21. Concerning offerings which, from distance cannot be carried to the altar of God, and which may be turned into money, 22-26. The Levite is not to be forsaken, 27. The third year's tithe for the Levite, stranger, widow, etc., 28, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. *Ye are the children of the Lord*— The very highest character that can be conferred on any created beings; ye shall not cut yourselves, i. e., their hair, for it was a custom among idolatrous nations to consecrate their hair to their deities, though they sometimes also made incisions in their flesh.

Verse 4. *These are the beasts which ye shall eat*— On Leviticus 11. I have entered into considerable detail relative to the clean and unclean animals there mentioned. For the general subject, the reader is referred to the notes on that chapter; but as there are particulars mentioned here which Moses does not introduce in Leviticus, it will be necessary to consider them in this place.

The ox— שׁוֹר shor: BOS, fifth order Pecora, of the genus MAMMALIA, species 41. This term includes all clean animals of the beeve kind; not only the ox properly so called, but also the bull, the cow, heifer, and calf.

The sheep— שֶׁה seh: OVIS, fifth order Pecora, of the genus MAMMALIA, species 40; including the ram, the wether, the ewe, and the lamb.

The goat— אֵז az: CAPRA, fifth order Pecora, of the genus MAMMALIA, species 39; including the he-goat, she-goat, and kid. The words in the text, עֲזִים שֶׁה seh chesabim, signify the lamb or young of sheep; and עִזִּים שֶׁה seh izzim, the young or kid of goats: but this is a Hebrew idiom which signifies every creature of the genus, as בֶּן אָנוֹשׁ ben enosh and בְּאָדָם b

ben adam, son of man, signify any human being. See Psalm 144:3; Job 25:6.

The flesh of these animals is universally allowed to be the most wholesome and nutritive. They live on the very best vegetables; and having several stomachs, their food is well concocted, and the chyle formed from it the most pure because the best elaborated, as it is well refined before it enters into the blood. On ruminating or chewing the cud, see the note on “Leviticus 11:3”.

Verse 5. *The hart*— אֵיל aiyal, the deer, according to Dr. Shaw: see the note on “Deuteronomy 12:15”.

The roebuck— צִבִי tsebi, generally supposed to be the antelope, belonging to the fifth order Pecora, genus MAMMALIA, and species 38. It has round twisted spiral horns, hairy tufts on the knees, browses on tender shoots, lives in hilly countries, is fond of climbing rocks, and is remarkable for its beautiful black eyes. The flesh is good and well flavoured.

The fallow deer— יַחְמוּר yachmur, from חָמַר chamar, to be troubled, disturbed, disordered: this is supposed to mean, not the fallow deer, but the bubalus or buffalo, which is represented by Dr. Shaw, and other travelers and naturalists, as a sullen, malevolent, and spiteful animal, capricious, ferocious, and every way brutal. According to the Linnaean classification, the buffalo belongs to the fifth order Pecora, genus MAMMALIA, species bos. According to 1 Kings 4:23, this was one of the animals which was daily served up at the table of Solomon. Though the flesh of the buffalo is not considered very delicious, yet in the countries where it abounds it is eaten as frequently by all classes of persons as the ox is in England. The yachmur is not mentioned in the parallel place, Leviticus 11.

The wild goat— אֶקוּ akko. It is not easy to tell what creature is intended by the akko. Dr. Shaw supposed it to be a kind of very timorous goat, known in the East by the name fishtall and serwee, and bearing a resemblance both to the goat and the stag, whence the propriety of the name given it by the Septuagint and Vulgate, tragelaphus, the goat-stag; probably the rupicapra or rock-goat. The word is found nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible.

The pygarg— **דִּישׁ** dishon. As this word is nowhere else used, we cannot tell what animal is meant by it. The word pygarg **πυγαργος**, literally signifies white buttocks, and is applied to a kind of eagle with a white tail; but here it evidently means a quadruped. It was probably some kind of goat, common and well known in Judea.

The wild ox— **תֵּאוֹ** teo. This is supposed to be the oryx of the Greeks, which is a species of large stag. It may be the same with the bekker el wash, described by Dr. Shaw as “a species of the deer kind, whose horns are exactly in the fashion of our stag, but whose size is only between the red and fallow deer.” In Isaiah 51:20 a creature of the name of **תֵּאוֹ** is mentioned, which we translate wild bull; it may be the same creature intended above, with the interchange of the two last letters.

The chamois— **זֶמֶר** zemer. This was probably a species of goat or deer, but of what kind we know not: that it cannot mean the chamois is evident from this circumstance, “that the chamois inhabits only the regions of snow and ice, and cannot bear the heat.”-Buffon. The Septuagint and Vulgate translate it the Camelopard, but this creature is only found in the torrid zone and probably was never seen in Judea; consequently could never be prescribed as a clean animal, to be used as ordinary food. I must once more be permitted to say, that to ascertain the natural history of the Bible is a hopeless case. Of a few of its animals and vegetables we are comparatively certain, but of the great majority we know almost nothing. Guessing and conjecture are endless, and they have on these subjects been already sufficiently employed. What learning, deep, solid, extensive learning, and judgment could do, has already been done by the incomparable Bochart in his Hierozoicon. The learned reader may consult this work, and, while he gains much general information, will have to regret that he can apply so little of it to the main and grand question. As I have consulted every authority within my reach, on the subject of the clean and unclean animals mentioned in the law, and have detailed all the information I could collect in my notes on Leviticus 11., I must refer my readers to what I have there laid down.

Verse 13. The vulture after his kind— The word **דַּהַּ** daah is improperly translated vulture Leviticus 11:14, and means a kite or glede. The word

דַּיָּהּ daiyah in this verse is not only different from that in Leviticus, but means also a different animal, properly enough translated vulture. See the note on “Leviticus 11:14”.

Verse 21. *Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.*— Mr. Calmet thinks that this precept refers to the paschal lamb only, which was not to be offered to God till it was weaned from its mother; but see the note on “Exodus 23:19”.

Verse 22. *Thou shalt truly tithe*— Meaning the second tithe which themselves were to eat, ver. 23, for there was a first tithe that was given to the Levites, out of which they paid a tenth part to the priests, Numbers 18:24-28; Nehemiah 10:37, 38. Then of that which remained, the owners separated a second tithe, which they ate before the Lord the first and second year; and in the third year it was given to the Levites and to the poor, Deuteronomy 14:28, 29. In the fourth and fifth years it was eaten again by the owners, and in the sixth year was given to the poor. The seventh year was a Sabbath to the land, and then all things were common, Exodus 23:10, 11, where see the notes, See “Exodus 23:11”, and see Ainsworth on this verse.

Verse 26. *Or for strong drink*— What the sikera or strong drink of the Hebrews was, see in the note on “Leviticus 10:9”. This one verse sufficiently shows that the Mosaic law made ample provision for the comfort and happiness of the people.

Verse 29. *And the Levite (because he hath no part nor inheritance*— And hence much of his support depended on the mere freewill-offerings of the people. God chose to make his ministers thus dependent on the people, that they might be induced (among other motives) to labor for their spiritual profiting, that the people, thus blessed under their ministry, might feel it their duty and privilege to support and render them comfortable.

CHAPTER 15

The Sabbatical year of release, 1. The manner in which this release shall take place, 2-5. Of lending to the poor, and the disposition in which it should be done, 6-11. Of the Hebrew servant who has served six years, and who shall be dismissed well furnished, 12-15. The ceremony of boring the ear, when the servant wishes to continue with his master, 16-18. Of the firstlings of the flock and herd, 19, 20. Nothing shall be offered that has any blemish, 21. The sacrifice to be eaten both by the clean and unclean, except the blood, which is never to be eaten, but poured out upon the ground, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. *At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release*— For an explanation of many things in this chapter, see the notes on Exodus 21. and 23., and Leviticus 25.

Verse 4. *There shall be no poor*— That is, comparatively; see ver. 11.

Verse 8. *Thou shalt open thine hand wide*— Thy benevolence shall be in proportion to his distress and poverty, and thy ability. Thou shalt have no other rule to regulate thy charity by.

Verse 9. *Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart*—

לִבְבְךָ בְלִיעַל lebabecha beliyaal, thy belial heart, that is, thy good-for-nothing or unprofitable heart; See on “Deuteronomy 13:13”.

And thine eye be evil— An evil eye signifies a covetous disposition. See the same form of expression used by our Lord in the same sense. Matthew 6:23. If thine eye be evil—If thou be a covetous person. Evil eye is by our Lord opposed to single eye, i. e., a person of a liberal, benevolent mind. Covetousness darkens the soul; liberality and benevolence enlighten it.

And he cry unto the Lord against thee— What a consolation to the poor and the oppressed, that they have a sure friend in God, who will hear their cry and redress their grievances!

Verse 11. *For the poor shall never cease out of the land*— To this passage our Lord appears to allude Mark 14:7: For ye have the poor with you always. God leaves these in mercy among men to exercise the feelings of compassion, tenderness, mercy, etc. And without occasions afforded to exercise these, man would soon become a Stoic or a brute.

Verse 13. *Thou shalt not let him go away empty*— Because during the time he served thee, he made no property for himself, having been always honest towards thee; and now when he leaves thee, he has nothing to begin the world with.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt furnish him-out of thy flock*— Thou shalt give him some cattle to breed with; out of thy floor-some corn for seed and for bread; and out of thy wine press-an adequate provision of wine for present necessity.

Verse 17. *Thou shalt take an awl*— See the note on “Exodus 21:6”.

Verse 20. *Thou shalt eat it-in the place which the Lord shall choose*— Thus God in his mercy made their duty and interest go hand in hand. And in every case God acts thus with his creatures; well, therefore, might Satan ask, Doth Job serve God for naught? No! nor does God design that any man should.

Verse 21. *If there be any blemish*— See the notes on “Leviticus 22:20”. God will have both a perfect priest and a perfect offering.

CHAPTER 16

The month of Abib to be observed, 1. The feast of the passover and of unleavened bread, 2-8. The feast of weeks, 9-12. The feast of tabernacles, 13-15. All the males to appear before the Lord thrice in the year, none to come empty, each to give according to his ability, 16, 17. Judges and officers to be made in all their cities, 18. Strict justice shall be executed, 19, 20. No grove to be planted near the altar of God, nor any image to be set up, 21, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. *Keep the passover*— A feast so called because the angel that destroyed the firstborn of the Egyptians, seeing the blood of the appointed sacrifice sprinkled on the lintels and door-posts of the Israelites' houses, passed over THEM, and did not destroy any of their firstborn. See the notes on “Exodus 12:2”, See “Exodus 12:3”, etc.

Verse 3. *Bread of affliction*— Because, being baked without leaven, it was unsavoury, and put them in mind of their afflictive bondage in Egypt.

Verse 11. *Thou shalt rejoice*— The offerings of the Israelites were to be eaten with festivity, communicated to their friends with liberality, and bestowed on the poor with great generosity, that they might partake with them in these repasts with joy before the Lord. To answer these views it was necessary to eat the flesh while it was fresh, as in that climate putrefaction soon took place; therefore they were commanded to let nothing remain until the morning, ver. 4. This consideration is sufficient to account for the command here, without having recourse to those moral and evangelical reasons that are assigned by the learned and devout Mr. Ainsworth for the command. How beneficent and cheerful is the design of this institution! — Harmer, vol. i., p. 396.

Verse 16. *Three times in a year*— See “Exodus 23:14”, where all the Jewish feasts are explained. See also “Leviticus 23:34”.

Verse 18. *Judges and officers shalt thou make*— JUDGES, שפטים

shophetim, among the Hebrews, were probably the same as our magistrates or justices of the peace. OFFICERS, שטררים shoterim, seem to have been the same as our inquest sergeants, beadles, etc., whose office it was to go into the houses, shops, etc., and examine weights, measures, and the civil conduct of the people. When they found any thing amiss, they brought the person offending before the magistrate, and he was punished by the officer on the spot. They seem also to have acted as heralds in the army, chap. 20:5. See also Rab. Maimon in Sanhedrin. In China, for all minor offenses, the person when found guilty is punished on the spot, in the presence of the magistrate or mandarin of justice.

Verse 21. *Thou shalt not plant thee a grove, etc.*— We have already seen that groves were planted about idol temples for the purpose of the obscene worship performed in them. (See on “Deuteronomy 12:3”.) On this account God would have no groves or thickets about his altar, that there might be no room for suspicion that any thing contrary to the strictest purity was transacted there. Every part of the Divine worship was publicly performed, for the purpose of general edification.

CHAPTER 17

All sacrifices to be without blemish, 1. Of persons consisted of idolatry and their punishment, 2-7. Difficult matters in judgment to be laid before the priests and judges, and to be determined by them; and all to submit to their decision, 8-13. The king that may be chosen to be one of their brethren; no stranger to be appointed to that office, 14, 15. He shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return unto Egypt, 16. Nor multiply wives, money, etc., 17. He shall write a copy of the law for his own use, and read and study it all his days, that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, 18-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. *Wherein is blemish*— God must not have that offered to him which thou wouldst not use thyself. This not only refers to the perfect sacrifice offered by Christ Jesus, but to that sincerity and uprightness of heart which God requires in all those who approach him in the way of worship.

Verse 4. *If it be told thee*— In a private way by any confidential person. And thou hast heard of it; so that it appears to be notorious, very likely to be true, and publicly scandalous. And hast inquired diligently-sought to find out the truth of the report by the most careful examination of persons reporting, circumstances of the case, etc. And, behold, it be true-the report is not founded on vague rumor, hearsay, or malice. And the thing certain-substantiated by the fullest evidence. Then shalt thou bring forth that man, ver. 5. As the charge of idolatry was the most solemn and awful that could be brought against an Israelite, because it affected his life, therefore God required that the charge should be substantiated by the most unequivocal facts, and the most competent witnesses. Hence all the precautions mentioned in the fourth verse must be carefully used, in order to arrive at so affecting and so awful a truth.

Verse 6. *Two witnesses*— ONE might be deceived, or be prejudiced or malicious; therefore God required two substantial witnesses for the support of the charge.

Verse 8. *If there arise a matter too hard for thee*— These directions are given to the common magistrates, who might not be able to judge of or apply the law in all cases that might be brought before them. The priests and Levites, who were lawyers by birth and continual practice, were reasonably considered as the best qualified to decide on difficult points.

Verse 12. *The man that will do presumptuously*— The man who refused to abide by this final determination forfeited his life, as being then in a state of rebellion against the highest authority, and consequently the public could have no pledge for his conduct.

Verse 15. *One from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee*— It was on the ground of this command that the Jews proposed that insidious question to our Lord, Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, OR NO? Matthew 22:17; for they were then under the authority of a foreign power. Had Christ said Yes, then they would have condemned him by this law; had he said No, then they would have accused him to Caesar. See this subject discussed in great detail in the notes, See “Matthew 22:16”, etc.

Verse 16. *He shall not multiply horses*— As horses appear to have been generally furnished by Egypt, God prohibits these, 1. Lest there should be such commerce with Egypt as might lead to idolatry. 2. Lest the people might depend on a well-appointed cavalry as a means of security, and so cease from trusting in the strength and protection of God. And, 3. That they might not be tempted to extend their dominion by means of cavalry, and so get scattered among the surrounding idolatrous nations, and thus cease, in process of time, to be that distinct and separate people which God intended they should be, and without which the prophecies relative to the Messiah could not be known to have their due and full accomplishment.

Verse 17. *Neither shall he multiply wives*— For this would necessarily lead to foreign alliances, and be the means of introducing the manners and customs of other nations, and their idolatry also. Solomon sinned against

this precept, and brought ruin on himself and on the land by it; see 1 Kings 11:4.

Verse 18. *He shall write him a copy of this law*— **הַזֹּאת מִשְׁנֵה הַתּוֹרָה** mishneh hattorah hazzoth, an iteration or duplicate of this law; translated by the Septuagint, **τὸ δευτερονόμιον τούτο** this deuteronomy. From this version both the Vulgate Latin and all the modern versions have taken the name of this book; and from the original word the Jews call it Mishneh. See the preface to this book.

Out of that which is before the priests the Levites— It is likely this means, that the copy which the king was to write out was to be taken from the autograph kept in the tabernacle before the Lord, from which, as a standard, every copy was taken and with which doubtless every copy was compared; and it is probable that the priests and Levites had the revising of every copy that was taken off, in order to prevent errors from creeping into the sacred text.

Verse 19. *And it shall be with him, etc.*— It was the surest way to bring the king to an acquaintance with the Divine law to oblige him to write out a fair copy of it with his own hand, in which he was to read daily. This was essentially necessary, as these laws of God were all permanent, and no Israelitish king could make any new law, the kings of this people being ever considered as only the vice-gerents of Jehovah.

Verse 20. *He, and his children, in the midst of Israel.*— From this verse it has been inferred that the crown of Israel was designed to be hereditary, and this is very probable; for long experience has proved to almost all the nations of the world that hereditary succession in the regal government is, on the whole, the safest, and best calculated to secure the public tranquillity.

CHAPTER 18

The priests and Levites to have no inheritance, 1, 2. What is the priest's due, 3-5. Of the Levites that come from any of the other cities, 6-8. The Israelites must not copy the abominations of the former inhabitants, 9. None to cause his son or daughter to pass through the fire, or use any kind of divination or enchantment, as the former inhabitants did, 10-14. The great prophet which God promised to raise up, 15-19. Of false prophets, 20; and how to discern them, 21, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. *The priests the Levites-shall have no part*— That is, says Rab. Maimon, they shall have no part in the spoils taken from an enemy.

Verse 2. *The Lord is their inheritance*— He is the portion of their souls; and as to their bodies, they shall live by the offerings of the Lord made by fire, i. e., the meat-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering; and whatever was the Lord's right, in these or other offerings, he gave to the priests.

Verse 3. *Offer a sacrifice*— זָבַחַ הַזֶּבַח zobechey hazzebach. The word זָבַח zebach is used to signify, not only an animal sacrificed to the Lord, but also one killed for common use. See Genesis 46:1; Proverbs 17:1; Ezekiel 39:17. And in this latter sense it probably should be understood here; and, consequently, the command in this verse relates to what the people were to allow the priests and Levites from the animals slain for common use. The parts to be given to the priests were, 1. The shoulder, probably cut off from the beast with the skin on; so Maimonides. 2. The two cheeks, which may include the whole head. 3. The maw—the whole of those intestines which are commonly used for food.

Verse 4. *The first-fruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, etc.*— All these firstfruits and firstlings were the Lord's portion, and these he gave to the priests.

Verse 8. *The sale of his patrimony.*— So we find that, though the Levites might have no part of the land by lot, yet they were permitted to make purchases of houses, goods, and cattle, yea, of fields also. See the case of Abiathar, 1 Kings 2:26, and of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 32:7, 8.

Verse 10. *To pass through the fire*— Probably in the way of consecration to Molech, or some other deity. It is not likely that their being burnt to death is here intended. See on “Leviticus 18:21”.

Divination— **קסם קסמים** kosem kesamim, one who endeavors to find out futurity by auguries, using lots, etc.

Observer of times— **מעון** meonen, one who pretends to foretell future events by present occurrences, and who predicts great political or physical changes from the aspects of the planets, eclipses, motion of the clouds, etc., etc. See on “Genesis 41:8”.

Enchanter— **מנחש** menachesh, from **נחש** nichesh, to view attentively; one who inspected the entrails of beasts, observed the flight of birds, etc., etc., and drew auguries thence. Some think divination by serpents is meant, which was common among the heathen.

A witch— **מחשפ** mechashsheph, probably those who by means of drugs, herbs, perfumes, etc., pretended to bring certain celestial influences to their aid. See the note on “Leviticus 19:26”.

Verse 11. A charmer— **חבר חבר** chober chaber, one who uses spells; a peculiar conjunction, as the term implies, of words, or things, tying knots, etc., for the purposes of divination. This was a custom among the heathen, as we learn from the following verses:-

*Necte TRIBUS NODIS ternos, Amarylli, colores:
Necte, Amarylli, modo; et Veneris, dic, vincula necto.*

Virg. Ecl. viii., ver. 77.

*“Knit with three KNOTS the fillets, knit them straight;
Then say, these KNOTS to love I consecrate.”*

DRYDEN.

A consulter with familiar spirits— שאל אוב shoel ob, a Pythoness, one who inquires by the means of one spirit to get oracular answers from another of a superior order. See on “Leviticus 19:31”.

A wizard— ידעני yiddeoni, a wise one, a knowing one. Wizard was formerly considered as the masculine of witch, both practising divination by similar means. See on “Exodus 22:13”, and See “Leviticus 19:31”.

Or a necromancer.— דרש אל המתים doresh el hammethim, one who seeks from or inquires of the dead. Such as the witch at Endor, who professed to evoke the dead, in order to get them to disclose the secrets of the spiritual world.

Verse 15. *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet*— Instead of diviners, observers of times, etc., God here promises to give them an infallible guide, who should tell them all things that make for their peace, so that his declarations should completely answer the end of all the knowledge that was pretended to be gained by the persons already specified.

Like unto me— Viz., a prophet, a legislator, a king, a mediator, and the head or chief of the people of God. This was the very person of whom Moses was the type, and who should accomplish all the great purposes of the Divine Being. Such a prophet as had never before appeared, and who should have no equal till the consummation of the world.

This prophet is the Lord Jesus, who was in the bosom of the Father, and who came to declare him to mankind. Every word spoken by him is a living infallible oracle from God himself; and must be received and obeyed as such, on pain of the eternal displeasure of the Almighty. See ver. 19, and Acts 3:22, 23; and see the conclusion of this chapter.

Verse 22. *If the thing follow not*— It is worthy of remark that the prophets in general predicted those things which were shortly to come to pass, that the people might have the fullest proof of their Divine mission, and of the existence of God’s providence in the administration of the affairs of men.

THE promise contained in the 15th and 18 verses of this chapter has long been considered of the first importance in the controversies between the Christians and Jews. "Christ," says Ainsworth, "was to be a man, and of the stock of the Jews, by promise, because the people could not endure to hear the voice of GOD, ver. 16. And as in respect of his prophecy, so of the priesthood: for every high priest is taken from among men, Hebrews 5:1; and also of his kingdom, as in Deuteronomy 17:15: From among thy brethren shalt thou set a king over thee like unto me.

"1. Christ alone was like unto Moses as a PROPHET; for it is written, There arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do, Deuteronomy 34:10, 11, 12. This therefore cannot be understood of the ordinary prophets which were raised up in Israel, but of Christ only, as the apostles expound it Acts 2:22-26. 2. Christ was like unto Moses in respect to his office of mediation between God and his people, Deuteronomy 5:5; 1 Timothy 2:5; but greater than Moses as being the mediator of a better covenant, (or testament,) which was established upon better promises, Hebrews 8:6. 3. Christ was like unto Moses in excellency; for as Moses excelled all the prophets in speaking to God mouth to mouth, Numbers 12:6, 7,8, so Christ excelled him and all men in that being in the bosom of the Father, he hath come down from heaven and declared God unto us, John 1:18; 3:13. 4. Christ was like to Moses in faithfulness, but therein also excelling; for Moses was faithful in God's house as a servant, but Christ as the son over his own house, Hebrews 3:2, 5, 6. 5. Christ was like to Moses in signs and wonders, wherein he also excelled Moses, as the history of the Gospel shows; for he was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, Luke 24:19. A man approved of God among them, by miracles, signs, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of them, Acts 2:22. For he did among them the works which no other man did, John 15:24. Unto him, that is, not unto the diviners, wizards, or any such like, but unto him, and him only; as Him thou shalt serve, Deuteronomy 6:13, is expounded, Him only, Matthew 4:10. And though this is principally meant of Christ in person, of whom God said, Hear him, Matthew 17:5; yet it implies also his ministers, as himself said, He that heareth you heareth me, Luke 10:16." To these may be added, 6. As Moses was king among his people, in this respect Christ is like to him,

but infinitely greater; for he is King of kings and Lord of lords, Revelation 19:16; 1 Timothy 6:15. And, 7. He was like to Moses as a legislator. Moses gave laws to Israel by the authority and commandment of God, which the Jews have ever acknowledged as coming from the immediate inspiration of the Almighty: these are contained in the Pentateuch. Christ gave a new law, the Gospel contained in the four Evangelists and Acts of the Apostles, on which the Christian Church is founded, and by which all genuine Christians are governed both in heart and life. To all which may be added, 8. That God never commissioned any human beings to give laws to mankind but Moses and Christ; and therefore, as a lawgiver, Christ alone resembles Moses; for to the present hour none but themselves have given laws in the name of God, which he has ratified and confirmed by the most indubitable and infallible signs, proofs, and miracles.

Dr. Jortin, in his Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, has drawn a parallel between Moses and Christ in a great number of particulars, which he concludes thus: "Let us search all the records of universal history, and see if we can find a man who was so like to Moses as Christ was, and so like to Christ as Moses was. If we cannot find such a one, then have we found HIM of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write to be Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God." On this subject see Ainsworth, Calmet, and Dodd, who have all marked this striking correspondence between Moses and Christ.

CHAPTER 19

Three cities of refuge to be appointed in the midst of the promised land; the land being divided into three parts, a city is to be placed in each, a proper way to which is to be prepared, 1-3. In what cases of manslaughter the benefit of those cities may be claimed, 4-6. Three cities more to be added should the Lord enlarge their coasts, and the reasons why, 7-10. The intentional murderer shall have no benefit from these cities, 11-13. The landmark is not to be shifted, 14. One witness shall not be deemed sufficient to convict a man, 15. How a false witness shall be dealt with—he shall bear the punishment which he designed should have been inflicted on his neighbor, 16-20. Another command to establish the lex talionis, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 2. *Thou shalt separate three cities*— See on “Numbers 35:11”, etc.

Verse 3. *Thou shalt prepare thee a way*— The Jews inform us that the roads to the cities of refuge were made very broad, thirty-two cubits; and even, so that there should be no impediments in the way; and were constantly kept in good repair.

Verse 9. *Shalt thou add three cities more*— This was afterwards found necessary, and accordingly six cities were appointed, three on either side Jordan. See Joshua 21:1-3, etc. In imitation of these cities of refuge the heathens had their asyla, and the Catholics their privileged altars. See “Exodus 21:13”, 14, and See “Numbers 35:11”, etc.

Verse 11. *If any man hate his neighbor*— See on “Exodus 21:13”.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor’s landmark*— Before the extensive use of fences, landed property was marked out by stones or posts, set up so as to ascertain the divisions of family estates. It was easy to remove one of these landmarks, and set it in a different place; and thus the dishonest man enlarged his own estate by contracting that of his

neighbor. The termini or landmarks among the Romans were held very sacred, and were at last deified.

To these termini Numa Pompillus commanded offerings of broth, cakes, and firstfruits, to be made. And Ovid informs us that it was customary to sacrifice a lamb to them, and sprinkle them with its blood:-

Spargitur et caeso communis terminus agno.

FAST. lib. ii., ver. 655.

And from Tibullus it appears that they sometimes adorned them with flowers and garlands: —

*Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris,
Seu vetus in trivio floridaserta lap is.*

ELEG. lib. i., E. i., ver. 11.

*“Revere each antique stone bedeck’d with flowers,
That bounds the field, or points the doubtful way.”*

GRAINGER.

It appears from Juvenal that annual oblations were made to them:-

— *Convallem ruris aviti
Improbis, aut campum mihi si vicinus ademit,
Aut sacrum effodit medio de limite saxum,
Quod mea cum vetulo coluit puls annua libo.*

SAT. xvi., ver. 36.

*“If any rogue vexatious suits advance
Against me for my known inheritance,
Enter by violence my fruitful grounds,
Or take the sacred landmark from my bounds,
Those bounds which, with procession and with prayer
And offer’d cakes, have been my annual care.”*

DRYDEN.

In the digests there is a vague law, *de termino moto*, Digestor. lib. xlvii., Tit. 21, on which Calmet remarks that though the Romans had no determined punishment for those who removed the ancient landmarks; yet if slaves were found to have done it with an evil design, they were put to death; that persons of quality were sometimes exiled when found guilty; and that others were sentenced to pecuniary fines, or corporal punishment.

Verse 15. *One witness shall not rise up, etc.*— See “Numbers 35:30”.

Verse 19. *Then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother*— Nothing can be more equitable or proper than this, that if a man endeavor to do any injury to or take away the life of another, on detection he shall be caused to undergo the same evil which he intended for his innocent neighbor.

Some of our excellent English laws have been made on this very ground. In the 37th of Edw. III., chap. 18, it is ordained that all those who make suggestion shall incur the same pain which the other should have had, if he were attainted, in case his suggestions be found evil. A similar law was made in the 38th of the same reign, chap. 9. By a law of the twelve Tables, a false witness was thrown down the Tarpeian rock. In short, false witnesses have been execrated by all nations.

Verse 21. *Life-for life, eye for eye, etc.*— The operation of such a law as this must have been very salutary: if a man prized his own members, he would naturally avoid injuring those of others. It is a pity that this law were not still in force: it would certainly prevent many of those savage acts which now both disgrace and injure society. I speak this in reference to law generally, and the provision that should be made to prevent and punish ferocious and malevolent offenses. A Christian may always act on the plan of forgiving injuries; and where the public peace and safety may not be affected, he should do so; but if law did not make a provision for the safety of the community by enactment against the profligate, civil society would soon be destroyed.

CHAPTER 20

Directions concerning campaigns, 1. The priest shall encourage the people with the assurance that God will accompany and fight for them, 2-4. The officers shalt dismiss from the army all who had just built a new house, but had not dedicated it, 5. All who had planted a vineyard, but had not yet eaten of its fruits, 6. All who had betrothed a wife, but had not brought her home, 7. And all who were timid and faint-hearted, 8. The commanders to be chosen after the timid, etc., had retired, 9. No city to be attacked till they had proclaimed conditions of peace to it, provided it be a city beyond the bounds of the seven Canaanitish nations; if it submitted, it was to become tributary; if not, it was to be besieged, sacked, and all the males put to the sword; the women, children, and cattle to be taken as booty, 19-15. No such offers to be made to the cities of the Canaanites; of them nothing shall be preserved, and the reason, 16-18. In besieging a city no trees to be cut down but those which do not bear fruit, 19, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. *When thou goest out to battle*— This refers chiefly to the battles they were to have with the Canaanites, in order to get possession of the promised land; for it cannot be considered to apply to any wars which they might have with the surrounding nations for political reasons, as the Divine assistance could not be expected in wars which were not undertaken by the Divine command.

Verse 2. *The priest shall approach, and speak unto the people*— The priest on these occasions was the representative of that God whose servant he was, and whose worship he conducted. It is remarkable that almost all ancient nations took their priests with them to battle, as they did not expect success without having the object of their adoration with them, and they supposed they secured his presence by having that of his representative.

Verse 5. *That hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it?*— From the title of Psa. xxx.,—A Psalm or Song at the Dedication of the House of David—it is evident that it was a custom in Israel to dedicate a new house to God with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving; and this was done in order to secure the Divine presence and blessing, for no pious or sensible man could imagine he could dwell safely in a house that was not under the immediate protection of God. Hence it has been a custom in the most barbarous nations to consecrate a part of a new house to the deity they worshipped. The houses of the inhabitants of Bonny, in Africa, are generally divided into three apartments: one is a kind of state room or parlour; another serves for a common room, or kitchen; and the third is dedicated to the Juju, the serpent god, which they worship; for even those savages believe that in every house their god should have his temple! At the times of dedication among the Jews, besides prayer and praise, a feast was made, to which the relatives and neighbors were invited. Something of this custom is observed in some parts of our own country in what is called warming the house; but in these cases the feasting only is kept up—the prayer and praise forgotten! so that the dedication appears to be rather more to Bacchus than to Jehovah, the author of every good and perfect gift.

Verse 7. *Betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her?*— It was customary among the Jews to contract matrimony, espouse or betroth, and for some considerable time to leave the parties in the houses of their respective parents: when the bridegroom had made proper preparations, then the bride was brought home to his house, and thus the marriage was consummated. The provisions in this verse refer to a case of this kind; for it was deemed an excessive hardship for a person to be obliged to go to battle, where there was a probability of his being slain, who had left a new house unfinished; a newly purchased heritage half tilled; or a wife with whom he had just contracted marriage. Homer represents the case of Protesilaus as very afflicting, who was obliged to go to the Trojan war, leaving his wife in the deepest distress, and his house unfinished.

Του δε και αμφιδρυφης αλοχος φυλακη ελελειπρο,
και δομος ημιτεληςῶ τον δ' εκτανε δαρδανος ανηρ,
νης αποθρωσκοντα πολυ πρωτιστον αχαιων.

*“A wife he left,
To rend in Phylace her bleeding cheeks,
And an unfinish’d mansion: first he died
Of all the Greeks; for as he leap’d to land,
Long ere the rest, a Dardan struck him dead.”*

COWPER.

Verse 8. *What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted?*— The original רַחַם *rach*, signifies tender or soft-hearted. And a soft heart the man must have who, in such a contest, after such a permission, could turn his back upon his enemies and his brethren. However, such were the troops commanded by Gideon in his war against the Midianites; for after he gave this permission, out of 32, 000 men only 10, 000 remained to fight! Judges 7:3. There could be no deception in a business of this kind; for the departure of the 22, 000 was the fullest proof of their dastardliness which they could possibly give.

Verse 10. *Proclaim peace unto it.*— Interpreters are greatly divided concerning the objects of this law. The text, taken in connection with the context, (see verses 15-18,) appears to state that this proclamation or offer of peace to a city is only to be understood of those cities which were situated beyond the limits of the seven anathematized nations, because these latter are commanded to be totally destroyed. Nothing can be clearer than this from the bare letter of the text, unless some of the words, taken separately, can be shown to have a different meaning. For the common interpretation, the following reasons are given.

God, who knows all things, saw that they were incurable in their idolatry; that the cup of their iniquity was full; and as their Creator, Sovereign, and Judge, he determined to destroy them from off the face of the earth, “lest they should teach the Israelites to do after all their abominations,” ver. 18. After all, many plausible arguments have been brought to prove that even these seven Canaanitish nations might be received into mercy, provided they, 1. Renounced their idolatry; 2. Became subject to the Jews; and, 3. Paid annual tribute: and that it was only in case these terms were rejected,

that they were not to leave alive in such a city any thing that breathed, ver. 16.

Verse 17. *But thou shalt utterly destroy them*— The above reasoning will gain considerable strength, provided we could translate **הַחָרֵם תַּחַרֵּם** **ח** hi hacharem tacharimem, thou shalt utterly subdue them—slaying them if they resist, and thus leaving nothing alive that breathed; or totally expel them from the land, or reduce them to a state of slavery in it, that they might no longer exist as a people. This certainly made them an anathema as a nation, wholly destroying their political existence. Probably this was so understood by the Gibeonites, viz., that they either must be slain or utterly leave the land, which last was certainly in their power, and therefore, by a stratagem, they got the princes of Israel to make a league with them. When the deceit was discovered, the Israelites, though not bound by their oath, because they were deceived by the Gibeonites, and therefore were under no obligation to fulfill their part of the covenant; yet, though they had this command before their eyes, did not believe that they were bound to put even those deceivers to death; but they destroyed their political existence, by making them hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation; i. e., slaves to the Israelites. (See Joshua ix.) Rahab and her household also were spared. So that it does not appear that the Israelites believed that they were bound to put every Canaanite to death. Their political existence was under the anathema, and this the Hebrews annihilated.

That many of the Canaanites continued in the land even to the days of Solomon, we have the fullest proof; for we read, 2 Chronicles 8:7: “All the people of the land that were left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were left in the land, whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make to pay tribute to this day.” Thus Solomon destroyed their political existence, but did not consider himself bound by the law of God to put them to death.

Verse 19. (*For the tree of the field is man’s life*) to employ them in the siege— The original is exceedingly obscure, and has been variously translated, **כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה לְבֹא מִפְּנֵיךָ בַמָּצוֹר** hi haadam ets hassadeh labo mippanycha bammatsor. The following are the chief versions: For, O man, the trees of the field are for thee to employ THEM in

the siege-or, For it is man, and the tree of the field, that must go before thee for a bulwark-or, For it is a tree, and not men, to increase the number of those who come against thee to the siege-or, lastly, The tree of the field (is as) a man, to go before thy face for a bulwark. The sense is sufficiently clear, though the strict grammatical meaning of the words cannot be easily ascertained: it was a merciful provision to spare all fruit-bearing trees, because they yielded the fruit which supported man's life; and it was sound policy also, for even the conquerors must perish if the means of life were cut off.

It is diabolic cruelty to add to the miseries of war the horrors of famine; and this is done where the trees of the field are cut down, the dykes broken to drown the land, the villages burnt, and the crops wilfully spoiled. O execrable war! subversive of all the charities of life!

THERE are several curious particulars in these verses: 1. The people had the most positive assurances from God that their enemies should not be able to prevail against them by strength, numbers, nor stratagem, because God should go with them to lead and direct them, and should fight for them; and against his might none could prevail. 2. All such interferences were standing proofs of the being of God, of his especial providence, and of the truth of their religion. 3. Though God promised them such protection, yet they were to expect it in the diligent use of their own prudence and industry. The priests, the officers, and the people, had their respective parts to act in this business; if they did their duty respectively, God would take care that they should be successful. Those who will not help themselves with the strength which God has already given them, shall not have any farther assistance from him. In all such cases, the parable of the talents affords an accurate rule. 4. Their going to war against their enemies must not deprive them of mercy and tenderness towards their brethren. He who had built a house and had not yet dwelt in it, who had planted a vineyard and had not eaten of its fruits, who had betrothed a wife and had not yet taken her to his house, was not obliged to go to battle, lest he should fall in the war, and the fruits of his industry and affection be enjoyed by others. He who was faint-hearted was also permitted to return, lest he should give way in the heat of battle, and his example have a fatal influence on others.

CHAPTER 21

If a man be found slain in a field, and the cause of his death be unknown, the murder shall be expiated by the sacrifice of a heifer in an uncultivated valley, 1-4. The rites to be used on the occasion, 5-9. The ordinance concerning marriage with a captive, 10-14. The law relative to the children of the hated and beloved wives: if the son of the hated wife should be the first-born he shall not be disinherited by the son of the beloved wife, but shall have a double portion of all his father's goods, 15-18. The law concerning the stubborn and rebellious son, who, when convicted, is to be stoned to death, 19-21. Of the person who is to be hanged, 22. His body shall not be left on the tree all night; every one that is hanged on a tree is accursed of God, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 4. *Shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley*— אֵית נַחַל *nachal eythan* might be translated a rapid stream, probably passing through a piece of uncultivated ground where the elders of the city were to strike off the head of the heifer, and to wash their hands over her in token of their innocence. The spot of ground on which this sacrifice was made must be uncultivated, because it was considered to be a sacrifice to make atonement for the murder, and consequently would pollute the land. This regulation was calculated to keep murder in abhorrence, and to make the magistrates alert in their office, that delinquents might be discovered and punished, and thus public expense saved.

Verse 6. *Shall wash their hands over the heifer*— Washing the hands, in reference to such a subject as this, was a rite anciently used to signify that the persons thus washing were innocent of the crime in question. It was probably from the Jews that Pilate learned this symbolical method of expressing his innocence.

Verse 11. *And seest-a beautiful woman*— No forcible possession was allowed even in this case, when the woman was taken in war, and was, by

the general consent of ancient nations, adjudged as a part of the spoils. The person to whose lot or share such a woman as is here described fell, might, if he chose, have her for a wife on certain conditions; but he was not permitted to use her under any inferior character.

Verse 12. *She shall shave her head*— This was in token of her renouncing her religion, and becoming a proselyte to that of the Jews. This is still a custom in the East; when a Christian turns Mohammedan his head is shaven, and he is carried through the city crying, [A] la alahila allah we Mohammed resooli Allah; “There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God.”

Pare her nails — **ועשתה את צפרניה** veasethah eth tsipporneyha, “she shall make her nails.” Now whether this signifies paring or letting them grow, is greatly doubted among learned men. Possibly it means neither, but colouring the nails, staining them red with the hennah, which is much practiced in India to the present day, and which was undoubtedly practiced among the ancient Egyptians, as is evident from the nails of mummies which are found thus stained. The hennah, according to Hasselquist, grows in India, and in Upper and Lower Egypt; it flowers from May to August. The manner of using it is this: the leaves are powdered, and made into a paste with water: they bind this paste on the nails of their fingers and toes, and let it stand on all night; in the morning they are found to be of a beautiful reddish yellow, and this lasts three weeks or a month, after which they renew the application. They often stain the palms of their hands and the soles of their feet in the same way, as appears from many paintings of eastern ladies done in India and Persia, which now lie before me. This staining the soles of the feet with the hennah is probably meant in 2 Samuel 19:24: Mephibosheth had not dressed (literally made) his feet—they had not been thus coloured.

Verse 15. *One beloved, and another hated*— That is, one loved less than the other. This is the true notion of the word hate in Scripture. So Jacob HATED Leah, that is, he loved her less than he did Rachel; and Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I HATED, that is, I have shown a more particular affection to the posterity of Jacob than I have to the posterity of Esau. See the note on “Genesis 29:31”. From this verse we see that polygamy did exist under the Mosaic laws, and that it was put under certain regulations;

but it was not enjoined, Moses merely suffered it, because of the hardness of their hearts, as our Lord justly remarks Matthew 19:8.

Verse 18. — 21. The stubborn, rebellious, gluttonous, and drunken son is to be stoned to death. — This law, severe as it may seem, must have acted as a powerful preventive of crime. If such a law were in force now, and duly executed, how many deaths of disobedient and profligate children would there be in all corners of the land!

Verse 23. *His body shall not remain all night upon the tree*— Its exposure for the space of one day was judged sufficient. The law which required this answered all the ends of public justice, exposed the shame and infamy of the conduct, but did not put to torture the feelings of humanity by requiring a perpetual exhibition of a human being, a slow prey to the most loathsome process of putrefaction. Did ever the spiking of the heads of state criminals prevent high treason? or the gibbeting of a thief or a murderer, prevent either murder or robbery? These questions may be safely answered in the negative; and the remains of the ancient barbarism which requires these disgusting and abominable exhibitions, and which are deplored by every feeling heart, should be banished with all possible speed. In the case given in the text, God considers the land as defiled while the body of the executed criminal lay exposed, hence it was enjoined, Thou shalt in any wise bury him that day.

For he that is hanged is accursed of God— That is, he has forfeited his life to the law; for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them; and on his body, in the execution of the sentence of the law, the curse was considered as alighting; hence the necessity of removing the accursed thing out of sight. How excellent are all these laws! How wondrously well calculated to repress crimes by showing the enormity of sin! It is worthy of remark that in the infliction of punishment prescribed by the Mosaic law, we ever find that Mercy walks hand in hand with Judgment.

CHAPTER 22

Ordinances relative to strayed cattle and lost goods, 1-3. Humanity to oppressed cattle, 4. Men and women shall not wear each other's apparel, 5. No bird shall be taken with her nest of eggs or young ones, 6, 7. Battlements must be made on the roofs of houses, 8. Improper mixtures to be avoided, 9-11. Fringes on the garments, 12. Case of the hated wife, and the tokens of virginity, and the proceedings thereon, 13-21. The adulterer and adulteress to be put to death, 22. Case of the betrothed damsel corrupted in the city, 23, 24. Cases of rape and the punishment, 25-27; of fornication, 28, 29. No man shall take his father's wife, 30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. *Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray*— The same humane, merciful, and wise regulations which we met with before, Exodus 23:4, 5, well calculated to keep in remembrance the second grand branch of the law of God, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. A humane man cannot bear to see even an ass fall under his burden, and not endeavor to relieve him; and a man who loves his neighbor as himself cannot see his property in danger without endeavoring to preserve it. These comparatively small matters were tests and proofs of matters great in themselves, and in their consequences. See the note on "Exodus 23:4".

Verse 3. *Thou mayest not hide thyself.*— Thou shalt not keep out of the way of affording help, nor pretend thou didst not see occasion to render thy neighbor any service. The priest and the Levite, when they saw the wounded man, passed by on the other side of the way, Luke 10: 31, 32. This was a notorious breach of the merciful law mentioned above.

Verse 5. *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man*— **כלי גבר** keli geber, the instruments or arms of a man. As the word **גבר** geber is here used, which properly signifies a strong man or man of war, it is very probable that armor is here intended; especially as we know that in the worship of Venus, to which that of Astarte or Ashtaroth among the

Canaanites bore a striking resemblance, the women were accustomed to appear in armor before her. It certainly cannot mean a simple change in dress, whereby the men might pass for women, and vice versa. This would have been impossible in those countries where the dress of the sexes had but little to distinguish it, and where every man wore a long beard. It is, however, a very good general precept understood literally, and applies particularly to those countries where the dress alone distinguishes between the male and the female. The close-shaved gentleman may at any time appear like a woman in the female dress, and the woman appear as a man in the male's attire. Were this to be tolerated in society, it would produce the greatest confusion. Clodius, who dressed himself like a woman that he might mingle with the Roman ladies in the feast of the Bona Dea, was universally execrated.

Verse 7. *Thou shalt let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee*— This passage may be understood literally. If they destroyed both young and old, must not the breed soon fail, and would it not in the end be ill with them; and by thus cutting off the means of their continual support, must not their days be shortened on the land? But we may look for a humane precept in this law. The young never knew the sweets of liberty; the dam did: they might be taken and used for any lawful purpose, but the dam must not be brought into a state of captivity. They who can act otherwise must be either very inconsiderate or devoid of feeling; and such persons can never be objects of God's peculiar care and attention, and therefore need not expect that it shall be well with them, or that they shall prolong their days on the earth. Every thing contrary to the spirit of mercy and kindness the ever blessed God has in utter abhorrence. And we should remember a fact, that he who can exercise cruelty towards a sparrow or a wren, will, when circumstances are favorable, be cruel to his fellow creatures. The poet Phocylides has a maxim in his admonitory poem very similar to that in the sacred text:—

μηδε τις ορυιθας καλιης αμα παντας ελοσθω
μητερα δ' εκπρολιπης, ιν' εχης παλι τησδε νεοττους.

PHOCYL. ποιημα νουθετ., ver. 80.

“Nor from a nest take all the birds away;

The mother spare, she'll breed a future day."

Verse 8. *A battlement for thy roof*— Houses in the East are in general built with flat roofs, and on them men walk to enjoy the fresh air, converse together, sleep, etc.; it was therefore necessary to have a sort of battlement or balustrade to prevent persons from falling off. If a man neglected to make a sufficient defense against such accidents, and the death of another was occasioned by it, the owner of the house must be considered in the light of a murderer.

Verse 9. *Divers seeds*— See the note on "Leviticus 19:19".

Verse 10. *Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass*— It is generally supposed that mixtures of different sorts in seed, breed, etc., were employed for superstitious purposes, and therefore prohibited in this law. It is more likely, however, that there was a physical reason for this; two beasts of a different species cannot associate comfortably together, and on this ground never pull pleasantly either in cart or plough; and every farmer knows that it is of considerable consequence to the comfort of the cattle to put those together that have an affection for each other. This may be very frequently remarked in certain cattle, which, on this account, are termed true yoke-fellows. After all, it is very probable that the general design was to prevent improper alliances in civil and religious life. And to this St. Paul seems evidently to refer, 2 Corinthians 6:14: Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers; which is simply to be understood as prohibiting all intercourse between Christians and idolaters in social, matrimonial, and religious life. And to teach the Jews the propriety of this, a variety of precepts relative to improper and heterogeneous mixtures were interspersed through their law, so that in civil and domestic life they might have them ever before their eyes.

Verse 12. *Fringes*— See on "Numbers 15:38".

Verse 15. *Tokens of the damsel's virginity*— This was a perfectly possible case in all places where girls were married at ten, twelve, and fourteen years of age, which is frequent in the East. I have known several instances of persons having had two or three children at separate births before they were fourteen years of age. Such tokens, therefore, as the text

speaks of, must be infallibly exhibited by females so very young on the consummation of their marriage.

Verse 17. *They shall spread the cloth, etc.*— A usage of this kind argues a roughness of manners which would ill comport with the refinement of European ideas on so delicate a subject. Attempts have been made to show that the law here is to be understood metaphorically; but they so perfectly fail to establish any thing like probability, that it would be wasting my own and my reader's time to detail them. A custom similar to that above is observed among the Mohammedans to the present day.

Verse 22. *Shall both of them die*— Thus we find that in the most ancient of all laws adultery was punished with death in both the parties.

Verse 25. *And the man force her*— A rape also, by these ancient institutions, was punished with death, because a woman's honor was considered equally as precious as her life; therefore the same punishment was inflicted on the ravisher as upon the murderer. This offense is considered in the same point of view in the British laws, and by them also it is punished with death.

Verse 30. *A man shall not take his father's wife*— This is to be understood as referring to the case of a stepmother. A man in his old age may have married a young wife, and on his dying, his son by a former wife may desire to espouse her: this the law prohibits. It was probably on pretense of having broken this law, that Solomon put his brother Adonijah to death, because he had desired to have his father's concubine to wife, 1 Kings 2:13-25.

CHAPTER 23

Neither eunuchs, bastards, Ammonites, nor Moabites, shall be incorporated with the genuine Israelites, 1-3. The reason why the Ammonites and Moabites were excluded, 4-6. Edomites and Egyptians to be respected, 7. Their descendants in the third generation may be incorporated with the Israelites, 8. Cautions against wickedness when they go forth against their enemies, 9. To keep the camp free from every defilement, and the reason why, 10-14. The slave who had taken refuge among them is not to be delivered up to his former master, 15, 16. There shall be no prostitutes nor sodomites in the land, 17. The hire of a prostitute or the price of a dog is not to be brought into the house of God, 18. The Israelites shall not lend on usury to each other, 19; but they may take usury from strangers, 20. Vows must be diligently paid, 21-23. In passing through a vine yard or field a man may eat of the grapes or corn, but must carry away none with him, 24, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. *Shall not enter into the congregation, etc.*— If by entering the congregation be meant the bearing a civil office among the people, such as magistrate, judge, etc., then the reason of the law is very plain; no man with any such personal defect as might render him contemptible in the sight of others should bear rule among the people, lest the contempt felt for his personal defects might be transferred to his important office, and thus his authority be disregarded. The general meaning of these words is, simply, that the persons here designated should not be so incorporated with the Jews as to partake of their civil privileges.

Verse 2. *A bastard shall not enter*— מַמְזֵר mamzer, which is here rendered bastard, should be understood as implying the offspring of an illegitimate or incestuous mixture.

Verse 3. *An Ammonite or Moabite*— These nations were subjected for their impiety and wickedness, (see ver. 4 and 5,) to peculiar disgrace, and

on this account were not permitted to hold any office among the Israelites. But this did not disqualify them from being proselytes: Ruth, who was a Moabitess, was married to Boaz, and she became one of the progenitors of our Lord.

Even to their tenth generation— That is, for ever, as the next clause explains; see Nehemiah 13:1.

Verse 12. *etc.*— These directions may appear trifling to some, but they were essentially necessary to this people in their present circumstances. Decency and cleanliness promote health, and prevent many diseases.

Verse 15. *Thou shalt not deliver-the servant which is escaped-unto thee*— That is, a servant who left an idolatrous master that he might join himself to God and to his people. In any other case, it would have been injustice to have harboured the runaway.

Verse 17. *There shall be no whore*— See on Genesis 38:15-21.

Verse 18. *The hire of a whore, or the price of a dog*— Many public prostitutes dedicated to their gods a part of their impure earnings; and some of these prostitutes were publicly kept in the temple of Venus Melytta, whose gains were applied to the support of her abominable worship.

Verse 19. *Usury*— See on “Leviticus 25:36”.

Verse 21. *When thou shalt vow, etc.*— See on “Numbers 30:2, etc.”

Verse 24. *Thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.*— Thou shalt carry none away with thee. The old English proverb, Eat thy fill but pocket none, seems to have been founded on this law.

Verse 25. *Thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand*— It was on the permission granted by this law that the disciples plucked the ears of corn, as related Matthew 12:1. This was both a considerate and humane law, and is no dishonor to the Jewish code.

CHAPTER 24

The case of a divorced wife, 1-4. No man shall be obliged to undertake any public service for the first year of his marriage, 5. The mill-stones shall not be taken as a pledge, 6. The man-stealer shall be put to death, 7. Concerning cases of leprosy, 8, 9. Of receiving pledges, and returning those of the poor before bed-time, 10-13. Of servants and their hire, 14, 15. Parents and children shall not be put to death for each other, 16. Of humanity to the stranger, fatherless, widow, and bondman, 17, 18. Gleanings of the harvest, etc., to be left for the poor, stranger, widow, fatherless, etc., 19-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. *Some uncleanness*— Any cause of dislike, for this great latitude of meaning the fact itself authorizes us to adopt, for it is certain that a Jew might put away his wife for any cause that seemed good to himself; and so hard were their hearts, that Moses suffered this; and we find they continued this practice even to the time of our Lord, who strongly reprehended them on the account, and showed that such license was wholly inconsistent with the original design of marriage; see Matthew 5:31, etc.; 19:3, etc., and the notes there.

Verse 3. *And write her a bill of divorcement*— These bills, though varying in expression, are the same in substance among the Jews in all places. The following, collected from Maimonides and others, is a general form, and contains all the particulars of such instruments. The reader who is curious may find a full account of divorces in the Biblioth. Rab. of Bartolucci, and the following form in that work, vol. iv., p. 550.

“In — day of the week, or day — of the month A., in — year from the creation of the world, or from the supputation (of Alexander) after the account that we are accustomed to count by, here, in the place B., I, C., the son of D., of the place B., (or if there be any other name which I have, or my father hath had, or which my place or my father’s place hath had,) have voluntarily, and with the willingness of my soul, without constraint,

dismissed, and left, and put away thee, even thee, E., the daughter of F., of the city G., (or if thou have any other name or surname, thou or thy father, or thy place or thy father's place,) who hast been my wife heretofore; but now I dismiss thee, and leave thee, and put thee away, that thou mayest be free, and have power over thy own life, to go away to be married to any man whom thou wilt; and that no man be refused of thine hand, for my name, from this day and for ever. And thus thou art lawful for any man; and this is unto thee, from me, a writing of divorcement, and book (instrument) of dismissal, and an epistle of putting away; according to the Law of Moses and Israel.

A., son of B., witness.

C., son of D., witness.”

Verse 4. *She is defiled*— Does not this refer to her having been divorced, and married in consequence to another? Though God, for the hardness of their hearts, suffered them to put away their wives, yet he considered all after-marriages in that case to be pollution and defilement; and it is on this ground that our Lord argues in the places referred to above, that whoever marries the woman that is put away is an adulterer: now this could not have been the case if God had allowed the divorce to be a legal and proper separation of the man from his wife; but in the sight of God nothing can be a legal cause of separation but adultery on either side. In such a case, according to the law of God, a man may put away his wife, and a wife may put away her husband; (see Matthew 19:9;) for it appears that the wife had as much right to put away her husband as the husband had to put away his wife, see Mark 10:12.

Verse 5. *When a man hath taken a new wife*— Other people made a similar provision for such circumstances. Alexander ordered those of his soldiers who had married that year to spend the winter with their wives, while the army was in winter quarters. See Arrian, lib. i.

Verse 6. *The nether or the upper mill-stone*— Small hand-mills which can be worked by a single person were formerly in use among the Jews, and are still used in many parts of the East. As therefore the day's meal was generally ground for each day, they keeping no stock beforehand, hence they were forbidden to take either of the stones to pledge, because in such

a case the family must be without bread. On this account the text terms the millstone the man's life.

Verse 8. — 9. *The plague of leprosy*— See on Leviticus 13, and 14.

Verse 12. *And if the man be poor, etc.*— Did not this law preclude pledging entirely, especially in case of the abjectly poor? For who would take a pledge in the morning which he knew, if not redeemed, he must restore at night? However, he might resume his claim in the morning, and have the pledge daily returned, and thus keep up his property in it till the debt was discharged; see the note on “Exodus 22:26”. The Jews in several cases did act contrary to this rule, and we find them cuttingly reprov'd for it by the Prophet Amos, Amos 2:8.

Verse 15. *He is poor, and setteth his heart upon it*— How exceedingly natural is this! The poor servant who seldom sees money, yet finds from his master's affluence that it procures all the conveniences and comforts of life, longs for the time when he shall receive his wages; should his pay be delayed after the time is expired, he may naturally be expected to cry unto God against him who withholds it. See most of these subjects treated at large on Exodus 22:21-27.

Verse 16. *The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, etc.*— This law is explained and illustrated in sufficient detail, Ezekiel 18.

Verse 18. *Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman*— Most people who have affluence rose from comparative penury, for those who are born to estates frequently squander them away; such therefore should remember what their feelings, their fears, and anxieties were, when they were poor and abject. A want of attention to this most wholesome precept is the reason why pride and arrogance are the general characteristics of those who have risen in the world from poverty to affluence; and it is the conduct of those men which gave rise to the rugged proverb, “Set a beggar on horseback, and he will ride to the devil.”

Verse 19. *When thou cuttest down thine harvest*— This is an addition to the law, Leviticus 19:9; 23:22. The corners of the field, the gleanings, and the forgotten sheaf, were all the property of the poor. This the Hebrews extended to any part of the fruit or produce of a field, which had been

forgotten in the time of general ingathering, as appears from the concluding verses of this chapter.

CHAPTER 25

Punishment by whipping not to exceed forty stripes, 1-3. The ox that treads out the corn is not to be muzzled, 4. The ordinance concerning marrying the wife of that brother who has died childless, 5-10. Of the woman who acts indecently in succouring her husband, 11, 12. Of false weights and measures, 13-16. Amalek is to be destroyed, 17-19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 1. *They shall justify the righteous*— This is a very important passage, and is a key to several others. The word צַדִּיק tsadak is used here precisely in the same sense in which St. Paul sometimes uses the corresponding word δικαιωω, not to justify or make just, but to acquit, declare innocent, to remit punishment, or give reasons why such a one should not be punished; so here the magistrates הַצַּדִּיקִין hitsdiku, shall acquit, the righteous-declare him innocent, because he is found to be righteous and not wicked: so the Septuagint: και δικαιωσουσιν τον δικαιον they shall make righteous the righteous-declare him free from blame, not liable to punishment, acquitted; using the same word with St. Paul when he speaks of a sinner's justification, i. e., his acquittance from blame and punishment, because of the death of Christ in his stead.

Verse 2. *The judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face*— This precept is literally followed in China; the culprit receives in the presence of the magistrate the punishment which the law directs to be inflicted. Thus then justice is done, for the magistrate sees that the letter of the law is duly fulfilled, and that the officers do not transgress it, either by indulgence on the one hand, or severity on the other. The culprit receives nothing more nor less than what justice requires.

Verse 3. *Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed*— According to God's institution a criminal may receive forty stripes; not one more! But is the institution from above or not, that for any offense sentences a man to receive three hundred, yea, a thousand stripes? What horrible brutality

is this! and what a reproach to human nature, and to the nation in which such shocking barbarities are exercised and tolerated! Most of the inhabitants of Great Britain have heard of Lord Macartney's embassy to the emperor of China, and they have also heard of its complete failure; but they have not heard the cause. It appears to have been partly occasioned by the following circumstance: A soldier had been convicted of some petty traffic with one of the natives, and he was sentenced by a court-martial to receive sixty lashes! Hear my author:—

“The soldiers were drawn up in form in the outer court of the place where we resided; and the poor culprit, being fastened to one of the pillars of the great portico, received his punishment without mitigation. The abhorrence excited in the breasts of the Chinese at this cruel conduct, as it appeared to them, was demonstrably proved by their words and looks. They expressed their astonishment that a people professing the mildest, the most benevolent religion on earth, as they wished to have it believed, could be guilty of such flagrant inattention to its merciful dictates. One of the principal Mandarins, who knew a little English, expressed the general sentiment, Englishmen too much cruel, too much bad.”-Accurate account of Lord Macartney's Embassy to China, by an attendant on the embassy, 12mo., 1797, p. 88.

The following is Mr. Ainsworth's note on this verse: “This number forty the Scripture uses sundry times in cases of humiliation, affliction, and punishment. As Moses twice humbled himself in fasting and prayer forty days and forty nights, Deuteronomy 9:9, 18. Elijah fasted forty days, 1 Kings 19:8; and our Savior, Matthew 4:2. Forty years Israel was afflicted in the wilderness for their sins, Numbers 14:33, 34. And forty years Egypt was desolate for treacherous dealing with Israel, Ezekiel 29:11-13. Forty days every woman was in purification for her uncleanness for a man-child that she bare, and twice forty days for a woman-child, Leviticus 12:4, 5. Forty days and forty nights it rained at Noah's flood, Genesis 7: 12. Forty days did Ezekiel bear the iniquity of the house of Judah, Ezekiel 4:6. Jonah preached, Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown, Jon 3:4. Forty years' space the Canaanites had to repent after Israel came out of Egypt, and wandered so many years in the wilderness, Numbers 14:33. And thrice forty years the old world had Noah preaching unto them repentance, Genesis 6:3. It was forty days ere Christ ascended into heaven after his

resurrection, Acts 1:3, 9. And forty years' space he gave unto the Jews, from the time that they killed him, before he destroyed their city and temple by the Romans.

“By the Hebrews this law is expounded thus: How many stripes do they beat (an offender) with? With forty, lacking one: as it is written, (Deuteronomy 25:2, 3,) by number forty, that is, the number which is next to forty, Talmud Bab, in Maccoth, chap. 3. This their understanding is very ancient, for so they practiced in the apostles' days; as Paul testified: Of the Jews five times received I forty (stripes) save one; 2 Corinthians 11:24. But the reason which they give is not solid; as when they say, If it had been written FORTY IN NUMBER, I would say it were full forty; but being written IN NUMBER FORTY, it means the number which reckons forty next after it, that is, thirty-nine. By this exposition they confound the verses and take away the distinction. I rather think this custom was taken up by reason of the manner of their beating forespoken of, which was with a scourge that had three cords, so that every stroke was counted for three stripes, and then they could not give even forty, but either thirty-nine or forty-two, which was above the number set of God. And hereof they write thus: When they judge (or condemn) a sinner to so many (stripes) as he can bear, they judge not but by strokes that are fit to be trebled [that is, to give three stripes to one stroke, by reason of the three cords.] If they judge that he can bear twenty, they do not say he shall be beaten with one and twenty, to the end that they may treble the stripes, but they give him eighteen. — Maimon in Sanhedrin, chap. xvii., sec. 2. Thus he that was able to bear twenty stripes, had but eighteen: the executioner smote him but six times, for if he had smitten him the seventh they were counted one and twenty stripes, which was above the number adjudged: so he that was adjudged to forty was smitten thirteen times, which being counted one for three, make thirty-nine. And so R. Bechaios, writing hereof, says, The strokes are trebled; that is, every one is three, and three times thirteen are nine and thirty.”

Thy brother be vile, or be contemptible. — By this God teaches us to hate and despise the sin, not the sinner, who is by this chastisement to be amended; as the power which the Lord hath given is to edification, not to destruction, 2 Corinthians 13:10.

Verse 4. *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox, etc.*— In Judea, as well as in Egypt, Greece, and Italy, they make use of beeves to tread out the corn; and Dr. Shaw tells us that the people of Barbary continue to tread out their corn after the custom of the East. Instead of beeves they frequently made use of mules and horses, by tying by the neck three or four in like manner together, and whipping them afterwards round about the nedders, as they call the treading floors, (the Libycae areae Hor,) where the sheaves lie open and expanded, in the same manner as they are placed and prepared with us for threshing. This indeed is a much quicker way than ours, though less cleanly, for as it is performed in the open air, (Hosea 13: 3,) upon any round level plot of ground, daubed over with cow's dung to prevent as much as possible the earth, sand, or gravel from rising; a great quantity of them all, notwithstanding this precaution, must unavoidably be taken up with the grain, at the same time that the straw, which is their chief and only fodder, is hereby shattered to pieces; a circumstance very pertinently alluded to in 2 Kings 13:7, where the king of Syria is said to have made the Israelites like the dust by threshing. — Travels, p. 138. While the oxen were at work some muzzled their mouths to hinder them from eating the corn, which Moses here forbids, instructing the people by this symbolical precept to be kind to their servants and laborers, but especially to those who ministered to them in holy things; so St. Paul applies it 1 Corinthians 9:9, etc.; 1 Timothy 5:18. Leviticus Clerc considers the injunction as wholly symbolical; and perhaps in this view it was intended to confirm the laws enjoined in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the former chapter. See Dodd and Shaw.

In Bengal, where the same mode of treading cut the corn is used, some muzzle the ox, and others do not, according to the disposition of the farmer. — Ward.

Verse 9. *And loose his shoe*— It is difficult to find the reason of these ceremonies of degradation. Perhaps the shoe was the emblem of power; and by stripping it off, deprivation of that power and authority was represented. Spitting in the face was a mark of the utmost ignominy; but the Jews, who are legitimate judges in this case, say that the spitting was not in his face, but before his face on the ground. And this is the way in which the Asiatics express their detestation of a person to the present day, as Niebuhr and other intelligent travelers assure us. It has been remarked

that the prefix ב beth is seldom applied to פני peney; but when it is it signifies as well before as in the face. See Joshua 21:44; 23:9; Esther 9:2; and Ezekiel 42:12; which texts are supposed to be proofs in point. The act of spitting, whether in or before the face, marked the strong contempt the woman felt for the man who had slighted her. And it appears that the man was ever after disgraced in Israel; for so much is certainly implied in the saying, ver. 10: And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

Verse 13. *Divers weights*— אבן ואבן eben vaaben, a stone and a stone, because the weights were anciently made of stone, and some had two sets of stones, a light and a heavy. With the latter they bought their wares, by the former they sold them. In our own country this was once a common case; smooth, round, or oval stones were generally chosen by the simple country people for selling their wares, especially such as were sold in pounds and half pounds. And hence the term a stone weight, which is still in use, though lead or iron be the matter that is used as a counterpoise: but the name itself shows us that a stone of a certain weight was the material formerly used as a weight. See the notes on Leviticus 19:35, 36.

Verse 14. *Divers measures*— Literally, an ephah and an ephah; one large, to buy thy neighbor's wares, another small, to sell thy own by. So there were knaves in all ages, and among all nations. See the notes on "Exodus 16:16", and See "Leviticus 19:35".

Verse 18. *Smote the hindmost of thee*— See the note on "Exodus 17:8". It is supposed that this command had its final accomplishment in the death of Haman and his ten sons, Esther iii., vii., ix., as from this time the memory and name of Amalek was blotted out from under heaven, for through every period of their history it might be truly said, They feared not God.

CHAPTER 26

First-fruits must be offered to God, 1, 2. The form of confession to be used on the occasion, 3-11. The third year's tithe to be given to the Levites and the poor, 12, and the form of confession to be used on this occasion, 13-15. The Israelites are to take Jehovah for their God, and to keep his testimonies, 16, 17. And Jehovah is to take them for his people, and make them high above all the nations of the earth, 18, 19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 2. *Thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit, etc.*— This was intended to keep them in continual remembrance of the kindness of God, in preserving them through so many difficulties and literally fulfilling the promises he had made to them. God being the author of all their blessings, the first-fruits of the land were consecrated to him, as the author of every good and perfect gift.

Verse 5. *A Syrian ready to perish was my father*— This passage has been variously understood, both by the ancient versions and by modern commentators. The Vulgate renders it thus: Syrus persequatur patrem meum, “A Syrian persecuted my father.” The Septuagint thus: **συριαν απεβαλεν ο πατηρ μου**, “My father abandoned Syria.” The Targum thus: **לב ארמאה בעא לאובדא ית אבא** Laban arammaah bea leobada yath abba, “Laban the Syrian endeavored to destroy my father.” The Syriac: “My father was led out of Syria into Egypt.” The Arabic: “Surely, Laban the Syrian had almost destroyed my father.” The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel: “Our father Jacob went at first into Syria of Mesopotamia, and Laban sought to destroy him.”

Father Houbigant dissents from all, and renders the original thus: Fames urgebat patrem meum, qui in AEgyptum descendit, “Famine oppressed my father, who went down into Egypt.” This interpretation Houbigant gives the text, by taking the ך yod from the word **ארמי** arammi, which signifies an Aramite or Syrian, and joining it to **אבד** yeabud, the future

for the perfect, which is common enough in Hebrew, and which may signify constrained; and seeking for the meaning of אָרָם in the Arabic [A] arama, which signifies famine, dearth, etc., he thus makes out his version, and this version he defends at large in his notes. It is pretty evident, from the text, that by a Syrian we are to understand Jacob, so called from his long residence in Syria with his father-in-law Laban. And his being ready to perish may signify the hard usage and severe labor he had in Laban's service, by which, as his health was much impaired, so his life might have often been in imminent danger.

Verse 8. *With a mighty hand, etc.*— See on “Deuteronomy 4:34”.

Verse 11. *Thou shalt rejoice*— God intends that his followers shall be happy; that they shall eat their bread with gladness and singleness of heart, praising him. Those who eat their meat grudgingly, under the pretense of their unworthiness, etc., profane God's bounties and shall have no thanks for their voluntary humility.

Thou, and the Levite, and the stranger— They were to take care to share God's bounties among all those who were dependent on them. The Levite has no inheritance, let him rejoice with thee. The stranger has no home, let him feel thee to be his friend and his father.

Verse 12. *The third year, which is the year of tithing*— This is supposed to mean the third year of the seventh or Sabbatical year, in which the tenths were to be given to the poor. See the law, chap. 14:28. But from the letter in both these places it would appear that the tithe was for the Levites, and that this tithe was drawn only once in three years.

Verse 14. *I have not-given aught thereof for the dead*— That is, I have not consecrated any of it to an idol which was generally a dead man whom superstition and ignorance had deified. From 1 Corinthians 10:27, 28, we learn that it was customary to offer that flesh to idols which was afterwards sold publicly in the shambles; probably the blood was poured out before the idol in imitation of the sacrifices offered to the true God. Perhaps the text here alludes to a similar custom.

Verse 17. *Thou hast avouched the Lord*— The people avouch-publicly declare, that they have taken Jehovah to be their God.

Verse 18. *And the Lord hath avouched*— Publicly declared, by the blessings he pours down upon them, that he has taken them to be his peculiar people. Thus the covenant is made and ratified between God and his followers.

Verse 19. *Make thee high above all nations*— It is written, Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people, Proverbs 14: 34. While Israel regarded God's word and kept his testimonies, they were the greatest and most respectable of all nations; but when they forsook God and his law, they became the most contemptible. O Britain, even more highly favored than ancient Israel! learn wisdom by what they have suffered. It is not thy fleets nor thine armies, howsoever excellent and well appointed, that can ultimately exalt and secure thy permanence among the nations. It is righteousness alone. Become irreligious, neglect God's ordinances, profane his Sabbath, despise his word, persecute his followers, and thou art lost. But fear, love, and serve him, and thy enemies shall be found liars, thou shalt defeat their projects, and trample on their high places.

THE form of confession when bringing the first-fruits, related ver. 4-10, is both affecting and edifying. Even when brought into a state of affluence and rest, they were commanded to remember and publicly acknowledge their former degradation and wretchedness, that they might be ever kept humble and dependent; and they must bring their offering as a public acknowledgment to God that it was by his mercy their state was changed, and by his bounty their comforts were continued. If a man rise from poverty to affluence, and forget his former state, he becomes proud, insolent, and oppressive. If a Christian convert forget his former state, the rock whence he was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence he was digged, he soon becomes careless, unthankful, and unholy. The case of the ten lepers that were cleansed, of whom only one returned to give God thanks, is an awful lesson. How many are continually living on the bounty of God, who feel no gratitude for his mercies! Reader, Is this thy state? If so, then expect the just God to curse thy blessings.

CHAPTER 27

Moses commands the people to write the law upon stones, when they shall come to the promised land, 1-3. And to set up these stones on Mount Ebal, 4; and to build an altar of unhewn stones, and to offer on it burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, 5-7. The words to be written plainly, and the people to be exhorted to obedience, 8-10. The six tribes which should stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, 11, 12. Those who are to stand upon Mount Ebal to curse the transgressors, 13. The different transgressors against whom the curses are to be denounced, 14-26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 2. *Thou shalt set thee up great stones*— How many is not specified, possibly twelve, and possibly only a sufficient number to make a surface large enough to write the blessings and the curses on.

Plaster them with plaster— Perhaps the original ושרדת אתם בשיד vesadta otham bassid should be translated, Thou shalt cement them with cement, because this was intended to be a durable monument. In similar cases it was customary to set up a single stone, or a heap, rudely put together, where no cement or mortar appears to have been used; and because this was common, it was necessary to give particular directions when the usual method was not to be followed. Some suppose that the writing was to be in relievo, and that the spaces between the letters were filled up by the mortar or cement. This is quite a possible case, as the Eastern inscriptions are frequently done in this way. There is now before me a large slab of basaltes, two feet long by sixteen inches wide, on which there is an inscription in Persian, Arabic, and Tamul; in the two former the letters are all raised, the surface of the stone being dug out, but the Tamul is indented. A kind of reddish paint had been smeared over the letters to make them more apparent. Two Arabic marbles in the University of Oxford have the inscriptions in relievo, like those on the slab of basalt in my possession. In the opinion of some even this case may cast light upon the subject in question.

Verse 3. *All the words of this law*— After all that has been said by ingenious critics concerning the law ordered to be written on these stones, some supposing the whole Mosaic law to be intended, others, only the decalogue, I am fully of opinion that the (תּוֹרָה torah) law or ordinance in question simply means the blessings and curses mentioned in this and in the following chapter; and indeed these contained a very good epitome of the whole law in all its promises and threatenings, in reference to the whole of its grand moral design. See at the end of this chapter.

Verse 4. *Set up these stones-in Mount Ebal*— So the present Hebrew text, but the Samaritan has Mount Gerizim. Dr. Kennicott has largely defended the reading of the Samaritan in his second dissertation on the present state of the Hebrew text, and Dr. Parry has defended the Hebrew against the Samaritan in his Case between Gerizim and Ebal fairly stated. So has J. H. Verschuir, in his Dissert. Critica. Many still think Dr. Kennicott's arguments unanswerable, and have no doubt that the Jews have here corrupted the text through their enmity to the Samaritans. On all hands it is allowed that Gerizim abounds with springs, gardens, and orchards, and that it is covered with a beautiful verdure, while Ebal is as naked and as barren as a rock. On this very account the former was highly proper for the ceremony of blessing, and the latter for the ceremony of cursing.

Verse 12. *These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people*— Instead of upon Mount, etc., we may translate by, as the particle על al is sometimes used; for we do not find that the tribes did stand on either mount, for in Joshua 8:33, when this direction was reduced to practice, we find the people did not stand on the mountains, but over against them on the plain. See the observations at the end of this chapter.

Verse 15. *Cursed be the man, etc.*— Other laws, previously made, had prohibited all these things; and penal sanctions were necessarily understood; but here God more openly declares that he who breaks them is cursed-falls under the wrath and indignation of his Maker and Judge. See the note on "Exodus 20:4".

Verse 16. *Setteth light by his father or his mother.*— See the note on "Exodus 20:12".

Verse 17. *Removeth his neighbor's landmark.*— See before on Deuteronomy 19:14, and on Exodus 20:17. And for all the rest of these curses, see the notes on Exodus 20., and the observations at the end of it.

Verse 18. *The blind to wander out of the way.*— A sin against the sixth commandment. See on “Exodus 20:13”.

Verse 26. *That confirmeth not all the words of this law*— The word כּל col, ALL, is not found in any printed copy of the Hebrew text; but the Samaritan preserves it, and so do six MSS. in the collections of Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi, besides several copies of the Chaldee Targum. The Septuagint also, and St. Paul in his quotation of this place, Galatians 3:10. St. Jerome says that the Jews suppressed the word, that it might not appear that they were bound to fulfill ALL the precepts in the law of Moses. 1. Dr. KENNICOTT, who contends that it was the Decalogue that was written on the stones mentioned in this chapter, says, “If we examine these twelve curses, they will appear to contain a strong enforcement of the ten commands; and it is highly probable that the curses were here proclaimed principally to secure obedience to the commandments, as will be made more clear by the following table:—

The first, second, third, and fourth Commandments

Verse 15. Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination to the Lord, etc.

The fifth Commandment

Verse 16. Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother.

The sixth Commandment

Verse 25. Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person.

Verse 24. Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbor secretly.

Verse 18. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way.

The seventh Commandment

Verse 20. Cursed be he that lieth with his father's wife.

Verse 21. Cursed be he that lieth with any beast.

Verse 22. Cursed be he that lieth with his sister.

Verse 23. Cursed be he that lieth with his mother-in-law.

The eighth Commandment

Verse 17. Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark.

The ninth Commandment

Verse 19. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow.

The tenth Commandment

Verse 26. Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them."

Many will think this arrangement fanciful; and the analogy far from being natural.

2. In pronouncing these blessings and curses, the Talmud says, six tribes went up towards the top of Mount Gerizim, and six towards the top of Mount Ebal; and the priests and the Levites, and the ark stood beneath in the midst. The priests encompassed the ark, and the Levites stood around about the priests; and all Israel on this side and on that; see Joshua 8: 33. Then they turned their faces towards Mount Gerizim and pronounced the blessings, Blessed be the man, etc., and those on each side answered AMEN! then they turned their faces towards Mount Ebal, and pronounced the curse, Cursed be the man, etc., and those on each side answered AMEN! till they had finished the blessings and the curses; and afterwards they brought stones and built an altar. Some suppose that the Levites were divided into two grand bodies, part standing at or on Mount Gerizim, and part on Mount Ebal, and that with each division were some of the priests. The whole Dr. Parry supposes to have been arranged in the following manner:—

3. It is worthy of remark that Moses assigns to the children of Rachel and Leah, the two mothers of the family, the office of blessing the people, as being the most honorable; and these he places on Mount Gerizim. On the contrary, he assigns the office of cursing the people to the sons of Zilpah and Bilhah, as being the least honorable office; but with these he joins

Zebulun, the youngest of Leah's sons, and Reuben, the eldest. As there must be six tribes on each mountain, it was necessary that while six of the sons of Rachel and Leah, the legitimate wives, should be employed in blessing, two tribes descending from the same mothers should be joined to the other four who proceeded from the handmaids in order to make up the number six. The question is, which two of the more honorable tribes should be joined to the four least honorable, in order to complete the number six? Zebulun is chosen, because being the sixth and youngest of all Leah's sons, he was the least honorable of those who proceeded from the free woman; and Reuben is chosen, who, though the eldest of Jacob's sons, and entitled to the birthright, had lost it by his transgression. And hence he, in his posterity, was degraded, and was obliged to pronounce the curse, Cursed is he that lieth with his father's wife. See Genesis 49:3, 4, and 35:22, and the notes on both places.

4. It is strange how long the disgrace consequent on some flagrant transaction of a parent may cleave to his posterity! See this exemplified in the posterity of Reuben. Hence, with great propriety we may pray, Remember not, Lord, our offenses, nor the offenses of our forefathers; neither take thou vengeance of our sins."-Litany. For the offenses of our forefathers may be so remembered against their posterity, that God, in the course of his providence, may still keep up a controversy in secular matters with the descendants (though even pious) of unholy ancestors; for as all men are seminally included in the parents, they come into the world depraved with their depravity, and in some sort liable to their curses, though not so far as to affect their eternal interests without the addition of their own personal offenses. Thus God may be said to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, even unto the third and fourth generation; as he may have a controversy with the land for the evil which has been done in it, and for which no proper atonement has been made. Why is it that at this moment Spain is suffering the most afflictive and cruel desolations? What has she done to merit all this? Is she more wicked than all the European nations because she suffers such things? Here is the mystery: Nations, as such, can only be punished in this world. Look at the torrents of innocent blood shed by their ancestors in South America 300 years ago; and see now and adore the awful hand of retributive justice! (December, 1811.) We often see persons tried and afflicted, for whose distresses we

can give no legitimate reason. We find others who, though they rise early, sit up late, work hard, eat the bread of carefulness, and have a full knowledge of their business, yet never get on in life. Who can account for this? Shall we say that some injustice in their ancestors has brought down the displeasure of God upon the earthly possessions that descended in that line, so that the goods ill gotten shall never be permitted to multiply? I knew an honest man, dead many years since, who by great diligence, punctuality, and integrity in his business, had acquired considerable property. Some time before his death, having by will divided his substance among his sons and his daughters, he expressed himself thus: "Children, you need not fear the curse of God on this property; every penny of it was honestly earned." Many years have since elapsed, and the blessing of God has been in the basket and in the store of all his children. Parents! leave nothing behind you that you cannot say before your God, with a clear conscience, "This has been honestly earned." If all bequests of a contrary description were to be deducted from last wills and testaments, the quantum of descending property would be, in many cases, small indeed.

CHAPTER 28

The blessings which God pronounces on the obedient, 1-6. Particular privileges which the faithful shall receive, 7-13. The curses pronounced against the ungodly and idolatrous, 14-19. A detailed account of the miseries which should be inflicted on them, should they neglect the commandments of the Lord, 20. They shall be smitten with the pestilence, 21; with consumption, fever, etc., 22; drought and barrenness, 23, 24; they shall be defeated by their enemies, 25, 26; they shall be afflicted with the botch of Egypt, 27; with madness and blindness, 28, 29; they shall be disappointed in all their projects, 30; deprived of all their possessions, and afflicted in all their members, 31-35; they and their king shall go into captivity, 36, and become a by-word among the nations, 37. Their land shall be unfruitful, and they shall be the lowest of all people, 38-44. All these curses shall come on them should they be disobedient, 45-48. Character of the people by whom they should be subdued, 49, 50. Particulars of their dreadful sufferings, 51-57. A recapitulation of their wretchedness, 58-63. The prediction that they shall be scattered among all the nations of the earth, 64-68.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 2. *All these blessings shall come on thee*— God shall pour out his blessing from heaven upon thee. And overtake thee. Upright men are represented as going to the kingdom of God, and God's blessings as following and overtaking them in their heavenly journey. There are several things in this verse worthy of the most careful observation:- 1. If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. The voice of God must be heard; without a Divine revelation how can the Divine will be known? And if not known, it cannot be fulfilled. 2. When God speaks, men must hearken to the words of his mouth. He who does not hearken will not obey. 3. He who hearkens to the words of God must set out for the kingdom of heaven. The curse must fall on him who stands in the way of sinners, and will overtake them who loiter in the way of righteousness. 4. Those who run in the way of God's testimonies shall have an abundance

of blessing. Blessings shall come upon them, and blessings shall overtake them—in every part of their march through life they shall continue to receive the fulfillment of the various promises of God which relate to all circumstances, vicissitudes, trials, stages of life, etc., etc., each overtaking them in the time and place where most needed.

Verse 3. *In the city*— In all civil employments. In the field—in all agricultural pursuits.

Verse 4. *Fruit of thy body*— All thy children. Increase of thy kine, etc.; every animal employed in domestic and agricultural purposes shall be under the especial protection of Divine Providence.

Verse 5. *Thy basket*— Thy olive gathering and vintage, as the basket was employed to collect those fruits.

Store.— **משארת** mishereth, kneading-trough, or remainder; all that is laid up for future use, as well as what is prepared for present consumption. Some think that by basket all their property abroad may be meant, and by store all that they have at home, i. e., all that is in the fields, and all that is in the houses. The following note of Mr. Harmer is important:—

“Commentators seem to be at a great loss how to explain the basket and the store mentioned Deuteronomy 28:5, 17. Why Moses, who in the other verses mentions things in general, should in this case be so minute as to mention baskets, seems strange; and they that interpret either the first or the second of these words of the repositories of their corn, etc., forget that their barns or storehouses are spoken of presently after this in ver. 8. Might I be permitted to give my opinion here, I should say that the basket, **טנה** tene, in this place means their travelling baskets, and the other word **משארת** mishereth, (their store,) signifies their leathern bags, in both which they were wont to carry things in travelling. The first of these words occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures but in the account that is given us of the conveyance in which they were to carry their first-fruits to Jerusalem; the other nowhere but in the description of the hurrying journey of Israel out of Egypt, where it means the utensils in which they then carried their dough, which I have shown elsewhere in these papers means a piece of leather drawn together by rings, and forming a kind of bag. Agreeably to this, Hasselquist informs us that the Eastern people use baskets in

travelling; for, speaking of that species of the palm tree which produces dates, and its great usefulness to the people of those countries, he tells us that of the leaves of this tree they make baskets, or rather a kind of short bags, which are used in Turkey on journeys and in their houses; pages 261, 262. Hampers and panniers are English terms denoting travelling baskets, as *tene* seems to be a Hebrew word of the same general import, though their forms might very much differ, as it is certain that of the travelling baskets mentioned by Hasselquist now does.

“In like manner as they now carry meal, figs, and raisins, in a goat’s skin in Barbary for a viaticum, they might do the same anciently, and consequently might carry merchandise after the same manner, particularly their honey, oil, and balm, mentioned Ezekiel 27:17. They were the proper vessels for such things. So Sir J. Chardin, who was so long in the East, and observed their customs with so much care, supposed, in a manuscript note on Genesis 43:11, that the balm and the honey sent by Jacob into Egypt for a present were carried in a goat or kid’s skin, in which all sorts of things, both dry and liquid, are wont to be carried in the East.

“Understood after this manner, the passage promises Israel success in their commerce, as the next verse (the 6th) promises them personal safety in their going out and in their return. In this view the passage appears with due distinctness, and a noble extent.”-Observations, vol. 2:, p. 181.

Verse 6. *When thou comest in*— From thy employment, thou shalt find that no evil has happened to the family or dwelling in thy absence.

When thou goest out— Thy way shall be made prosperous before thee, and thou shalt have the Divine blessing in all thy labors.

Verse 7. *The Lord shall cause thine enemies, etc.*— This is a promise of security from foreign invasion, or total discomfiture of the invaders, should they enter the land. They shall come against thee one way-in the firmest and most united manner. And flee seven ways-shall be utterly broken, confounded, and finally routed.

Verse 8. *The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee*— Every thing that thou hast shall come by Divine appointment; thou shalt have nothing casually, but every thing, both spiritual and temporal, shall come by the immediate command of God.

Verse 9. *The Lord shall establish thee a holy people unto himself*— This is the sum of all blessings, to be made holy, and be preserved in holiness.

If thou shalt keep, etc.— Here is the solemn condition; if they did not keep God's testimonies, taking them for the regulators of their lives, and according to their direction walking in his ways, under the influence and aids of his grace, then the curses, and not the blessings, must be their portion. See ver. 15, etc.

Verse 12. *The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure*— The clouds, so that a sufficiency of fructifying showers should descend at all requisite times, and the vegetative principle in the earth should unfold and exert itself, so that their crops should be abundant.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt not go aside-to the right hand or to the left*— The way of obedience is a straight way; it goes right forward; he who declines either to right or left from this path goes astray and misses heaven.

Verse 20. *Cursing*— This shall be thy state; vexation-grief, trouble, and anguish of heart; rebuke-continual judgments, and marks of God's displeasure.

Verse 21. *The pestilence cleave unto thee*— יִדְבֵק יְהוָה בְּךָ אֶת הַדָּבָר yadbek Yehovah becha eth haddaber, the Lord shall CEMENT the pestilence or plague to thee. Sept., προσκολλησει κυριος εις σε τον θανατον, The Lord will GLUE-inseparably attach, the death unto thee. How dreadful a plague it must be that ravages without intermission, any person may conceive who has ever heard the name.

Verse 22. *Consumption*— שַׁחֲפֶת shachepheth, atrophy through lack of food; from שָׁחַף shacaph, to be in want.

Fever— קִדְחַת kaddachath, from קָדַח kadach, to be kindled, burn, sparkle; a burning inflammatory fever.

Inflammation— דַּלְקֶת dalleketh, from דָּלַק dalak, to pursue eagerly, to burn after; probably a rapidly consuming cancer.

Extreme burning— חָרַחַר charchur, burning upon burning, scald upon scald; from חָרַח char, to be heated, enraged, etc. This probably refers, not

only to excruciating inflammations on the body, but also to the irritation and agony of a mind utterly abandoned by God, and lost to hope. What an accumulation of misery! how formidable! and especially in a land where great heat was prevalent and dreadful.

Sword— War in general, enemies without, and civil broils within. This was remarkably the case in the last siege of Jerusalem.

Blasting— שדפון shiddaphon, probably either the blighting east wind that ruined vegetation, or those awful pestilential winds which suffocate both man and beast wherever they come. These often prevail in different parts of the East, and several examples have already been given. See “Genesis 41:6”.

Mildew— ירקון yerakon, an exudation of the vegetative juice from different parts of the stalk, by which the maturity and perfection of the plant are utterly prevented. It comes from ירק yarak, to throw out moisture.

Of these seven plagues, the five former were to fall on their bodies, the two latter upon their substance. What a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God!

Verse 23. *Thy heaven-shall be brass, and the earth-iron.*— The atmosphere should not be replenished with aqueous vapours, in consequence of which they should have neither the early nor the latter rain; hence the earth-the ground, must be wholly intractable, and, through its hardness, incapable of cultivation. God shows them by this that he is Lord of nature; and that drought and sterility are not casualties, but proceed from the immediate appointment of the Lord.

Verse 24. *The rain of thy land powder and dust*— As their heavens-atmosphere, clouds, etc., were to be as brass-yielding no rain; so the surface of the earth must be reduced to powder; and this, being frequently taken up by the strong winds, would fall down in showers instead of rain. Whole caravans have been buried under showers of sand; and Thevenot, a French traveler, who had observed these showers of dust, etc., says, “They grievously annoy all they fall on, filling their eyes, ears, nostrils, etc.”-Travels in the East, part 1, book ii., chap. 80. The

ophthalmia in Egypt appears to be chiefly owing to a very fine sand, the particles of which are like broken glass, which are carried about by the wind, and, entering into the ciliary glands, produce grievous and continual inflammations.

Verse 27. *The Lord will smite thee with the botch*— שֶׁחִי shechin, a violent inflammatory swelling. In Job ii., one of the Hexapla versions renders it ελεφας, the elephantiasis, a disease the most horrid that can possibly afflict human nature. In this disorder, the whole body is covered with a most loathsome scurf; the joints are all preternaturally enlarged, and the skin swells up and grows into folds like that of an elephant, whence the disease has its name. The skin, through its rigidity, breaks across at all the joints, and a most abominable ichor flows from all the chinks, etc. See an account of it in Aretaeus, whose language is sufficient to chill the blood of a maniac, could he attend to the description given by this great master, of this most loathsome and abominable of all the natural productions of death and sin. This was called the botch of Egypt, as being peculiar to that country, and particularly in the vicinity of the Nile. Hence those words of Lucretius:—

*Est Elephas morbus, qui circum flumina Nili
Nascitur, AEgypto in media; nec praeterea usquam.*

Lib. vi., ver. 1112.

Emerods— עֲפָלִים ophalim, from עָפַל aphal, to be elevated, raised up; swellings, protuberances; probably the bleeding piles.

Scab— גַּרְבַּ garab *does not occur as a verb in the Hebrew Bible, but* [A] gharb, in Arabic, signifies a distemper in the corner of the eye, (Castel.,) and may amount to the Egyptian ophthalmia, which is so epidemic and distressing in that country: some suppose the scurvy to be intended.

Itch— חֶרֶס cheres, a burning itch, probably something of the erysipelalous kind, or what is commonly called St. Anthony's fire.

Whereof thou canst not be healed.— For as they were inflicted by GOD's justice, they could not of course be cured by human art.

Verse 28. *The Lord shall smite thee with madness*— שִׁגְאוֹן shiggaon, distraction, so that thou shalt not know what to do.

And blindness— עוֹרָר ivvaron, blindness, both physical and mental; the גַּרְבַּגַּר garab, (ver. 27,) destroying their eyes, and the judgments of God confounding their understandings.

Astonishment— תִּמְהוֹן timmahon, stupidity and amazement. By the just judgments of God they were so completely confounded, as not to discern the means by which they might prevent or remove their calamities, and to adopt those which led directly to their ruin. How true is the ancient saying, Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat! “Those whom God is determined to destroy, he first infatuates.” But this applies not exclusively to the poor Jews: how miserably infatuated have the powers of the continent of Europe been, in all their councils and measures, for several years past! And what is the result? They have fallen—most deplorably fallen!

Verse 29. *Thou shalt be only oppressed, etc.*— Perhaps no people under the sun have been more oppressed and spoiled than the rebellious Jews. Indeed, this has been their portion, with but little intermission, for nearly 1, 800 years. And still they grope at noon day, as the blind gropeth in darkness—they do not yet discover, notwithstanding the effulgence of the light by which they are encompassed, that the rejection of their own Messiah is the cause of all their calamities.

Verse 30. *Thou shalt betroth a wife, etc.*— Can any heart imagine any thing more grievous than the evils threatened in this and the following verses? To be on the brink of all social and domestic happiness, and then to be suddenly deprived of all, and see an enemy possess and enjoy every thing that was dear to them, must excite them to the utmost pitch of distraction and madness. They have, it is true, grievously sinned; but, O ye Christians, have they not grievously suffered for it? Is not the stroke of God heavy enough upon them? Do not then, by unkind treatment or cruel Oppression, increase their miseries. They are, above all others, the men who have seen affliction by the stroke of his rod; Lamentations 3:1.

Verse 32. *Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people*— In several countries, particularly in Spain and Portugal, the

children of the Jews have been taken from them by order of government, and educated in the Popish faith. There have been some instances of Jewish children being taken from their parents even in Protestant countries.

Verse 35. *With a sore botch*— שֶׁחִין shechin, an inflammatory swelling, a burning boil. See ver. 27.

Verse 36. — 45. Can any thing be conceived more dreadful than the calamities threatened in these verses?

Verse 48. *Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies*— Because they would not serve GOD, therefore they became slaves to men.

Verse 49. *A nation -from far*— Probably the Romans.

As the eagle flieth— The very animal on all the Roman standards. The Roman eagle is proverbial.

Whose tongue thou shalt not understand— The Latin language, than which none was more foreign to the structure and idiom of the Hebrew.

Verse 52. He-Nebuchadnezzar first, (2 Kings 25:1, 2, etc.), and Titus next; shall besiege thee-beset thee round on every side, and cast a trench around thee: viz., lines of circumvallation, as our Lord predicted; (see Matthew 24:1, etc., and Luke 21:5, etc.): in all thy gates throughout all thy land—all thy fenced cities, which points out that their subjugation should be complete, as both Jerusalem and all their fortified places should be taken. This was done literally by Nebuchadnezzar and the Romans.

Verse 56. *The tender and delicate woman*— This was literally fulfilled when Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans; a woman named Mary, of a noble family, driven to distraction by famine, boiled and ate her own child! See a similar case 2 Kings 6:29; and see on “Leviticus 26:29”.

Verse 57. *Toward her young one-and toward her children which she shall bear*— There seems to be a species of tautology in the two clauses of this verse, which may be prevented by translating the last word, שְׁלִיָּתָה shilyathah, literally, her secondines, which is the meaning of the Arabic [A] sala, not badly understood by the Septuagint, χοριον αυτης, the chorion or exterior membrane, which invests the foetus in the womb;

and still better translated by Luther, [AS] the after-birth; which saying of Moses strongly marks the deepest distress, when the mother is represented as feeling the most poignant regret that her child was brought forth into such a state of suffering and death; and 2dly, that it was likely, from the favorable circumstances after the birth, that she herself should survive her inlaying. No words can more forcibly depict the miseries of those dreadful times. On this ground I see no absolute need for Kennicott's criticism, who, instead of **ובשליטה** ubeshilyathah, against her secondines, reads **ובשלה** ubashelah, and she shall boll, and translates the 56th and 57th verses as follows: "The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter. 57. And she shall boil that which cometh out from between her feet, even her children, which she shall bear, for she shall eat them, for want of all things, secretly." These words, says he, being prophetic, are fulfilled in 2 Kings 6:29, for we read there that two women of Samaria having agreed to eat their own children, one was actually boiled, where the very same word, **בשל** bashal is used. See Kennicott's Dissertations on 1 Chronicles 11., etc., p. 421.

Verse 64. *The Lord shall scatter thee among all people*— How literally has this been fulfilled! The people of the Jews are scattered over every nation under heaven.

Verse 65. *No ease-a trembling heart, and failing of eyes*— The trembling of heart may refer to their state of continual insecurity, being, under every kind of government, proscribed, and, even under the most mild, uncertain of toleration and protection; and the failing of eyes, to their vain and ever-disappointed expectation of the Messiah.

Verse 68. *And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again*— That is, into another state of slavery and bondage similar to that of Egypt, out of which they had been lately brought. And there ye shall be sold, that is, be exposed to sale, or expose yourself to sale as the word **התמכרתם** hithmaccartem may be rendered; they were vagrants, and wished to become slaves that they might be provided with the necessaries of life. And no man shall buy you; even the Romans thought it a reproach to have a Jew for a slave, they had become so despicable to all mankind. When

Jerusalem was taken by Titus, many of the captives, which were above seventeen years of age, were sent into the works in Egypt. See Josephus, *Antiq.*, b. xii, 100:1, 2, *War* b. vi., c. 9, s. 2; and above all, see Bp. Newton's *Dissertations on the Prophecies*.

THE first verse of the next chapter, in some of the most correct Hebrew Bibles, makes the 69th of this; and very properly, as the second verse of the following chapter begins a new subject.

This is an astonishing chapter: in it are prophecies delivered more than 3,000 years ago, and now fulfilling.

O God, how immense is thy wisdom, and how profound thy counsels! To thee alone are known all thy works from the beginning to the end. What an irrefragable proof does this chapter, compared with the past and present state of the Jewish people, afford of the truth and Divine origin of the Pentateuch!

CHAPTER 29

A recapitulation of God's gracious dealings with Israel, 1-8. An exhortation to obedience, and to enter into covenant with their God, that they and their posterity may be established in the good land, 9-15. They are to remember the abominations of Egypt, and to avoid them, 16, 17. He who hardens his heart, when he hears these curses, shall be utterly consumed, 18-21. Their posterity shall be astonished at the desolations that shall fall upon them, 22, 23; shall inquire the reason, and shall be informed that the Lord has done thus to them because of their disobedience and idolatry, 24-28. A caution against prying too curiously into the secrets of the Divine providence, and to be contented with what God has revealed, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. *These are the words of the covenant*— This verse seems properly to belong to the preceding chapter, as a widely different subject is taken up at ver. 2 of this; and it is distinguished as the 69th verse in some of the most correct copies of the Hebrew Bible.

Commanded Moses to make— לִכְרֹת *lichroth*, to cut, alluding to the covenant sacrifice which was offered on the occasion and divided, as is explained, "Genesis 15:18".

Beside the covenant which he made-in Horeb.— What is mentioned here is an additional institution to the ten words given on Horeb; and the curses denounced here are different from those denounced against the transgressors of the decalogue.

Verse 4. *The Lord hath not given you a heart, etc.*— Some critics read this verse interrogatively: And hath not God given you a heart, etc.? because they suppose that God could not reprehend them for the non-performance of a duty, when he had neither given them a mind to perceive the obligation of it, nor strength to perform it, had that obligation been known. Though this is strictly just, yet there is no need for the

interrogation, as the words only imply that they had not such a heart, etc., not because God had not given them all the means of knowledge, and helps of his grace and Spirit, which were necessary; but they had not made a faithful use of their advantages, and therefore they had not that wise, loving, and obedient heart which they otherwise might have had. If they had had such a heart, it would have been God's gift, for he is the author of all good; and that they had not such a heart was a proof that they had grieved his Spirit, and abused the grace which he had afforded them to produce that gracious change, the want of which is here deplored. Hence God himself is represented as grieved because they were unchanged and disobedient: "O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children for ever!" See Deuteronomy 5:29, and the note there.

Verse 5. *Your clothes are not waxen old*— See on "Deuteronomy 8:4".

Verse 6. *Ye have not eaten bread, etc.*— That is, ye have not been supported in an ordinary providential way; I have been continually working miracles for you, that ye might know that I am the Lord. Thus we find that God had furnished them with all the means of this knowledge, and that the means were ineffectual, not because they were not properly calculated to answer God's gracious purpose, but because the people were not workers with God; consequently they received the grace of God in vain. See 2 Corinthians 6:1.

Verse 10. *Ye stand-all of you before the Lord*— They were about to enter into a covenant with God; and as a covenant implies two parties contracting, God is represented as being present, and they and all their families, old and young, come before him.

Verse 12. *That thou shouldest enter*— לעבר leaber, to pass through, that is, between the separated parts of the covenant sacrifice. See "Genesis 15:18".

And into his oath— Thus we find that in a covenant were these seven particulars: 1. The parties about to contract were considered as being hitherto separated. 2. They now agree to enter into a state of close and permanent amity. 3. They meet together in a solemn manner for this

purpose. 4. A sacrifice is offered to God on the occasion, for the whole is a religious act. 5. The victim is separated exactly into two equal parts, the separation being in the direction of the spine; and those parts are laid opposite to each other, sufficient room being allowed for the contracting parties to pass between them. 6. The contracting parties meet in the victim, and the conditions of the covenant by which they are to be mutually bound are recited. 7. An oath is taken by these parties that they shall punctually and faithfully perform their respective conditions, and thus the covenant is made and ratified. See Jeremiah 34:18, 19, and the notes on “Genesis 6:18”; “Genesis 15:18”; “Exodus 29:45”; Leviticus 26.

Verse 15. *Him that standeth here*— The present generation. Him that is not here—all future generations of this people.

Verse 18. *A root that beareth gall and wormwood*— That is, as the apostle expresses it, Hebrews 3:12, An evil heart of unbelief departing from the living God; for to this place he evidently refers. It may also signify false doctrines, or idolatrous persons among themselves.

Verse 19. *To add drunkenness to thirst*— A proverbial expression denoting the utmost indulgence in all sensual gratifications.

Verse 26. *Gods-whom he had not given unto them*— This is an unhappy translation. Houbigant renders the original words **לָהֶם וְלוֹ חֶלֶק** *velo chalak lahem, et quibuscum nulla eis societas*, “And with whom they had no society;” and falls unmercifully on Leviticus Clerc because he had translated it, From whom they had received no benefits. I must differ from both these great men, because I think they differ from the text. **חֶלֶק** *chalak* signifies a portion, lot, inheritance, and God is frequently represented in Scripture as the portion or inheritance of his people. Here, therefore, I think the original should be rendered, And there was no portion to them, that is, the gods they served could neither supply their wants nor save their souls—they were no portion.

Verse 29. *The secret things belong unto the Lord, etc.*— This verse has been variously translated. Houbigant renders it thus: *Quae apud Dominum nostrum abscondita sunt, nobis ea filiisque nostris palam facta sunt ad multas aetates*, “The things which were hidden with the Lord our God, are made manifest to us and our children for many generations.” I am not

satisfied with this interpretation, and find that the passage was not so understood by any of the ancient versions. The simple general meaning seems to be this: "What God has thought proper to reveal, he has revealed; what he has revealed is essential to the well-being of man, and this revelation is intended not for the present time merely, nor for one people, but for all succeeding generations. The things which he has not revealed concern not man but God alone, and are therefore not to be inquired after." Thus, then, the things that are hidden belong unto the Lord, those that are revealed belong unto us and our children. But possibly the words here refer to the subjects of these chapters, as if he had said, "Apostasy from God and his truth is possible. When a national apostasy among us may take place, is known only to God; but he has revealed himself to us and our children that we may do all the words of this law, and so prevent the dreadful evils that shall fall on the disobedient."

THE Jews have always considered these verses as containing subjects of the highest importance to them, and have affixed marks to the original **לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ** lanu ulebaneynu, "to US and to our CHILDREN," in order to fix the attention of the reader on truths which affect them individually, and not them only, but the whole of their posterity.

CHAPTER 30

Gracious promises are given to the penitent, 1-6. The Lord will circumcise their heart, and put all these curses on their enemies, if they hearken to his voice and keep his testimonies, 7-10. The word is near to them, and easy to be understood, 11-14. Life and death, a blessing and a curse, are set before them; and they are exhorted to love the Lord, obey his voice, and cleave unto him, that they may inherit the land promised to Abraham, 15-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. *When all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse*— So fully did God foresee the bad use these people would make of their free agency in resisting the Holy Ghost, that he speaks of their sin and punishment as certain; yet, at the same time, shows how they might turn to himself and live, even while he was pouring out his indignation upon them because of their transgressions.

Verse 3. *Gather thee from all the nations*— This must refer to a more extensive captivity than that which they suffered in Babylon.

Verse 5. *Will bring thee into the land*— As this promise refers to a return from a captivity in which they had been scattered among all nations, consequently it is not the Babylonish captivity which is intended; and the repossession of their land must be different from that which was consequent on their return from Chaldea.

Verse 6. *God will circumcise thine heart*— This promise remains yet to be fulfilled. Their heart, as a people, has never yet been circumcised; nor have the various promises in this chapter been ever yet fulfilled. There remaineth, therefore, a rest for this people of God. Now, as the law, properly speaking, made no provision for the circumcision of the heart, which implies the remission of sins, and purification of the soul from all unrighteousness; and as circumcision itself was only a sign of spiritual good, consequently the promise here refers to the days of the Messiah,

and to this all the prophets and all the apostles give witness: “for circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter,” Romans 2: 29; and the genuine followers of God are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands-by the circumcision of Christ,” Colossians 2: 11, 12. Hence we see these promises cannot be fulfilled to the Jews but in their embracing the Gospel of Christ. To look, therefore, for their restoration is idle and nugatory, while their obstinacy and unbelief remain.

Verse 11. *This commandment-is not hidden*— Not too wonderful or difficult for thee to comprehend or perform, as the word **נִפְלְאוֹת** niphleth implies. Neither is it far off-the word or doctrine of salvation shall be proclaimed in your own land; for HE is to be born in Bethlehem of Judah, who is to feed and save Israel; and the PROPHET who is to teach them is to be raised up from among their brethren.

Verse 12. *It is not in heaven*— Shall not be communicated in that way in which the prophets received the living oracles; but the WORD shall be made flesh, and dwell among you.

Verse 13. *Neither is it beyond the sea*— Ye shall not be obliged to travel for it to distant nations, because salvation is of the JEWS.

Verse 14. *But the word is very nigh unto thee*— The doctrine of salvation preached by the apostles; in thy mouth, the promises of redemption made by the prophets forming a part of every Jew’s creed; in thy heart-the power to believe with the heart unto righteousness, that the tongue may make confession unto salvation. In this way, it is evident, St. Paul understood these passages; see Romans 10:6-8, etc.

Verse 15. *Life and good*— Present and future blessings.

Death and evil— Present and future miseries: termed, ver. 19, Life and death, blessing and cursing. And why were these set before them? 1. That they might comprehend their import. 2. That they might feel their importance. 3. That they might choose life, and the path of believing, loving obedience, that led to it. 4. That they and their posterity, thus choosing life and refusing evil, might be the favourites of God in time and eternity.

Were there no such thing as free will in man, who could reconcile these sayings either with sincerity or common sense? God has made the human will free, and there is no power or influence either in heaven, earth, or hell, except the power of God, that can deprive it of its free volitions; of its power to will and nill, to choose and refuse, to act or not act or force it to sin against God. Hence man is accountable for his actions, because they are his; were he necessitated by fate, or sovereign constraint, they could not be his. Hence he is rewardable, hence he is punishable. God, in his creation, willed that the human creature should be free, and he formed his soul accordingly; and the Law and Gospel, the promise and precept, the denunciation of wo and the doctrine of eternal life, are all constructed on this ground; that is, they all necessarily suppose the freedom of the human will: nor could it be will if it were not free, because the principle of freedom or liberty is necessarily implied in the idea of volition. See on the fifth chapter and 29th verse. {See “Deuteronomy 5:29”}

Verse 19. See the note on the preceding verse. {See “Deuteronomy 30:15”}

Verse 20. *That thou mayest love the Lord*— Without love there can be no obedience.

Obey his voice— Without obedience love is fruitless and dead.

And-cleave unto him— Without close attachment and perseverance, temporary love, however sincere and fervent-temporary obedience, however disinterested, energetic, and pure while it lasts-will be ultimately ineffectual. He alone who endures to the end, shall be saved. Reader, how do matters stand between God and thy soul? He cannot persevere in the grace of God whose soul is not yet made a partaker of that grace. Many talk strenuously on the impossibility of falling from grace, who have not yet tasted that the Lord is gracious. How absurd to talk and dispute about the infallibility of arriving safely at the end of a way in which a man has never yet taken one hearty step! It is never among those that have the grace of God, but among those that have it not, that we find an overweening confidence.

CHAPTER 31

Moses, being one hundred and twenty years old and about to die, calls the people together, and exhorts them to courage and obedience, 1-6. Delivers a charge to Joshua, 7, 8. Delivers the law which he had written to the priests, with a solemn charge that they should read it every seventh year, publicly to all the people, 9-13. The Lord calls Moses and Joshua to the tabernacle, 14. He appears to them, informs Moses of his approaching death, and delivers to him a prophetic and historical song, or poem, which he is to leave with Israel, for their instruction and reproof, 15-21. Moses writes the song the same day, and teaches it to the Israelites, 22; gives Joshua a charge, 23; finishes writing the book of the law, 24. Commands the Levites to lay it up in the side of the ark, 25, 26. Predicts their rebellions, 27. Orders the elders to be gathered together, and shows them what evils would befall the people in the latter days, 28, 29, and repeats the song to them, 30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 2. *I am a hundred and twenty years old*— The life of Moses, the great prophet of God and lawgiver of the Jews, was exactly the same in length as the time Noah employed in preaching righteousness to the antediluvian world. These one hundred and twenty years were divided into three remarkable periods: forty years he lived in Egypt, in Pharaoh's court, acquiring all the learning and wisdom of the Egyptians; (see Acts 7:20, 23;) forty years he sojourned in the land of Midian in a state of preparation for his great and important mission; (Acts 7:29, 30;) and forty years he guided, led, and governed the Israelites under the express direction and authority of God: in all, one hundred and twenty years.

Verse 3. *Joshua, he shall go over before thee*— See on Numbers 27:17, etc.

Verse 6. *Be strong*— חִזְקוּ *chizku*, the same word that is used Exodus 4:21, 9:15, for hardening Pharaoh's heart. See the notes there. The

Septuagint, in this and the following verse, have, *ανδριζου και ισχυε*, Play the man, and be strong; and from this St. Paul seems to have borrowed his ideas, 1 Corinthians 16:13: *στηκετε εν τη πιστει ανδριζεσθε, κρατιουσθε*: Stand firm in the faith; play the man-act like heroes; be vigorous.

Verse 8. *The Lord-doth go before thee*— To prepare thy way, and to direct thee.

He will be with thee— Accompany thee in all thy journeys, and assist thee in all thy enterprises.

He will not fail thee— Thy expectation, however strong and extensive, shall never be disappointed: thou canst not expect too much from him.

Neither forsake thee— He knows that without him thou canst do nothing, and therefore he will continue with thee, and in such a manner too that the excellence of the power shall appear to be of him, and not of man.

Verse 9. *Moses wrote this law*— Not the whole Pentateuch, but either the discourses and precepts mentioned in the preceding chapters, or the book of Deuteronomy, which is most likely.

Some of the rabbins have pretended that Moses wrote thirteen copies of the whole Pentateuch; that he gave one to each of the twelve tribes, and the thirteenth was laid up by the ark. This opinion deserves little credit. Some think that he wrote two copies, one of which he gave to the priests and Levites for general use, according to what is said in this verse, the other to be laid up beside the ark as a standard copy for reference, and to be a witness against the people should they break it or become idolatrous. This second copy is supposed to be intended ver. 26. As the law was properly a covenant or contract between God and the people, it is natural to suppose there were two copies of it, that each of the contracting parties might have one: therefore one was laid up beside the ark, this was the Lord's copy; another was given to the priests and Levites, this was the people's copy.

Verse 10. — 11. *At the end of every seven years-thou shalt read this law*— Every seventh year was a year of release, chap. 15:1, at which time the people's minds, being under a peculiar degree of solemnity, were better

disposed to hear and profit by the words of God. I suppose on this ground also that the whole book of Deuteronomy is meant, as it alone contains an epitome of the whole Pentateuch. And in this way some of the chief Jewish rabbins understand this place.

It is strange that this commandment, relative to a public reading of the law every seven years, should have been rarely attended to. It does not appear that from the time mentioned Joshua 8:30, at which time this public reading first took place, till the reign of Jehoshaphat 2 Chronicles 17:7, there was any public seventh year reading—a period of 530 years. The next seventh year reading was not till the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, 2 Chronicles 34:30, a space of two hundred and eighty-two years. Nor do we find any other publicly mentioned from this time till the return from the Babylonish captivity, Nehemiah 8:2. Nor is there any other on record from that time to the destruction of Jerusalem. See Dodd.

Verse 16. *Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers*— שָׁכַב shocheb, thou shalt lie down; it signifies to rest, take rest in sleep, and, metaphorically, to die. Much stress cannot be safely laid on this expression to prove the immortality of the soul, or that the people in the time of Moses had a distinct notion of its separate existence. It was, however, understood in this sense by Jonathan ben Uzziel, who in his Targum paraphrases the word thus: “Thou shalt lie down in the dust with thy fathers; and thy soul (נִשְׁמַתְךָ nishmethach) shall be laid up in the treasury of the life to come with thy fathers.”

Verse 18. *I will surely hide my face*— Withdraw my approbation and my protection. This is a general meaning of the word in Scripture.

Verse 19. *Write ye this song*— The song which follows in the next chapter. Things which were of great importance and of common concern were, among the ancients, put into verse, as this was found the best method of keeping them in remembrance, especially in those times when writing was little practiced. Even prose was sometimes sung. The history of Herodotus was divided into NINE books, and each inscribed with the name of one of the NINE Muses, because these books were anciently sung. Homer is reported to have sung his poems through different Greek cities. Aristotle observes that anciently the people sung their laws. And Cicero

observes that it was a custom among the ancient Romans to sing the praises of their heroes at the public festivals. This was the case among the northern inhabitants of Europe, particularly in Ireland and Scotland; hence the Gaelic poetry of Ossian and others. See Dodd; and See the note on “Exodus 15:1”, where the subject is largely treated.

Verse 21. *This song shall testify against them*— Because in it their general defection is predicted, but in such a way as to show them how to avoid the evil; and if they did not avoid the evil, and the threatened punishment should come upon them, then the song should testify against them, by showing that they had been sufficiently warned, and might have lived to God, and so escaped those disasters.

Verse 26. *Take this book of the law*— The standard copy to which all transcripts must ultimately refer: another copy was put into the bands of the priests. See the note on “Deuteronomy 31:9”.

Verse 27. *While I am yet alive -ye have been rebellious*— Such was the disposition of this people to act contrary to moral goodness that Moses felt himself justified in inferring what would take place from what had already happened. 1. NEVER was a people more fully and faithfully warned, and from this very circumstance we may see that they were under no fatal constraining necessity to commit sin against God; they might have avoided it, but they would not. God was present to help them, till by their repeated provocations they forced him to depart: wrath therefore came upon them to the uttermost because they sinned when they might have lived to the glory of God. Those who abuse God’s grace shall not only have that grace taken away from them, but shall be punished for the abuse of it, as well as for the transgression. Every sin is double, and must have a twofold punishment; for 1. Grace is resisted; 2. Transgression is committed; and God will visit for both. 2. How astonishing it is that, with such examples of God’s justice before their eyes, the Jews should be so little affected; and that the Gentiles, who have received the Gospel of God, should act as if God would no more punish transgression, or that he must be so partial to them as to pass by iniquities for which the hand of his justice still continues heavy upon the descendants of Jacob! Let them take heed, for if God spared not the natural branches, he will not spare them. If they sin after the manner of the Jews, they may expect to be partakers

with them in their punishments. What God does to nations he will do to individuals who reject his mercy, or trample under foot his grace; the soul that sinneth, and returns not to God by repentance and faith, shall die. This is a decree of God that shall never be reversed, and every day bears witness how strictly he keeps it in view. 3. The ode composed by Moses for this occasion was probably set to some lively and affecting air, and sung by the people. It would be much easier to keep such a song in remembrance, than an equal quantity of prose. The whole would have the additional circumstances of cadence and tune to cause it to be often repeated; and thus insure its being kept in memory. Poetry, though often, nay, generally abused, is nevertheless a gift from God, and may be employed with the best effect in his service. A very considerable part of the Old Testament is written in poetry; particularly the whole book of Psalms, great part of the prophet Isaiah, the Lamentations, and much of the minor prophets. Those who speak against poetic compositions in the service of God, speak against what they do not understand. All that a man hath should be consecrated to his Maker, and employed in his service; not only the energy of his heart and mind, the physical force of his body, but also the musical tones and modulations of his voice.

CHAPTER 32

The prophetic and historical song of Moses, showing forth the nature of God's doctrine, 1-3. The character of God, 4. The corruption of the people, 5, 6. They are called to remember God's kindness, 7, and his dealings with them during their travels in the wilderness, 8-14. Their ingratitude and iniquity, 15-18. They are threatened with his judgments, 19-28. A pathetic lamentation over them because of their sins, 29-35. Gracious purposes in their behalf, mixed with reproaches for their manifold idolatries, and threatenings against his enemies, 36-42. A promise of salvation to the Gentiles, 43. Moses, having finished the song, warmly exhorts the people to obedience, 44-47. God calls him up to the mount, that he may see the good land and then die, 48-52.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. On the inimitable excellence of this ode much has been written by commentators, critics, and poets; and it is allowed by the best judges to contain a specimen of almost every species of excellence in composition. It is so thoroughly poetic that even the dull Jews themselves found they could not write it in the prose form; and hence it is distinguished as poetry in every Hebrew Bible by being written in its own hemistichs or short half lines, which is the general form of the Hebrew poetry; and were it translated in the same way it would be more easily understood. The song itself has suffered both by transcribers and translators, the former having mistaken some letters in different places, and made wrong combinations of them in others. As to the translators, most of them have followed their own fancy, from good Mr. Ainsworth, who ruined it by the most inanimate rhyming version, to certain latter poets, who have cast it unhallowedly into a European mould. See the observations at the end of the chapter.

Give ear, O ye heavens— Let angels and men hear, and let this testimony of God be registered both in heaven and earth. Heaven and earth are appealed to as permanent witnesses.

Verse 2. My doctrine— לִקְחִי לִקְחִי likchi, from לָקַח lakach, to take, carry away; to attract or gain over the heart by eloquence or persuasive speech. Hence the Septuagint translate the word ἀποφθεγμα, an apophthegm, a sententious and weighty saying, for the regulation of the moral conduct such, properly, are the sayings in this inimitable ode.

Shall drop as the rain— It shall come drop by drop as the shower, beginning slowly and distinctly, but increasing more and more till the plenitude of righteousness is poured down, and the whole canon of Divine revelation completed.

My speech shall distil as the dew— אִמְרָתִי imrathi; my familiar, friendly, and affectionate speeches shall descend gently and softly, on the ear and the heart, as the dew, moistening and refreshing all around. In hot regions dew is often a substitute for rain, without it there could be no fertility, especially in those places where rain seldom falls. And in such places only can the metaphor here used be felt in its perfection. Homer uses a similar figure when speaking of the eloquence of Ulysses; he says, Il. iii., ver. 221:—

ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ ῥοπα τε μεγάλῃν ἐκ στήθεος ἰεῖ,
καὶ ἐπεὰ νιφάδεσσιν εὐκοτὰ χειμεριῆσιν —

*“But when he speaks what elocution flows!
Soft as the fleeces of descending snows.”*

On the manner in which dew is produced, philosophers are not yet agreed. It was long supposed to descend, and to differ only from rain as less from more; but the experiments of a French chemist seemed to prove that dew ascended in light thin vapours, and that, meeting with a colder region of the air, it became condensed and fell down upon the earth. Other recent experiments, though they have not entirely invalidated the former, have rendered the doctrine of the ascent of dew doubtful. Though we know nothing certain as to the manner of its production, yet we know that the thing exists, and that it is essentially useful. So much we know of the sayings of our God, and the blessed effects produced by them: God hath spoken, and the entering in of his words gives light and life. See the note on “Genesis 2:6”.

As the small rain— שַׁעִירִים seirim, from שַׁעַר saar, to be rough or tempestuous; sweeping showers, accompanied with a strong gale of wind.

And as the showers— רִבִּיבִים rebibim, from רָבָה rabah to multiply, to increase greatly; shower after shower, or rather a continual rain, whose drops are multiplied beyond calculation, upon the earth; alluding perhaps to the rainy seasons in the East, or to those early and latter rains so essentially necessary for the vegetation and perfection of the grain.

No doubt these various expressions point out that great variety in the word or revelation of God whereby it is suited to every place, occasion, person, and state; being “profitable for doctrine, reproof, and edification in righteousness.” Hence the apostle says that GOD, at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and in these last times has spoken unto us by his Son; Hebrews 1:1, 2. By every prophet, evangelist, and apostle, God speaks a particular language; all is his doctrine, his great system of instruction, for the information and salvation of the souls of men. But some portions are like the sweeping showers, in which the tempest of God’s wrath appears against sinners. Others are like the incessant showers of gentle rain, preparing the soil for the germination of the grain, and causing it to take root. And others still are like the dew, mildly and gently insinuating convictions, persuasions, reproofs, and consolations. The preacher of righteousness who wishes to handle this word profitably, must attend closely to those distinctions, that he may rightly divide the word of truth, and give each of his hearers his portion of the bread of life in due season.

Verse 4. He is the Rock— The word צוֹר tsur is rendered Creator by some eminent critics; and [A] khalyk is the reading in the Arabic Version. Rab. Moses ben Maimon, in his valuable work, Moreh Nebochim, observes that the word צוֹר tsur, which is ordinarily translated rock, signifies origin, fountain, first cause, etc., and in this way it should be translated here: “He is the first principle, his work is perfect.” As he is the cause of all things, he must be infinitely perfect; and consequently all his works must be perfect in their respective kinds. As is the cause, so must the effect be. Some think the word rock gives a very good sense: for, as in those lands, rocks were the ordinary places of defense and security, God

may be metaphorically represented thus, to signify his protection of his followers. I prefer the opinion of Maimon.

Verse 5. *Their spot is not the spot of his children*— This verse is variously translated and variously understood. They are corrupted, not his, children of pollution. — KENNICOTT. They are corrupt, they are not his children, they are blotted. — HOUBIGANT. This is according to the Samaritan. The interpretation commonly given to these words is as unfounded as it is exceptionable: “God’s children have their spots, i. e., their sins, but sin in them is not like sin in others; in others sin is exceedingly sinful, but God does not see the sins of his children as he sees the sins of his enemies,” etc. Unfortunately for this bad doctrine, there is no foundation for it in the sacred text, which, though very obscure, may be thus translated: He (Israel) hath corrupted himself. They (the Israelites) are not his children: they are spotted. Coverdale renders the whole passage thus: “The froward and overthwart generation have marred themselves to himward, and are not his children because of their deformity.” This is the sense of the verse. Let it be observed that the word spot, which is repeated in our translation, occurs but once in the original, and the marginal reading is greatly to be preferred: He hath corrupted to himself, that they are not his children; that is their blot. And because they had the blot of sin on them, because they were spotted with iniquity and marked idolaters, therefore God renounces them. There may be here an allusion to the marks which the worshippers of particular idols had on different parts of their bodies, especially on their foreheads; and as idolatry is the crime with which they are here charged, the spot or mark mentioned may refer to the mark or stigma of their idol. The different sects of idolaters in the East are distinguished by their sectarian marks, the stigma of their respective idols. These sectarian marks, particularly on the forehead, amount to nearly one hundred among the Hindoos, and especially among the two sects, the worshippers of Seeva, and the worshippers of Vishnoo. In many cases these marks are renewed daily, for they account it irreligious to perform any sacred rite to their god without his mark on the forehead; the marks are generally horizontal and perpendicular lines, crescents, circles, leaves, eyes, etc., in red, black, white, and yellow. This very custom is referred to in Revelation 20:4, where the beast gives his mark to his followers, and it is very likely that Moses refers to such a custom among the idolatrous of

his own day. This removes all the difficulty of the text. God's children have no sinful spots, because Christ saves them from their sins; and their motto or mark is, Holiness to the Lord.

Verse 8. *When the Most High divided to the nations, etc.*— Verses 8 and 9, says Dr. Kennicott, give us express authority for believing that the earth was very early divided in consequence of a Divine command, and probably by lot, (see Acts 17:26;) and as Africa is called the land of Ham, (Psalm 78:51; 105:23, 27; 106:22,) probably that country fell to him and to his descendants, at the same time that Europe fell to Japheth, and Asia to Shem, with a particular reserve of Palestine to be the Lord's portion, for some one peculiar people. And this separation of mankind into three bodies, called the general migration, was commanded to Noah, and by him to his sons, so as to take place in the days of Peleg, about two hundred years afterwards. This general migration was prior to the partial dispersion from Babel by about five hundred years.

He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.— The Septuagint is very curious, **εστησεν ορια εθνων κατα αριθμον αγγελων του θεου**. “He established the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God.” The meaning of the passage seems to be, that when God divided the earth among mankind, he reserved twelve lots, according to the number of the sons of Jacob, which he was now about to give to their descendants, according to his promise.

Verse 9. *The Lord's portion is his people*— What an astonishing saying! As holy souls take GOD for their portion, so GOD takes them for his portion. He represents himself as happy in his followers; and they are infinitely happy in, and satisfied with, God as their portion. This is what is implied in being a saint. He who is seeking for an earthly portion, has little commerce with the Most High.

Verse 10. He-the Lord, found him-Jacob, in his descendants, in a desert land-the wilderness. He led him about forty years in this wilderness, Deuteronomy 8:2, or **יסבבנהו** yesobebenhu, he compassed him about, i. e., God defended them on all hands, and in all places. He instructed him-taught them that astonishing law through which we have now almost passed, giving them statutes and judgments which, for depth of wisdom, and correct political adaptation to times, places, and circumstances, are so

wondrously constructed, as essentially to secure the comfort, peace, and happiness of the individual, and the prosperity and permanency of the moral system. Laws so excellent that they have met with the approbation of the wise and good in all countries, and formed the basis of the political institutions of all the civilized nations in the universe.

Notwithstanding the above gives the passage a good sense, yet probably the whole verse should be considered more literally. It is certain that in the same country travelers are often obliged to go about in order to find proper passes between the mountains, and the following extracts from Mr. Harmer well illustrate this point.

“Irwin farther describes the mountains of the desert of Thebais (Upper Egypt) as sometimes so steep and dangerous as to induce even very bold and hardy travelers to avoid them by taking a large circuit; and that for want of proper knowledge of the way, such a wrong path may be taken as may on a sudden bring them into the greatest dangers, while at other times a dreary waste may extend itself so prodigiously as to make it difficult, without assistance, to find the way to a proper outlet. All which show us the meaning of those words of the song of Moses, Deuteronomy 32:10: He led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

“Jehovah certainly instructed Israel in religion by delivering to him his law in this wilderness; but it is not, I presume, of this kind of teaching Moses speaks, as Bishop Patrick supposes, but God’s instructing Israel how to avoid the dangers of the journey, by leading the people about this and that dangerous, precipitous hill, directing them to proper passes through the mountains, and guiding them through the intricacies of that difficult journey which might, and probably would, have confounded the most consummate Arab guides. They that could have safely enough conducted a small caravan of travelers through this desert, might have been very unequal to the task of directing such an enormous multitude, encumbered with cattle, women, children, and utensils. The passages of Irwin, that establish the observation I have been making, follow here: ‘At half past eleven we resumed our march, and soon came to the foot of a prodigious hill, which we unexpectedly found we were to ascend. It was perpendicular, like the one we had passed some hours before; but what rendered the access more difficult, the path which we were to tread was

nearly right up and down. The captain of the robbers seeing the obstacles we had to overcome, wisely sent all his camels round the mountain where he knew there was a defile, and only accompanied us with the beast he rode. We luckily met with no accident in climbing this height.' p. 325. They afterwards descended, he tells us, into a valley, by a passage easy enough, and stopping to dine at half past five o'clock, they were joined by the Arabs, who had made an astonishing march to overtake them, p. 326. 'We soon quitted the dale, and ascended the high ground by the side of a mountain that overlooks it in this part. The path was narrow and perpendicular, and much resembled a ladder. To make it worse, we preceded the robbers, and an ignorant guide among our people led us astray. Here we found ourselves in a pretty situation: we had kept the lower road on the side of the hill, instead of that towards the summit, until we could proceed no farther; we were now obliged to gain the heights, in order to recover the road, in performing which we drove our poor camels up such steeps that we had the greatest difficulty to climb after them. We were under the necessity of leaving them to themselves, as the danger of leading them through places where the least false step would have precipitated both man and beast to the unfathomable abyss below, was too critical to hazard. We hit at length upon the proper path, and were glad to find ourselves in the road of our unerring guides the robbers, after having won every foot of the ground with real peril and fatigue.' p. 324. Again: 'Our road after leaving the valley lay over level ground. As it would be next to an impossibility to find the way over these stony flats, where the heavy foot of a camel leaves no impression, the different bands of robbers have heaped up stones at unequal distances for their direction through this desert. We have derived great assistance from the robbers in this respect, who are our guides when the marks either fail, or are unintelligible to us.' The predatory Arabs were more successful guides to Mr. Irwin and his companions, than those he brought with him from Ghinnah; but the march of Israel through deserts of the like nature, was through such an extent and variety of country, and in such circumstances as to multitudes and incumbrances, as to make Divine interposition necessary. The openings through the rocks seem to have been prepared by Him to whom all things from the beginning of the world were foreknown, with great wisdom and goodness, to enable them to accomplish this stupendous march." See Harmer's Observat., vol. iv. p. 125.

He kept him as the apple of his eye.— Nothing can exceed the force and delicacy of this expression. As deeply concerned and as carefully attentive as man can be for the safety of his eyesight, so was God for the protection and welfare of this people. How amazing this condescension!

Verse 11. As an eagle stirreth up her nest— Flutters over her brood to excite them to fly; or, as some think, disturbs her nest to oblige the young ones to leave it; so God by his plagues in Egypt obliged the Israelites, otherwise very reluctant, to leave a place which he appeared by his judgments to have devoted to destruction.

Fluttereth over her young— **יִרְחַף** yeracheph, broodeth over them, communicating to them a portion of her own vital warmth: so did God, by the influences of his Spirit, enlighten, encourage, and strengthen their minds. It is the same word which is used in Genesis 1:2.

Spreadeth abroad her wings, etc.— In order, not only to teach them how to fly, but to bear them when weary. For to this fact there seems an allusion, it having been generally believed that the eagle, through extraordinary affection for her young, takes them upon her back when they are weary of flying, so that the archers cannot injure them but by piercing the body of the mother. The same figure is used See “Exodus 19:4”; in the note. The **נֶשֶׁר** nesher, which we translate eagle, is supposed by Mr. Bruce to mean the rachama, a bird remarkable for its affection to its young, which it is known actually to bear on its back when they are weary.

Verse 12. So the Lord alone did lead him— By his power, and by his only, were they brought out of Egypt, and supported in the wilderness.

And there was no strange god— They had help from no other quarter. The Egyptian idols were not able to save their own votaries; but God not only saved his people, but destroyed the Egyptians.

Verse 13. He made him ride— **יַרְכִּיבֵהוּ** yarkibehu, he will cause him to ride. All the verbs here are in the future tense, because this is a prophecy of the prosperity they should possess in the promised land. The Israelites were to ride-exult, on the high places, the mountains and hills of their land, in which they are promised the highest degrees of prosperity; as even the

rocky part of the country should be rendered fertile by the peculiar benediction of God.

Suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock— This promise states that even the most barren places in the country should yield an abundance of aromatic flowers, from which the bees should collect honey in abundance; and even the tops of the rocks afford sufficient support for olive trees, from the fruit of which they should extract oil in abundance: and all this should be occasioned by the peculiar blessing of God upon the land.

Verse 14. *Fat of kidneys of wheat*— Almost every person knows that the kidney is enveloped in a coat of the purest fat in the body of the animal, for which several anatomical reasons might be given. As the kidney itself is to the abundantly surrounding fat, so is the germ of the grain to the lobes or farinaceous parts. The expression here may be considered as a very strong and peculiarly happy figure to point out the finest wheat, containing the healthiest and most vigorous germ, growing in a very large and nutritive grain; and consequently the whole figure points out to us a species of wheat, equally excellent both for seed and bread. This beautiful metaphor seems to have escaped the notice of every commentator.

Pure blood of the grape.— Red wine, or the pure juice of whatever color, expressed from the grapes, without any adulteration or mixture with water: blood here is synonymous with juice. This intimates that their vines should be of the best kind, and their wine in abundance, and of the most delicious flavour.

Verse 15. *Jeshurun*— יָשָׁר the upright. This appellative is here put for Israel, and as it comes from יָשָׁר yashar, he was right, straight, may be intended to show that the people who once not only promised fair, but were really upright, walking in the paths of righteousness, should, in the time signified by the prophet, not only revolt from God, but actually fight against him; like a full fed horse, who not only will not bear the harness, but breaks away from his master, and endeavors to kick him as he struggles to get loose. All this is spoken prophetically, and is intended as a warning, that the evil might not take place. For were the transgression unavoidable, it must be the effect of some necessitating cause, which would destroy the

turpitude of the action, as it referred to Israel; for if the evil were absolutely unavoidable, no blame could attach to the unfortunate agent, who could only consider himself the miserable instrument of a dire necessity. See a case in point, 1 Samuel 23:11, 12, where the prediction appears in the most absolute form, and yet the evil was prevented by the person receiving the prediction as a warning. The case is the following:—

The Philistines attacked Keilah and robbed the threshing-floors; David, being informed of it, asked counsel of God whether he should go and relieve it; he is ordered to go, and is assured of success; he goes, routs the Philistines, and delivers Keilah. Saul, hearing that David was in Keilah, determines to besiege the place. David, finding that Saul meditated his destruction, asked counsel of the Lord, thus: “O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? And the Lord said, He will come down. Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. Then David and his men (about six hundred) arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go: and it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah, and he forbore to go forth.” Here was the most positive prediction that Saul would come to Keilah, and that the men of Keilah would deliver David into his hands; yet neither of these events took place, because David departed from Keilah. But had he continued there, Saul would have come down, and the men of Keilah would have betrayed their deliverer. Thus the prediction was totally conditional; and so were all these prophecies relative to the apostasy of Israel. They were only fulfilled in those who did not receive them as warnings. See Jeremiah 18:8-10.

The Rock of his salvation.— He ceased to depend on the fountain whence his salvation issued; and thinking highly of himself, he lightly esteemed his God; and having ceased to depend on him, his fall became inevitable. The figure is admirably well supported through the whole verse. We see, first, a miserable, lean steed, taken under the care and into the keeping of a master who provides him with an abundance of provender. We see, secondly, this horse waxing fat under this keeping. We see him, thirdly, breaking away from his master, leaving his rich pasturage, and running to the wilderness,

unwilling to bear the yoke or harness, or to make any returns for his master's care and attention. We see, fourthly, whence this conduct proceeds—from a want of consciousness that his strength depends upon his master's care and keeping; and a lack of consideration that leanness and wretchedness must be the consequence of his leaving his master's service, and running off from his master's pasturage. How easy to apply all these points to the case of the Israelites! and how illustrative of their former and latter state! And how powerfully do they apply to the case of many called Christians, who, having increased in riches, forget that God from whose hand alone those mercies flowed!

Verse 17. *They sacrificed unto devils*— The original word שְׂדִיִּים shedim has been variously understood. The Syriac, Chaldee, Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan, and the Samaritan, retain the original word: the Vulgate, Septuagint, Arabic, Persic, Coptic, and Anglo-Saxon, have devils or demons. The Septuagint has εθυσαν δαιμονιοις, they sacrificed to demons: the Vulgate copies the Septuagint: the Arabic has [A] sheeateen, the plural of [A] Sheetan, Satan, by which the rebellious angels appear to be intended, as the word comes from the root [A] shatana, he was obstinate, proud, refractory, went far away. And it is likely that these fallen spirits, having utterly lost the empire at which they aimed, got themselves worshipped under various forms and names in different places. The Anglo-Saxon has [AS], devils.

New gods that came newly up— מִקְרָב בְּאוֹ mikkarob bau, “which came up from their neighbors;” viz., the Moabites and Amorites, whose gods they received and worshipped on their way through the wilderness, and often afterwards.

Verse 18. *Of the Rock that begat thee*— צוּר tsur, the first cause, the fountain of thy being. See the note on “Deuteronomy 32:4”.

Verse 19. *When the Lord saw it, etc.*— More literally, And the Lord saw it, and through indignation he reprobated his sons and his daughters. That is, When the Lord shall see such conduct, he shall be justly incensed, and so reject and deliver up to captivity his sons and daughters.

Verse 20. *Children in whom is no faith*— לֹא אֵמוּנָם בָּם lo emon bam, “There is no steadfastness in them,” they can never be depended on. They are fickle, because they are faithless.

Verse 21. *They have moved me to jealousy*— This verse contains a very pointed promise of the calling of the Gentiles, in consequence of the rejection of the Jews, threatened ver. 19; and to this great event it is applied by St. Paul, Romans 10:19.

Verse 22. *The lowest hell*— שְׁאוֹל תַּחְתִּית sheol tachtith, the very deepest destruction; a total extermination, so that the earth-their land, and its increase, and all their property, should be seized; and the foundations of their mountains-their strongest fortresses, should be razed to the ground. All this was fulfilled in a most remarkable manner in the last destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, so that of the fortifications of that city not one stone was left on another. See the notes on Matthew 24.

Verse 23. *I will spend mine arrows upon them.*— The judgments of God in general are termed the arrows of God, Job 6:4; Psalm 38:2, 3; 91:5; see also Ezekiel 5:16; Jeremiah 50:14; 2 Samuel 22:14, 15. In this and the following verses, to the 28th inclusive, God threatens this people with every species of calamity that could possibly fall upon man. How strange it is that, having this law continually in their hands, they should not discern those threatened judgments, and cleave to the Lord that they might be averted!

It was customary among the heathens to represent any judgment from their gods under the notion of arrows, especially a pestilence; and one of their greatest deities, Apollo, is ever represented as bearing a bow and quiver full of deadly arrows; so Homer, *Il. i.*, ver. 43, where he represents him, in answer to the prayer of his priest Chryses, coming to smite the Greeks with the pestilence:—

ὡς εἶπας εὐχομένοσιν τοῦ δ' ἐκλυε φοίβος ἀπολλων.
βῆ δὲ κατ' οὐλύμποιο κάρηνων χρομένοσ κηρ,
τοξ' ὠμοισιν ἔχων ἀμφηρεφῆα τε φαρῆτην. —
ἔζετ' ἐπειτ' ἀπανευθε νεωνὸ μετὰ δ' ἰον ἠηκεὺ
δεινὴ δὲ κλαγγὴ γενετ' ἀργυροιο βιοιο. κ. τ. λ.

*“Thus Chryses pray’d; the favoring power attends,
And from Olympus’ lofty tops descends.
Bent was his bow the Grecian hearts to wound;
Fierce as he moved, his silver shafts resound; —
The fleet in view, he twang’d his deadly’ bow,
And hissing fly the feather’d fates below.
On mules and dogs the infection first began;
And last the vengeful arrows fix’d in man.”*

How frequently the same figure is employed in the sacred writings, every careful reader knows; and quotations need not be multiplied.

Verse 24. *They shall be burnt with hunger*— Their land shall be cursed, and famine shall prevail. This is one of the arrows.

Burning heat— No showers to cool the atmosphere; or rather boils, blains, and pestilential fevers; this was a second.

Bitter destruction— The plague; this was a third.

Teeth of beasts-with the poison of serpents— The beast of the field should multiply upon and destroy them; this was a fourth: and poisonous serpents, infesting all their steps, and whose mortal bite should produce the utmost anguish, were to be a fifth arrow. Added to all these, the sword of their enemies-terror among themselves, ver. 25, and captivity were to complete their ruin, and thus the arrows of God were to be spent upon them. There is a beautiful saying in the Toozuki Teemour, which will serve to illustrate this point, while it exhibits one of the finest metaphors that occurs in any writer, the sacred writers excepted.

“It was once demanded of the fourth Khaleefeh, (Aaly,) on whom be the mercy of the Creator, ‘If the canopy of heaven were a BOW; and if the earth were the cord thereof; and if calamities were ARROWS; if mankind were the mark for those arrows; and if Almighty GOD, the tremendous and the glorious, were the unerring ARCHER; to whom could the sons of Adam flee for protection?’ The Khaleefeh answered, saying, ‘The sons of Adam must flee unto the Lord.’”

Verse 27. *Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy*— Houbigant and others contend that wrath here refers not to the enemy, but to God;

and that the passage should be thus translated: “Indignation for the adversary deters me, lest their enemies should be alienated, and say, The strength of our hands, and not of the Lord’s, hath done this.” Had not God punished them in such a way as proved that his hand and not the hand of man had done it, the heathens would have boasted of their prowess, and Jehovah would have been blasphemed, as not being able to protect his worshippers, or to punish their infidelities. Titus, when he took Jerusalem, was so struck with the strength of the place, that he acknowledged that if God had not delivered it into his hands, the Roman armies never could have taken it.

Verse 29. *That they would consider their latter end!*— אַחֲרֵיהֶם

archaritham, properly, their latter times—the glorious days of the Messiah, who, according to the flesh, should spring up among them. Should they carefully consider this subject, and receive the promised Savior, they would consequently act as persons under infinite obligations to God; his strength would be their shield, and then:—

Verse 30. *How should one chase a thousand*— If therefore they had not forgotten their Rock, God their author and defense, it could not possibly have come to pass that a thousand of them should flee before one of their enemies.

Verse 31. *For their rock*— The gods and pretended protectors of the Romans.

Is not as our Rock— Have neither power nor influence like our God.

Our enemies themselves being judges.— For they often acknowledged the irresistible power of that God who fought for Israel. See Exodus 14:25; Numbers 23:8-12, 19-21; 1 Samuel 4:8.

There is a passage in Virgil, Eclog. iv., ver. 58, very similar to this saying of Moses:—

*Pan Deus Arcadia mecum si iudice certet,
Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice victum.*

“Should the god Pan contend with me,” (in singing the praises of the future hero, the deliverer, prophesied of in the Sibylline books,) “were even Arcadia judge, Pan would acknowledge himself to be vanquished, Arcadia herself being judge.”

Verse 32. *For their vine is of the vine of Sodom*— The Jews are as wicked and rebellious as the Sodomites; for by the vine the inhabitants of the land are signified; see Isaiah 5:2, 7.

Their grapes— Their actions, are gall and worm-wood-producing nothing but mischief and misery to themselves and others.

Their clusters are bitter— Their united exertions, as well as their individual acts, are sin, and only sin, continually. That by vine is meant the people, and by grapes their moral conduct, is evident from Isaiah 5:1-7. It is very likely that the grapes produced about the lake Asphaltites, where Sodom and Gomorrah formerly stood, were not only of an acrid, disagreeable taste, but of a deleterious quality; and to this, it is probable, Moses here alludes.

Verse 33. *Their wine*— Their system of doctrines and teaching, is the poison of dragons, etc., fatal and destructive to all them who follow it.

Verse 34. *Sealed up among my treasures?*— Deeds or engagements by which persons were bound at a specified time to fulfill certain conditions, were sealed and laid up in places of safety; so here God’s justice is pledged to avenge the quarrel of his broken covenant on the disobedient Jews, but the time and manner were sealed in his treasures, and known only to himself. Hence it is said:—

Verse 35. *Their foot shall slide in due time, etc.*— But Calmet thinks that this verse is spoken against the Canaanites, the enemies of the Jewish people.

Verse 36. *The Lord shall judge his people*— He has an absolute right over them as their Creator, and authority to punish them for their rebellions as their Sovereign; yet he will repent himself—he will change his manner of conduct towards them, when he seeth that their power is gone—when they are entirely subjugated by their adversaries, so that their

political power is entirely destroyed; and there is none shut up or left-not one strong place untaken, and not one family left, all being carried into captivity, or scattered into strange lands. Or, he will do justice to his people, and avenge them of their adversaries; see ver. 35.

Verse 37. *He shall say*— He shall begin to expostulate with them, to awaken them to a due sense of their ingratitude and rebellion. This may refer to the preaching of the Gospel to them in the latter days.

Verse 39. *See now that I-am he*— Be convinced that God alone can save, and God alone can destroy, and that your idols can neither hurt nor help you.

I kill, and I make alive, etc.— My mercy is as great as my justice, for I am as ready to save the penitent as I was to punish the rebellious.

Verse 40. *For I lift up my hand to heaven*— See concerning oaths and appeals to God in the note on “Deuteronomy 6:13”.

Verse 42. *From the beginning of revenges*— The word פִּרְעוֹת paroth, rendered revenges, a sense in which it never appears to be taken, has rendered this place very perplexed and obscure. Mr. Parkhurst has rendered the whole passage thus:—

*I will make my arrows drunk with blood;
And my sword shall devour flesh,
With the blood of the slain and captive
From the hairy head of the enemy.*

Probably מֵרֹאשׁ פִּרְעוֹת merosh paroth may be more properly translated, from the naked head-the enemy shall have nothing to shield him from my vengeance; the crown of dignity shall fall off, and even the helmet be no protection against the sword and arrows of the Lord.

Verse 43. *Rejoice, O ye nations*— Ye Gentiles, for the casting off of the Jews shall be the means of your ingathering with his people, for they shall not be utterly cast off. (See Romans 15:9, for in this way the apostle applies it.) But how shall the Gentiles be called, and the Jews have their iniquity purged? He will be merciful unto his land and to his people, וְכִפֶּר

vechipper, he shall cause an atonement to be made for his land and people; i. e., Jesus Christ, the long promised Messiah, shall be crucified for Jews and Gentiles, and the way to the holiest be made plain by his blood.

The people have long been making atonements for themselves, but to none effect, for their atonements were but signs, and not the thing signified, for the body is Christ; now the Lord himself makes an atonement, for the Lamb of God alone taketh away the sin of the world. This is a very proper and encouraging conclusion to the awfully important matter of this poem.

Israel shall be long scattered, peeled, and punished, but they shall have mercy in the latter times; they also shall rejoice with the Gentiles, in the common salvation purchased by the blood of the Savior of all mankind.

Verse 44. *And Moses came*— Probably from the tabernacle, where God had given him this prophetic ode, and he rehearsed it in the ears of the people.

Verse 46. *Set your hearts unto all the words*— Another proof that all these awful denunciations of Divine wrath, though delivered in an absolute form, were only declaratory of what God would do IF they rebelled against him.

Verse 47. *Through this thing ye shall prolong your days*— Instead of being cut off, as God here threatens, ye shall be preserved and rendered prosperous in the land which, when they passed over Jordan, they should possess.

Verse 49. *Get thee up into this mountain Abarim*— The mount of the passages, i. e., of the Israelites when they entered into the promised land. See the notes on “Numbers 27:12”.

Verse 50. *And die in the mount-as Aaron*— Some have supposed that Moses was translated; but if so, then Aaron was translated, for what is said of the death of the one is said of the death of the other.

Verse 51. *Ye trespassed against me-at the waters of Meribah*— See the note on “Numbers 20:12”.

Verse 52. *Thou shalt see the land before thee*— See Numbers 27:12, etc. How glorious to depart out of this life with God in his heart and heaven in

his eye! his work, his great, unparalleled usefulness, ending only with his life. The serious reader will surely join in the following pious ejaculation of the late Rev. Charles Wesley, one of the best Christian poets of the last century:—

*“O that without a lingering groan
I may the welcome word receive;
My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live!”*

It would require a dissertation expressly formed for the purpose to point out the general merit and extraordinary beauties of this very sublime ode. To enter into such particulars can scarcely comport with the nature of the present work. Drs. Lowth, Kennicott, and Durell, have done much in this way; and to their respective works the critical reader is referred. A very considerable extract from what they have written on this chapter may be found in Dr. Dodd’s notes. In writing this ode the design of Moses was, 1. To set forth the Majesty of God; to give that generation and all successive ones a proper view of the glorious perfections of the object of their worship. He therefore shows that from his holiness and purity he must be displeased with sin; from his justice and righteousness he must punish it; and from the goodness and infinite benevolence of his nature he is ever disposed to help the weak, instruct the ignorant, and show mercy to the wretched, sinful sons and daughters of men. 2. To show the duty and interest of his people. To have such a Being for their friend is to have all possible happiness, both spiritual and temporal, secured; to have him for their enemy is to be exposed to inevitable destruction and ruin. 3. To warn them against irreligion and apostasy; to show the possibility of departing from God, and the miseries that would overwhelm them and their posterity should they be found walking in opposition to the laws of their Creator. 4. To give a proper and impressive view of the providence of God, by referring to the history of his gracious dealings with them and their ancestors; the minute attention he paid to all their wants, the wonderful manner in which he led, fed, clothed, protected, and saved them, in all their travels and in all perils. 5. To leave on record an everlasting testimony against them, should they ever cast off his fear and pollute his worship, which should serve at once as a warning to the world, and a

vindication of his justice, when the judgments he had threatened were found to be poured out upon them; for he who loved them so long and so intensely could not become their enemy but in consequence of the greatest and most unprincipled provocations. 6. To show the shocking and unprecedented ingratitude which induced a people so highly favored, and so wondrously protected and loved, to sin against their God; and how reasonable and just it was, for the vindication of his holiness, that God should pour out upon them such judgments as he had never inflicted on any other people, and so mark their disobedience and ingratitude with fresh marks of his displeasure, that the punishment should bear some proportion to the guilt, and that their preservation as a distinct people might afford a feeling proof both of the providence and justice of God. 7. To show the glory of the latter days in the re-election of the long reprobated Jewish nation, and the final diffusion of his grace and goodness over the earth by means of the Gospel of Christ.

And all this is done with such strength and elegance of diction, with such appropriate, energetic, and impressive figures and metaphors, and in such a powerful torrent of that soul-penetrating, pure poetic spirit that comes glowing from the bosom of God, that the reader is alternately elated or depressed, filled with compunction or confidence, with despair or hope, according to the quick transitions of the inimitable writer to the different topics which form the subject of this incomparable and wondrously varied ode. May that Spirit by which it was dictated give it its fullest, most durable, and most effectual impression upon the mind of every reader!

CHAPTER 33

Moses delivers a prophetic blessing to the children of Israel, 1. The introduction, 2-5. Prophetic declarations concerning Reuben, 6; concerning Judah, 7; concerning Levi, 8-11; concerning Benjamin, 12; concerning Joseph, 13-17; concerning Zebulun, 18, 19; concerning Gad, 20, 21; concerning Dan, 22; concerning Naphtali, 23; concerning Asher, 24, 25. The glory of the God of Jeshurun, and the glorious privileges of his true followers, 26-29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 1. *And this is the blessing wherewith Moses-blessed, etc.*— The general nature of this solemn introduction, says Dr. Kennicott, is to show the foundation which Moses had for blessing his brethren, viz., because God had frequently manifested his glory in their behalf; and the several parts of this introduction are disposed in the following order:—

1. The manifestation of the Divine glory on Sinai, as it was prior in time and more magnificent in splendor, is mentioned first.
2. That God manifested his glory at Seir is evident from Judges 5:4: Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the fields of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens dropped, etc.
3. The next place is Paran, where the glory of the Lord appeared before all the children of Israel, Numbers 14:10.

Instead of he came with ten thousand saints, by which our translators have rendered **קדש מרבבת** meribeboth kodesh, Dr. Kennicott reads Meribah-Kadesh, the name of a place: for we find that, towards the end of forty years, the Israelites came to Kadesh, Numbers 20:1, which was also called Meribah, on account of their contentious opposition to the determinations of God in their favor, Numbers 20:13; and there the glory of the Lord again appeared, as we are informed Numbers 20:6. These four places, Sinai, Seir, Paran, and Meribah-Kadesh, mentioned by Moses in

the text, are the identical places where God manifested his glory in a fiery appearance, the more illustriously to proclaim his special providence over and care of Israel.

Verse 3. *Yea, he loved the people*— This is the inference which Moses makes from those glorious appearances, that God truly loved the people; and that all his saints, קדשיו kedoshaiv, the people whom he had consecrated to himself, were under his especial benediction; and that in order to make them a holy nation, God had displayed his glory on Mount Sinai, where they had fallen prostrate at his feet with the humblest adoration, sincerely promising the most affectionate obedience; and that God had there commanded them a law which was to be the possession and inheritance of the children of Jacob, ver. 4. And to crown the whole, he had not only blessed them as their lawgiver, but had also vouchsafed to be their king, ver. 5.

Dr. Kennicott proposes to translate the whole five verses thus: —

Verse 1. And this is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said,

2. Jehovah came from SINAI, And he arose upon them from SEIR; He shone forth from Mount PARAN, And he came from MERIBAH-KADESH: From his right hand a fire shone forth upon them.

3. Truly, he loved the people, And he blessed all his saints For they fell down at his feet, And they received of his words.

4. He commanded us a law, The inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

5. And he became king in Jeshurun; When the heads of the people were assembled, Together with the tribes of Israel.

We have already seen that Dr. Kennicott reads מריבה קדש Meribah-Kadesh, the name of a place, instead of מרבבת קדש meribeboth kodesh, which, by a most unnatural and forced construction, our version renders ten thousands of saints, a translation which no circumstance of the history justifies.

Instead of a fiery law, **אש דת** esh dath, he reads, following the Samaritan version, **אש אור** esh ur, a fire shining out upon them. In vindication of this change in the original, it may be observed, 1. That, though **דת** dath signifies a law, yet it is a Chaldee term, and appears nowhere in any part of the sacred writings previously to the Babylonish captivity: **תורה** torah being the term constantly used to express the Law, at all times prior to the corruption of the Hebrew, by the Chaldee. 2. That the word itself is obscure in its present situation, as the Hebrew Bibles write it and esh in one word **אשדת** eshdath, which has no meaning; and which, in order to give it one, the Massorah directs should be read separate, though written connected. 3. That the word is not acknowledged by the two most ancient versions, the Septuagint and Syriac. 4. That in the parallel place, Habakkuk 3:3, 4, a word is used which expresses the rays of light, **קרניים** karnayim, horns, that is, splendours, rays, or effulgence of light. 5. That on all these accounts, together with the almost impossibility of giving a rational meaning to the text as it now stands, the translation contended for should be adopted.

Instead of All his saints are in his hand, Dr. Kennicott reads, He blessed all his saints-changing **בידך** beyadecha, into **ברך** barach, he blessed, which word, all who understand the Hebrew letters will see, might be easily mistaken for the other; the **ד** daleth and the **ר** resh being, not only in MSS., but also in printed books, often so much alike, that analogy alone can determine which is the true letter; and except in the insertion of the **י** yod, which might have been easily mistaken for the apex at the top of the **כ** both very frequent in MSS., both words have the nearest resemblance. To this may be added, that the Syriac authorizes this rendering.

Instead of **לרגלך** leraglecha, and **מדברתיך** middabberotheycha, THY feet, and THY words, Dr. Kennicott reads the pronouns in the third person singular, **לרגליו** leraglaiv and **מדברותיו** middabberothaiv, His feet, His words, in which he is supported both by the Septuagint and Vulgate. He also changes **ישא** yissa, HE shall receive, into **ישאו** yisseu, THEY shall receive.

He contends also that מֹשֶׁה Mosheh, Moses, in the fourth verse, was written by mistake for the following word מורשה morashah, inheritance; and when the scribe found he had inserted a wrong word, he added the proper one, and did not erase the first. The word Moses, he thinks, should therefore be left out of the text, as it is improbable that he should here introduce his own name; and that if the word be allowed to be legitimate, then the word king must apply to him, and not to GOD, which would be most absurd. See Kennicott's first Dissertation, p. 422, etc.

Verse 6. *Let Reuben live, and not die*— Though his life and his blessings have been forfeited by his transgression with his father's concubine, Genesis 49:3, 4; and in his rebellion with Korah, Numbers 16:1-3, etc., let him not become extinct as a tribe in Israel. "It is very usual," says Mr. Ainsworth, "in the Scripture, to set down things of importance and earnestness, by affirmation of the one part, and denial of the other; Isaiah 38:1: Thou shalt die, and not live; Numbers 4:19: That they may live, and not die; Psalm 118:17: I shall not die, but live; Genesis 43:8: That we may live, and not die; Jeremiah 20:14: Cursed be the day-let not that day be blessed; 1 John 2:4: He is a liar, and the truth is not in him; 1 John 2:27: Is truth, and no lie; John 1:20: He confessed, and denied not; 1 Samuel 1:11: Remember me, and not forget thy handmaid; Deuteronomy 9:7: Remember, forget not; Deuteronomy 32:6: O foolish people, and unwise. In all these places it is evident that there is a peculiar emphasis in this form of expression, as if he had said, Let him not only not die, but let him live in great and increasing peace and prosperity. Do not only not forget me, but keep me continually in remembrance. He denied not, but confessed FULLY and PARTICULARLY. O foolish people-silly and stupid, and unwise-destitute of all true wisdom."

And let not his men be few.— It is possible that this clause belongs to Simeon. In the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint the clause stands thus: **και συμεων εστω πολυς εν αριτω**, and let SIMEON be very numerous, but none of the other versions insert the word. As the negative particle is not in the Hebrew, but is supplied in our translation, and the word Simeon is found in one of the most ancient and most authentic copies of the Septuagint version; and as Simeon is nowhere else mentioned here, if not implied in this place, probably the clause anciently stood: Let Reuben live, and not die; but let the men of Simeon be few. That this tribe was small

when compared with the rest, and with what it once was, is evident enough from the first census, taken after they came out of Egypt, and that in the plains of Moab nearly forty years after. In the first, Simeon was 59, 300; in the last, 22, 200, a decrease of 37, 100 men!

Verse 7. *And this is the blessing of Judah*— Though the word blessing is not in the text, yet it may be implied from ver. 1; but probably the words, he spake, are those which should be supplied: And this he spake of Judah, Lord, hear the voice of Judah; that is, says the Targum, receive his prayer when he goes out to battle, and let him be brought back in safety to his own people. Let his hands be sufficient for him—let him have a sufficiency of warriors always to support the tribe, and vindicate its rights; and let his enemies never be able to prevail against him! Three things are expressed here: 1. That the tribe of Judah, conscious of its weakness, shall depend on the Most High, and make prayer and supplication to him; 2. That God will hear such prayer; and, 3. That his hands shall be increased, and that he shall prevail over his enemies. This blessing has a striking affinity with that which this tribe received from Jacob, Genesis 49:9; and both may refer to our blessed Lord, who sprang from this tribe, as is noticed on the above passage, who has conquered our deadly foes by his death, and whose praying posterity ever prevail through his might.

Verse 8. *Of Levi he said*— Concerning the Urim and Thummim, See “Exodus 28:30”.

Thy holy one— Aaron primarily, who was anointed the high priest of God, and whose office was the most holy that man could be invested with. Therefore Aaron was called God’s holy one, and the more especially so as he was the type of the MOST HOLY and blessed Jesus, from whom the Urim—all light and wisdom, and Thummim- all excellence, completion, and perfection, are derived.

Whom thou didst prove, etc.— God contended with Aaron as well as with Moses at the waters of Meribah, and excluded him from the promised land because he did not sanctify the Lord before the people.

From the words of St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 10:8-12, it is evident that these words, at least in a secondary sense, belong to Christ. He is the Holy One who was tempted by them at Massah, who suffered their manners in the

wilderness, who slew 23, 000 of the most incorrigible transgressors, and who brought them into the promised land by his deputy, Joshua, whose name and that of Jesus have the same signification.

Verse 9. *Who said unto his father, etc.*— There are several difficulties in this and the following verses. Some think they are spoken of the tribe of Levi; others, of all the tribes; others, of the Messiah, etc.; but several of the interpretations founded on these suppositions are too recondite, and should not be resorted to till a plain literal sense is made out. I suppose the whole to be primarily spoken of Aaron and the tribe of Levi. Let us examine the words in this way, *Who said unto his father, etc.* The law had strictly enjoined that if the father, mother, brother, or child of the high priest should die, he must not mourn for them, but act as if they were not his kindred; see Leviticus 21:11, 12. Neither must Aaron mourn for his sons Nadab and Abihu, etc., though not only their death, but the circumstances of it, were the most afflicting that could possibly affect a parent's heart. Besides, the high priest was forbidden, on pain of death, to go out from the door of the tabernacle, Leviticus 10:2-7, for God would have them more to regard their function (as good Mr. Ainsworth observes) and duty in his service, than any natural affection whatever. And herein Christ was figured, who, when he was told that his mother and brethren stood without, and wished to speak with him, said: "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? whosoever shall do the will of my father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother;" Matthew 12:46-50. It is likely also that Moses may refer here to the fact of the Levites, according to the command of Moses, killing every man his brother, friend, neighbor, and even son, who had sinned in worshipping the golden calf, Exodus 32:26; and in this way the Chaldee paraphrast understands the words.

Verse 10. *They shall teach Jacob, etc.*— This was the office of the Levites, to teach, by their significant service and typical ceremonies, the way of righteousness and truth to the children of Israel. And of their faithfulness in this respect God bears testimony by the prophet, "My covenant was with him of life and peace," Malachi 2:5; and, "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity;"

Malachi 2:6. These words are a sufficient comment on the words of the text.

Verse 11. *Bless, Lord, his substance*— The blessing of God to the tribe of Levi was peculiarly necessary, because they had no inheritance among the children of Israel, and lived more immediately than others upon the providence of GOD. Yet, as they lived by the offerings of the people and the tithes, the increase of their substance necessarily implied the increase of the people at large: the more fruitful the land was, the more abundant would the tithes of the Levites be; and thus in the increased fertility of the land the substance of Levi would be blessed.

Verse 12. *Of Benjamin—the beloved of the Lord*— Alluding to his being particularly beloved of his father Jacob, Genesis 49:27, etc.

Shall dwell in safety by him— That is, by the Lord, whose temple, which is considered as his dwelling-place, was in the tribe of Benjamin, for a part of Jerusalem belonged to this tribe.

Shall cover him all the day— Be his continual protector; and he shall dwell between his shoulders—within his coasts, or in his chief city, viz., Jerusalem, where the temple of God was built, on his mountains Zion and Moriah, here poetically termed his shoulders.

Some object to our translation of the Hebrew יד יד yedid by the term beloved, and think the original should be divided as it is in the Samaritan, יד יד yad yad, the hand, even the hand of the Lord shall dwell for safety or protection, עליי alaiv, upon him. This makes a good sense, and the reader may choose.

Verse 13. *Blessed-be his land*— The whole of this passage certainly relates to the peculiar fertility of the soil in the portion that fell to this tribe which, the Jews say, yielded a greater abundance of all good things than any other part of the promised land.

The precious things of heaven— The peculiar mildness and salubrity of its atmosphere.

For the dew— A plentiful supply of which was a great blessing in the dry soil of a hot climate.

The deep that coucheth beneath— Probably referring to the plentiful supply of water which should be found in digging wells: hence the Septuagint have **αβυσσων πηγων**, fountains of the deeps. Some suppose there has been a slight change made in the word **מטל** mittal, for the dew, which was probably at first **מעל** meal, FROM ABOVE, and then the passage would read thus: For the precious things of heaven FROM ABOVE, and for the deep that coucheth BENEATH. This reading is confirmed by several of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS. The Syriac and Chaldee have both readings: The dew of heaven from above.

Verse 14. *The precious fruits brought forth by the sun*— All excellent and important productions of the earth, which come to perfection once in the year. So the precious things put forth by the moon may imply those vegetables which require but about a month to bring them to perfection, or vegetables of which several crops may be had in the course of a year.

Verse 15. *The chief things of the ancient mountains*— **ומראש הררי קדם** umerosh harerey kedem, and from the head or top of the ancient or eastern mountains, the precious things or productions being still understood. And this probably refers to the large trees, etc., growing on the mountain tops, and the springs of water issuing from them. The mountains of Gilead may be here intended, as they fell to the half tribe of Manasseh. And the precious things of the lasting hills may signify the metals and minerals which might be digged out of them.

Verse 16. *The good will of him that dwelt in the bush*— The favor of him who appeared in the burning bush on Mount Sinai, who there, in his good will—mere love and compassion, took Israel to be his people; and who has preserved and will preserve, in tribulation and distress, all those who trust in him, so that they shall as surely escape unhurt, as the bush, though enveloped with fire, was unburnt.

The top of the head, etc.— The same words are used by Jacob in blessing this tribe, Genesis 49:26. The meaning appears to be that God should distinguish this tribe in a particular way, as Joseph himself was separated, **נזיר** nazir, a Nazarite, a consecrated prince to God, from among and in preference to all his brethren. See the notes on “Genesis 49:25”, etc.

Verse 17. *His glory is like the firstling of his bullock*— This similitude is very obscure. A bullock was the most excellent of animals among the Jews, not only because of its acceptableness in sacrifice to God, but because of its great usefulness in agriculture. There is something peculiarly noble and dignified in the appearance of the ox, and his greatest ornament are his fine horns; these the inspired penman has particularly in view, as the following clause proves; and it is well known that in Scriptural language horns are the emblem of strength, glory, and sovereignty; Psalm 75:5, 10; 89:17, 24; 112:9; Daniel 8:3, etc.; Luke 1:69; Revelation 17:3, etc.

His horns are like the horns of unicorns— קַרְנַיִם reem, which we translate unicorn, from the μονοκερως monokeros of the Septuagint, signifies, according to Bochart, the mountain goat; and according to others, the rhinoceros, a very large quadruped with one great horn on his nose, from which circumstance his name is derived. See the notes on Numbers 23:22; 24:8. Reem is in the singular number, and because the horns of a unicorn, a one-horned animal, would have appeared absurd, our translators, with an unfaithfulness not common to them, put the word in the plural number.

To the ends of the earth— Of the land of Canaan, for Joshua with his armies conquered all this land, and drove the ancient inhabitants out before him.

They are the ten thousands of Ephraim, etc.— That is, The horns signify the ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh. Jacob prophesied, Genesis 48:19, that the younger should be greater than the elder; so here TENS of thousands are given to Ephraim, and only thousands to Manasseh. See the census, Numbers 1:33-35.

Verse 18. *Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out*— That is, Thou shalt be very prosperous in thy coasting voyages; for this tribe's situation was favorable for traffic, having many sea-ports. See "Genesis 49:13".

And, Issachar, in thy tents.— That is, as Zebulun should be prosperous in his shipping and traffic, so should Issachar be in his tents-his agriculture and pasturage.

Verse 19. *They shall call the people unto the mountain*— By their traffic with the Gentiles (for so I think עַמִּים ammim should be

understood here) they shall be the instruments in God's hands of converting many to the true faith; so that instead of sacrificing to idols, they should offer sacrifices of righteousness.

They shall suck of the abundance of the seas— That is, grow wealthy by merchandise.

And of treasures hid in the sand.— Jonathan ben Uzziel has probably hit upon the true meaning of this difficult passage: "From the sand," says he, "are produced looking-glasses and glass in general; the treasures-the method of finding and working this, was revealed to these tribes." Several ancient writers inform us that there were havens in the coasts of the Zebulunites in which the vitreous sand, or sand proper for making glass, was found. See Strabo, lib. xvi.; see also Pliny, Hist. Nat. l. xxxvi., c. 26; Tacitus, Hist. l. v., c. 7. The words of Tacitus are remarkable: Et Belus amnis Judaico mari illabitur; circa ejus os lectae arenae admixto nitro in vitrum excoquuntur. "The river Belus falls into the Jewish sea, about whose mouth those sands, mixed with nitre, are collected, out of which glass is formed," or which is melted into glass. Some think that the celebrated shell-fish called murex, out of which the precious purple dye was extracted, is here intended by the treasure hid in the sand: this also Jonathan introduces in this verse. And others think that it is a general term for the advantages derived from navigation and commerce.

Verse 20. *Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad*— As deliverance out of distress is termed enlarging, (see Psalm 4:1,) this may refer to God's deliverance of the tribe of Gad out of that distress mentioned Genesis 49:19, and to the enlargement obtained through means of Jephthah, Judges 11:33, and probably also to the victories obtained by Gad and Reuben over the Hagarites, 1 Chronicles 5:18-20.

He dwelleth as a lion— Probably the epithet of lion or lion-like was applied to this tribe from their fierce and warlike disposition. And on this supposition, 1 Chronicles 12:8, will appear to be a sufficient comment: And of the Gadites there were-men of might, men of war for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were LIKE THE FACES OF LIONS, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains. Tearing the arm or shoulder with the crown of the head seems simply to mean that no force

should be able to prevail over them, or stand against them; as the arm or shoulder signifies dominion, and the crown of the head, sovereign princes.

Verse 21. *He provided the first part*— That is, he chose for himself a very excellent portion, viz., the land of Sihon and Og, in which this tribe had requested to be settled by the lawgiver, viz., Moses, from whom they requested this portion, Numbers 32:1-5.

He came with the heads of the people— Notwithstanding this portion fell unto them on the east side of Jordan, yet they proceeded with the heads of the people, the chiefs of the other tribes.

To execute the justice of the Lord— To extirpate the old inhabitants of the country, according to the decree and purpose of the Lord. See on Numbers 32.

Verse 22. *Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.*— The Jewish interpreters observe that Bashan was a place much frequented by lions, who issued thence into all parts to look for prey. By this probably Moses intended to point out the strength and prowess of this tribe, that it should extend its territories, and live a sort of predatory life. It appears from Joshua 19:47, that the portion originally assigned to this tribe was not sufficient for them; hence we find them going out to war against Leshem and taking it, adding it to their territories, and calling it by the name of the tribe. Jacob, in his prophetic blessing of this tribe, represents it under the notion of a serpent in the path, Genesis 49:17. The character there, and that given here, constitute the complete warrior-stratagem and courage. See the note on "Genesis 49:17".

Verse 23. *O Naphtali, satisfied with favor*— Though this may refer to the very great fertility of the country that fell to this tribe, yet certainly something more is intended. Scarcely any of the tribes was more particularly favored by the wondrous mercy and kindness of God, than this and the tribe of Zebulun. The light of the glorious Gospel of Christ shone brightly here, Matthew 4:13, 15, 16. Christ's chief residence was at Capernaum in this tribe, Matthew 9:1; Mark 2:1; and this city, through Christ's constant residence, and the mighty miracles he wrought in it, is represented as being exalted unto heaven, Matthew 11:23. And it is generally allowed that the apostles were principally of the tribe of

Naphtali, who were to possess the west and the south-to dispense the Gospel through all the other tribes. The word יָם yam, which we here translate west, literally signifies the sea, and probably refers to the sea of Gennesareth, which was in this tribe.

Verse 24. *Let Asher be blessed with children*— Let him have a numerous posterity, continually increasing.

Let him be acceptable to his brethren— May he be in perfect union and harmony with the other tribes.

Let him dip his foot in oil.— Let him have a fertile soil, and an abundance of all the conveniences and comforts of life.

Verse 25. *Thy shoes shall be iron and brass*— Some suppose this may refer to the iron and copper mines in their territory; but it is more likely that it relates to their warlike disposition, as we know that greaves, boots, shoes, etc., of iron, brass, and tin, were used by ancient warriors. Goliath had greaves of brass on his legs, 1 Samuel 17:6; and the brazen-booted Greeks, χαλκοκνημιδες αχαιοι, is one of the epithets given by Homer to his heroes; see Iliad. lib. viii., ver. 41.

And as thy days, so shall thy strength be.— If we take this clause as it appears here, we have at once an easy sense; and the saying, I have no doubt, has comforted the souls of multitudes. The meaning is obvious: “Whatever thy trials or difficulties may be, I shall always give thee grace to support thee under and bring thee through them.” The original is only two words, the latter of which has been translated in a great variety of ways, וְכִימִיךָ דְבָאךָ ucheyameycha dobecha. Of the first term there can be no doubt, it literally means, and as thy days; the second word, דְבָא dobe, occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible: the Septuagint have rendered it by ἰσχυς, strength, and most of the versions have followed them; but others have rendered it affliction, old age, fame, weakness, etc., etc. It would be almost endless to follow interpreters through their conjectures concerning its meaning. It is allowed among learned men, that where a word occurs not as a verb in the Hebrew Bible, its root may be legitimately sought in the Arabic. He who controverts this position knows little of the ground on which he stands. In this language the root is found; [A] daba signifies he rested, was quiet. This gives a very good sense, and a

very appropriate one; for as the borders of this tribe lay on the vicinity of the Phoenicians, it was naturally to be expected that they should be constantly exposed to irruptions, pillage, etc.; but God, to give them confidence in his protection, says, According to thy days—all circumstances and vicissitudes, so shall thy REST be—while faithful to thy God no evil shall touch thee; thy days shall increase, and thy quiet be lengthened out. This is an unfailing promise of God: “I will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon me, because he trusteth in me;” therefore “trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;” Isaiah 26:4. Some derive it from [A] *dabi*, he abounded in riches; the interpretation then would be, As thy days increase, so shall thy riches. This makes a very good sense also. See Rosenmuller.

Moses, having now finished what God gave him to predict concerning the twelve tribes, and what he was led in the fullness of his heart to pray for in their behalf, addresses all the tribes collectively under the names Jeshurun and Israel; and in an ode of astonishing energy and elegance describes this wondrous people, and their still more wonderful privileges. The reader will observe that, though the latter part of this chapter appears in the form of prose in our Bibles, yet it is written in hemistichs or short metrical lines in the original, which is the form in which all the Hebrew poetry is written; and as in other cases, so in this, it would contribute much to the easy understanding of the author’s meaning, were the translation produced in lines corresponding to those of the original.

Verse 26. *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun*— We have already seen the literal meaning of Jeshurun, chap. 32:15; but besides its literal meaning, it seems to be used as an expression of particular affection: hence Calmet understands it as a diminutive of the word Israel. We know that **τεκνοί**, sons, in the mouth of St. John, signifies much less than **τεκνία**, which, properly translated, would be beloved children, a term which at once shows the helplessness of the offspring, and the tender affection of the parent. So Jeshurun may be understood here: and hence the Septuagint seem to have apprehended the full force of the word by translating it **του αγαπημενου**, the beloved one, the object of God’s especial delight.

Israel's God, and God's Israel, have no fellows. What were all the gods of the nations, even supposing they were real beings, in comparison of the Almighty? And what nation under heaven could be compared to the Israel of God? It was, however, from God's excellence that they derived theirs.

Rideth upon the heaven, etc.— Unites heaven and earth in thy defense and support, and comes with irresistible velocity to succor and defend thee, and to discomfit thine adversaries.

Verse 27. *The eternal God*— אֱלֹהֵי קֶדֶם *elohey kedem*, the former God; HE who was of old. Not like the gods which were lately come up. HE who ever was and ever will be; and HE who was, is, and will be unchangeably holy, wise, just, and merciful. See the note on "Genesis 21:33".

Everlasting arms— As the arm is the emblem of power, and of power in a state of exertion, the words here state that an unlimited and unconquerable power shall be eternally exerted in the defense of God's Church, and in the behalf of all those who trust in Him.

Thrust out the enemy— He will expel all the ancient inhabitants, and put thee in possession of their land.

Verse 28. *Israel then shall dwell-alone*— This people shall not be incorporated with any other people under heaven. A prophecy which continues to be fulfilled to the very letter. Every attempt to unite them with any other people has proved absolutely ineffectual.

The fountain of Jacob— His offspring, shall possess a most fertile land; such was Palestine.

Verse 29. *Happy art thou, etc.*— אֲשֶׁרִי *ashrey*. O the happiness of Israel! it is ineffable, inconceivable, because they are a people saved by the Lord—have such a salvation as it becomes the infinite perfections of God to bestow; he is their help—their never-failing strength, and the shield of that help—he defends their defense, saves them and preserves them in the state of salvation.

Sword of thy excellency— Or whose sword—his all-conquering WORD, is thine excellency, in its promises, threatenings, precepts, etc., etc. St. Paul,

in his exhortation to the Christians at Ephesus, uses the same metaphor, Take unto you the SWORD of the SPIRIT, which is the WORD of GOD.

Thine enemies shall be found liars— Who said thou shouldst never be able to gain the possession of this good land; for thou shalt tread on-subdue, their high places-even their best fortified cities.

THE blessings contained in this chapter belong also to the spiritual Israel of God, who, according to the Divine promise, shall have a complete victory over all their spiritual foes, shall have all their inward enemies, the whole of the carnal mind, destroyed, (for the blood of Jesus Christ, applied by the energy of the eternal Spirit, shall not only blot out all their sin, but purify their hearts from all unrighteousness;) and thus, being delivered from their enemies, they shall love God with all their heart, and serve him in righteousness and true holiness, without fear before him all the days of their life. There are many circumstances and expressions in this ode similar to several in the prophetic blessing pronounced by Jacob on his twelve sons, Gen. xlix., for the subject is the same in both chapters, the reader is therefore requested to compare the two places, and to consider the notes on each, as they have some tendency to cast light on each other. Both these chapters constitute a part of those Scriptures which, according to St. Paul, Romans 15:4, were written for our learning; and, as to instruct the reader and make him wise unto salvation was the gracious design of God, we should particularly beg of him “that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, by patience and comfort of his holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life which he has given us in our Savior Jesus Christ”—Collect for the second Sunday in Advent.

CHAPTER 34

Moses goes up Mount Nebo to the top of Pisgah, and God shews him the whole extent of the land which he promised to give to the descendants of Abraham, 1-4. There Moses died, and was so privately buried by the Lord that his sepulcher was never discovered, 5, 6. His age and strength of constitution, 7. The people weep for him thirty days, 8. Joshua being filled with the spirit of wisdom, the Israelites hearken to him, as the Lord commanded them, 9. The character of Moses as a prophet, and as a worker of the most extraordinary miracles, both in the sight of the Egyptians, and the people of Israel: conclusion of the Pentateuch, 10-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 1. *And Moses went up*— This chapter could not have been written by Moses. A man certainly cannot give an account of his own death and burial. We may therefore consider Moses's words as ending with the conclusion of the preceding chapter, as what follows could not possibly have been written by himself. To suppose that he anticipated these circumstances, or that they were shown to him by an especial revelation, is departing far from propriety and necessity, and involving the subject in absurdity; for God gives no prophetic intimations but such as are absolutely necessary to be made; but there is no necessity here, for the Spirit which inspired the writer of the following book, would naturally communicate the matter that concludes this. I believe, therefore, that Deuteronomy 34., should constitute the first chapter of the book of Joshua.

On this subject the following note from an intelligent Jew cannot be unacceptable to the reader:—

“Most commentators are of opinion that Ezra was the author of the last chapter of Deuteronomy; some think it was Joshua, and others the seventy elders, immediately after the death of Moses; adding, that the book of Deuteronomy originally ended with the prophetic blessing upon the twelve tribes: ‘Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O

people saved by the Lord,' etc.; and that what now makes the last chapter of Deuteronomy was formerly the first of Joshua, but was removed from thence and joined to the former by way of supplement. This opinion will not appear unnatural if it be considered that sections and other divisions, as well as points and pauses, were invented long since these books were written; for in those early ages several books were connected together, and followed each other on the same roll. The beginning of one book might therefore be easily transferred to the end of another, and in process of time be considered as its real conclusion, as in the case of Deuteronomy, especially as this supplemental chapter contains an account of the last transactions and death of the great author of the Pentateuch."—Alexander's Heb. and Eng. Pentateuch.

This seems to be a perfectly correct view of the subject. This chapter forms a very proper commencement to the book of Joshua, for of this last chapter of Deuteronomy the first chapter of Joshua is an evident continuation. If the subject be viewed in this light it will remove every appearance of absurdity and contradiction with which, on the common mode of interpretation, it stands sadly encumbered.

Verse 5. *So Moses-died-according to the word of the Lord.*— **פִּי יְהוָה** **עַל** al pi Jehovah, at the mouth of Jehovah; i. e., by the especial command and authority of the Lord; but it is possible that what is here said refers only to the sentence of his exclusion from the promised land, when he offended at the waters of Meribah.

Verse 6. *He buried him*— It is probable that the reason why Moses was buried thus privately was, lest the Israelites, prone to idolatry, should pay him Divine honors; and God would not have the body of his faithful servant abused in this way. Almost all the gods of antiquity were defiled men, great lawgivers, eminent statesmen, or victorious generals. See the account of the life of Moses at the end of this chapter.

Verse 7. *His eye was not dim*— Even at the advanced age of a hundred and twenty; nor his natural force abated—he was a young man even in old age, notwithstanding the unparalleled hardships he had gone through. See the account of his life at the end of this chapter.

Verse 9. *Laid his hands upon him*— See on Numbers 27:18-23.

Verse 10. *There arose not a prophet, etc.*— Among all the succeeding prophets none was found so eminent in all respects nor so highly privileged as Moses; with him God spoke face to face- admitted him to the closest familiarity and greatest friendship with himself. Now all this continued true till the advent of Jesus Christ, of whom Moses said, “A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me;” but how great was this person when compared with Moses! Moses desired to see God’s glory; this sight he could not bear; he saw his back parts, probably meaning God’s design relative to the latter days: but Jesus, the Almighty Savior, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, who lay in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared God to man. Wondrous system of legal ordinances that pointed out and typified all these things! And more wonderful system of Gospel salvation, which is the body, soul, life, energy, and full accomplishment of all that was written in the LAW, in the PROPHETS, and in the PSALMS, concerning the sufferings and death of Jesus, and the redemption of a ruined world “by his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his death and burial, by his glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost!” Thus ends the PENTATEUCH, commonly called the LAW of MOSES, a work every way worthy of God its author, and only less than the NEW COVENANT, the law and Gospel of our Lord and Savior JESUS CHRIST.

Now to the ever blessed and glorious TRINITY, FATHER, WORD, and SPIRIT, the infinite and eternal ONE, from whom alone wisdom, truth, and goodness can proceed, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

MASORETIC Notes On DEUTERONOMY

The number of verses in ELLAH HADDEBARIM, Deuteronomy, is 955; the symbol of which is **תתנ** in which word **ת** tsade stands for 900, **נ** nun for 50, and **ה** cheth for 5.

The middle verse is the 10th of chap. xvii. And thou shalt observe to do all that they command thee.

Its Pareshioth or larger sections are 11, the numerical symbol of which is **חג** chag; Psalm 118:27: Bind the SACRIFICE with cords to the horns of the altar. In which word **ח** cheth stands for 8, and **ג** gimel for 3.

Its Sedarim or smaller sections are 27, the symbolical sign of which is **גיד** yaggid; Proverbs 12:17: He that speaketh truth, SHOWETH FORTH righteousness. In which word the two **י י** yods stand for 20, **ד** daleth for 4, and **ג** gimel for 3.

Its Perakim or modern chapters are 34, the symbol of which is **לבב** lebab; Psalm 111:1. I will praise the Lord with my whole HEART. In which word the two **ב ב** beths stand for 4, and the **ל** lamed for 30.

The number of open sections is 34, of its close sections 124, total 158; the symbol of which is **ינחילם** yanchilem, 148, and **כבוד** cab-od, 10, 1 Samuel 2:8: To make them to INHERIT the throne of his GLORY. The numerical letters of the word **ינחילם** yanchilem, 148, with **וד** od, 10, taken from **כבוד** cabod, make 158, the total of its open and close sections.

The number of verses in the whole Pentateuch is 5845, the memorial symbol of which is **החמה** hachammah, Isaiah 30:26: Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of THE SUN. In which word, the letters taken in their proper order make the 5845 sum, **המכה**.

The middle verse of the Law is Leviticus 8:8: And he put the breastplate upon him, and he put in the breastplate the URIM and the THUMMIM.

The number of OPEN sections in the whole Law is 290, the symbol of which is **פרי** peri; (Cant.) So 4:16: Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his precious FRUITS. The number of its CLOSE sections is 379, the symbol of which occurs in the word **בשבעה** bishbuah; Numbers 30:10: Or bound her soul with a bond BY AN OATH.

Total number of all the open and close sections, 669, the memorial symbol of which is **לא תחסר** lo techsar; Deuteronomy 8:9: THOU SHALT NOT LACK any thing in it.

SECTIONS of the Book of Deuteronomy, carried on from Numbers, which ends with the FORTY-THIRD.

The FORTY-FOURTH, called **דברים** debarim, begins Deuteronomy 1:1, and ends chap. 3:22.

The FORTY-FIFTH, called **ואתחנן** vaethchannen, begins chap. 3:23, and ends chap. 7:11.

The FORTY-SIXTH, called **עקב** ekeb, begins chap. 7:12, and ends chap. 11:25.

The FORTY-SEVENTH, called **ראה** reeh, begins chap. 11:26, and ends chap. 16:17.

The FORTY-EIGHTH, called **שפטים** shophetim, begins chap. 16:18, and ends chap. 21:9.

The FORTY-NINTH, called **תצא** tetse, begins chap. 21:10, and ends chap. 25:19.

The FIFTIETH, called **תבוא** tabo, begins chap. 26:1, and ends chap. 29:8.

The FIFTY-FIRST, called **נצבים** nitstsabim, begins chap. 29:9, and ends chap. 30:20.

The FIFTY-SECOND, called **וילך** vaiyelech, begins chap. 31:1, and ends chap. 31:30.

The FIFTY-THIRD, called **האזינו** haazinu, begins chap. 32:1, and ends chap. 32:51.

The FIFTY-FOURTH, called **וזאת הברכה** vezoth habberachah, begins chap. 33:1, and ends chap. 34:12.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES

WE have now passed through the Pentateuch, and have endeavored carefully to mark its important contents. Its antiquity sets it at the head of all the writings in the world; and the various subjects it embraces make it of the utmost consequence to every civilized part of the earth. Its philosophy, jurisprudence, history, geography, and chronology, entitle it to the respect of the whole human race; while its system of theology and religion demonstrably prove it to be a revelation from GOD. But on these topics, as many observations have already been made as the nature of a commentary professing to study brevity can possibly admit.

Of MOSES, the writer of the Pentateuch, considered as a historian and philosopher, a great deal has been said in the course of the notes on the book of GENESIS; and especially at the conclusion of the fiftieth chapter; to which the reader is particularly referred. {See “Genesis 50:26”}

Of Moses as a legislator, volumes might be written, and the subject not be exhausted. What is called the Law of Moses, is more properly the Law of God; and תּוֹרַת יְהוָה Torath Yehovah, the Law of Jehovah, is the grand title of the Pentateuch. Such a definition of this term as comports with the nature, structure, and design of the Pentateuch, has already been given in the note, See “Exodus 12:40”, to which the reader is requested to refer. Could we conceive Moses to have been the author of this system, we must consider him more than mortal: no wisdom of man has ever yet been able to invent such a code of laws.

This merit however has been disputed, and his laws severely criticised by certain persons whose interest it was to prove religion to be a cheat, because they had none themselves; and whose case must be hopeless could it be proved to be true. To some whose mental taste and feeling are

strangely perverted, every thing in heathenism wears not only the most fascinating aspect, but appears to lay claim to and possess every excellence. These have called up Confucius, Menu, Zoroaster, and Mohammed himself, to dispute the palm of excellence with Moses! To examine the claims of such competitors, and to decide on their respective merits would require a large treatise, and my limits confine me to a sketch. To any godly, impartial mind, properly acquainted with the subject, little needs to be said; to those who are prejudiced, all reasoning is thrown away. A few words on the merit of each of these competitors must suffice.

1. To Con fu tsee, the great Chinese lawgiver, corruptly called Confucius, are attributed, in the records of his country, a number of ordinances and institutions which do honor to his times and to his people; but alas! how much of the darkness, erroneousness, and infirmity of the human mind do they exhibit! And however profitable they may be, as prudential maxims and social regulations to a certain extent, how little are they calculated to elevate or ennoble the human mind, or inspire men with a just notion of vice and virtue! Their author had no correct notion of the Divine nature; his laws had no sanction but that of convenience or necessity, and, notwithstanding their boasted excellence, have left, from the time of their promulgation to the present day, the sum total of that immense nation which profess to be governed by them, in the thickest darkness of the most degrading idolatry, closely verging upon atheism itself! Not so the Mosaic code; it was the light that lightened the universe, and the glory of the people who were governed by its dictates. We have the firmest ground and the most ample authority to assert, that the greatest kings, the wisest statesmen, the most accomplished poets and rhetoricians, the most magnanimous heroes, and the most holy and useful people that ever existed, were formed on the model, and brought up in the bosom and under the influence, of the Mosaic institutions. While the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes of SOLOMON, the history and poetic compositions of DAVID, the inimitable discourses of ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, JOEL, HABAKKUK, and others of the Jewish prophets remain, every intelligent reader will have the fullest proofs of the truth of the above assertion, which shrinks not under the pretense of being hazarded; but which must spring up in every ingenuous mind, from the fullest conviction of its own truth, after a serious perusal of the sacred code in question. All those eminent personages were

brought up in the Mosaic school and were prepared by the Pentateuch for the prophetic influence.

2. The Institutes of MENU, lately clothed in an English dress by the elegant hand of Sir William Jones, have been thought to stand in fair competition with the laws of Moses. I have read them carefully, with strong prejudice in their favor; and have endeavored, to the best of my judgment, duly to appreciate their worth. I have sought for resemblances to the Mosaic institutions, because I thought it possible that the same God who was so fully known in Jewry, might have made at least a partial revelation of himself in Hindostan; but while I alternately admired and regretted, I was ultimately disappointed, as I plainly saw that the system in its essential parts lacked the seal of the living God. My readers may justly question my competency to form a correct opinion of the work under consideration-I shall not therefore obtrude it, but substitute that of the translator, who was better qualified than perhaps any other man in Europe or Asia, to form a correct judgment of its merits. "The work," says he, "now presented to the European world, contains abundance of curious matter, extremely interesting both to speculative lawyers and antiquaries; with many beauties which need not be pointed out, and with many blemishes which cannot be justified or palliated. It is a system of despotism and priestcraft, both indeed limited by law, but artfully conspiring to give mutual support though with mutual checks. It is filled with strange conceits in metaphysics and natural philosophy; with idle superstitions, and with a scheme of theology most obscurely figurative, and consequently liable to dangerous misconception. It abounds with minute and childish formalities, with ceremonies generally absurd and often ridiculous; the punishments are partial and fanciful; for some crimes dreadfully cruel, and for others reprehensibly slight; and the very morals, though rigid enough on the whole, are in one or two instances, as in the case of light oaths and pious perjury, unaccountably relaxed."-PREFACE to the Institutes of Menu.

We may defy its enemies to prove any of these things against the Pentateuch. Priestcraft and despotism cannot appear under its sanction: GOD is KING alone, and the priest his servant; and he who was prevented, by the very law under which he ministered, from having any earthly property, could consequently have no secular power. The king, who was

afterwards chosen, was ever considered as God's deputy or vice-gerent; he was obliged to rule according to the laws that were given by God through Moses, and was never permitted either to change them, or add a single precept or rite to the civil or sacred code of his country. Thus despotism and priestcraft were equally precluded. As to its rites and ceremonies, they are at once dignified and expressive; they point out the holiness of their author, the sinfulness of man, the necessity of an atonement, and the state of moral excellence to which the grace and mercy of the Creator have promised to raise the human soul. As to its punishments, they are ever such as the nature and circumstances of the crime render just and necessary -and its rewards are not such as flow merely from a principle of retribution or remunerative justice, but from an enlightened and fatherly tenderness, which makes obedience to the laws the highest interest of the subject.

At the same time that love to God and obedience to his commandments are strongly inculcated, love and benevolence to man are equally enforced, together with piety, which is the soul of obedience, patriotism, the life of society; hospitality to strangers, and humanity to the whole brute creation. To all this might be added that it includes in it, as well as points out, the Gospel of the Son of God, from which it receives its consummation and perfection. Such, reader, is the law of God given through Moses to the people of Israel.

3. Of the laws of Zerdust or Zeratusht, commonly called Zoroaster, It is unnecessary to speak at large; they are incapable of comparison with the Mosaic code. As delivered in the Zend Avesta, they cannot so properly be called a system as a congeries of puerility, superstition, and absurdity; with scarcely a precept or a rite that has any tendency to elevate the mind, or raise man from his state of moral degradation to a proper rank in civilized society, or to any worthy apprehension of the Maker and Governor of the universe. Harmlessness is the sum of the morality they seem to inculcate, with a certain superstitious reverence for fire, probably as the emblem of purity; and for animal life, principally in reference to the doctrine of the Metempsychosis or transmigration of souls, on which it seems to have been originally built.

4. The KORAN of MOHAMMED is the only remaining competitor that can be supposed to be at all qualified to dispute the palm with the Pentateuch

of Moses; but the pretensions of this production will be soon settled, when it is known that it possesses not one excellence, the purity and elegance of its language excepted, which it has not borrowed from the writings of Moses and the prophets, or the sayings of Christ and his apostles. This is a fact which none can successfully dispute, and of which the Koran itself bears the most unequivocal evidences. What can be fairly claimed as the peculium of the Arab lawgiver makes a motley mixture with what he has stolen from the book of God, and is in general as absurd and weak as it is on the whole false and wicked. As to the boasted morality of the Koran, it will have as little to exult in of this kind when the law and the Gospel have taken from it that of which they have been plundered, as the daw in the fable had when the different fowls had plucked away their own feathers, with which the vain bird had decorated herself. Mohammed, it is true, destroyed idolatry wherever he came; and he did the same by true religion; for Judaism and Christianity met with no more quarter from him than the grossest errors of pagan idolatry. To compare him with the pure, holy, disinterested, humane, and heavenly-minded Jewish legislator, would be as gross political as it would be palpable religious blasphemy. When we allow that he was a man of a deep and penetrating mind, well acquainted with the superstitious turn of his countrymen; austere, cunning, and hypocritical; a great general and a brutal conqueror, who seemed to sacrifice at no other shrine than that of his lust and ambition, we do him no injustice: the whole of his system bears the most evident proofs of imposition and forgery; nor is there a character to which imposture can lay claim that does not appear prominently in the Koran, and in every part of the Mohammedan system. The chief of these distinctive marks have already been examined in reference to the Pentateuch, in the concluding note on Exodus 18. These are all found in the Koran, but not one of them in the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch therefore is of God; the Koran came from another quarter.

5. The different systems of the Grecian ethic philosophers cannot come into this inquiry. They were in general incongruous and contradictory, and none of them was ever capable of forming a sect that could be said to have any moral perpetuity.

6. The laws of Lycurgus and Solon could not preserve those states, at the basis of which they were laid; which the laws of Moses have been the

means of preserving the people who held them, amidst the most terrible reverses of what are called fortune and fate, for nearly the space of 4, 000 years! This is one of the most extraordinary and astonishing facts in the whole history of mankind.

7. The republic of Plato, of which it is fashionable to boast, is, when stripped of what it has borrowed from Moses, like the Utopia of Sir T. More, the aerial figment of a philosophic mind, en delire; both systems are inapplicable and impracticable in the present state of man. To persons under the influence of various and discordant passions, strongly actuated by self-interest, they can never apply. They have no tendency to change the moral state of society from vice to virtue: a nation of saints might agree to regulate their lives and conduct by them, but where is such to be found? Though Plato has borrowed much from Moses, yet he has destroyed the effect of the whole by not referring the precepts and maxims to God, by whom alone strength to fulfill them could be furnished. It is the province of the revelation of God to make the knave an honest man; the unholy and profane, pure and pious; and to cause all who act by its dictates to love one another with pure hearts fervently, and to feel the finest and fullest impressions of

***“The generous mind that’s not confined at home,
But spreads itself abroad through all the public,
And feels for every member of the land.”***

The Pentateuch is an original work; nothing like it was ever found among the nations of the earth. Those who have asserted that its principal institutions have been borrowed from the Egyptians, neither know the Mosaic code, nor are acquainted with the Egyptian mythology. Dr. Priestley has written well on this point, and from his dissertation I shall borrow the following extracts:—

‘They who suppose that Moses himself was the author of the institutions, civil or religious, that bear his name, and that in framing them he borrowed much from the Egyptians, or other ancient nations, must never have compared them together; otherwise they could not but have perceived many circumstances in which they differ most essentially from them all. I shall endeavor to point out the more considerable of them.

“1. No heathen ever conceived an idea of so great an object as that of the institutions of Moses, which appears to be nothing less than the instruction of all mankind in the great doctrine of the unity and universal moral government of God, as the Maker of the world, and the common parent of all the human race, in opposition to the polytheism and idolatry which then prevailed, which, besides being grossly absurd in its principles, and leading to endless superstitions, threatened the world with a deluge of vice and misery. For this purpose the Hebrew nation was placed in the most conspicuous situation among all the civilized nations of the world, which were universally addicted to idolatry of the grossest kind, to divinations, necromancy, and other superstitions of a similar nature, and practiced as acts of religion; some of their rites abominably licentious, and others the most shockingly cruel, as the necessary means of recommending themselves to the various objects of their worship. As all mankind imagined that their outward prosperity depended upon the observance of their respective religions, that of the Hebrew nation was made to do so in the most conspicuous manner, as a visible lesson to all the world. They were to prosper beyond all other nations while they adhered to their religion; and to suffer in a manner equally exemplary and conspicuous in consequence of their departure from it. Of this all mankind might easily judge. These great ideas occur in the sacred books of the Hebrews, and nowhere else. They are all distinctly advanced by Moses, and more fully unfolded in the writings of the later prophets. But certainly nothing so great and sublime could have been suggested to Moses from any thing that he saw in Egypt, or could have heard of in other countries.

“2. In no system of religion besides that of Moses was purity of morals any part of it. All the heathen religions were systems of mere ceremonies, on the observance of which it was imagined that the prosperity of the several states depended; and the sole business of the priests was to attend to the due observance of these rites, many of which were so far from being favorable to morals, that they were of the most impure and abominable nature, as is well known to all who have any knowledge of them. On the contrary, it appears, not only from the ten commandments, but from all the writings of Moses, and those of the prophets who succeeded him, that the purest morality, the most favorable to private and public happiness, was the principal and ultimate object of the system. The books of Moses

abound with precepts of morality, inculcated in the most forcible manner, and they are distinguished from laws by having no penalty annexed to them. Such precepts as these, Be ye holy, for I am holy; and, What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? could never have been borrowed from any heathen system of religion. In this most important respect the institutions of Moses are a great original, and were never copied by any other lawgiver.

“3. Nowhere in all the heathen world could Moses have heard of such a proper national worship as that which he introduced. The Hebrew nation had not only one single object of their worship, in which they differed essentially from all other nations, but one national altar, one precise ritual, and only one place for the meeting of the whole nation at the public festivals. A whole tribe, a twelfth part of the nation, was set apart for services of a religious nature, and their provision made to depend in a great measure upon their performance of them, being not in lands cultivated by themselves, but in the produce of lands cultivated by others. At this one great national altar sacrifices were performed every morning and evening, in the name and at the expense of the whole nation; and the manner in which this was done was invariable, and not left to the discretion of the performers. In all other countries the places of worship were numerous; and the diversity in the modes of worship varied with the objects of them. In Egypt in particular the different nomes were exceedingly hostile to each other on this account. Hence arose endless and discordant superstitions.

“4. In no country besides that of the Hebrews were the public festivals expressly instituted in commemoration of such great events respecting their history and religion. It is peculiar to this nation also that the directions for the celebration of them were reduced to writing at the time of their institution, so that there could never be any uncertainty about the origin or the reasons of them. They were only three: the passover, on their deliverance from their state of servitude in Egypt, when the first-born of all the Egyptians were destroyed, and all theirs preserved; the pentecost, on the giving of the law from Mount Sinai; and the feast of tabernacles, in commemoration of their living in tents and booths during their travels through the wilderness. At the first of these festivals the first-fruits of the year were solemnly presented; at the second, the harvest was got in; and at the last, the vintage and all the greater labors of the year were closed.

Among the heathen nations the festivals were numerous and perplexing. More than sixty were celebrated by the Athenians; the origin and reason of their institution were uncertain; and none of them were calculated to answer any important moral purposes, but were too often the occasion, not of innocent festivity, but of intemperance and debauch. Several of the heathen festivals were celebrated in a manner the most disgusting and shocking to common modesty and common sense.

“Sacrificing was a mode more ancient than idolatry, or the institutions of Moses; but among the heathens various superstitious customs were introduced respecting it, which were all excluded from the religion of the Hebrews.

“In the laws of Moses, in which we find even the most minute circumstances of the act of sacrificing prescribed, there is no mention of any thing preceding the slaying of the animal, besides its being sound and of a proper age. It was not brought with any garlands. No *ουλαι*, or cakes of barley and salt, were put upon its back. No wine was poured upon its horns. No hair was taken from its forehead to be thrown into the fire on the altar. And nothing is said about inspecting the entrails, with a view to divination, which was a principal object in all the heathen sacrifices. The use that was made of the blood of the victims was peculiar to the Hebrew ritual; and certainly not borrowed from any heathen customs that could have been known to Moses.

“No heathens knew any thing of the sprinkling of the blood in the peculiarly solemn manner in which it was to be done by the Hebrew priests; and so far were they from rigorously abstaining from the eating of blood, that in their sacrifices to the infernal deities they partook of it as a method of feasting with them; and in the Tauribolium the offerer was covered with it from head to foot, and kept himself in that condition as long as he could. (As a proof of this see the note on “Leviticus 8:23”.) As Moses did not adopt any of the heathen customs, it is equally evident that they borrowed nothing from him with respect to sacrifices. With them we find no such distinction of sacrifices as is made in the books of Moses, such as burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, and peace-offerings, or of the heaving or waving of the sacrifices. Those particulars, therefore, he could not have had from them, whether we can

discover any reason for them or not. They either had their origin in the time of Moses, or, which is most probable, were prior to his time and to the existence of idolatry.

“Had Moses copied any thing from the heathens, he would probably have introduced something of their mysteries, which were rites performed in secret, and generally in the night, to which peculiar privileges were annexed, and which it was deemed the greatest crime to reveal; all of them circumstances of a suspicious nature, and evidently liable to great abuse.

“The most remarkable of these mysteries were the Eleusinian, which were celebrated at Athens every four years, and continued nine days. Whatever these rites were, it was made death to reveal them; and if any person not regularly initiated was present at this exhibition, he was put to death without mercy.

“Nothing surely like this can be found in the institutions of Moses. There was nothing in the Hebrew ritual of worship that was any secret. Every thing is expressly described in the written law; and though none but priests could enter the holy place, or the holy of holies besides the high priest, every thing that was done by him there is as particularly described as what was done by the people without; and no service whatever was performed in the night except the attendance at the great altar to keep the fire in a proper state for consuming all the remains of victims; and of this no mention is made in the ritual. It is only presumed by the Jewish writers on the subject that it must have been done of course.

“Had Moses borrowed any thing from the heathens, he could not have overlooked the various modes of divination, sorcery, and witchcraft; their omens of a thousand kinds, their rites for consulting the dead in the art of necromancy, their distinction of days into lucky and unlucky, which constituted a great part of the religious observances of all the heathen nations, civilized or uncivilized. The Romans had even an order of priests called augurs, whose sole business it was to observe the flight of birds, and to make prognostications from them. But so far are we from finding in the books of Moses any thing of this kind, of which those of the Hindoos are full, that they are spoken of with the greatest contempt and abhorrence, and the pretenders to them are directed to be put to death.

“The cities of refuge have been mentioned as compared with the unlimited right of asylum attached to the temples of the heathens; and this may be considered as a religious as well as a civil institution. But the privileges of the Sabbatical year and of the jubilee are wholly of a civil nature, and they must have been an admirable security for personal liberty and the property of families. No Hebrew could bind himself for servitude more than seven years, nor could he alienate his landed property for more than fifty. No gift or sale could have any effect beyond this term, which was fixed for the whole nation, and did not commence at the time of every particular bargain. In consequence of this, though a family might suffer by the imprudence or extravagance of the head of it, the evil had a limit; for at the jubilee all estates reverted to the original proprietors.

“In short, no person can peruse the laws of Moses without acknowledging them to be truly original; and their superiority to those of other ancient nations, the most famed for their wisdom, is an evidence of their Divine origin.”-Dissertat. on the Mosaic Institutions.

8. On this subject in general it may be just necessary to add, that the utmost that can be said of all laws merely human is, that they restrain vices through the terror of punishment. God’s law not only restrains vice, but it infuses virtue. It alone brings man to the footstool of his Maker, and keeps him dependent on the strong for strength, on the wise for wisdom, and on the merciful for grace. It abounds with promises of support and salvation for the present life, which no false system dared ever to propose; every where Moses in the most confident manner pledges his God for the fulfillment of all the exceeding great and precious promises with which his laws are so plentifully interspersed; and while they were obedient they could say, “Not one word hath failed us of all the good things which the Lord our God spake concerning us.” Who that dispassionately reads the Pentateuch, that considers it in itself, and in its reference to that glorious Gospel which it was intended to introduce, can for a moment deny it the palm of infinite superiority over all the systems ever framed or imagined by man? Well might the Israelitish people triumphantly exclaim, “There is none like the God of Jeshurun!” and with that striking propriety does the glorious legislator add, “Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee? O people saved of the LORD!”

See the **ZEND AVESTA**, by Anquetil du Perron, 3 vols., 4to., Paris, 1771. **CONFUCIUS SINARUM PHILOSOPHUS**, by Herdtrich, Couplet, etc., folio, Paris, 1687. **ZOROASTER, CONFUCIUS, et MAHOMET, compar,s, par M. Pastoret**, 8vo, Paris, 1788. The **INSTITUTES of MENU**, by Sir William Jones; and the **KORAN**, with Notes, etc., by Mr. Sale.

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY AND CHARACTER OF MOSES

HAVING said so much concerning the Pentateuch, there remains little room to say much concerning Moses himself, as his character is so much involved in that of his work. The genuine history of Moses is written by himself, and that is found succinctly detailed in the book of Exodus; Josephus, the rabbins, and the oriental historians, have written lives of this great man which are perfect romances; for by attempting to embellish, they have turned the whole history into ridicule. Troguus Pompeius has copied some of them, unless we allow that his abridger, Justin, is the author of the ill-told falsity which is found in his work. But with these relations we have no concern; and from the account written by himself, collated with the speech of St. Stephen, Acts vii., we learn the following facts:—

MOSES, the son of Amram and Jochebed, both of the tribe of Levi, was born A. M. 2433, B. C. 1571, while the Israelites were in a state of bondage in Egypt, and at that time under the most distressful persecution, the king of Egypt having issued an edict to destroy all the male children of the Hebrews. Added to their parental affection, his personal beauty, (Acts 7:20,) seems to have induced the parents to hazard every thing to preserve their child's life; they therefore hid him for three months; but finding from circumstances that they could keep him secret no longer, they were determined to abandon him wholly to the care of providence. Having provided a little vessel of bulrushes, or flags pitched, and thus rendered impervious to the water, they set him afloat on the river Nile, and sent his sister Miriam to watch the event. The daughter of Pharaoh coming to that part of the river, either to make her ablutions or to wash her clothes, seeing the vessel afloat, commanded it to be brought to her; and being struck with the helpless state and beauty of the child, judging that it belonged to one of the Hebrews, determined to preserve its life, and adopt it for her own. Miriam, his sister, who immediately appeared, but was unknown to the

princess, offered her services to procure a nurse for the child from among the Hebrew women; she was accordingly employed, and Jochebed, the mother, was soon brought to the spot, and the child was immediately committed to her care, the princess being entirely ignorant of the relation that subsisted between the child and its nurse. At a proper age he was taken to the Egyptian court, and educated there as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and was brought up in all the learning and wisdom of the Egyptians, and became very eminent both in words and deeds; Acts 7:22. Here he appears to have stayed nearly forty years. Afterwards, in consequence of having killed one of the oppressors of his Hebrew brethren, he was obliged to take refuge in Midian, where, entering into the service of Jethro, a priest or prince of that country, he married his daughter Zipporah, by whom he had two sons, Eleazar and Gershom, and continued as the guardian of the flocks of his father-in-law for forty years. At the conclusion of this time God manifested himself to him while tending the flocks of his father-in-law at Mount Horeb, and gave him a commission to bring Israel out of Egypt. He went on the Divine errand, became associated with his elder brother, Aaron, opened his commission to the Egyptian king, and wrought several striking miracles to prove the truth of his Divine mission. The king refusing to let the people go, God afflicted him and the land with ten grievous plagues; after which the people were led out, and by a most stupendous miracle passed through the divided waters of the Red Sea, which Pharaoh and his army essaying to do, were drowned. Having led the Israelites into the deserts of Arabia, commonly called wilderness, God gave them the most signal manifestations of his power and goodness in a series of successive miracles, and delivered to Moses their leader that information and those laws which are contained in the Pentateuch. Having governed the people forty years in the desert, and brought them to the very verge of the promised land, he was not permitted to pass over Jordan with them, but died in the plains of Moab, while in familiar converse with his God, in the 120th year of his age. Care, labor, and years, had made no inroads upon his constitution, for it is particularly marked that his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated, Deuteronomy 34:7; that he preserved all the vivacity of youth and the vigor of manhood to a period in which, even at that time, old age made its greatest depredations upon those who had no other support than what the common course of nature afforded.

After this hasty sketch of so eventful a life as that of Moses, it may be necessary to enter more particularly into an examination of his character and conduct. This is a difficult task; but, in *MAGNIS voluisse sat est*.

The eulogium or character given of him by the Spirit of God, though very concise, is yet full and satisfactory: And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face; in all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land; and in all that mighty hand (all-conquering power and influence) and in all the great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel. Moses is called the servant of God; and he has farther this high character, that as a servant he was faithful to God in all his house, Hebrews 3:5. He faithfully discharged the trust reposed in him; and totally forgetting himself and his own secular interest, with that also of his family, he labored incessantly to promote God's honor and the people's welfare, which on many occasions he showed were dearer to him than his own life. Moses was in every respect a great man; for every virtue that constitutes genuine nobility was concentrated in his mind, and fully displayed in his conduct. He ever conducted himself as a man conscious of his own integrity, and of the guidance and protection of God, under whose orders he constantly acted. He therefore betrays no confusion in his views, nor indecision in his measures; he was ever without anxiety, because he was conscious of the rectitude of his motives, and that the cause which he espoused was the cause of God, and that his power and faithfulness were pledged for his support. His courage and fortitude were unshaken and unconquerable, because his reliance was unremittingly fixed on the unchangeableness of *JEHOVAH*. He left Egypt having an eye to the recompense of reward in another world, and never lost sight of this grand object; he was therefore neither discouraged by difficulties, nor elated by prosperity. He who in Egypt refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, thereby renouncing the claim he might have had on the Egyptian throne, was never likely to be influenced by secular views in the government of the miserable multitudes which he led out of that country. His renunciation of the court of Pharaoh and its advantages was the amplest proof that he neither sought nor expected honor or emolument in the wilderness, among a people who had scarcely any thing but what they received by immediate miracle from the hand of God.

I have more than once had occasion to note the disinterestedness of Moses in reference to his family, as well as to himself. This is a singular case; his own tribe, that of Levi, he left without any earthly possession: and though to minister to God was the most honorable employment, yet the Levites could never arise to any political consequence in Israel. Even his own sons became blended in the common mass of the Levites, and possessed no kind of distinction among their brethren. Though his confidence in God was ever unshaken, yet he had a life of toll and perpetual distress, occasioned by the ignorance, obstinacy, and baseness, of the people over whom he presided; and he died in their service, leaving no other property but his tent behind him. Of the spoils taken in war we never read of the portion of Moses. He had none; he wanted none; his treasure was in heaven, and where his treasure was, there also was his heart. By this disinterestedness of Moses two points are fully proved: 1. That he was satisfied, fully so, that his mission was Divine, and that in it he served the living God; and 2. That he believed in the immortality of the soul, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, and therefore he labored so to pass through things temporal, that he might not lose the things that are eternal. It is strange that the faith of Moses in these points should be questioned by any who had ever seriously read the Pentateuch.

The manner in which he bore the sentence of his exclusion from the promised inheritance, is an additional proof of his persuasion of the reality of the invisible world. No testiness, no murmuring, no expatiating on former services; no passionate entreaties to have the sentence reversed, appear in the spirit or conduct of this truly great man. He bowed to the decision of that justice which he knew could not act wrong; and having buried the world, as to himself, he had no earthly attachments; he was obeying the will of God in leading the people, and therefore, when his Master chose to dismiss him from this service, he was content; and saw, without regret or envy, another appointed to his office.

The moral character of Moses is almost immaculate. That he offended Jehovah at the waters of Meribah there can be no doubt; but in what the offense consisted, commentators and critics are greatly at a loss to ascertain. See the note on "Numbers 20:12"; I have said all that I believe should be said upon the point; and after all, conjecture is obliged to come in, to supply the place of substantial evidence; and the fault is so slight,

humanly speaking, as even to glide away from the eye of conjecture itself. Had the offense, whatever it was, been committed by any ordinary person, it would probably have passed between God and the conscience without any public reprehension. But Moses was great, and supereminently favored; and a fault in him derived much of its moral delinquency from these very circumstances. He did not sanctify the Lord in the sight of the people-he did not fully show that God himself was the sole worker; he appeared by his conduct to exhibit himself as an agent indispensably necessary in the promised miraculous supply; and this might have had the most dangerous consequences on the minds of this gross people, had not God thus marked it with his displeasure. This awful lesson to the legislator taught the people that their help came from GOD, and not from man; and that consequently they must repose their confidence in HIM alone. But this subject deserves to be more distinctly considered, as in the account given of his death this offense is again brought forth to view. God himself thus details the circumstances: "Get thee up into this mountain, and behold the land of Canaan-and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people as Aaron thy brother, because ye trespassed against me **AMONG THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL**; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel." chap. 32:49-51. "And Moses went up unto the mountain of Nebo, and the Lord showed him all the land; and the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither: so Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there, according to the word of the Lord; and he buried him;" chap. 34:1-6. In the above extracts, all the circumstances relative to this event are brought into one point of view; and we see plainly the stress that is laid on the offense against God. **YE TRESPASSED AGAINST ME AMONG THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL-YE SANCTIFIED ME NOT IN THE MIDST OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.** These words may be understood thus: The people of themselves were too much prone to take off their eye from GOD, consult their senses, and depend upon man; and the manner in which Moses and Aaron performed the miracle which God commanded them to do in his name, was such as to confirm them in the carnality of their views, and cause them to depend on an arm of flesh. Ye therefore shall not go into the promised land, said the Lord: and the death of them both was the fullest proof to this people that

it was not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts, that their enemies were expelled, and that themselves were introduced and established in the promised inheritance. This seems to be the spirit of the whole business: and as Moses had no other end in view but the glory of God, it must have been a supreme satisfaction to his pious soul, that this end was so effectually promoted, though even at the expense of his life. 1. At a distant view there appears to be very little observable in the death of Moses; but on a nearer approach we shall find it to have been the most honorable, I might add the most glorious, with which any human being was ever favored. As to his death itself, it is simply said, He died in the land of Moab-according to the word of the Lord. He was, as has already been observed, in familiar conversation with his Maker; and while in the act of viewing the land, and receiving the last information relative to it, the ancient covenant with the patriarchs, and the performance of the covenant in putting their posterity into possession of this goodly inheritance, he yielded up the ghost, and suddenly passed from the verge of the earthly into the heavenly Canaan. Thus, without the labor and the delay of passing through the type, he entered at once into the possession of the antitype; having simply lost the honor of leading the people a little farther, whom, with so much care and solicitude, he had brought thus far. 2. There is another circumstance in his death which requires particular notice. It is said, He died-according to the word of the Lord: the original words יהוה על פי al pi Yehovah, signify literally at (or upon) the mouth of Jehovah; which Jonathan ben Uzziel interprets thus: על נשיקת מימרא דיי al neshikath meymera dayeya, “by a kiss of the WORD of Jehovah;” and this has given rise to an ancient tradition among the Jews, “that God embraced Moses, and drew his soul out of his body by a kiss.” The Targumist adds, that this was “on the seventh day of the month Adar, the same, day of the same month on which he was born. 3. The last circumstance worthy of note is, that God buried him, which is an honor no human being ever received besides himself. From the tradition referred to by Saint Jude, Jude 9, it appears that Michael, the archangel, was employed on this occasion; that Satan disputed the matter with him, probably wishing the burial-place of Moses to be known, that it might become an excitement to superstition and idolatry; but being rebuked by the Lord, he was obliged to give over the contention; and though the place of burial was probably the valley of

the mountain on which Moses had been conversing with God, and where he died, yet Satan himself could not ascertain the spot, and no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day. 4. It may be asked how Moses, who was bred up at an idolatrous court, which he did not quit till the fortieth year of his age, got that acquaintance with the true God which the apostle states him to have had; and that faith by which he realized spiritual and invisible things, and through which he despised all worldly grandeur and secular emolument. "By faith," says the apostle, "Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward," Hebrews 11:24, etc. This certainly implies a degree of religious knowledge, associated with an experimental acquaintance with Divine things, which we can scarcely ever suppose to have been at all the result of an Egyptian education. But we shall cease to be pressed with any difficulty here, when we consider the circumstance of his being providentially nursed by his own mother, under the authority and direction of the Egyptian princess. This gave him the privilege of frequent intercourse with his parents, and others of the Hebrews, who worshipped the true God; and from them he undoubtedly learned all the great truths of that religion which were taught and practiced among the patriarchs. The circumstance of his Hebrew origin, his exposure on the Nile, his being found and adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh, were facts which could not be concealed, and must have been notorious at the Egyptian court; and when these points are considered, we need not be surprised that he never could be so identified among the Egyptians as that his Hebrew extraction should be forgotten.

That the person whom God designed to be the deliverer of his people should have been a Hebrew by birth, and have retained all his natural attachment to his own people, and yet have been brought up by Pharaoh's daughter, and had all the advantages of a highly-finished education, which the circumstances of his own family could not have afforded, is all a master-piece of wisdom in the designs of the Divine providence. Besides, Moses by this education must have been well known, and even popular among the Egyptians; and therefore the subsequent public part he took in

behalf of the Hebrews must have excited the greater attention and procured him the greater respect both among the Egyptians and his own people. All these circumstances taken together show the manifold wisdom and gracious providence of God. 5. Thus end the life and the work of the writer of the Pentateuch, who, by the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which he has amassed in those five books, has enriched the whole civilized earth, and indeed greatly promoted that very civilization. His works, we may justly say, have been a kind of text-book to almost every writer on geology, geography, chronology, astronomy, natural history, ethics, jurisprudence, political economy, theology, poetry, and criticism, from his time to the present day. Books, to which the choicest writers and philosophers in pagan antiquity have been deeply indebted, and which were the text-books to all the prophets; books from which the flimsy writers against Divine Revelation have derived their natural religion, and all their moral excellence; books written in all the energy and purity of the incomparable language in which they are composed; and finally, books which, for importance of matter, variety of information, dignity of sentiment, accuracy of facts, impartiality, simplicity, and sublimity of narration, tending to improve and ennoble the intellect, and meliorate the physical and moral condition of man, have never been equalled, and can only be paralleled by the GOSPEL of the Son of God! Fountain of endless mercy, justice, truth, and beneficence! how much are thy gifts and bounties neglected by those who do not read this law; and by those who, having read it, are not morally improved by it, and made wise unto salvation!

On the whole we may remark, that when God calls any person to an extraordinary work, he so orders it, in the course of his providence, that he shall have every qualification necessary for that work. This was the case with Moses: his Hebrew extraction, the comeliness of his person, his Egyptian education, his natural firmness and constancy of character, all concurred with the influences of the Divine Spirit, to make him in every respect such a person, one among millions, who was every way qualified for the great work which God had given him to do; and who performed it according to the mind of his Maker. SERVANT OF GOD, WELL DONE!

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