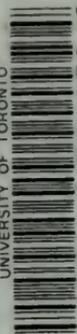


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THE BIBLICAL HISTORY OF THE
HEBREWS TO THE CHRISTIAN ERA

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THE BIBLICAL HISTORY OF THE HEBREWS TO THE CHRISTIAN ERA

BY

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Preface

THE book has been enlarged by a summary of the Apocryphal books bound up with the English Bible, and by two chapters, bringing the history up to the period when that of the New Testament begins.

New York, 1920.

Preface to the First Edition

THIS work is primarily intended for students in Theology, but the Author hopes that it may be of interest to a wider public. He has endeavoured to tell the story of Israel from a Biblical standpoint, in such a way as to bring into relief the progressive character of God's revelation to His chosen people. If, especially in the earlier chapters, narratives once universally accepted as *literally* true are related with somewhat less confidence than was customary at one time, the reader may be reminded that in the Author's opinion this does not detract from their spiritual value, and that the interest of Israel's history grows with our increasing knowledge as the end of the Old Dispensation is approached. It is not what Israel originally was, but what it became, that makes its story of such supreme importance.

Many friends have assisted the writer of this volume, to whom he desires to express his gratitude. Some of these may not agree with the Author's conclusions, and none are responsible for his views. He cannot, however, refrain from acknowledging the help he has received from the Revds. A. C. Jennings, Professor Nairne, R. H. Kennett, E. C. Griffenhoofe and H. Bissek, and also from Mr. H. G. Wood, Scholar of Jesus College, the writer of the notes to Chapter V.

Easter, 1903.

Preface to the Second Edition

THE reception which this work has met with has compelled me to reprint it at an earlier date than I had anticipated. To one who, like myself, has continually to go over the same ground in teaching others, the temptation to make alterations and to modify statements is very strong. I have, however, deliberately refrained from doing this, being convinced that to alter my narrative would be to impair the value of this work as a text-book; I have therefore left the main part of the book unchanged, contenting myself with the correction of manifest errors, and I have made a few additions to the notes. An appendix has been added, consisting of translations of the most important inscriptions referring to the history of Israel, which, I hope, will be of use. For permission to print these I have to thank His Majesty's Printers (Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode), the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Inscriptions in the British Museum, the Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

1904.

Preface to the Third Edition

It has been considered advisable to reprint the Introduction and the main part of the book, and to make any additions which are considered necessary in the Notes at the end, some of which have been completely rewritten. A summary of history as related in the canonical books of the Old Testament has been placed after the Introduction: and it is to be hoped that this may be of use to students if only as an inducement to study the history of the Hebrews from the Bible itself. So many maps are available that I have contented myself with rough sketches to enable the reader to see what is necessary at a glance. Two English Commentaries have appeared since 1904 which no student of the Bible can neglect: Dr. Driver's invaluable work on Genesis and Dr. McNeile's stimulating exposition of Exodus. To both of these I have constantly referred. I must also tender my grateful thanks to the Rev. A. Lukyn Williams for his searching criticisms on the Introduction and the Notes.

December, 1909.

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Introduction

SEVERAL causes combine to render a restatement of the facts of the history of Israel desirable. Not only has much light been thrown upon the history of the ancient East by recent discoveries, but the writings of the Old Testament under the searching light of criticism have been made to appear in a new aspect. A few years ago the historian of Israel based his narrative on the assumption that an almost contemporary record of Israel's doings had been preserved, at any rate since the age of Moses. The verdict of modern scholars is that much that was assumed to belong to remote antiquity is in reality comparatively modern.

Necessity for a restatement of the history of Israel

The difference between a non-critical and a critical examination of the early books of Scripture may be compared to the views of the firmament taken by an uneducated person and by a trained astronomer. To the one every star seems to be so to speak fixed in the solid vault of heaven, the other knows how vast is the distance that may part two luminaries which to the eye stand in the same plane. In like manner a practised critic can discern perhaps in a single chapter the thoughts not of a single individual but of many generations of men.

So much has been written on the so-called "Higher Criticism" that information is easily accessible. In the present work it is not necessary to do more than to make a statement of the case in a simple form.

The decision of modern criticism is that almost every book of the Old Testament shews signs of being composite in character; the work of several authors combined by one or more redactors. In a sense this is so in the case of every historical work. No historian can be independent of the works of others. His function is to make enquiry, to sift statements made by others, before presenting his own

Principles of modern criticism

conclusions. A modern author generally puts his own work into the text and gives his authorities in notes or appendices, sometimes quoting a passage at length from a work he has consulted. But in early days, when books were scarce, authors composed their works for the information of readers who cared little how the facts were collected; no scruples were felt in copying authorities wholesale, or in combining the narratives of other writers without any acknowledgment.

It is supposed that this was the method employed by the Biblical writers, nor can they be reasonably blamed for appropriating the labours of others, since they wrote as a rule anonymously, with the sole object of edifying and informing their readers.

It is the duty of the modern critic to attempt to discover the process by which the book before him has been reduced to its present shape, to discern what is really ancient, what is more recent, and what parts have been supplied by its latest editor.

A possible objection to this method is, that since "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the sacred writers had no need to set to work like profane historians, to consult traditions, monuments, writings, and the like, but had only to set down that which they were moved by God's Holy Spirit to write.

This objection is not without weight, for sneers at "theories of verbal and mechanical inspiration" are often due to a complete failure to apprehend the seriousness of the question at issue, and are of no assistance to those who approach the criticism of the Scriptures with any appreciation of its gravity. But the answer to the foregoing objection is supplied by the sacred writers themselves.

In the later books they do not scruple to acknowledge their obligations to earlier works. From the first, indeed, there is evidence of what may be styled a prebiblical literature, consisting of books like those of the "Wars of Jehovah" and that of "Jashar." The task, therefore, of attempting to resolve the Scriptures into their original component elements can be approached without either presumption or irreverence.

Before entering upon the subject of the date or origin of various portions of the Old Testament Scriptures, an examination of the opening chapters of Genesis may illustrate the arguments in favour of a composite authorship of many books of Scripture.

Argument in
favour of
composite
authorship
illustrated

The story of Creation is told in the first chapter, but at ii. 4 another account is begun. In the opening narrative it is God (Elohim) who creates the heaven and the earth, the elements, animals, and finally man, male and female. In that which follows the Lord God (Jehovah-Elohim) forms man out of the dust of the ground, and Eve out of the side of Adam.

At the conclusion of the fourth chapter (vv. 16-18) there occurs a pedigree of the first of mankind from Cain to Lamech and his sons. In the next chapter the descent of Lamech from Adam's son Seth is given. It can hardly be a mere coincidence that there is a great similarity in the names of the patriarchs in these two lists; and it is at least possible that two documents, distinct though derived from a common tradition, have been embodied in the text.

On reaching the account of the Flood the twofold character of the narrative is evident. In Genesis vi. 1-8 there is a description of the wickedness of men on earth and the union between the "sons of God" and the daughters of men. Verse 9 begins abruptly with the formula, "These are the generations of Noah," as though a new subject were being introduced.

Contradictions also occur. In one place, for instance, it is said that all the animals were to be taken into the ark for preservation in pairs (vi. 19, 20; vii. 8); in another, Noah is commanded to choose the clean beasts and fowls by sevens and the rest of the beasts by twos (vii. 2). The rain is said in one place to have lasted forty days (vii. 12), but a few verses later one hundred and fifty (vii. 24).

In Genesis xii. and Genesis xx. there are two accounts very similar in character of an imposture practised upon Pharaoh in Egypt and Abimelech, King of Gerar, and the difference in phraseology points to variety of authorship.

In the latter chapter there is a studious avoidance of the sacred name Jehovah, which is habitually used in the other narrative.

The way in which names are suddenly introduced into the narrative of Genesis without explanation favours the view that the book is of composite authorship. Anyone who has tried to draw up a statement from many sources knows that it is easy to introduce some fresh name or incident without giving the reader adequate information. Every historian must experience the difficulty of avoiding obscurity when he has to compress his facts into a small compass. One of the most familiar scriptural difficulties is to be explained in this way. Since the time of St Augustine at least, the mention of Cain's wife (Gen. iv. 17) has caused perplexity. On the supposition that the author of Genesis had several documents treating of primitive history before him, and that in the work of condensation he omitted the mention of Cain's marriage, the difficulty would certainly be lessened, though even then it would hardly disappear. Later in Genesis, Deborah the nurse of Rebekah is suddenly mentioned by name as dying at Bethel, but, save for a passing allusion in Gen. xxiv. 59, nothing is said of her in the previous narrative. She was evidently a person of importance, and played her part in patriarchal history, but for some reason the story of what she did was omitted. Enough, however, has been said to shew that the theory that Genesis has been compiled from many sources is tenable. In addition to this, the linguistic peculiarities observable in different passages throughout this book have enabled critics to disintegrate the various strands with which the whole story has been woven.

The three main strands are these :

I. Genesis i. has several distinctive peculiarities which, ceasing with chapter ii. 3, reappear throughout the fifth chapter. In the account of the Flood, vi.—ix., the same features are observable, sometimes in passages several verses in length, at others in single sentences. They are recognisable, being characterised by a preference for systematic arrangement, a love of precision, repetition of the

Main
"strands" of
narrative in
Genesis

same phrases, and a tendency to supply dates, measurements and particular details. There is further to be noticed a legal or sacerdotal mode of thought as seen in the laws and "covenants" in chapter ix. Lastly, the sacred name is avoided because, according to this same document, it was not revealed till the days of Moses (Ex. vi. 3).

II. In the second account of the Creation a very different character of writer is revealed. He is in many respects more interesting than his predecessor. His temper is neither scientific nor legal, but it is eminently artistic. His views of God, whom he always names as Jehovah, are somewhat primitive. But the simplicity of this author's mind is full of charm. It is to him we owe some of the most beautiful parts of Genesis, and it may be added glimpses of a deep insight into such awful questions as those of the nature of God, the heinousness of sin, the hope of redemption.

III. In the twentieth chapter another writer makes his appearance. In many respects he closely resembles the author who has just been discussed, but he reveals certain marks of individuality. He does not make use of the sacred Name, and dwells much on the appearances of angels, whom he generally makes intermediaries between God and man. He is particularly interested in the origin of the Northern tribes, and is careful to shew that Reuben and not Judah took the lead among the sons of Jacob.

There are traces of still earlier writers in Genesis. It incorporates old poems, unintelligible in their present position, like the song of Lamech (Gen. iv. 23, 24); fragmentary genealogies, like those of Lamech's sons (*ib.* 19-22); ancient sayings and place-names round which stories have gathered; poems handed down in Israel (Gen. xlix.); detached historical fragments (Gen. xiv.).

Nor is this all. The discoveries of the lost civilisations of Chaldea and Egypt prove that some of the stories enshrined in the first book of the Bible belong to an antiquity even more remote than the first days of Israel; and it seems almost certain that the writers used in the composition of Genesis were acquainted with them.

In the early days of Biblical criticism an attempt was made to argue that Genesis was not a composite work

Traces of
early docu-
ments in
Genesis

Unity of plan
in Genesis

because of the unity of plan observable throughout. This is undeniable. The man to whom we owe the present form of the book undoubtedly had a distinct object in view when he compressed the copious material at his disposal into the fifty chapters of Genesis. In a few pages he has given a survey of the past of his nation in such a way that to readers in every age the characters he depicts are more familiar than those of the greatest of their own countrymen. What a grand picture is that of the patriarch Abraham! Where is there a more subtle delineation of character than that of Jacob? Does any story equal the account of Joseph making himself known to his brethren? The fact that the writer used many authorities should add to, rather than lessen our admiration for his work.

Inspiration

Still the question arises how far the researches of a student are compatible with the notions current concerning the nature of inspiration. What claim, it may be asked, can men, who, like other historians, have gathered together their materials and put them into literary form, have to be considered as peculiarly inspired by God's Spirit?

In answer to this it may be urged that the greatest productions of the human mind have, as a rule, been the result of strenuous effort and careful preparation. Yet the production of the *improvisatore* sometimes excites more vulgar admiration than that of one who has "a capacity for taking infinite pains."

Creative genius may be so far identified with our conception of "inspiration," that in both something indefinable from without seems to make a man accomplish more than his unaided nature is capable of. But just as genius when combined with strength of character and determination produces infinitely better work than when it manifests itself in a transitory form, so the highest form of inspiration may well accompany earnest effort and firm purpose to declare the truth. The compiler of such a book as Genesis may have been more truly inspired in his labours than one "falling into a trance, yet having his eyes open." Why need the presence of God's Spirit be denied in assisting such a writer to select, classify and arrange the best information he possessed, if the result justifies such a claim? The value of the work

is not lessened because the critical spirit of the present day has succeeded in discovering its original sources. The sun shines none the less brightly because the spectroscope has discovered the elements of which it is composed. The history of the growth of the historical and prophetic literature is, moreover, not merely an account of individuals, but of a Church. The Bible grew with the ever-developing religious consciousness of Israel. By modern methods we are able to discern not only how inspired books were composed, but how the spiritual life in God's people developed from its earliest stages.

It need not be added that the question of the date of the compilation of a biblical work does not affect its intrinsic worth. Genesis is equally beautiful whether it issued from the hands of Moses in its present form, or whether it was not fully completed till after the Captivity.

The question of the date of the component parts of Genesis cannot be raised without referring to the rest of the Pentateuch, and to later history. **The symbols
P, J, E**

The symbols by which the three main strands are designated are P, J and E.

The letter P is applied to the source of Genesis i., because it is supposed to be part of a work embracing the tradition and law of the priests at Jerusalem.

J is assumed to be part of a historical work written in Judah, and the author is sometimes called the Jehovist from his preference for the Sacred Name.

E is assigned to the Northern Kingdom after the division of the tribes, and the writer is styled "the Elohist," because he uses the word God (Elohim) if possible instead of the Sacred Name.

But the two last-named documents cannot always be separated from one another, and the symbol JE is used to denote them as distinguished from P.

Roughly speaking, the first four books of the Bible are made up of J, E and P, with a few editorial additions. In the fifth a new and most important factor appears.

The book of Deuteronomy (in Hebrew called "These are the Words," from the opening words of the first chapter) consists mainly of hortatory addresses by Moses to the Israelites, delivered on the eve of their crossing the Jordan to enter **The Deuteronomist (D)**

Canaan. But these breathe the spirit of a very different age, and it is now generally agreed that the book was composed by the prophetic party in Jerusalem in the seventh century B.C.

Assuming the correctness of this classification, the question of the respective dates of J, E and P has to be approached.

The first thing to be observed in the first chapters of Deuteronomy is that the narrative of JE is known to the writer, but he betrays an ignorance of P.

This will be at once evident when the three narratives of the spying out of the land of Canaan are compared.

JE.

NUMBERS XIII., XIV.

v. 22. The spies went to Hebron as far as the brook Eshcol (23), and cut a cluster of grapes. They returned to Kadesh (26) and made their report. When the people murmured, Caleb tried to still them (30), and for his fidelity he is promised an inheritance in the land which he had spied out (xiv. 24).

(N.B.—The inheritance of the Calebites was afterwards near Hebron.)

P.

NUMBERS XIII., XV.

The spies searched the whole of Canaan as far as Hamath in the extreme north (21) for forty days. They came to Moses in the wilderness of Paran (26). Caleb and Joshua proved faithful (xiv. 6), and were promised inheritances (xiv. 30).

D.

DEUTERONOMY I.

Spies sent from Kadesh - Barnea (19). They go to the Valley of Eshcol (24). Caleb is the only faithful spy (36). Joshua is to enter the Promised Land as leader (38).

It must here be evident that the original story is amplified by additions in P, and that Deuteronomy shews no acquaintance with these amplifications. It might, however, be maintained, and not without reason if this were but a single instance, that P had preserved an equally pure tradition and had not deliberately improved on an earlier narrative; but the contrary seems to be shewn by the three following examples. In the two first the additions of P are designed.

EXODUS VII.—THE FIRST PLAGUE.

JE.

vv. 15-18. Moses is ordered to stand by the Nile with his rod, and the waters of the Nile are to be turned into blood. v. 24. To get water the Egyptians dig pits near the Nile and obtain clear water by filtration.

P.

v. 19. Moses is ordered to send Aaron with his rod. Not only the waters of the Nile become blood, but all the water in the land of Egypt—contradicting v. 24.

EXODUS XIV.—PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.

JE.

v. 19. The Pillar of Cloud divides Israel and Egypt all the night. v. 21*b*. The sea goes back by an east wind. v. 24. In the morning Jehovah looks forth and troubles the Egyptians. They flee from Israel. v. 27*b*. The sea returns in its strength. Jehovah overthrows the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

P.

v. 21. The sea is made dry land and the waters are divided (22). The Israelites go through: the waters are as a wall. v. 26. When Israel has passed over, Moses stretches forth his hand. v. 28. The waters return and overwhelm the Egyptians.

The story of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram shews how two distinct narratives have been fused into one. The Psalmist wrote before the fusion took place. Korah is not mentioned in the early narrative.

NUMBERS XVI.—KORAH, DATHAN AND ABIRAM.

JE.

Psalm cvi. 17.
(Based on JE.)

P.

N.T.

v. 1. Dathan and Abiram rebel against Moses. v. 12. Moses summons them only. v. 27. Dathan and Abiram alone stand at the tent door.

“The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.”

Korah a Levite is associated throughout with Dathan and Abiram, and rebels against the ecclesiastical authority of Aaron.

(Knowing narrative as *it now stands*.) Only mentions Korah (St Jude 11).

Thus we have proof that JE is older than Deuteronomy, henceforth called D, and that P is later than either. Out of a mass of arguments in favour of this view two may here be introduced.

That D is later than JE may be shewn from the fact that whereas D repeatedly insists that there is only one place where sacrifices can legally be offered to Jehovah, J and E betray no knowledge of such a command. This creates a presumption in favour of both J and E being earlier than D.

That D is earlier than P is shown by the way in which these documents allude to the priesthood. In D all Levites are apparently priests, as the constantly recurring phrase “the priests, the Levites” testifies; but in the legislation of P great care is taken to draw a distinction

between the tribe of Levi and the sons of Aaron, who alone are allowed to execute the priestly functions.

These are after all but a few instances, and the theory of the relative position of P, D, and JE to one another does not simply depend on these examples. It is rather the result of a large amount of evidence, much of which taken alone seems trifling and over ingenious, but collectively is almost overwhelming.

Three periods
in Hebrew
literature

Granting, however, that these three main documents of the Hexateuch (for as they are continued in the book of Joshua this name has taken the place of the more familiar Pentateuch) have been correctly arranged, it is permissible to regard each as representing a period in Hebrew literature.

From the days of the patriarchs downwards there is no reason why the chosen people should not have had a literature of their own. Long before the accepted date for the conquest of Palestine by Joshua, its inhabitants were accustomed to correspond with their overlords the Pharaohs of Egypt. The recent discoveries at Tel-el-Amarna have revealed a collection of tablets written in cuneiform recording the diplomatic relations between the Egyptian court and the petty kings of Southern Canaan. A town in this district was actually called Kiriath-sepher (the "city of the book"). An Israelite tribe is especially mentioned as famous for its scribes in a poem composed very soon after the settlement in Palestine.

But whilst there is no presumption against the possibility of an early Hebrew literature, there is no *proof* of its existence till the eighth and ninth centuries B.C. Strangely enough, the first specimen of Hebrew of undoubted antiquity is Moabite. The famous inscription of Mesha recording his victories over Israel, written in Hebrew, so resembles the style of the narratives in the book of Kings as to warrant the assumption that a prose literature existed at this period among the Hebrew nations, including Israel.

The prophecy of Amos, the earliest undoubted literary production of Israel, is about two generations later than the Moabite Stone. Even if allowance is made for interpolations, the major portion of the book bears upon it the stamp of genuineness, as it refers to a condition of things

only possible during the first half of the eighth century. But Amos assuredly does not address an ignorant or unlettered people. His prophecy is carefully elaborated; it abounds in allusions presupposing a considerable knowledge of the history and geography of Israel and the neighbouring peoples. He assumes that his hearers are well acquainted with the doings of their ancestors, and with the ancient laws of Israel. That Amos lived in a literary age there can be no doubt, and everything points to the existence of earlier writings than this prophecy.

Whether J or E is the elder document cannot be finally decided, but neither is much later than B.C. 770; possibly they belong to the previous century, or to an even earlier period. Their writers naturally used even earlier material. Two works, "The Book of the Wars of Jehovah" and "The Book of Jasher," are quoted by name. Poems like part of the Song of Moses and Miriam and the Song of Deborah go back to the primitive ages, and some of the legislation of the Wanderings has survived. It is necessary also to bear in mind that in ancient times, especially in the East, mental activity does not begin with literature. Tales were and are still handed down from mouth to mouth with almost verbal accuracy. Poems were composed, circulated and preserved without ever being committed to writing. Memory strengthened by constant practice almost supplied the place of written documents. There is consequently little reason to doubt that at any rate from the days of the Exodus, if not earlier, the Hebrews preserved records of their race in song and story.

This national tradition is the source of the narrative of JE and other writers of the same periods. To understand their standpoint it is necessary to review the condition of life, thought and religion in Israel in the eighth or ninth century B.C.

The Hebrews were by this time a warlike, energetic and powerful people, who, after many vicissitudes, had obtained the hegemony among the nations in Palestine. They were divided into two rival kingdoms, that in the north being by far the most powerful. They were monotheists in religion—that is they believed that they were forbidden to worship any God save their own Jahveh or

First period
of surviving
Hebrew
literature

Jihveh, known to us as Jehovah. The more enlightened Israelites believed Him to be the only true God, but the majority regarded Him as their national Deity, probably as not materially different from the gods by whom other nations were ruled.

Jehovah was worshipped in many ways. At some places His image in the form of a bull was set up. At others He was adored on the top of a solitary hill; trees, wells and rocks were also His sanctuaries. Possibly the purest form of religion existed at Jerusalem, where was the great Temple of the Southern Kingdom; but this is by no means certain. In Central and Northern Palestine many religious ordinances had been borrowed from the customs of the older Canaanite inhabitants of the land.

Still, despite the many resemblances with the religions of the neighbouring nations, the worship of Jehovah by the Israelites had certain unique characteristics. In the first place, it was generally acknowledged that Jehovah had brought the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt, and kept them in the wilderness for forty years in order that they might be His people. The land they occupied was His gift; the laws they lived under were His laws. As Jehovah's people, Israel was not allowed to consider itself like other nations; it had peculiar privileges and also responsibilities. For years prophets had been sent by Jehovah to remind Israel of these, and to reprove the people if they were unfaithful to their God.

Those who recorded the history of the past did so with the object of shewing how the power of Jehovah had been manifested in ancient days. They dwelt on the choice of the patriarchs and on the way they had been protected against all perils, on the wonderful deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, and on the Divine mercies shewn in the days of the Kings, when Jehovah vindicated His power in Israel against Baal. But their method of relating facts is comparatively simple. There is what may be termed an almost secular tone in some of their narratives. The story of Abimelech in the Judges, for example, is a relation of bare facts. The writer desired to inform rather than to edify. The same perhaps is the case with the accounts

of Jephthah. The lament of David over Saul and Jonathan, quoted from the book of Jasher, has provoked comment because of its secular tone. A man like David might be expected to "improve the occasion." Israel's defeat and the death of its king might well have been attributed to Jehovah's anger at the sins of the people. But this is exactly contrary to the spirit of his age. David expressed the grief he felt so keenly, but neglected (and not unnaturally) to draw the expected moral. The same is observable in the Song of Deborah. Jehovah's power, it is true, is celebrated, and the victory attributed to Him; but no word is said of Israel's repentance.

In the same way, though idolatry is condemned in the literature of this age, ritual offences are generally ignored; for, to speak generally, the object of the writers was to relate the story of Israel, dwelling indeed on the power of Jehovah, but not troubling to discuss whether either the nation or individuals were worthy of blame or not.

The Assyrians came; and the earthly glory of Israel vanished. The Northern Kingdom was annihilated, and the Southern shrunk to a district containing a few towns and villages around Jerusalem. The religious teachers of the nation were increasingly impressed with the idea that all the calamities of Israel were a proof of the anger of Jehovah. They saw in the past continued proofs of His loving-kindness and the perversity of Israel. History became a homily on this subject. The narratives and legends preserved in earlier writings were made to assume a didactic form. The reign of Solomon, which had been to earlier generations a dream of all that was glorious, was made to teach a more sombre lesson. The prayer put into the king's mouth on the occasion of the dedication of the Temple is full of gloomy forebodings; the disruption of the kingdom of David is attributed to Solomon's apostasy in his later years; even the wild age of the Judges is made to point its moral. The troubles which then afflicted Israel are all traced to acts of religious apostasy, nor did deliverance come till repentance was manifested. Throughout the historical books of Scripture the hand of the moralists of this age is traceable. This tendency

Age of the
Deuteronomists

received its greatest impulse by the discovery of the "book of the law" in the house of Jehovah, which produced such an extraordinary effect in the reign of Josiah. That the book of Deuteronomy is meant no one can doubt, but there is a considerable variety of opinion as to the date of its composition. On the one hand, it certainly bears on its surface much that can be more easily explained by being assigned to the days of Manasseh, than to those of Moses. On the other, there is a most natural repugnance to attribute one of the most earnest and spiritual books in Holy Scripture to one who used the venerable name of Moses to advance his own opinions.

The dilemma is not easy to escape from, and perhaps the only way is candidly to admit that such a literary artifice is not as abhorrent to Orientals as it would be to us. For, whoever he was, the author or authors of Deuteronomy were men of deep piety. In the person of Moses, making his farewell address to Israel on the plains of Moab, he urges the importance of the love of Jehovah with evangelical fervour. He preaches love by means of the law which had been given to Israel, reminding his readers constantly of Jehovah's mercies towards His people.

But he is deeply depressed by the ruin impending over his people in his old age. The condition of the country, with the kingdom of Israel destroyed, and that of Judah about to fall, fills him with sorrow. Like his predecessors in the prophetic office (for he certainly possessed the gift), the author of Deuteronomy attributed the disasters of his country to the perversion of the Jehovah-worship at the different local sanctuaries. There had for some time been a growing feeling that nothing could remedy the state of affairs but a return to the condition of things in the days of Moses, when Israel had but one tabernacle. It was assumed that Jehovah had specially chosen Jerusalem for His worship, and that no sacrifice made elsewhere could be legal. Hence the insistence throughout Deuteronomy that Israel might not offer a sacrifice or keep a feast save at the place which Jehovah should choose.

This Deuteronomic spirit constantly appears throughout

the books from Joshua to Kings, and the extraordinary impression made by this teaching is observable in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The phraseology of the school is quite unmistakable.

The last school, the Priestly, arose during the Captivity. At this time the nation was ruined, but the Church remained. An ecclesiastical spirit began to pervade Jewish thought. Even the influence of the house of David waned before that of the High Priest. The pioneers of the new movement were the exiled priests of the fallen Temple of Jerusalem. It was apparently inaugurated by Ezekiel, when, at the conclusion of his book, he described the restoration of the city and Temple. One of its main features was to be the rigid limitation of the priestly office to the sons of Zadok, the ancient priesthood of Jerusalem, and the relegation of the Levites, who had hitherto acted as priests, to humbler duties at the sanctuary. The result of this movement was the Priests' Code, which was not so much a promulgation of new laws as the publication of a priestly tradition preserved at Jerusalem stretching back ultimately even to the age of Moses, but now adapted to the requirements of a new age.

**The Priestly
School**

The tendency of the historians who came under the influence of this movement was to make events as far as possible square with their ideas of how the worship of Jehovah ought to have been conducted in early days. The most striking example is found in the book of Chronicles. The book of Kings, written under the influence of the Deuteronomists, points out how the sin of such a king as Solomon brought its punishment, but relates without comment that the monarch himself officiated at the dedication of the Temple. The priesthood is almost ignored. In the book of Chronicles, on the other hand, the priests take the lead at the dedication, and the Levites, in due subordination, conduct the musical parts of the service and minister to the priests; but nothing is said to the discredit of Solomon. His munificence and scrupulous fulfilment of the Law alone are mentioned.

To these priestly writers the latter part of Exodus, all the purely legal matter in Numbers, and all the book of

Leviticus, are due. Their influence is felt in Genesis, and parts of Joshua are attributable to them. Their earliest work is the last part of Leviticus, xix.-xxvi., now commonly called the "Law of Holiness," which marks the transition from the Deuteronomic to the priestly style.

Recapitulation

To recapitulate: there are three distinct strata in the composition of the historical books of the Old Testament, which may be here considered to extend from Genesis to Chronicles in the English Bible.

(1) The Jehovist and Elohist writers, historians rather than moralists, but deeply impressed by the Majesty of Jehovah. To them are due most of the vivid and picturesque narratives in the Old Testament. They give us, for example, the adventures of the patriarchs, the deeds of Jehovah in Egypt and in the wilderness, the exploits of the Judges, the wonderfully frank delineation of David's character, the missions of Elijah and Elisha, the fall of the Baal worshippers. Whether the writers are the relaters of the story in the Hexateuch, or the collectors of the tales of the Judges, or biographers of David or Elisha, their spirit is the same.

The Law as known to these writers is the Book of the Covenant in Exodus xx.-xxiv. The prophets who represent them are Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah.

(2) The Deuteronomistic writers are chiefly interested in moral questions. Their style is hortatory; to them history is a text for a discourse. Their work includes the greater part of Deuteronomy and most of the exhortations in the book of Joshua, the religious "setting" of Judges, parts of Samuel, the view of Solomon's reign given in Kings, etc. The chief prophetic writings of this school are Jeremiah and the main part of Ezekiel. Its Law is found in Deuteronomy, and its main object is to safeguard the purity of the sacrificial worship of Jehovah by restricting it to one place.

(3) The Priestly revisers of the laws of Israel paid most attention to ritual. They intruded their views on chronology, the account of the Creation and the Flood, the covenants of God with the patriarchs, etc., into the book of Genesis. In Exodus their hand is seen from the first

in the desire to make Aaron (the ancestor of the priests) the equal of Moses. It is they who have recorded the construction of the Tabernacle, the orders of the priestly and Levitical families, the sacrificial system of the sanctuary, the mode of observing the festivals. In Joshua they have named the districts assigned to the tribes. Judges, Samuel and Kings have been hardly touched by these revisers, but the book of Chronicles, an expurgated version of Samuel and Kings adapted to the peculiar views of this school, furnishes the best example of its method. The prophetic writings are Ezekiel's concluding chapters, xl.-xlviii., Haggai, Zechariah i.-viii., and Malachi.

One important point remains to be discussed, namely, the historical value of the Biblical records.

**Historical
value of
Bible records**

It must be evident to any one who endeavours to construct the story of Israel from the Old Testament that the task is a hard one. The writers have not merely collected a number of documents; they have used them for purposes of instruction. All the Israelite teachers recognised that the story of their race was of value to reveal God's dealing with man, and they made use of it accordingly. Much of what seemed to them not to be profitable for edification they omitted, and consequently there are gaps in the narrative most perplexing to the historian.

In addition to this there is very little information outside the Bible to be obtained. The Israelites are said by some to be mentioned by Menephtah II., whom some suppose to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus, about B.C. 1250. Shishak records an invasion of Palestine alluded to in 1 Kings. The Moabite Stone relates the victories of Moab over "the son of Omri." An Assyrian inscription mentions Ahab, and another Jehu. Except the late accounts of the Exodus given by heathen writers and reproduced by Josephus there are no other direct allusions to Israel before the eighth century, and by that time the Northern Kingdom, the greater part of the nation, was on the verge of destruction.

The Bible is therefore practically the sole source of information for most of Israel's history, and its testimony even on these grounds is of the highest importance. The docu-

mentary theory furnishes scope for a certain amount of critical discernment. It continually suggests the question whether the view taken of certain events is that of the age in which they occurred or of some subsequent period. The narratives in the Chronicles are an extreme example of this, as in them the characters give expression to the feelings of the Judaism of the fourth century B.C., and are veritably lay-figures when compared with the vigorous personalities portrayed in Kings. A less striking but more suggestive instance is the story of Jeroboam's religious apostasy related in 1 Kings xii.-xiv. It is pervaded by the idea that Jehovah could be rightly worshipped at but one sanctuary, an idea peculiar to the Deuteronomic period after the appearance of the Assyrian invaders in Israel (that is between 738-600 B.C.).

Under these circumstances a good deal of conjecture is allowable, but its results can never take the place of historical statements. Truly ingenious, for instance, is Stade's theory that the Israelites settled at first in the district round Mahanaim and Penuel to the south of the Sea of Galilee; that they crossed the Jordan in small parties near Jezreel and acquired tracts of land by purchase, till they were strong enough to suppress the Canaanites. But such a hypothesis rests on nothing but conjecture and the skilful manipulation of a few scattered notices, whereas the accepted account of crossing the Jordan near Jericho is supported by the traditions preserved not in one but in several documents. That there are difficulties in the Biblical narrative of the event cannot be denied, but the presence of contradictions real or apparent need not make tradition valueless, and it is frequently the case that the discovery of fresh evidence has re-established a tradition, which had been pronounced by experts to be incredible. Unless there is positive evidence against any tradition it should meet with respect, and this rule applies with special force to the sacred Scriptures of Israel.

Miracle and
prophecy

Miracle and prophecy play an important part in the history of the Hebrews. The whole question is one of extreme difficulty, and perhaps it is enough here to remark that though the human mind under the influence of modern ideas has the greatest difficulty in believing in any intervention

in the course of nature, no one has ever been able to prove that it has never been interrupted. A purely rationalistic account of such a people as Israel is not likely to give a correct impression. As far back as the evidence for the belief of the Israelites goes, the nation believed its existence to be supernatural. It was convinced that it was like no other nation, but had been specially chosen by an act of the Divine Will. The knowledge of Jehovah was believed to be due to successive acts of self-revelation on His part. All this is just as supernatural as anything which the Hebrews recorded as evidences of God's power. It is therefore not to deny the miraculous to attribute many supposed miracles to natural causes, or to question the credibility of others on the ground of the possibility of those who saw or reported them having been mistaken. It is the same with prophecy—to use the word in its most restricted sense of foretelling the future. In two particular cases, at least, the record of a prediction does seem to be later than the fulfilment, but this need not hinder the belief that God did supernaturally reveal His will to Israel.

Indeed, the wonderful story of the chosen people is itself a greater miracle than any exhibition of Divine power it records. It is absolutely unique in the history of humanity. No nation can shew a record in any way resembling it. That a people possessing their full share of human frailty, not naturally given to idealism, nor easily touched by appeals to their better nature, with apparently no special aptitude for religion, but hard-hearted and stiff-necked as their teachers describe them, should have existed for ages without country, or sanctuary, or any external coercion, simply for an idea, would be incredible if it were not a fact. That the extraordinary tenacity with which the Jews have clung to their nationality and institutions was due to a discipline which probably began in Egypt in the thirteenth century B.C. or earlier, and ended not much more than a century after the foundation of Rome, is almost beyond belief and yet is sober truth. That the literature produced by such a people should have had more influence on the mind of man than any other would not be so strange but for the fact that after the close of the canon no Hebrew literature has possessed any interest

**The greatest
miracle the
Jews them-
selves**

for the mass of humanity—a circumstance only explicable on the assumption that the books of the Old Testament contain a Divine message to mankind. All these things point to the fact that throughout its long, eventful and painful story Israel has been upheld by some external power not its own; and that the Jew has outlasted so many proud empires and ancient races is a miracle beside which the mere drying up of the Red Sea that his ancestors might escape from Egypt, need hardly cause more than a passing feeling of surprise.

A Brief Sketch of the History of Israel

Based on an Analysis of the Books of the
Hebrew Canon

SINCE there is so much dispute as to the real significance of the history of Israel as related in the canonical books of the Hebrew Scriptures, and, alas, such wide-spread ignorance as to their contents, I think it may be helpful to the student to add a short summary of the history of Israel as it is related in the Bible. For this purpose I have taken the books containing historical material mainly in the order in which they occur in the Hebrew (not the English) Bible, and have briefly summarised each, in order to shew that, whatever may be the conclusions at which we are compelled to arrive regarding the sources from which they derived their information, those to whom we owe the Bible *in its present form* had a distinct conception of their own of the course of events, and arranged the historical portions of the Hebrew Scriptures in such a way as to bring out the lessons they desired to inculcate.

The divisions into which the sacred books of the Jews fall are: I. *The Law*, consisting of the Pentateuch; II. *The Prophets*, (a) "the earlier" historical, (b) "the later" hortatory; III. *The Writings*, (a) poetical, (b) festal, (c) historical, relating to the Captivity and Return, including (d) a revised summary of history known as the Chronicles. To these may be added: IV. *The Apocryphal Writings*, which are regarded canonical in the older branches of the Church.

I

THE LAW

Hebrew, Torah

Genesis

Hebrew, "In the beginning" (Bereshith). Greek, Γένεσις.

I.—XI. *Primitive History*.—The Creation of the world and of the vegetable and animal kingdom culminating in the creation of man in God's image. Man placed in the Garden of Eden, the Fall and the Curse with the promise of Redemption. The death of Abel and the rejection of Cain. Two antediluvian pedigrees: (1) of the descendants of Cain, the builders of cities and inventors of the arts of life; (2) of Adam and Seth, a series of ten patriarchs, the chief of whom are Adam, Seth, Enoch, and Noah. The wickedness of man now becomes so great that a Flood is threatened and Noah warned to build the Ark. A twofold narrative of the Flood. The Covenant of God with Noah, and Noah's prediction of the fate of his three sons, Shem, Japheth, and Ham the father of Canaan. A survey of the nations of the world as descendants of Japheth, Ham and Shem. The presumption of man in building Babel (Babylon) and its tower, and the confusion of tongues. A genealogy, constructed on the same plan as that from Adam to Noah, from Shem to Terah and his three sons, ten generations.

XII.—XXV. 10. *Abram or Abraham*.—Abram, as he is called down to the changing of his name in xvii. 5, with his nephew Lot leaves Haran owing to a Divine command and enters "the Land," halting by the terebinth of Moreh near Sichem. He builds an altar between Bethel and Ai, and advances southward to the Negeb or desert country south of Judah. He visits Egypt (Mizraim) and returns to Bethel. There he gives Lot the choice, who selects the plain or circuit of Jordan and dwells in Sodom. Abram removes to Hebron. Promises are made to Abram by God on entering the Land and on his return from Egypt. Then follows a supplementary

chapter describing how Abram delivers Lot from Chedorlaomer and his confederates, and is blessed by Melchizedek, King of Salem. God makes a covenant with Abraham and he receives the promise of a son. First a son is born by his handmaid Hagar the Egyptian (Mizrith), and when Ishmael was thirteen years of age the covenant of circumcision is given. The three Heavenly Visitants appear to Abraham and promise that Sarah, his true wife, shall have a son. Abraham intercedes for Sodom, the doom of which is next described together with the deliverance of Lot, who at Zoar begets two sons, Moab and Ammon. Abraham visits Abimelech, king of Gerar, after which Isaac is born and Hagar and Ishmael thrust out into the wilderness of Beersheba, where an angel succours them and tells Hagar that Ishmael will become "a great nation." The temptation of Abraham follows and the supreme proof of his faith in offering Isaac is rewarded by a great promise. Sarah's death is the occasion of Abraham buying the field and cave of Machpelah, the burying place of the patriarchs, from Ephron the Hittite. The servant of Abraham is sent by his aged master to Mesopotamia, the home of the family, to choose a wife for Isaac, and he meets with Rebekah the granddaughter of Abraham's brother Nahor. Abraham is next described as taking Keturah to wife and becoming the father of six nations whose descendants were known as the "Sons of the East." He died at the age of 175.

XXV. 11—XXVIII. *Ishmael and Isaac: birth of Jacob and Esau.*—"The generations of Ishmael" shew that this patriarch begat "twelve princes" who dwelt "from Havilah to Shur that is before Egypt." The strife between Esau (Edom) and Jacob (Israel) began in the womb; and Jacob in early life purchased the birthright from his brother. We are next told how he obtained the blessing by fraud, and escaped from Esau to Bethel, where he saw the vision of angels and made a solemn vow to make Bethel his sanctuary.

XXIX.—XXXI. *Jacob and Laban.*—Jacob comes to Haran, and at the well he meets Leah and Rachel. He serves Laban for his daughters, and eleven of the patriarchs and a daughter Dinah are born to him. Jacob's skill as a shepherd makes him wealthier than Laban, and fearing his father-in-law's jealousy he escapes and crosses the Euphrates. Laban pursues him to Mount Gilead, and a covenant is made between Jacob and Laban, the Israelites and Aramæans, at Gal'ed, or Jegar-sahadutha.

XXXII.—XXXVI. *Jacob in Palestine; Esau.*—This section deals with the third generation of the chosen race. Jacob on leaving Laban appears at Mahanaim and sends messengers to Esau. At Penuel (or Peniel) he wrestles with a mysterious Visitant and receives his blessing and the name of Israel. After the meeting

with Esau Jacob goes to Succoth, and afterwards crosses the Jordan and settles at Shechem where he purchases land from Hamor the father of Shechem. Shechem humbles Dinah, Jacob's daughter; a treaty is made between the Shechemites and Jacob; but Simeon and Levi avenge the insult to their sister. Jacob accordingly goes to Bethel, and at Ephrath Rachel dies in giving birth to Benjamin. Isaac dies and Esau and Jacob bury him in the cave of Machpelah near Hebron. This section concludes with the "generations of Esau," a list of the sons of the patriarchs and of the "dukes" and kings of Edom.

XXXVII.—XXXVIII. *The generations of Jacob.*—There is an account of two sons of Jacob: Joseph, the favourite son, who is betrayed and sold by his brethren into Egypt (Mizraim); and Judah, whose sons Er and Onan are cut off for their sins. The story of Tamar the wife of Er is then related, and the birth of her twin sons by Judah, Pharez and Zarah.

XXXIX.—L. *The Israelites in Egypt.*—Joseph's fidelity to Potiphar leads to his being cast into prison, where his trustworthiness still wins him favour. He interprets the chief butler's and baker's dreams, and when Pharaoh hears of his fame and receives good advice he sets Joseph over Egypt. The famine takes place as Joseph had predicted, and his brethren come down to Egypt. Joseph by his prudent management purchases all the land during the famine for Pharaoh. Jacob comes down with his whole family and is settled in Goshen "in the land of Rameses." Jacob falls sick in Egypt and is visited by Joseph, who brings him his two sons, Manasseh the elder, and Ephraim the younger. Jacob blesses them and sets Ephraim before Manasseh. Then the patriarch assembles his twelve sons and declares what will happen to them "in the last days." Jacob dies, and Joseph embalms the body and takes it to Hebron to bury in Machpelah. When Joseph dies he makes his brethren swear that they will take his bones out of Egypt.

Exodus

Hebrew, "Names" (Shemoth). Greek, "Ἐξόδος.

I.—II. *The oppression of Israel and Birth of Moses.*—The Israelites multiply so rapidly that the "new" king of Egypt who knew not Joseph becomes alarmed. First he oppresses the people and makes them build the cities Pithom and Raamses, then he orders the midwives to slay the male children as soon as they are born, and finally he commands the Israelites to cast their sons into the

river. Moses, however, is saved by Pharaoh's daughter, brought up as her son, and when he is grown up defends the oppressed Israelites, escapes to Midian and becomes the son-in-law of Jethro.

III.—XI. *The revelation to Moses ; Moses and Aaron in Egypt.*—In the wilderness of Horeb God appears to Moses in the burning bush, reveals His Name JHVH, and promises deliverance for Israel. Moses is given signs and Aaron is to be his spokesman. The people believe when they hear the words of God's messengers. Pharaoh, however, only adds to the labours of the people, and Moses remonstrates with God. Again the NAME is revealed. Jehovah declares to Moses 'See I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet,' and sends them again to Pharaoh. Nine of the ten plagues follow, but Pharaoh remains stubborn.

XII.—XV. 22. *The Passover and the Exodus.*—The story of the tenth plague is prefaced by the legislation for the observance of the feast of the Passover and that of unleavened bread. In accordance with these laws Moses order the elders to observe the feast, and on the same night the slaying of the firstborn compels Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to depart. The people journey from Rameses to Succoth. More paschal laws and the command to sanctify the firstborn interrupt the narrative of the journey from Succoth to Etham on the edge of the wilderness. Pharaoh regrets allowing the people to depart and pursues them, with the result that his army is lost in the Yam-Suph (Red Sea). The section concludes with a Song of Triumph.

XV. 23—XIX. *The Journey to Sinai ; the Theophany.*—The Israelites enter the wilderness of Shur and come to Marah and Elim. On the 15th day of the second month they are in the wilderness of Sin. Here the quails are sent and the manna given. The rock in Horeb is smitten, and the place is called Massah and Meribah. The Amalekites are defeated, and Moses visited by his father-in-law, Jethro. In the third month the people encamp before Sinai, and prepare for the Theophany.

XX.—XXIV. *The Covenant.*—The ten commandments (ten words) are spoken by God Himself, and then the Israelites beg that the rest of the Law may be spoken to Moses. Moses then enters "the thick darkness" and receives the earliest legislation, which from its solemn inauguration with the sprinkling of blood is called "The Book of the Covenant." Moses and his minister, Joshua, now ascend the mount.

XXV.—XXXI. *The Tabernacle and Priesthood.*—Instructions are given for making the Tabernacle and for the consecration of Aaron and his sons as its priests. The law of the Sabbath is renewed, and

Moses is given "the two tablets of testimony written with the finger of God."

XXXII.—XXXIV. *Moses' descent from the Mount; The other "ten words."*—Aaron makes the golden calf, which the people are worshipping as Moses with Joshua descends the mountain. The tribe of Levi take vengeance upon the people. God again talks with Moses, who asks to see His Glory. Moses makes new tables and God writes on them ten other commandments. When Moses returns after this vision with the "ten words" inscribed by God in his hands he has to veil his face because of its brightness.

XXXV.—XL. *The Making of the Tabernacle.*—Moses assembles the people and enjoins the observance of the Sabbath, and commands them to make the Tabernacle. When all is prepared it is commanded to be raised up; Aaron and his sons are consecrated; and the "cloud of the Lord" covers the Tabernacle.

Leviticus

Hebrew, "And he called" (Wayyikra). Greek, Λευιτικόν.

The book is in no sense historical but purely legislative, there being only two historical portions: viz. the consecration of the priests and the death of Aaron's eldest sons Nadab and Abihu (viii.—x.), and the punishment of a blasphemer (xxiv. 10-23).

The book falls into two sections.—(A) chs. i.—xvi., Legal: dealing with Sacrifices, portions reserved for the priests, animal food clean and unclean, purification, leprosy, the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement. (B) chs. xvii.—xxvi., Hortatory: called the Law of Holiness (*Das Heiligkeitgesetz*) because of its insistence on holiness:—partly ceremonial and partly moral—as a quality demanded of Israel by Jehovah. This section treats of the legal manner of slaughtering animals for food, unlawful marriages and unchastity, regulations mainly ethical, laws for preserving the peculiar holiness of the priests, a calendar of sacred seasons, the Sabbatical year and the jubile: a hortatory conclusion.

Strange to say the Levites are never mentioned in this book.

Numbers

Hebrew, "In the wilderness" (Bemidhbar). Greek, Ἀριθμοί.

The fourth book of Moses deals with a definite period of history extending over about thirty-eight years. The first historical event, the departure from Sinai, takes place on the first day of the second

month of the second year of the Exodus, Aaron dies on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year, after which the Israelites encamp on the Plains of Moab, and the wanderings are ended. The book opens with a census of the twelve tribes, hence the Greek Jews gave it the name of *Ἀριθμοί*. Despite many legislative interruptions a distinct historical narrative runs through the book.

I.—X. 10. *The Israelites prepare to start from Sinai on their march to Kadesh.*—The people are numbered, the Levites appointed their stations, and the order of march arranged. The chieftains make their offerings at the Tabernacle, a second passover is held, and one a month later for those who had been unable to keep the feast. The silver trumpets are made and directions given as to how they are to be blown on the march. (A great deal of legislation is introduced into this section.)

X. 11—XIX. *The march to Kadesh and Israel's failure to enter the Land : Korah's rebellion.*—The people leave the wilderness of Sinai for that of Paran, where the cloud which guided them rests once more. Hobab, the son of Moses' father-in-law, Raguel, becomes their guide. At Taberah the people are consumed by fire, and at Kibroth-hattaavah by plague. Aaron and Miriam murmur against Moses before the wilderness of Paran is reached. The spies are sent, and the people defeated in their attempt to enter the land at Hormah. Korah, Dathan and Abiram rebel against Moses and are punished.

XX.—XXI. *The passing away of the older generation and the march from Kadesh to Eastern Palestine.*—Miriam dies in Kadesh, and Moses and Aaron give offence by striking the rock at the Water of Meribah (but see Ex. xvii. 7). The embassy to Edom and the journey to Mt. Hor, where Aaron dies, and Arad the Canaanite defeats the Israelites. The people march to the Red Sea (the Gulf of 'Akabah) avoiding the territory of Edom. On the journey the fiery serpents are sent to punish the murmuring of the people. The itinerary is given till the passing of the Arnon. Then Israel encamps in the valley of Moab and defeats Sihon, the Amorite king who had conquered much of the Moabite territory, and Og, king of Bashan.

XXII.—XXXVI. *Israel in the plains of Moab.*—Balaam is summoned by Balak, King of Moab, to curse the people, but fails; the people, however, join with the Moabites (xxv. 1) and the Midianites (vv. 6, 14, 17) in idolatry, and impurity at Baal-peor. Some legislation, a numbering of the people, and the law of female inheritance, as illustrated by the case of the daughters of Zelophehad (ch. xxvii.), follows; and the Midianites are punished for having instigated the sin of Peor at the suggestion of Balaam (xxxi. 16). The Reubenites and Gadites are given an inheritance on the east of Jordan on

condition that they assist in the conquest of Western Palestine. The stations of the journeyings in the wilderness are given, and Eleazar the priest and Joshua are ordered to divide the Land.

Deuteronomy

Hebrew, "Words" (Debharim). Greek, *Δευτερονόμιον*.

This is not in any sense an historical book and it covers a period of at most a few days duration. It is really a prophetic rather than a book of laws, being the last discourses of Moses, in which he is represented as repeating some of the legal enactments, hence the Greek translators happily named it the second law (*δευτερονόμιον*)¹ The main object of the book is to exhort the people to remain true to Jehovah. There is, however, a short historical retrospect which, like the laws differ somewhat from that in the earlier books.

In this book Moses delivers three discourses.

(a) I. 6—IV. 40. He describes the journeys in the wilderness to their close and exhorts the people not to forget what they had been commanded in Horeb.

(b) V.—XXVI. Legislation, beginning with a hortatory discourse, inculcating the theocratic principles on which the polity of Israel was based (v.—xi.), and ending with a code of laws. These laws are to be formally accepted in Palestine (xxvii.) and dreadful penalties will follow disobedience (xxviii.).

(c) Moses' third discourse (XXIX.—XXXI.) his farewell to the people and the delivery of the Law to the priests. The book concludes with Moses' song and blessing of the tribes and the ascent of Pisgah, the view of Palestine, and the death of the Lawgiver (XXXII.—XXXIV.).

We now pass from the Law, the first division of the Hebrew Canon, to the Prophetic Books, the four earlier of which are historical.

¹From Deut. xvii. 18, τὸ δευτερονόμιον τοῦτο, the Hebrew of which, says Driver, signifies "a repetition, i.e. copy of this law." (*Introduction*, p. 65 note.)

II

THE PROPHETS

Hebrew, *Nebi'im*
(the four earlier)

Joshua

Greek. Ἰησοῦς Ναυῆ.

This book is so much a continuation of the five books of Moses that modern scholars include it with them and speak of a Hexateuch instead of a Pentateuch. In the Jewish Canon, however, it is regarded as a prophetic book.

It is evidently a continuation of the Law and begins with a conjunction "now" or "and," as do Judges, Samuel and Kings. The book falls into three main divisions. (1) I.—XI. An account of the conquest of Canaan; (2) XII.—XXII. The division of the Land; (3) XXIII.—XXIV. The last discourses of Joshua and the deaths of Joshua and Eleazar.

(1) The Conquest of the Land is related systematically. Joshua, after crossing the Jordan, destroys Jericho and endeavours, at first unsuccessfully owing to the sin of Achan, to seize the highlands of Benjamin. After Ai is taken Joshua and the people go to Ebal and Gerizim and read the Law as Moses had commanded (Deut. xxvii.). The alliance with the Gibeonites is fraudulently obtained; then the five Kings of the South are defeated and their territory devastated. Finally Joshua takes Northern Palestine from Jabin, King of Hazor.

(2) Only two tribes are assigned inheritances by Joshua himself, namely Judah and Joseph, and, as the latter is reckoned as two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, the remaining seven tribes (Reuben and Gad having been already settled in E. Palestine) are allotted territories which were yet to be won from the inhabitants of Canaan. The Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh are repre-

sented as returning to their lands, and an altar made by them is shewn not to have been schismatic, but merely a memorial.

(3) Joshua exhorts the people to remain faithful to Jehovah, and they promise to do so. Joshua dies at the age of one hundred and ten, and as Caleb says he was forty when he was faithful as one of the spies, if Joshua was his contemporary he presumably survived Moses by about thirty years.

Judges

This is different from any early book of the Bible except Genesis, being an historical survey of a long period extending, if its system of chronology is accepted, over more than three centuries.

Chs. I.—II. The book opens with a summary account of the conquest of the Land after the death of Joshua, differing in many respects from the circumstances related in the previous book, especially in the Land being subdued, not by a general national effort, but by individual tribes, acting sometimes in concert as Judah and Simeon, but often independently. It impresses the reader with the idea that the conquest was extremely partial, and that the old inhabitants were still powerful. The generation which had known Joshua remained faithful to Jehovah; but then Israel forsook Him and served Baalim and Ashtaroth.

Chs. III.—XVI. Then follows the history of the nation under twelve Judges, six of whom are the subject of special memoirs: Othniel, Ehud, Deborah with Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. The six minor Judges were Shamgar the successor of Ehud, Tola and Jair, who followed the supremacy of the family of Gideon, and Ibzan, Elon and Abdon, who succeeded Jephthah. The stories of four of the great Judges are told each on the same plan—an apostasy, an oppression, deliverance, and a period of rest: see iii. 8-11 (Othniel); iii. 12-30 (Ehud); iv.—v. (Deborah and Barak); vi.—viii. (Gideon—see vi. 1, and viii. 28. The curious episode of Abimelech and the Shechemites (ix.) follows: and the judgeship of Jephthah is then related (x.—xii.), though the periods of oppression and rest are here not distinctly specified. Chapters xiii.—xvi. relate the Philistine oppression of forty years and the personal adventures of Samson, who was Judge for twenty.

Chs. XVII.—XXI. The book concludes with two supplementary narratives, told for the purpose of shewing the state of Israel when there was no king, and thus leading up to the establishment of the monarchy. xvii.—xviii. relate the adventures of the Danites, who made a new settlement and carried away Micah's *sacra*; and xix.—xxi. the outrage at Gibeah, the Benjamite war, and the subsequent

restoration of the tribe. The book concludes with a remark on the lawlessness of the country when there was no king in Israel.

We now come to two books, those of Samuel and Kings, which are divided into four in the Hebrew canon, and in the LXX. are considered as four parts of one book, that of the 'kingdoms,' βασιλειῶν. The periods covered by them are very uneven. I. Samuel gives the history of Samuel, Saul, and David, who were all alive at the same time, so that the narrative covers at most four generations. II. Samuel deals with the greater part of the forty years reign of David: I. Kings takes us from Solomon to Ahab, about 150 years; and II. Kings from Ahab to the thirty-seventh year of the Captivity of Judah, or roughly, three centuries. In these books therefore short periods are treated with much detail, whilst generations are passed over in a few verses.

I. Samuel

Greek, βασιλειῶν α'.

The main divisions of this book are :—

(a) I.—VI. *The priestly judgeship of Eli at Shiloh, the birth of Samuel, the utter degradation of the priesthood, and the loss of the Ark.* The Philistine yoke is now firmly planted on the neck of Israel; and though Jehovah saves His Ark from the indignity of remaining in a Philistine city and temple, it is not restored to Israel; but it remains in seclusion at Kirjath-jéarim.

(b) VII.—VIII. *The judgeship of Samuel and the demand of the people for a king.* Samuel exhorts the people to repent and, after a solemn national assent, the Philistines are attacked and defeated at Ebenezer. Then follows a period of peace, during which Samuel exercises his office as a judge. His two sons are unsatisfactory as judges in Beersheba; and the people ask for a king. This Samuel regards as a sign of national apostasy, and tells the people what a kingly rule actually means.

(c) IX.—XV. *The appointment, reign and rejection of Saul the Benjamite.* Saul is privately anointed by Samuel, designated by Jehovah and acknowledged by the people. He defeats Nahash the Ammonite, and with the aid of his son Jonathan gains a great victory over the Philistines, who had become complete masters of the territory of Israel. Saul, however, offends Samuel by not awaiting his

coming at Gilgal, and by sparing Agag, the king of the Amalekites. For this he is told that Jehovah will deprive him of his kingdom.

(d) XVI.—XXXI. *The adventures of David to the death of Saul.*—From his anointing by Samuel David becomes the leading character. He is sent to play to relieve Saul's melancholy, he slays Goliath, becomes the friend and companion in arms of Jonathan and the son-in-law of Saul. His fame as a warrior makes Saul jealous and David becomes a fugitive. His adventures in Southern Judah, his hairbreadth escapes, his acts of generosity, and his rise from the position of an outlaw to that of the leader of a band of warriors under Philistine protection, are related with some detail. Finally Saul is defeated and killed with four of his sons on Mount Gilboa.

II. Samuel

Greek, Βασιλειῶν β'.

The forty years reign of David occupies this book, though a great part is devoted to several isolated instances. David prospers till his sin with Bathsheba, and then "the sword never departs from his house."

I.—IV. *The joint rule of David at Hebron and Ishbosheth son of Saul at Mahanaim.*—Israel is divided into two kingdoms constantly at war, the larger part under Ishbosheth and his able kinsman and general Abner. David, assisted by Joab, increases in power, and Joab commences a blood-feud with Abner, who had killed his brother Asahel in battle. Abner renounces his allegiance to Ishbosheth, and makes terms with David; but he is slain by Joab. Ishbosheth is murdered and David is left the only king in Israel.

V.—X. *The prosperous period of the reign of David.*—David's first act as king of all Israel is to capture Jerusalem and to build a palace there with the aid of Hiram, King of Tyre; he conquers the Philistines and restores the Ark to Israel, placing it in his new capital. He desires to build a temple, but is forbidden by Jehovah through the prophet Nathan. His wars are then recounted: Moab, Edom, Ammon, the Philistines and the Syrians are conquered and acknowledge him as suzerain. A chapter is devoted to the war with the Ammonites and their allies.

XI.—XX. *David's sin and its punishment.*—During the Ammonite war David sees and loves Bathsheba and procures her husband's death. As a punishment the sword is never to depart from his house; and the fulfilment of the prophecy is related at length. His favourite son Absalom murders his brother Amnon in revenge for his conduct to Tamar. Restored to favour, Absalom rebels

against David, and almost succeeds in dethroning him. He is in the end defeated and slain by Joab, who suppresses another rebellion led by the Benjamite, Sheba the son of Bichri.

XXI.—XXIV. *Detached supplementary chapters.*—The slaughter of Saul's sons to appease the injured Gibeonites is related, together with the exploits of some of David's warriors in the Philistine war. Two poems of David follow this chapter, and next comes an enumeration of the chief champions of Israel. The book concludes with the numbering of the people and the purchase of the threshing floor of Araunah.

I. Kings

Greek, Βασιλειῶν γ'.

The history of David is continued without any break, and we find him an aged man awaiting his death and prepared to nominate his successor. The chief periods treated of in the book are :—

I.—III. *The death of David and the accession of Solomon.*—In David's extreme old age the succession became the subject of palace intrigue: Joab, the veteran commander of the army, and Abiathar the priest supporting Adonijah; and Benaiah, Nathan, and Zadok supporting Bathsheba's son Solomon. Solomon becomes king not without the bloodshed consequent upon a disputed succession: but soon shews himself a devout and wise prince.

IV.—X. *The glories of Solomon's reign; The Temple.*—David's successful wars had made his son a wealthy and powerful monarch, and Solomon organised his kingdom so as to make it the centre of an extensive commerce. With the aid of Hiram, King of Tyre, he builds the temple at Jerusalem, together with several royal palaces and castles. His wealth and wisdom induce various monarchs to visit his court, among them the Queen of Sheba.

XI.—XII. 25. *The sin of Solomon and the disruption.*—Amid all his prosperity Solomon was sowing the seeds of calamity. His reckless expenditure had already caused him to cede twenty cities to Hiram (ix. 11-13), and his foreign wives led him to sanction idolatry. His subjected countries Edom and Syria revolted, and the Ephraimites under Jeroboam manifested discontent at the forced labour exacted from them. The kingdom was only held together by Solomon's personal influence, and at his death the folly of his successor Rehoboam caused the northern tribes under Jeroboam to declare their independence of the house of David.

XII. 26—XVI. *The religious Schism and the divided Kingdoms.*—Policy induced Jeroboam to erect sanctuaries in Bethel and Dan and to consecrate priests to minister at them. This is the "Sin of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat" which ultimately caused the ruin of Israel.

Jeroboam's sin is denounced by the disobedient prophet and Ahijah of Shiloh, and his family is destroyed by Baasha, whose dynasty in turn is annihilated by Zimri. Israel and Judah are continually at war and Syria is called in to assist Asa king of Judah. At the accession of Zimri a civil war breaks out in Israel which only ends with the accession of Omri, a powerful prince, founder of Samaria and the first of an energetic dynasty. In Judah, Asa reigns well and begins a religious reformation, whilst the Northern Kingdom falls into idolatry.

XVII.—XXII. *The strife between the worshippers of Baal and Jehovah ; Elijah.*—Ahab son of Omri marries Jezebel, a Zidonian princess, and sets up the worship of the Tyrian Baal. For this Elijah the Tishbite foretells a drought and famine, and after the land had suffered grievously demands to be confronted with the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. Jehovah vindicates His honour by sending fire from heaven ; the rain comes, and the priests of Baal are massacred. Jezebel drives Elijah from the kingdom, and at Horeb he is told by God to anoint Elisha as prophet, Jehu as king of Israel, and Hazael as king of Syria. Ahab sins in the matter of Naboth and his doom is foretold. The Syrian war between Benhadad and Ahab occupies much of this portion of the book, in which the king of Israel appears in the light of a brave and successful warrior ; but he is finally killed in battle at Ramoth-Gilead. The affairs of Judah under the good king Jehoshaphat are only alluded to as affecting Israel ; Jehoshaphat being in the position of a vassal of the powerful Ahab.

II. Kings

Greek, βασιλειῶν δ'.

I.—XIII. *The destruction of the Baal worship in Israel.*—This long section is a continuation of I. Kings and is occupied with the last scenes of the life of Elijah and the ministry of Elisha. The affairs of the Northern Kingdom are still of all-absorbing interest. Elijah predicts the death of Ahab's son Ahaziah and calls down fire from heaven on the men sent to take him. Accompanied by Elisha he crosses the Jordan and ascends to heaven. Elisha then continues his master's work ; and long and interesting stories are related of him. He saves the allied armies of Israel, Judah, and Edom in the Moabite war, works many miracles including the healing of Naaman and the raising of the son of the woman of Shunem, and is the life and soul of the nation in its struggle with Syria. By his command a prophet anoints Jehu, and the house of Ahab and the Baal worshippers are slain. He also foretells to Hazael that he will be

king of Syria. At the same time as Jehu extirpates the house of Ahab, that king's daughter Athaliah kills all the royal family at Jerusalem except the young Joash, who finally becomes king in the revolution which overthrew Athaliah. Under the dynasty of Jehu, Israel is sorely harassed by Syria, but Elisha on his death-bed foretells to Jehoash, the grandson of Jehu, that he will be successful against Syria.

XIV.—XVII. *The last days of the Northern Kingdom.*—The history now becomes more of the nature of a chronicle. Except the war between Jehoash of Israel and Amaziah of Judah, nothing is related with any detail. The length of the reign of each king of Israel and Judah is given and a few particulars. Under Jeroboam II., the fourth king of the house of Jehu, Israel became very powerful, and Judah flourished at the same time under Uzziah. One of the many revolutions in Israel overthrew the house of Jehu; then king follows king in rapid succession, the Assyrians appear on the scene and Samaria is taken B.C. 722. A chapter (xvii.) is devoted to an account of the origin of the heretical Samaritan nation.

XVIII.—XX. *The reign of Hezekiah of Judah.*—The early victories and reforms of Hezekiah are briefly epitomised, but the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib and the destruction of the army which threatened Jerusalem, is related in a very graphic and spirited manner; as is also Hezekiah's sickness and the embassy of Merodach Baladan, King of Babylon. The general impression left is that Hezekiah was a pious and able king who, assisted by Isaiah, had brought his kingdom safely through a very critical situation.

XXI.—XXV. *The apostasy of Manasseh, the reform of Josiah, and the fall of Jerusalem.*—The important events of this period, with the exception of the finding of the Book of the Law and its results, are passed over with provoking brevity. Under Hezekiah's son Manasseh, a violent reaction against the reforms of the late king and in favour of the "high places" set in and continued for more than half a century. Then Josiah favours a purer worship of Jehovah and, assisted by the discovery of the "book of the law," Jerusalem and even Bethel is purified of every trace of idolatry. In spite of his pious zeal Josiah is defeated by Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo, and under his degenerate sons things go from bad to worse. Josiah's grandson Jehoiachin is taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, and under his uncle Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, Jerusalem is taken and the Temple burned. The miserable remnant left in Judah are committed to the care of Gedaliah, who is murdered, and the rest of the people escape into Egypt. The last verses of the book relate how Nebuchadnezzar's son Evil-Merodach shewed favour to Jehoiachin the captive king of Judah in Babylon.

Thus in the four earlier so-called prophetical books a continuous history of the Israelites is presented to us. We now turn to the four later prophetical books: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and "the Twelve" (known as the Minor Prophets). These are not historical books; but they may be aptly described as a collection of pamphlets, mostly hortatory, but often historical, and from these we may supplement the story as we have it in the earlier books. In Isaiah, Jeremiah, and "the Twelve," these pamphlets are loosely strung together, and to use them as historical documents is an excellent introduction to the study of detached contemporary fragments. Parts of Isaiah and of "the Twelve" and most of Ezekiel are a little outside the period included in the Books of Kings.

The Four 'Later Prophets'

Isaiah

Hebrew, *Yēsha'yāhû*. Greek, *Ἡσαΐας*.

It is almost certain that this collection of prophecies is not the work of a single individual. It begins in the last year of King Uzziah (vi.) B.C. 740 (Driver), and contains allusions to Cyrus B.C. 538. Parts (i.—xii., xiv. 24—xx., xxi. 11 ff.—xxiii., xxviii.—xxxiii.) are generally admitted to be the utterances of Isaiah the son of Amoz; but xiii.—xiv. 23 and xl.—lxvi. refer to the time when Babylon, not Assyria, was the enemy of Israel, whilst xxiv.—xxvii. are very different in style to the Isaianic passages. Without, however, entering into a discussion of the unity of the authorship, it may be said that it possesses a certain unity of purpose in shewing that however Jehovah may punish His people He provides deliverance for the faithful remnant. Roughly speaking, Isaiah i.—xxxix. deals with the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah from B.C. 740 to 690, and Isaiah xl.—lxvi. with the last days of the Captivity. B.C. 538-535, and the issuing of the decree of Cyrus permitting the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem. The chief historical events alluded to in the first section are (1) the alliance of Syria and Israel against Judah in the reign of Ahaz and his submission to Assyria (vii.),

the fall of Samaria (xviii.), the invasion of Judah by Sargon (xx.), an Assyrian advance (?) from the north on Jerusalem (x.), the projected alliance of Judah with Egypt against the Assyrians, denounced by the prophet (xxx. ff.), and Sennacherib's invasion, Hezekiah's sickness and the embassy of Merodach Baladan (xxxvi.—xxxix.). See the parallel chapters in 2 Kings xviii. 13—xx. The second part (xl.—lxvi.) is a series of prophecies dealing with the decree of Cyrus, the most important being those dealing with the work of the Servant of Jehovah (xlix.—liii.).

Jeremiah

Hebrew, *Yirmiyāhu*. Greek, *Ἰερεμίας*.

This book contains a very large proportion of history mingled with prophecy and covers a period of forty or more years: Jeremiah being called to the prophetic office in the 13th year of Josiah, B.C. 626, and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans taking place in B.C. 586. The historical portions of this book supplement the extremely meagre notices of the last four kings of Judah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, given in 2 Kings xxiii. 30—xxv. 30 (fifty-eight verses) and 2 Chron. xxxvi. The last siege of Jerusalem and the vacillations of the unfortunate Zedekiah and the fate of the remnant left in Judah under Gedaliah which finally took refuge in Egypt are related in some detail. But for Jeremiah, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah and Gedaliah would be mere names to us. The historical parts of Jeremiah will be best understood if arranged under the different kings, as in the early chapters the book is far from being chronological.

Josiah, B.C. 639-609. Jeremiah was called in the 13th year of this king, and in his 18th year (2 Kings xxii. 3) there was the finding of the Law and the great reformation. No particulars of this reign are given in the book of Jeremiah; but Jeremiah evidently approved of Josiah (xxii. 15).

Jehoahaz, B.C. 609. Made king, but taken into captivity to Egypt (xxii. 10).

Jehoiakim, B.C. 608-596. A dependent of Pharaoh Necho and an oppressor of the people (xxii. 13-19), he became a subject of Nebuchadrezzar after the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish (xlvi. 2) in the fourth year of his reign. Jeremiah instantly advised submission to Babylon (xxv.), foreseeing Nebuchadrezzar's success. He also wrote his prophecies in a book which Baruch read to the princes of Judah in the following year. Jehoiakim, when he

heard the contents of the roll, destroyed it (xxxvi.). The impressive contrast between the Rechabites' obedience to Jehonadab and Israel's disregard of Jehovah was made in the same reign. (xxxv.) This king killed several prophets and sought Jeremiah's life (xxvi.). Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar at the end of his reign, but how he died is uncertain (cf. Jer. xxii. 18, 19, xxxvi. 30, with 2 Kings xxiv. 6).

Jehoiachin, called Coniah by Jeremiah (xxii. 24), only reigned three months and was taken captive to Babylon (xxix. 1-2).

Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was a son of Josiah, and was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the events of the ten years of his reign (B.C. 596-586), especially the last year of the siege of Jerusalem, are related in the book of Jeremiah. Zedekiah was apparently a well-meaning but weak king placed in an almost impossible position. False prophets of the so-called patriotic party were foretelling the overthrow of Babylon and the restoration of Jehoiachin (Jer. xxviii. 2-4), and he was induced to break his oath to Nebuchadnezzar and accept support from Egypt. (Ez. xvii.) At last Nebuchadnezzar sent an army to besiege Jerusalem, which resisted for three years, during which time Jeremiah was persecuted by the nobles opposed to Babylon and protected where possible by the King. When the city was taken Zedekiah tried to escape but was taken prisoner and blinded: Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. The following chapters of Jeremiah refer to this king: xxi., xxiv., xxvii.—xxix., xxxii.—xxxiv., xxxvii., xxxviii., xxxix., lii. 1-11.

The Remnant in Judah and in Egypt. Chs. xl.—xlv. relate that Jeremiah elected to stay with the remnant left by the Chaldeans in Judah in charge of Gedaliah. Gedaliah was murdered by a certain Ishmael, a scion of the royal family of Judah. The rest of the people, under Johanan the son of Kareah, fearing the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar escaped to Egypt, taking Jeremiah with them.

[The text and arrangement of this book in the LXX. differs materially from that in the Hebrew.]

Ezekiel

Hebrew, Yihizqiel. Greek, Ἰεζεκὴλ.

This book is in some respects unique, especially owing to what Dr. Driver (*Introduction*, 2nd ed., p. 261) is able to say of it: "The dates of the several prophecies are in many cases stated with precision. No critical question arises in connection with the author-

ship of the book, the whole from beginning to end bearing unmistakably the stamp of a single mind"; and again, "The volume of his prophecies is methodically arranged, evidently by his own hand: his book in this respect forms a striking contrast with those of Isaiah or Jeremiah."

Ezekiel was a priest carried captive to Tel-abib by the river Chebar. He received his call in the 5th year of the captivity of Jehoiachin (B.C. 592), and the latest date in his book is B.C. 570. There is no distinctly historical matter in Ezekiel, whose utterances are divided into three heads: (a) I.—XXIV., The approaching fall of Jerusalem; (b) XXV.—XXXII., Prophecies on foreign nations; (c) XXXIII.—XLIV., The future restoration of Israel and the Theocracy. Form the standpoint of the historian Ezekiel is chiefly valuable for the light thrown on the thoughts and feelings of a community of exiled Israelites during the eventful years which intervened between the deportation of Jehoiachin (B.C. 596) and the fall of the City and Temple in B.C. 586. But Ezekiel's ministry as a prophet had a far-reaching influence upon the subsequent destinies of Judaism. In the darkest days of the Exile he devoted his energies to planning a constitution, civil and religious, for the restored community which materially affected the development of religion at Jerusalem after the Return.

The Minor Prophets

(Considered by the Jews as a single book called "The Twelve.")

Instead of adhering to the order observed in the Bible an attempt will be made to place these writings in chronological order, distinguishing between dated and undated prophecies.

Dated Prophecies

Amos.	In the days of Uzziah, King of Judah and of Jeroboam II., King of Israel.
Hosea.	In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam II., King of Israel.
Micah.	In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah.
Zephaniah.	In the days of Josiah.
Haggai.	In the second year of Darius the King.
Zechariah.	In the second year of Darius.

Undated Prophets

Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk. Malachi.

Amos

Amos was a native of Tekoa in Judah, his occupation was that of a herdsman, and he declined the name of a prophet. He was, however, specially commissioned by Jehovah to denounce the sins of Israel at the Royal Sanctuary at Bethel (vii.) some time about B.C. 760 to 746. His prophecies throw a light on the state of Israel under Jeroboam II., whose long and successful reign is briefly alluded to in 2 Kings xiv. 23-29. After a survey of the surrounding nations—Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Judah—Amos denounces the sins of Israel, which are chiefly those of a nation in an age of great prosperity, punctilious in religious observances, but regardless of the sufferings of the poor and supremely self-indulgent. Amos's utterances reveal the religious belief of Israel, and he insists strongly on the fact that the God of Israel is the Supreme Moral Governor of the world and will punish every guilty nation, not sparing His own people.

Hosea

Although Hosea is said to have prophesied under Jeroboam II. he was evidently not a contemporary of Amos, as he seems to allude mainly to the disastrous period which followed the death of Jeroboam (2 Kings xv. 8-31) between B.C. 746-722. The first section (I.—III.) appears to belong to the closing years of Jeroboam; and the rest of the book to the days of his successors Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah and Hoshea. The scene has materially changed since the prophecies of Amos. The Assyrians, never mentioned by the earlier prophet, now appear, and Israel, no longer prosperous, is passing through a period of anarchy, crime, and civil war prior to the final ruin of the nation.

Micah

Micah was a younger contemporary of Isaiah, but, unlike him, dwelt not in Jerusalem but in the maritime plain at Moresheth, a dependency of Gath. He depicts the Assyrian invasion and the sufferings of the district in which he dwells, and foretells the rise of a

deliverer when Judah returns to the simplicity of ancient times when a shepherd-king like David of Bethlehem was its ruler. The last two chapters (vi.-vii.), cast in dramatic form, showing how Jehovah pleads with His people, are by many critics assigned to a later prophet, belonging perhaps to the post-exilic period.

Zephaniah

Zephaniah is said to be descended from Hezekiah, presumably the king. He predicts the fall of Nineveh and possibly alludes to the Scythian invasion (see p. 301).

Haggai and Zechariah

These two prophets encouraged the rebuilding of the Temple in the days of Darius and they supplement Ezra iv. The prophecy of Haggai consists of four addresses to Zerubbabel the prince and Joshua the high priest, in the second year of Darius, B.C. 520. There is no allusion to a return in the days of Cyrus, nor to the second Temple having been begun in that king's reign. Zechariah i.—viii. consists mainly of visions extending over the 2nd to the 4th years of Darius, B.C. 520-518, and assuring the people that Zerubbabel shall successfully accomplish the rebuilding of the Temple.

The last chapters of Zechariah (ix.—xiv.) are not an integral part of the book, and may be regarded as an undated prophecy.

Joel

Joel is described as the son of Pethuel, but no date is given. It was formerly generally considered that the prophecy belonged to the 9th century and the reign of Joash. There are in it some affinities with Amos, but the modern view is that Joel is the later prophecy. The occasion of it was an appalling plague of locusts which called for a national repentance. The prophecy concludes with foretelling the restoration of the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, and a gathering of all nations for judgment at Jerusalem in the valley of Jehoshaphat (*Jehovah judges*).

Obadiah

A vision of judgment on Edom, reminding us forcibly of Jeremiah's prophecy, Jer. xlix. 7 ff.

Jonah

In 2 Kings xiv. 25, Jeroboam II. is said to have gained his victories over the Syrians in consequence of the prophecies of Jonah the son of Amittai of Gath-hepher in Zebulun. The story of Jonah's disobedience, his punishment, deliverance, and preaching to Nineveh, the repentance of the city and its pardon, the remonstrance of the prophet, and Jehovah's answer, are familiar to all. Whether the story is fact or not does not affect its importance to the historian, as it does not in any way bear on national development. But the value of the book is very great as revealing a design to teach that God's purposes are not limited to Israel but that the repentance even of the heathen is accepted by Him. It is assigned by modern critics to the 5th century B.C. or later.

Nahum

From iii. 10 we get a clue to the date of this prophecy, since the Assyrian king Asshur-bani-pal captured Thebes in Egypt in B.C. 664, and it evidently preceded the fall of Nineveh in 607. It is a vigorous and lively denunciation of the Assyrian power, describing the fall of Nineveh, the oppressor of the people of Jehovah. "Nahum" says Dr. Driver "is the only one who in dignity and force approaches Isaiah." It has been suggested that the prophecy was immediately occasioned by the attack on Nineveh in B.C. 623 by Cyaxares the Mede.

Habakkuk

This prophecy alludes to the rise of the Chaldean power, consequently Habakkuk was contemporary with the early years of Jeremiah. Unlike Jeremiah, Habakkuk bitterly denounces the cruelty of the Babylonian power, but though the idols are powerless "Jehovah is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." The third and last chapter is a lyric ode, "which, for sublimity of poetic conception and splendour of diction, ranks with the finest efforts which Hebrew poetry has produced." (Driver.)

Zechariah II. (Chs. ix.—xiv.)

This is divided into two sections: (a) ix.—xi. Here Israel and Judah are both kingdoms and their enemies are Hamath, Damascus, and Tyre and Zidon. The people suffer from unworthy rulers, and an allegory follows shewing how when Jehovah offered to take

charge of His people instead of the false shepherds He was offered as hire the price of a slave. The two staves "Beauty" and "Bands" are broken by the prophet, and the brotherhood between Israel and Judah said to be at an end. This prophecy must date before the fall of Samaria in B.C. 722. In (b) xii.—xiv. the nations are assembled against Jerusalem, a fountain is opened to the house of David for sin and uncleanness, Jehovah will fight for Jerusalem and a mighty earthquake shall alter the valleys and mountains around. Judah fights against Jerusalem: but in the end all that is in the city shall be holy and the nations that come not up "to keep the feast of Tabernacles" shall be smitten. This fragment is probably post-exilic.

Malachi

The name Malachi does not occur elsewhere and means "my messenger," see iii. 1, "Behold I will send *my messenger*." The prophecy evidently belongs to a period after the exile, and from the allusion to "the governor" to a later date than the administration of Nehemiah. "Malachi" denounces the priests' neglect of their duties, the meanness of the people to the sanctuary, and the practice of divorcing Jewish wives in order to marry foreigners.

III

THE WRITINGS

Hebrew, K'thûbhîm. Greek, 'Αγιόγραφα.

These fall into three divisions. (1) Three poetical books : Psalms, Proverbs, Job. (2) Five rolls : Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. (3) Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Only the three last of these books with Ruth and Esther can be considered historical.

(I) Poetical Books

Psalms

Hebrew, Têhillîm. Greek, Ψαλμοί.

The Psalter is a collection of devotional songs in five books, corresponding to the books of the Law. Bk. I. Pss. i.—xli. Bk. II. Pss. xlii.—lxxii. Bk. III. Pss. lxxiii.—lxxxix. Bk. IV. Pss. xc.—cvi. Bk. V. Pss. cvii.—cl.

The Psalms are naturally invaluable as indicating the spiritual feelings, hopes, and experiences of ancient Israel, but for our purpose only (1) the historical psalms, (2) the headings and ascriptions to the psalms, need be considered.

(1) The historical psalms recite the experiences of Israel in the past and are retrospects of national history with lessons deducible from it. They are lxxviii., lxxxi., cv., cvi., cxiv. These all deal with the early history of the nation, especially with the deliverance from Egypt and the righteous acts of Jehovah in the Wilderness. In no case do they allude to anything later than the days of David.

(2) The origin of the titles of the Psalms is very obscure, but they were certainly in existence before the LXX. version was made, *i.e.*

before B.C. 200. Except Ps. vii. "Concerning the words of Cush a Benjamite," all those ascribed to David with mention of the occasion of the Psalm refer to some incident in his life, as recorded in the books of Samuel, though with variations.

Allusions to many events and persons in the Old Test. are to be found in the Psalms; though those omitted—*e.g.* Elijah, the reign of Solomon (except the heading to Ps. lxxii.), etc.—are equally remarkable.

Proverbs

Hebrew, Meshalim. Greek, Παροιμίαι.

In this book there are naturally no historical allusions, if we except the notice in ch. xxv. that "the men of Hezekiah" copied out certain proverbs of Solomon, confirming the tradition of the piety of that monarch.

Job

The book of Job deals with nothing bearing on the history of the Hebrews, even if the chief character, who is mentioned by Ezekiel as one of the holy men of old (Ez. xiv. 14), experienced all that is described in it. It deals with the problem of the suffering of the righteous, and consists of dialogues between Job, who is afflicted in every possible way, and his friends. The scene is laid in the north or north-east of Edom, in the land of Uz. The poem consists of (a) A Prologue. (b) A speech of Job cursing the day on which he was born. (c) Three groups of speeches in which each of Job's friends address the sufferer, Eliphaz and Bildad thrice and Zophar twice, and are answered by Job on each occasion. (d) Job's "parables" or discourses after the controversy. (e) An interruption by a young man named Elihu, who is angry that neither Job nor his friends have spoken well—this is usually considered an interpolation. (f) God's answers to Job out of the whirlwind, vindicating His Providence. (g) An epilogue.

Modern critics are inclined to assign the book of Job to a date posterior to the Captivity.

(2) The Five Megilloth

These books are read publicly at certain sacred seasons. The Song of Songs at Passover, Ruth at Pentecost, Lamentations on the 9th Ab (destruction of Jerusalem), Ecclesiastes at Tabernacles, Esther at Purim.

The Song of Songs

Hebrew, Shir Hashshirîm. Greek, Ἄσμα αἰσμάτων.

This poem has been the subject of much dispute. Is it to be understood literally or allegorically? Is it a dialogue between Solomon and the fair Shulamite, or are there three speakers, the third being the Shulamite's shepherd lover, or is it a monologue? Is it a secular poem, a Syrian wedding song regarded as a religious ode, or is it the work of a devout poet? All that is undeniable is its beauty as a poem.

Ruth

This touching story is a sort of supplement to the book of Judges, relating how Elimelech took refuge in Moab and died with his two sons, the widow of one of them returning to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi and becoming the wife of Boaz, the great-grandfather of David. The story is in marked contrast with the narratives at the end of Judges, being distinguished by its delicate refinement. Some critics assign it to the period after the Exile, and consider that it was an apology for the foreign marriages so loudly condemned by the zealots for Jewish separation. There is, however, much to be said for its belonging to the best period of Hebrew literature before the Exile.

Lamentations

Hebrew, 'êykhah. Greek, Θρήνοι.

The book consists of five distinct poems, four of which are alphabetically arranged, like some of the Psalms. The fifth, though it contains 22 verses, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, is not alphabetically arranged. Tradition as early as the LXX. attributes these poems to Jeremiah on the occasion of the fall of Jerusalem.

Ecclesiastes

Hebrew, Qôheleth. Greek, Ἐκκληστής.

Ecclesiastes professes to be by Solomon, but it reflects the opinions of a far later age, and can hardly be said to bear even on the thought of the period with which this book deals. It represents Solomon, having experienced all the pleasures and acquired all the wisdom of the world, declaring all to be vanity and vexation of spirit.

Esther

This book, in which the name of God is not so much as mentioned, relates the deliverance of the Jews in the days of Xerxes. Owing to Haman the Agagite's enmity to Mordecai the Jew, a decree was extorted from King Ahasuerus, *i.e.* Xerxes, B.C. 485-465, ordering all the Jews in the Empire to be massacred on the 13th day of Adar, eleven months later than the passing of the law. Mordecai persuaded Esther, the Jewish queen who had displaced the proud Vashti, to intercede for her people. The queen entered the presence, and merely requested the king to honour a banquet to which Haman was invited. That night the archives were read to the king and he heard how Mordecai had saved his life. At the banquet Esther revealed that Haman had obtained the decree against the Jews, and when he fled to her couch for protection the king commanded him to be hanged on the gallows prepared for Mordecai. As the edict could not be changed the Jews were allowed to defend themselves, and slew their enemies. In memory of their deliverance they observed the 14th and 15th of Adar as the festival of Purim (*lots*).

The last three books of the Canon, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah (considered as a single book) and Chronicles, are of importance to the historian. Daniel, though not a historical book, presents problems of considerable interest.

(3) The Three Writings

Daniel

Though ranked as one of the four greater prophets according to the arrangement of the LXX., the book of Daniel in the Hebrew is not included in the prophetic canon. It falls into two main sections: (a) I.—VI., The history of Daniel and his companions; (b) VII.—XII., The visions of Daniel concerning the empires of antiquity and the coming kingdom of Messiah. Professedly the book is the work of Daniel, who was taken captive at Jerusalem in B.C. 605 (the third year of Johoiakim) by Nebuchadrezzar and brought to Babylon where he became a leader of the Magi and a favoured counsellor of that king, his son Belshazzar, and of "Darius the Mede," who captured Babylon and reigned with Cyrus the Persian (cf. vi. 28, "Now this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.") The facts related in Daniel are: Ch. I.

Daniel and his companions refuse to eat unclean food in Babylon and thrive on pulse, they become more expert than any of the Magi. Ch. II. Daniel interprets Nebuchadrezzar's dream of the image. Ch. III. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to worship Nebuchadrezzar's image. Ch. IV. Nebuchadrezzar's madness. Ch. V. Belshazzar's feast and the capture of Babylon. Ch. VI. The Decree of Darius; Daniel delivered from the lions. The rest of the book is a series of visions; and, whatever the date of "Daniel" may be, they refer mainly to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, B.C. 176-165, and especially to his cruel persecution of the Jews in B.C. 169-8. This book is written in two languages. It begins in Hebrew; but at ii. 4 the narrative is abruptly continued in Western Aramaic. Hebrew is resumed in the portions relating to Daniel's Visions, vii.—xii. The stories in Daniel are told with great effect, and, as English, the translation in this book in the Authorised Version is unequalled. The Revised Version has endeavoured to render the sense simpler to the unlearned by such happy expedients as the substitution of "satraps" for "princes."

Ezra-Nehemiah

This work, reckoned as a single book in the Hebrew canon, is properly a continuation of the book of Chronicles, and the compiler of both is probably the same; nevertheless it possesses a peculiar feature in consisting of the personal memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah. Ezra i.—vi. contains an account of the return from captivity, the setting up of the altar, the commencement of the work of rebuilding the Temple, the hindrance of the work due to the intolerance of the Jews and the enmity of the Samaritans, and the completion of the building in the sixth year of the reign of Darius. (B.C. 536-516.)

Sixty years elapse of which there is no record, and the narrative is resumed in the 7th year of Artaxerxes, B.C. 458, when Ezra, a priest and scribe, receives permission to take a colony of Jews to Jerusalem and to beautify the Temple. (ch. vii.) Ezra now (ch. viii.) speaks in *propria persona*, and tells of his arrival at Jerusalem and the committal of the offerings to the treasury of the Temple. He learns that the people have intermarried with the heathen, and addresses God in a fervent prayer, in which he confesses the greatness of the national sin. (Ch. ix.) In chapter x. the third person is employed, and we are told how at Ezra's command the foreign women are put away.

Nehemiah's story now commences in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, B.C. 446. At Shushan Nehemiah hears that the wall of Jerusalem has been broken down and the gates burned. At

his petition Artaxerxes appoints him Tirshatha or governor, and he visits Jerusalem: he surveys the walls and rebuilds them, despite the opposition of the enemies of the Jews led by Sanballat and Tobiah, and suppresses the usurious practices which were ruining the poorer Jews (i.—vii.). Thus far the narrative is in the first person, in chapter viii. we hear of Ezra and Nehemiah. The Law is read to the people by Ezra, and after celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles the people enter into a solemn covenant to serve Jehovah and obey His Law (viii.—x.). The rest of the contents of the book are miscellaneous, dealing (xi.-xii.) with the priests and Levites and offering to the Sanctuary, and ending (xiii.) with a personal memoir of Nehemiah's second governorship in B.C. 432.

Chronicles

Hebrew, *Dibherë hayyimim*.

Greek, *Παραλειπομένων βασιλείων Ἰούδα, α' καὶ β'.*

In Hebrew this book is called *Dibherë hayyamim* "words (or acts) of days"; and Jerome describes it as *Chronicon totius divinæ historie*. The LXX. name is *παραλειπόμενα*, and although the present participle is strange here, this title apparently implies that it contains things left out of Kings and Samuel. *Chronicles* is a revised history of Israel, written when the books of Samuel and Kings were, if not textually at least substantially, in their present form. By no possibility can *Chronicles* be earlier than B.C. 330, and the latest date assigned to it is about B.C. 200. Historically the book is of the utmost importance for the days of the second Temple, throwing, as it does, a flood of light on the condition of Judaism under Persian and Greek influences, whilst as regards the earlier history of Israel its genealogies are receiving special attention as furnishing clues to explain various episodes and the origin of families, tribes and nations, nor can the traditions it preserves concerning early tribal history be neglected. The writer of *Chronicles* is impregnated with the orthodoxy of the third century B.C., his norm and standard is the priestly code (P), and any violations of this are explained away or expunged, and occasionally visited with severe punishment. All that seems unedifying, like the failings of a David or Solomon, is omitted. Numerous works are quoted, but as references to facts which the author has not mentioned, not as his authorities. The contents of the book are briefly as follows:—

(a) I Chr. I.—X. Pedigrees from Adam to Saul, taken mainly from Genesis and Numb. xxvi., ending with an account of the death of Saul from 1 Sam. xxxi.

(b) I Chr. XI.—XXIX. Reign of David from his election at Hebron to his edifying end after the appointment of Solomon his successor. Of these chapters xxi.—xxix. are devoted to the preparation for the Temple from the purchase of the threshing-floor of Ornan to the arrangements of the ministers of the sanctuary, and to David's discourses to the people. None of David's sins, trials, or his son's rebellion, are alluded to by the Chronicler.

(c) II Chr. I.—IX. The reign of Solomon. The king is regarded almost exclusively as the builder of the Temple—even his secular buildings and the disposition of the kingdom are passed over in silence, chs. ii.—vii. being entirely devoted to the Temple. The visit of the Queen of Sheba (ix.), with Solomon's choice of wisdom (i.), are the only incidents in his reign mentioned by the Chronicler if we except the cities built by him (viii.); his sins and troubles are ignored.

(d) II Chr. X.—XXXVI. An account of the kings of Judah from the accession of Rehoboam to the proclamation of Cyrus. The remarkable feature in this long section is that the existence of the northern kingdom to which so much importance is attached in Kings is entirely ignored, and Elijah is only mentioned as writing a letter denouncing Jehoram king of Judah (II. Chr. xxi. 12).

In a sense the Chronicler is the first Biblical historian who, with something at any rate closely resembling the canonical books before him, endeavours to tell the story of Judah. If his strong legalistic prepossessions obscure his judgment at times, the importance of his work is far greater than is usually assumed, and I. and II. Chronicles deserve careful and attentive study.

IV

THE APOCRYPHA

The order of the books called Apocrypha in our Bible is: 1 Esdras, 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, the Rest of Esther, the Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch with the Epistle of Jeremiah, The Song of the Three Holy Children, the History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasses, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees. They fall, however, into the following categories: (A) Additions to the Hebrew Canonical books—1 Esdras, The Rest of Esther, the Greek additions to the Book of Daniel—(1) the Song of the Three Children, (2) Susanna, (3) Bel and the Dragon; and the Prayer of Manasses in LXX of 2 Chronicles. To these Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremy may be added. (B) Popular Jewish Romances—Tobit and Judith. (C) Books of Wisdom—Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus. (D) Apocalypse—2 Esdras. (E) Histories—1-2 Maccabees.

(A) Additions to the Canonical Hebrew Books

The first book of Esdras, so called, is the ancient Greek version of the book of Ezra, the Greek translation of the Hebrew text as we now have it being that of Theodotion (A.D. 100?). It is considered by some scholars, notably Professor Torrey, to represent an earlier Hebrew exemplar than that which appears in the Bible.

It begins with 2 Chron. xxxv. 1, "Moreover Josiah (Josias) kept a passover," and gives the substance of the last two chapters of the book. The story in the present Hebrew Ezra is continued with certain modifications; and in chapter iii. there is the story of Darius and the three youths, which does not appear at all in the Hebrew Bible. Three of the bodyguard of Darius Hystaspes challenged each other to say what was the strongest thing in the

world, and agreed that the victor should have great rewards from Darius. One said Wine, a second The King, the third Truth. The last was acclaimed victor, and proved to be Zorobabel. He reminded the king of his promise to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and he was sent thither for that purpose. The rest of the book resembles our Ezra, except that it concludes with the reading of the Law to the people, which is found in Nehemiah viii.

The Rest of the Book of Esther consists of seven chapters numbered x., a continuation of Esther x.—xvii. They are part of the Greek Esther; and when Jerome translated the Hebrew book, he placed these chapters as a supplement at the end. They are arranged in the order Jerome left them, with the conclusion of chapter x. to xii., which really ends the book, at the beginning of the extracts. The Greek book of Esther begins with xi. 2, "In the second year of Artaxerxes," &c., and goes on to xii. 6; then follows the Hebrew. The next section, *Rest* xiii. 1-7, comes between Esther iii. 13-14; another *Rest* xiv. 8-xv. 16, follow iv. 17; and *Rest* xvi. comes between vii. 12 and 13. The book ends with a notice that "In the days of Ptolemeus and Cleopatra (c. B.C. 114), Dositheus, who said he was a priest and Levite, . . . brought this epistle of Phrurai (A.V. Purim)." The additions are of little value, and are evidently intended to give an air of specious piety to Esther, which is absent from the Hebrew version in which there is no allusion to the Deity.

The Song of the Three Children (Oh all ye works of the Lord) is in the Greek of Daniel after v. 24, put into the mouth of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when in the fiery furnace.

The History of Susanna relates how Susanna, a virtuous and beautiful woman rejected the advances of two elders, who accused her of misconduct with a young man. The charge was considered proved, and she was condemned to death, when the youthful Daniel appeared, and by examining the Elders separately convinced the people of Susanna's innocence. The popularity of this story is seen in the frequent pictures of Susanna in Christian art, and also in Shakespeare's allusion "A Daniel come to judgment."

Bel and The Dragon. Daniel exposes the fraud of the Babylonian idol called Bel, who was said to consume a vast meal every night. By sprinkling ashes on the floor of the temple the prophet proved that the priests and their families had entered by private doors and eaten the food. Thereupon King Cyrus gave the temple to Daniel, and he overthrew it.

The king ordered Daniel to worship a great dragon, but Daniel declared he would slay it "without sword or staff." He gave the dragon lumps of fat, pitch and hair, and it burst asunder.

The people revolted, and the king delivered Daniel to them, and they cast him into a den of lions. The Angel of the Lord transported the prophet Habakkuk by the hair of his head, and bade him bear food to Daniel. On the seventh day Daniel was delivered.

The Prayer of Manasses. This is the prayer put into the mouth of Manasseh, the king of Judah, who, according to Chronicles, but not Kings, was taken to Babylon by the King of Assyria, repented of his sins and was restored.

The Book of Baruch was supposed to have been written by the companion of Jeremiah when he was in Babylon, and read to the Jews there. It was then sent in the form of a letter to Jerusalem with offerings for the Temple. It is a cento of prophetic phrases of confession, penitence and hope, with assurances that mercy will once more be shown to Israel.

The Epistle of Jeremy, appended to Baruch, is a long warning against the folly of idolatry, supposed to have been addressed to the captives who were about to be sent from Jerusalem to Babylon.

(B) Popular Jewish Romances

The Book of Tobit begins with the personal story of Tobit, a pious native of Thisbe, in the tribe of Naphtali, who had been carried captive to Nineveh by Enemessar, king of the Assyrians. Tobit had refused to worship the calves with his countrymen, and had persistently gone to Jerusalem, and had paid tithe regularly to the Levites. He married his kinswoman, Anna, and had a son named Tobias. In his captivity he became purveyor to the king. In the days of Sennacherib, Tobit incurred enmity for the mercy he showed to Jews who had offended the king, and was deprived of his property; but the next king, Sarchedonus, made Tobit's nephew Achiacharus, chief minister. At the feast of Pentecost Tobit by an accident lost his sight. Achiacharus supported him till he went to Elymais, where he fell into poverty and prayed for death (ch. i. 1-iii. 6).

The narrative now continues in the third person. In Ecbatana in Media lived a damsel Sara, the daughter of Raguel. She was beloved by the demon Asmodeus, who on their marriage night had killed seven men who had wedded her. Like Tobit, Sara prayed that she might die; but God was providing that both of them might be delivered by means of the Angel Raphael (iii. 7-17).

Tobit next desires to send his son Tobias for money due to him from Gabiel in Rages of Media. After much good advice, the old man tells his son to procure a companion. Tobias finds Raphael, not suspecting that he is an angel, and knowing him

only as a Israelite, named Azarias (iv.-v). On their journey, accompanied by Tobias' dog, the young man bathes and is attacked by a great fish. At the angel's bidding he draws the fish out of the river Tigris, and takes the liver and the gall with him; the liver, it is explained, being good to drive away demons, and the gall a remedy for blindness. As they near Ecbatene the angel tells Tobias about Sara, and says that if he will follow his advice he may marry her in safety, for the heart and liver of the fish will, if burned, drive the evil spirit out of the marriage chamber (vi.).

They come to the house of Raguel and Edna his wife, Tobias asks Sara in marriage: the recipe of the angel is a complete success, the devil flees to the "utmost parts of Egypt," and the angel binds him. The money is sought from Gabael and paid, and Tobias, his wife and the angel prepare to return home. Tobit and his wife begin to mourn for the loss of their son (vii.-x.). The rest of the book relates the homecoming of Tobias, and the healing of Tobit's blindness. The supposed Azarias reveals himself as Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, and the book concludes with the notice that Tobit and Tobias both attained to a good age.

Fantastic as is the simple plot of the story, abounding in impossible incidents, it is hardly too much to say that Tobit in other respects ranks among the most edifying of the Scriptures of the Old Covenant. It presents a beautiful picture of homely piety, and has many sayings worthy of remembrance. It is quoted in the Book of Common Prayer in the Offertory at Communion.

Judith

The *Book of Judith* is a somewhat ferocious tale, recalling Esther.

The Jews and other neighbouring nations refuse to aid Nabuchodnosor (Nebuchadnezzar) against his enemy Arphaxad. After conquering his rival the king returns to Nineveh, makes Holophernes his general, and sends him to the "West country" to punish those who refused assistance. (chs. i.-ii.) All those of the sea coast sought peace. But the High Priest Joacim fortified all the passes leading to Judaea. Holophernes asks who the Jews are, and Achior, the prince of Ammon, gave their story. He warned Holophernes that if the Jews had offended their God they would be an easy prey; but if not no one could overcome them (ch. iii.-v.).

Holophernes sends Achior with contumely to the Jews in Bethulia, who receive him and cry to God for help. By the

advice of the Edomites, Bethulia is strictly besieged (chs. vi.-vii.). So closely was the city invested that Ozias the governor promised to surrender if in five days no help arrived. There was, however, a pious, wealthy and beautiful widow named Judith, of the tribe of Simcon, who declared that through her God would deliver the city. Though she had spent her widowhood in fasting, Judith, now arrayed magnificently and attended by her maid, went to Holophernes. She charmed the general, and promised to show him how to overcome Israel. For three days she communed with Holophernes and went out by night into the mountains. Then on the fourth night, at the invitation of Bagoas the Eunuch, she was present at a great feast, at which Holophernes drank himself into slumber. Bagoas then left Judith and Holophernes alone. After praying she took Holophernes by his hair and cut off his head. She gave it to her maid and returned to Bethulia. A great victory over the Assyrians follows, Judith sings a song of victory, and for the rest of her long life she lives in honourable widowhood. (Chs. viii.-xvi.)

(C) *Books of Wisdom*

The Wisdom of Solomon. This book is Alexandrian in origin, and to the "Wisdom" it contains is opposed to the Epicureanism of those who say "By mere chance were we born" (ii. 2). It is of special interest because it teaches (1) the immortality of the righteous (iii. 4); (2) describes Wisdom's nature and relation to God (vii. 22-viii. 21); (3) maintains that man could have known God from His creation, but preferred idolatry (xiii., cf. Rom. i. 20); (4) affirms that the fall of man and the entry into the world of sin by "the envy of the devil."

This book is of historical interest because its theology and philosophy of life forms a bridge leading from the teaching of the Old Testament to that of the New.

The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus is prefaced by an interesting statement by the translator, the grandson and namesake of the author. It contains the first reference to any distinction between canonical scripture and other books, and the earliest allusion to the threefold division of the Hebrew books into Law, Prophets, and remaining books. The object of the translator is to give those in a strange country (Egypt) the opportunity of learning how to live according to the Law. The book contains fifty-one chapters, of which the first forty-three are full of proverbial sayings, chapters xliv.-l. is in praise of "famous men," and there is an enumeration of the heroes of Israel, concluding with a chapter (l.) in praise of Simon the High Priest, the son of Onias. Most of the Hebrew of this book has now been recovered.

(D) Apocalypse

II Esdras

Ch. i.—ii. A prophecy delivered by Ezra with the biblical preface "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying," &c.

iii. Salatathiel ("the same is Esdras"—R.V. not A.V.) was in Babylon in the thirtieth year of the Captivity. This is followed by a complaint to God of the affliction of Israel.

iv.—xiv. Uriel, the angel, was sent to Esdras, and answers a number of questions put to him concerning the fall of Adam, why God permits evil, the Judgment, who are the saved, and the like. Then follow a series of visions, notably that of the Eagle and the Lion (chs. xi.-xii.). The whole section concludes with Ezra's being commanded to write ninety-four books, twenty-four of which were to be published, and seventy to be delivered to the wise among the people.

xv.—xvi. The last section is a prophecy of the woes coming on the earth in the last days, from which the righteous will be delivered.

The most remarkable passage (vii. 28-33) refers to the reign of Messiah, "My son [Jesus]" and His followers shall remain four hundred years after which "My son Messiah" shall die, and for seven days there shall be the old silence as at the first beginning. Then will there be resurrection and judgment.

(E) History

The First Book of Maccabees begins with a notice of Alexander the Great and those who divided his kingdoms after his death. The story opens with Antiochus Epiphanes in "the hundred and thirty-seventh year of the Greeks," or about B.C. 176, and the last event recorded is the murder of Simon in "the hundred and seventy-seventh year," B.C. 136. The events are dated throughout the book.

The most interesting section is i. 41-ix. 22. The persecution by Antiochus, the rising under Mattathias, the priest of Modin, and the successes of his son Judas the Maccabee till his defeat and death at the battle of Elasa, B.C. 161.

ix. 23-xii. 53. An account of the doings of Jonathan the brother of Judas, who was the first of his family to assume the office of High Priest. He was enticed into Ptolemais by the usurper Tryphon and murdered.

xiii. —xvi. The conclusion of the book describes the way in which the Jews obtained independence under the third brother Simon, who was also treacherously murdered, and was succeeded by his son John Hyrcanus.

The Second Book of Maccabees is prefaced by i. 1-10a, a letter to the Jews of Egypt from their brethren in Judah exhorting them to keep the feast of Tabernacles (*σκηνοπηγία*) in the month Chisleu.

i. 10b —ii. 18. A second letter to "Aristobulus, king Ptolemy's teacher," saying that the feast of the purification of the Temple will be kept on the twenty-fifth day of Chisleu. The story is told how the priests, when the Temple was destroyed, hid the holy fire in a well, and Nehemiah discovered the place full of thick water. When this was sprinkled on the altar and the sun shone on it, it took fire. Nehemiah called it naphthar, but many call it Nephi.

ii. 19—vi. 42 relates the persecution of the Jews from the five books of Jason of Cyrene. Here is found the story of Heliodorus, who tried to rob the Temple, and was driven forth by a terrible rider on horseback and scourged by two young men; the intrigues of the apostate priests; and the sufferings of the martyrs.

viii. 1—xv. 36. Contains the story of the exploits of Judas the Maccabee, the conclusion being the victory over Nicanor and the bringing of his head in triumph to Jerusalem by Judas.

Books Recommended

THE following books are recommended to students who desire to give special attention to the study of Old Testament History. The list does not pretend to be exhaustive, being intended principally for beginners who may be interested in the subject.

The best History is Ewald's *History of the Hebrew People*, in 5 volumes (6s. each), translated into English 1869-1880. Though the criticism is out of date, the treatment of the subject must always be of permanent value. Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 3 vols., 2s. 6d. net each (Murray), based on Ewald, is eminently readable and a finished literary production. The best recent works in English are Wade's *Old Testament History* (6s.), Kent's *A History of the Hebrew People*, 2 vols., 6s. each (Smith, Elder), and H. P. Smith's *Old Testament History* (12s.).

Histories

The best Introduction to the study of the Higher Criticism is Robertson-Smith's *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church* (6s. net). Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (12s.) is an invaluable storehouse of information; and Wellhausen's *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, Eng. Transl., must not be neglected. On the conservative side Orr, *Problem of the Old Testament* (2s. 6d. net).

Critical Introductions

Robertson-Smith *Prophets of Israel* (6s. net); Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of the Prophets* (6s.); Ottley, *Religion of Israel* (4s.); Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament* (12s.); Oesterley, *Evolution of the Messianic Idea* (3s. 6d. net); Kennett, *In our Tongues* (3s. 6d. net).

Religion of the Hebrews

Kirkpatrick, *Divine Library of the Old Testament* (3s. net). Ryle, *Canon of the Old Testament* (6s.); Geden, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* (T. and T. Clark, 8s. 6d. net).

General Introductions

McCurdy, *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*, 3 vols. (14s. net each); Hommel, *Ancient Hebrew Tradition Illustrated by the Monuments* (5s.); Sayce, *Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments* (7s. 6d.); Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (6s. each); Zimmern, *Babylonian and Hebrew Genesis* (1s.); Niebuhr (Carl), *The Tell-el-Amarna Period* (1s.), [The Ancient East Series]; Paton, *Syria*

Archæology

and Palestine (5s.); Johns, *The Oldest Code of Laws in the World* (1s. 6d. net); Driver, *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible* (3s. net); Ball, *Light from the East* (15s.).

Geography

Bartholomew, *Topographical and Physical Map of Palestine* (10s. 6d.); G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*; G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem from the Earliest Times to A.D. 70* (15s.).

Hebrew and Greek Text

Biblica Hebraica, ed. Kittel, 2 vols. (5s. 3d. each); Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek*, 3 vols. (7s. 6d. each), *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*.

Dictionaries

Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (moderate criticism), 5 vols. (28s. each); one-volume edition (20s. net); *Encyclopædia Biblica*, ed. Cheyne (advanced criticism; excellent maps), 4 vols. (20s. net each); Murray's *Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (conservative), (21s.).

Biblical History of the Hebrews

Chapter I

The Ancient World

THE Hebrew nation is not of extreme antiquity. Compared with that of Egypt or Babylonia its history is almost modern. It cannot be traced with any certainty to an earlier date than the thirteenth century B.C.; and its authentic documents do not carry us back further than the ninth century before our era. No really venerable monuments survive to connect the Israelites with the remote past; no hint of the existence of the nation having been discovered earlier than the inscription on a stele of Menephtah II., a monarch of the nineteenth dynasty of Egyptian kings (B.C. 1275).¹

But when the Israelites emerge into the full light of history, we find them possessed of a series of remarkable traditions extending back to the Creation of the world. Between 900 and 800 years before Christ a part of these traditions may have existed in written form much as we now have them; and it is safe to assume that even then they were of venerable antiquity.² They agree in stating that the original home of the human race was somewhere near the banks of the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, and that the Hebrews were an offshoot of the nation which made its first home in Babylonia. In this country therefore the scene of the first eleven chapters of Genesis is laid.

But though much of the introductory portion of the Book of Genesis is ancient, it contains some comparatively modern elements. When the Jews were led captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar they were brought back to the cradle of their race; and their learned men naturally revised the traditions their ancestors had brought from their ancient home.³ For it must not be forgotten that the civilisation

Israelite traditions

The twofold stream of Hebrew tradition

of Israel, and indeed that of all Palestine, came originally from Babylonia; and consequently the views held concerning the origin of the world, its geographical divisions and the history of nations, are traceable to this land. The two opening chapters of Genesis furnish an excellent example of the way in which earlier and later elements are combined together in our Bible. There are evidently two accounts of the Creation, very different from one another in language, thought, and conception. The writers occupy different stand-points, and it may perhaps be said of them, that whilst he to whom the first chapter of Genesis may be attributed presents his view of Creation with the thoughtfulness of a full grown man, the writer from whose work Gen. ii. 4 ff. is taken displays the simplicity of a pure-hearted child.

Proem to
Genesis

The proem to the book of Genesis (ch. i. 1—ii. 3) was perhaps added at a comparatively late date; but at whatever time it was brought into its present form, it is the work of a true poet. The structure of the chapter is such as to bring out the orderly development of a great thought, that all things have come into being by the will of God. Stage by stage, day by day the work of Creation goes forward till we are brought to the conclusion of the whole with the words, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished the work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made"⁴ (Gen. ii. 1, 2).

Creation
tablets

It has been reserved for modern times to discover an account of the Creation similar to the one in the opening chapter of the Hebrew Bible. In the seventh century before Christ Assur-bani-pal, King of Assyria, formed a vast library of clay tablets at Nineveh. These have been recently unearthed and deciphered, and from duplicates discovered elsewhere it has been inferred that the originals are at least as old as B.C. 2200-1800. These Creation tablets are full of polytheistic ideas, as opposed to the rigid monotheism of Genesis i., but at the same time there are coincidences of language too remarkable to be accidental.⁵

Second and
earlier Crea-
tion narrative

If the first account of Creation in the book of Genesis is admirable for its dignified reserve and for the orderly course of its narrative, the second (and presumably earlier one) is no

less worthy of attention. The childlike simplicity of the writer's thoughts about the origin of the world is in strong contrast with the profundity of the insight displayed by him on the moral relationship of God and man.

The author of Gen. ii. 4 ff. describes the earth as hard and dry because no rain had as yet fallen, and there was no one to till it. First a mist used to rise from the earth, and water it; * then man was formed out of the dust of the ground, and a garden planted in Eden for his habitation. From this delightful spot issued a stream from which flowed the four great rivers of the world. There stood the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life. As man was alone the beasts were formed to be his companions, but none of them were fitted for this part. So a deep sleep fell upon the man, and woman was taken from his side. The serpent, the craftiest of all beasts, persuaded the woman to eat of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Thus did man fall, and was cast out of Eden to till the ground, which for his sake was cursed. He was not however bereft of all hope; for an assurance was given that the seed of the woman would at last bruise the serpent's head.

Throughout this narrative the Maker of all is called Jehovah-God, whereas in the first chapter God is spoken of. This serves to distinguish the two accounts, and this change of designation supplied the clue to the modern theory that the Book of Genesis is a composite work.⁶

A small tablet of terra-cotta was discovered in 1882 written in Sumerian, the primitive speech of Sumer (Shinar), or Southern Babylonia, with a translation into Semitic Babylonian. It contains a sort of hymn written probably for the ritual of one of the temples, the words of which recall expressions in the second Biblical account of Creation.⁷

Nearly all the traditions of the primitive world preserved by the Hebrews find their counterparts in the beliefs of ancient Babylonia. Thus the garden in Eden is represented in Sumerian by the word *edin*, the plain. The tree of life is suggested by the sacred tree near Eridu, the most ancient city and temple in that part of the world. Trees are represented guarded by winged monsters, the cherubim of Scripture

Babylonian
tradition

* Gen. ii. 6, a 'mist' or 'tide.' The text is possibly corrupt.

which "kept the way of the tree of life." A hymn has been discovered which may, if rightly translated, refer to a Fall of man due to eating forbidden fruit. Allusions to woman being taken out of the side of man have been perhaps recognised. If, however, due allowance be made for the uncertainty of some of the supposed identifications, there remains so much similarity between the beliefs of early Babylonia and those revealed in the first three chapters of Genesis, that it cannot be altogether accidental.⁸

Hebrew view
of the
Universe

By the ancient Hebrew this world was probably imagined as a mountain rising out of the abyss of waters, which encompassed and underlay it. The Deep (*Tehom*), as it was called, had a terrible fascination to the mind of the Israelite. It was sometimes conceived of as a mighty serpent coiled round the world, and called *Rahab* or *Leviathan*. Above the firmament—for the sky was believed to be solid ("strong as a molten mirror," Job xxxvii. 18)—were the upper deeps, which would descend upon the earth if "the windows of heaven were opened." The sun rejoiced as a giant to run his daily course across the expanse of heaven (Ps. xix. 5), and the moon and stars marked the seasons and religious festivals (Gen. i. 14). Above the water-flood God was enthroned surrounded by the host of heaven, who attended to do Him service (Ps. xxix. 10, Job i. 6).

This differed but little from the view of the Universe held by most nations of antiquity: hardly in any respect from the theory of the world current among the Babylonians, by whom the mysterious Deep, sometimes represented as a serpent, was called *Tiamat*, a name almost identical with the Hebrew *Tehom*. The earth was regarded as a mountain rising out of the sea which encompassed it. Maps have even been discovered displaying ideas concerning geography as crude as those descriptive of the situation of Eden in Genesis.⁹

Twofold
story of the
Flood

When we pass from the story of the Creation to that of the Flood we notice precisely the same analogy to Babylonian thought. Here we have again a double tradition, like the twofold account in Scripture.

The early Hebrew narrative is marked by the same simplicity of ideas as the primitive Creation story. As man multiplies he becomes sinful. The sons of God (*elohim*)

seeing that the daughters of men are fair, take them to wife, and a race of famous men are born who have the presumption to defy Jehovah (Gen. vi. 1 ff.). At last the wickedness of mankind arrives at such a pitch that Jehovah determines to destroy the world. One pious man, Noah, finds grace in the eyes of Jehovah. He was commanded to take the clean animals by sevens and the others by pairs and to enter an ark with his wife, his sons, and their wives. Jehovah shut the door of the Ark, and a flood ensued lasting forty days. At the end of this time Noah sent forth a raven, and a dove; the latter returned, and seven days later Noah sent her out again and she came back with an olive leaf. Again Noah waited seven days before he released the dove, and this time he saw her no more. Noah then removed the covering of the Ark and found that the ground was dry. He came forth from the Ark and offered sacrifice. Jehovah "smelled the savour," and said in His heart, "I will not curse the ground any more for man's sake, for that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. vi. 1-7; vii. 1-4, 7-10, 17, 22, 23; viii. 6-12, 13^b, 20-22 J).

The parallels in the Babylonian story of the Deluge with the foregoing are most striking. The gods were offended by the sins of the men of the city of Shurippak. One pious man called Hasisadra (Greek, Xisuthrus) was commanded to build a vessel and to put on board his friends, his treasure, and the animals. The flood came "like a battle charge" upon mankind, and when it subsided the vessel rested on the "mountain of the country of Nizir." A dove, a *swallow* and a raven were sent forth. When the flood ceased Hasisadra and his companions offered sacrifice, and the savour of it pleased the gods. The god Bel promised that a flood should not again destroy mankind.¹⁰

Story of
Xisuthrus

When we turn to the second flood-narrative in the Bible, which is unmistakably a continuation of the Creation story in Genesis i., we find a detailed account of the building of the Ark, and its measurements. A covenant is promised; Noah is ordered to take two of each sort of animal (no distinction being made between clean and unclean), and to

Later Hebrew
account of
the Flood (P)

provide food. His age is given, as is also the exact day of the month on which the Flood began, as well as the fact that it lasted a year. The cause of the Flood is said to have been the opening of "the windows of heaven," and "the breaking up of the foundations of the Great Deep." Dates are given for the day on which the waters were dried up, and the depth of the water when at its height is stated. A covenant is given to Noah, and the bow is placed in the cloud as a sign that there shall not again be a universal flood (parts Gen. vi.-ix. not assigned to J, see p. 5).

Very remarkable are the coincidences found in the Chaldean Genesis, the chief difference being that the Ark is described as a ship—a circumstance not unnatural in the case of a people accustomed to navigation.¹¹

The stories of Creation and the Flood find undoubted parallels in the Babylonian records; but there are others of which the origin is uncertain, though possibly traceable to the same source. As we have seen, the Garden of Eden and the Fall are foreshadowed in the mythology of the ancient Sumerians, and it is to be hoped that more light may be thrown on the origin of such narratives as those of Cain and Abel; Lamech and his three sons Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain; the Sons of God and the Daughters of Men; the curse of Canaan; and the Confusion of Tongues.

Traditions
unconnected
with Baby-
lonia

Cain and Abel

A short examination of each of these may not be out of place. Adam's two sons represent the two primitive occupations of mankind. Cain tills the ground, whilst Abel keeps sheep. The cause of their dispute is a sacrifice to Jehovah. Each brings of the fruit of his toil, and Abel's offering is accepted. Thus sacrifice is assumed to be a necessary part of human worship; no account of its origin being given. Jehovah remonstrates with Cain and explains that the acceptance of sacrifice is dependent upon right action, and that it is in man's power to resist sin, which like a savage beast is ever ready to spring upon its victim. Cain, according to nearly all the ancient versions, entices Abel into the field and slays him. Again Jehovah appears and tells the murderer "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Cain fears that men will avenge his brother's death, but Jehovah sets a mark

upon him "lest any finding him should kill him" (Gen. iv. 15).

After this Cain is said to have had a son called Enoch, and to have founded a city called after his son in the land of Nod, east of Eden (Gen. iv. 16, 17).

In this as in the other early narrative in Genesis we must draw a distinction between the original story and the purpose of the man who has recorded it. It is legitimate to conjecture that it was a primitive attempt to account for the hostility of the pastoral and agricultural nations, possibly also for the *totem-mark*, which protected a man even in the desert. The narrative is certainly detached from its original context. It presupposes a state of things quite different from that described in Gen. i.-iii. There are other people on earth besides Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel; for the last named has friends to avenge his death, and Cain is represented as a city-builder.¹²

But the writer of this part of the book of Genesis has an evident purpose in introducing the story. He connects Cain's murder with the Fall of Man. He makes it an occasion for showing Jehovah's horror of the crime of bloodshedding. He shows primitive law to be Jehovah's ordinance. He inculcates the lessons of personal responsibility, the duty of resisting sin, the character of true sacrifice. In fact he takes the old legend and makes it teach important lessons in morality and duty.¹³

Purpose of
the author of
Genesis

A descendant of Cain named Lamech had two wives and three sons, besides a daughter of whom nothing is recorded save her name, Naamah. The sons were the inventors of the arts of life, or, as they are styled, the "fathers" of the various callings of mankind. Jabal was the "father" of those who dwell in tents and have cattle, and Jubal of musicians. Tubal-Cain instructed the workers in brass and iron.

Lamech and
his sons

A song of Lamech to his wives is also preserved (Gen. vi. 23, 24):—

"Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech:
For I have slain a man for wounding me,
And a young man for bruising me:
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold"

There is no attempt to draw a moral from this narrative, and its meaning can be only conjectured. Perhaps the song of Lamech celebrates the invention of the sword by Tubal-Cain.¹⁴ It is remarkable that the Flood seems to be ignored, as these antediluvian patriarchs are said to be the "fathers" of the different classes of mankind. Perhaps they belong to some tradition from which the story of the Deluge was absent¹⁵ (Gen. iv. 19-24).

The wickedness of man

More mysterious is the description of the wicked race before the Flood. "The sons of the Elohim saw the daughters of Adam that they were fair, and took them wives of all which they chose." Who these sons of gods were it is impossible to say; but it looks as though the writer was acquainted with traditions, like those so common in antiquity, of heroic men, the sons of divine fathers and human mothers. Equally vague is our knowledge concerning the *Nephilim* or giants mentioned afterwards. But we are irresistibly reminded of the Titans who defied the heavenly powers and were destroyed by thunderbolts. The beliefs embodied in these obscure verses evidently resemble those of other ancient nations¹⁶ (Gen. vi. 1-4).

The Curse of Canaan

The names of Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and the curse of Canaan the son of Ham are traceable to no known source.¹⁷ Noah is said to have planted the vine and to have been uncovered in his drunkenness. Ham treated his aged father with contumely, Shem and Japheth showed him a more becoming reverence. When the patriarch awoke from his wine, he blessed Shem and Japheth, but cursed Canaan the son of Ham in the following words:—

"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (Gen. ix. 25-27).

The curse appears to be taken from a story in which Japheth, Shem and Canaan figured as Noah's sons.¹⁸

The building of Babel

The great event in antiquity which appealed to the Hebrew imagination was the building of Babel or Babylon. This is in one place attributed to Nimrod, "the mighty hunter before Jchovah," the beginning of whose kingdom was "Babel, Accad,

and Calneh in the land of Shinar" (Gen. x. 8-12). But of Nimrod no particulars are related, and we can only look to legend for information concerning him.¹⁹

The well-known story of Babel occurs in the following chapter. The children of men are all of one language and go together to the plain of Shinar, where they learn to use bricks instead of stone. They decide to build a city and a tower in order that they may never be scattered abroad. But Jehovah comes down to see the city and the tower, and declares that there is no end to human presumption. To prevent the completion of the city He confounds men's language so that they can no more understand one another. So mankind was dispersed, and the city was called Babel²⁰ (Gen. xi. 1 ff).

Such then were the traditions which the Hebrews of the ninth century B.C. had received concerning the origin of mankind. They are evidently of much earlier date, especially when we recollect that at the time of their being written down the Israelites had been at least four centuries in Canaan, and had previously been in Egypt. Yet many of these fragmentary legends have nothing to do with either Palestine or Egypt. The scene is Babylonian, and several of the names are non-Hebraic. Though there is hardly any allusion to intercourse with countries east of the Euphrates from the age of the Exodus to Solomon, it is evident that the Hebrews had cherished the idea that their ancient home was there, and the discoveries at Tel-el-Amarna confirm the impression given in the Bible that relations between Palestine and Babylonia were long maintained.

Even when Palestine was tributary to Egypt in the fifteenth century B.C. the medium of communication between the vassal nations and their suzerain the King of Egypt was the cuneiform writing of Babylonia. An extensive correspondence on clay tablets has been discovered in Egypt, showing the diplomatic relations between a king of the eighteenth dynasty and his Palestinian subjects, and this conclusively proves that the latter had borrowed their civilisation from beyond the Euphrates, thus showing the correctness of the impression left by the perusal of the early chapters of Genesis.²¹ It has also been shown by the Assyrian monu-

Babylonia the
source of
Israel's early
traditions

ments that long before the patriarchal period of Hebrew history Canaan had been reduced to subjection by Babylonian conquerors.²² A brief description of the scene of the opening records in the Bible story, which for want of a better name we have styled Babylonia, may not be out of place.

Early history
of Babylonia

At the remote period of which we are speaking it seems probable that the Persian Gulf extended more than a hundred miles to the north of its present limits, and that the Tigris and Euphrates entered it by different mouths. The southern district between the two rivers was called Sumer, to the north of which was the land of Akkad. The whole, a territory in shape like a bottle, the neck of which is formed by the Tigris and Euphrates flowing in comparative proximity at Bagdad, is known as Shinar or Babylonia. The early kings who claimed lordship over the whole called themselves "Kings of Sumer and Akkad."²³

It was a land of great cities. The southermost and probably the most ancient was Eridu (*Tel-Abu-Sharein*) on the Euphrates; further up the river were Ur and Erech, and more than a hundred miles higher was Babel, or Babylon. Just at the point where the rivers approach one another were Agade (Akkad), and Sippara. In the plain of Shinar were Cutha, Nippur, and Ellasar or Larsa. Far to the north of Babylonia on the Tigris was the land of Asshur, where Nimrod went to build Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir and Calah (Gen. x. 8-12).

The civilisation of Babylonia was probably due to its original settlers, the Sumerians and Akkadians, but at a very early period people of the same race as the Hebrews—Arabs of Semitic stock—occupied the country and adopted the arts and learning of its earlier inhabitants.²⁴

Religion of
Babylonia

The religion of Babylonia was polytheistic, and there are indications that some of the stories embodied in Genesis were originally current among people who worshipped many gods. But the writer, to whom we owe their preservation in Scripture, worshipped but one God, and attributed all things to Jehovah, the God of Israel. It is instructive, in comparing the Babylonian narratives and those of Scripture which they resemble, to notice how the belief in many gods prevalent in the one is supplanted by the knowledge that

there is no God but Jehovah, which is so marked a feature in the Biblical story. Yet even there the polytheism of the ancient legends occasionally asserts itself: in the use of the plural Elohim for God; the adoption of the first person plural in the account of the Creation of man; and in that of the building of Babel Jehovah is represented with as it were gods in council debating what was to be done²⁵ (Gen. i. 26, xi. 7). The Israelites admitted that their ancestors worshipped many gods, and the fact survived in their language long after the practice had been discontinued.²⁶

But it may well be asked, Wherein lies the importance of the early stories of Genesis from a religious standpoint? Is the interest in them solely due to their significance as survivals of a remote past, or as studies in comparative religion? The answer seems to be that it is not so much the character of the stories, as the purpose with which the author employs them, that is of importance; nor does the real value of what is related depend so much upon the literal accuracy of its historical facts, as upon the lessons drawn from them. To one who studies Genesis from a purely historical standpoint the early narratives are distinctly disappointing. There has evidently been an almost remorseless excision of what the writers deemed unnecessary. This seems to be accounted for by the fact that the author's attention was so concentrated on one object that he had little interest for that which did not point directly to it.²⁷

In the chapters before us the design seems to be to show that Jehovah is the one true God, and that mankind His creature has been from of old in rebellion against Him. Jehovah made man innocent and gave him the opportunity of living a harmless and simple life in Eden; but man, tempted by the prospect of being "as God knowing good and evil" (*i.e.* all things), sought by eating of the tree of knowledge, to anticipate Jehovah's purpose of revealing knowledge to him, and so fell from his state of purity. The consequences of the Fall appeared in the death of Abel; and Cain the murderer became the first city builder—for in these chapters the city is the home of human pride and self-sufficiency. In the progeny of Lamech we see how the discovery of the arts and luxuries of life led to war and

Wherein lies the importance of Gen. i.-xi. ?

Moral purpose of writer

rapine: the sword being one of the first products of man's ingenuity. As men multiply they become more and more arrogant, the heroes born of human mothers by divine fathers, and the *Nephilim* or giants, become intolerable in their presumption; so the Flood is sent and destroys them all. The one family saved, that of Noah, the man of peace or comfort, again replenishes the earth, but there is no improvement. Nimrod the "mighty hunter" before Jehovah founds an empire and builds great cities, and the erection of Babel is the crowning act of defiance to heaven. To prevent the success of such an enterprise the language of men is confused and the nations are scattered.

This seems to be the leading idea of the old narrator of primitive history, and it is in accordance with the teaching of the prophets of Israel. Like other peoples, the Hebrews imagined that the age of innocence was the age of simplicity, and that man was most virtuous when he was most ignorant. If experience has not confirmed us in this notion, we can still sympathise with it so far as to appreciate the view that the happiest life is the one which is the most natural, as most independent of luxury and extravagance. But the Israelite teacher was so impressed by the unique majesty of God, that he regarded human pride and restlessness as an insult to the Creator, and preferred the simple and humble existence of the nomad shepherd, in which a man could spend much time in solitary communion with God, to the turmoil of city life. The great brick walls which encompassed the cities of Babylonia, the palaces and temples, which seemed to reach the sky, appeared to this writer as insults to the supreme power of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

Even if we consider these conceptions of human life to be somewhat crude, we cannot deny that a very profound knowledge of the human heart is displayed. Look at the account of the Temptation, the suggestions of the Serpent, the doubts he instils into the woman's heart, her own communings as to the desirability of transgressing the Divine Command and eating of the fruit of the tree. Or take the account of Cain's jealousy at the acceptance of his brother's sacrifice, and of God's warning as to the danger of not guarding against sin. In both instances it is evident that

Sense of the
heinousness
of sin

there is a very clearly defined conception of sin and its consequences. It is this which depresses the soul of the writer and makes his language sad. He feels keenly that man is alienated from God, and that reconciliation is the supreme need of our race. Yet, but for the promise to the woman that her seed shall bruise the serpent's head, he gives no indication how this is to be brought about.

But we must not forget that we have a twofold narrative, and that the author of Genesis i.-ii. 3 has also made researches into the primitive history of the world. His account may be less vivid and picturesque than that of his predecessor, but it is equally instructive.²⁸

The hand of this writer reappears in chapter v. with the "Book of the Generations of Adam," in which the descent of man through Seth* is given in a style characteristic of the author. The extreme limit of human life is apparently fixed at a thousand years; and two dates are given—(1) the age at which each patriarch's eldest son was born and the time he survived him and (2) his age at death. Some of the names bear a strong resemblance to those in the pedigree of Cain, and in both many occur which are non-Hebraic. Only one fact is related concerning any of the patriarchs in this list. Enoch, it is said, "walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Gen. v. 24). To this unexplained remark are due the many Jewish traditions concerning the one blameless man before the Flood who did not taste of death.²⁹

After giving the story of the building of the Ark and the Flood this writer adds in the ninth chapter an account of the covenant made between God and Noah, containing a prohibition against eating the blood of animals, the law that a man's brother must avenge his murder, and the setting of the bow in the cloud in token that a flood shall not again destroy all flesh.

This writer concludes his researches into primitive antiquity with a pedigree of Abraham showing his descent from Shem. This is constructed on a principle analogous with that in Genesis v., only instead of giving the sum total of years of the patriarchs, the time each one lived after the birth of his son is stated. The limit of human life begins by being six hundred

* Seth is also mentioned by Balaam (Numb. xviv. 17).

The object
of the
"Priestly"
writer

years, but to Terah the father of Abram less than two centuries of life are assigned.³⁰

Division of
the world,
Gen. x.

One chapter alone of primitive history remains—Genesis x.—the joint work of the two narrators, embodying the geographical ideas of the Hebrews in the ninth and fifth centuries B.C. The idea is that there were three divisions of the world, each peopled by the descendants of a son of Noah. It is evident that when in this chapter “sons” are mentioned nations and not individuals are meant. Some “sons” are cities, others are peoples, the plural being freely employed.

Under the sons of Japheth we find the northern nations and those who lived in the coasts or “isles” west of Palestine. Seven names are given, among them Gomer the ancestor of the Cimmerians, and Javan, the Ionian or Greek of Asia Minor. Javan’s sons are Elishah (perhaps Hellas), Tarshish, the Phœnician settlement, Kittim (Cyprus) and the Rodanim (Rhodians?).³¹

Ham is the ancestor of the greatest and most powerful nations known to the ancient Hebrews. Cush (Ethiopia), Mizraim (Egypt), Put (Libya?) and Canaan (Phœnicia). The sons of Canaan are Zidon, his first born, and the nations inhabiting Palestine.³²

Shem is the ancestor of the nations akin to the Hebrews, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Lydians (Lud), and the Aramaeans. The Hebrews themselves claimed to spring from Shem’s third son Arphacshad.³³*

This system of classification of the nations would not satisfy any modern views of ethnology; and the method of arrangement seems to be geographical rather than racial. The importance of the chapter is that we are enabled to see the view of the world taken by the men who wrote the Old Testament.

Hebrew idea
of Geography

They had no more conception than had our ancestors that the world in which we live was not the centre of the universe. They regarded it as a round disk encompassed by the Deep, with the Under World beneath, and the Heaven with the luminaries above. As they looked from the hills of Palestine seawards they peopled the remote isles with

* Sheba (Arabia) according to T is a son of Shem (Gen. x. 28) and according to P a son of Ham (Gen. x. 7).

nations whose names alone seem to have been known to them. To the south spread the great nations of the race of Ham, the Egyptians, whose kinsmen the Canaanites had occupied Palestine, and perhaps were regarded as allied by race to the great nations in Babylonia. Between the Japhethites, occupiers of the isles and the unknown North, and the Hamites in the South, were the men of Shemitic stock who had obtained a footing in the cities of Babylonia and had peopled Assyria and Northern Mesopotamia. These were the nations to whom the future seemed in the ninth century B.C. to belong. They were establishing themselves everywhere: in ancient Sumer and Akkad as well as in Canaan. From this stock the Hebrew peoples had sprung, and among these were the Israelites, the worshippers of the only true God.

We may perhaps be inclined to undervalue the early chapters of Genesis because of the ignorance of the writers as compared with our own knowledge. It is possible that we may ask whether this relation possesses any religious interest whatever, or whether it is not merely a curious record of the erroneous views of antiquity. But before relegating these chapters to the sphere of myth and fable, it is desirable to consider a few points in connection with them, which may materially affect our judgment.

Value of early chapters of Genesis

The question naturally arises, Whence did the author or authors derive their information? Waiving for the moment any discussion as to the date of Genesis i.-xi., we may affirm that there are three possible ways in which the knowledge of what is recorded was attained. By revelation, by conjecture, and by investigation. It is conceivable and by no means impossible that Moses, or whoever wrote this account of primitive antiquity, received a direct revelation from God. This was long the accepted view, and it is one which ought not to be set aside without due consideration. Two things prevent our unqualified adherence to this opinion. The accounts of the Creation and of the Deluge are not only in conflict with modern theories of the Universe—for this would be but a secondary consideration—but with ascertained facts; and we cannot imagine that God would have revealed aught but truth. In addition to this the fragmentary nature

of the narratives precludes the idea of the whole having been communicated as a direct revelation from Heaven.

This latter objection also disposes of the notion that the writer is giving his own theory of the origin of the world and of man, as in this case his story would be more connected in form. There remains the view that Genesis i.-xi. is, as we have previously maintained, the result of investigation assisted by the Holy Spirit—a theory completely in accordance with our modern notions. That the records of antiquity should have been carefully searched, that the results arrived at should have been revised and corrected as time went on, appears to us to be the most fitting method; and this seems to have been the one employed. The Israelite writers gave of their best, they spared no pains to collect their facts, their work is the result of careful and laborious study.

Though to the modern mind the results appear entirely inadequate, yet they are worthy of respect, nor can their claim to inspiration be set aside. Of natural science a child-like ignorance is displayed, but many all important moral truths are firmly grasped. The unity of God, the fact that all things proceed from His will, man's relation to Him, are all understood and appreciated. How fully is it recognised that the misery of mankind is due not to the will of God, but to man's refusal to obey it! How completely has the writer realised that sin is the cause of all unhappiness! How vividly has he depicted God's hatred of iniquity, and man's need of Divine grace and pardon

And these, after all, are the principles of all true religion. With some the ancient Babylonians, from whom the Israelites borrowed so much, were familiar, but no nation understood them like the chosen people of Jehovah. If in the course of our history, we are compelled to appear to disparage the accuracy of certain records, or the truth of certain beliefs, it must be borne in mind that the Old Testament is always before us as an account of a gradual revelation from human ignorance to Divine knowledge, and that Israel with all its limitations was in truth a people taught of God.

Chapter II

The Patriarchs in Palestine

THE opening chapters of Genesis deal with the nations of the world known to the inhabitants of Western Asia. In them the history of mankind is traced from the garden to the city; from innocence and peace to confusion and division; from Eden to Babel.

In the twelfth and following chapters we are given an account, not of nations, but of individuals, who became the ancestors of the chosen people of Jehovah. These are no shadowy figures like those, which, so to speak, loom through the mists of antiquity in the first eleven chapters of the Bible. They are depicted as real persons, playing thoroughly human parts, as men who may be described in St James' words as "of like passions with us" (James v. 17).

**Patriarchal
History**

Yet the three patriarchs of Israel—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—can scarcely be considered in the strict sense of the word historical characters. The records of their lives are far from being contemporary; hardly anything is told us to connect them with the great events of the world's history; and much is related of them, which evidently must be interpreted as referring to tribes rather than to individuals. At one moment they seem to us to be real persons, at the next their identity seems lost in that of the nation, at others we feel that they are typical of the ideas of a later age.

Under these circumstances it is exceedingly difficult to write an account of the patriarchal period, unless we try to do so from the standpoint of the authors of the book of Genesis. Recent discovery has, it is true, put us in possession of certain facts concerning Palestine in the days of Abraham; but it is not possible to *prove* that these were known to the writers of Genesis. An attempt has been made to restate the narrative in such a way as to display the

patriarchs as tribal gods of the ancient Canaanites, or as survivals of ancient solar or lunar myths; but the result is at least as unhistorical as the older method of treating the whole Scriptural narrative as verbally true. There is no direct evidence that any *cultus* of the ancestors of the Hebrew race ever existed, or that they were looked upon either as heroes or gods by their posterity.¹

Threefold
narrative,
J, E, P

Whereas for the early history of the human race but two main sources of information are available, the patriarchal story is drawn from three. In it the narratives of J and P are continued; but a third document soon makes its appearance, that of the Elohist narrators, generally known as E.

As has been already stated, the Jehovist writers probably began their work in the ninth century B.C., but it is not certain whether the Elohist writers belong to an earlier or a later date. Upon the whole critics seem in favour of placing E after J, owing to the doctrine of angels as intermediaries between God and man being more developed in the Elohist literature.² It is no easy task to discriminate between these two sources, and on this point there is much divergency of opinion. One thing, however, is clear. The Elohist writers lived in the Northern Kingdom, as is seen from their marked preference for the house of Joseph, in contrast to the desire so manifest in J to exalt Judah; as well as in the fact that, according to them, Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, takes the leading part, whereas J makes Judah the spokesman among the brethren.³ The authors of the earlier narratives concerning the patriarchs flourished in the days of the divided kingdoms, and have preserved the traditions current in both Israel and Judah. The religious ideals seem to be those of the period between the rebellion of Jeroboam and the fall of Samaria. The places mentioned are for the most part famous as sanctuaries in or before the days of the prophets Hosea and Amos.⁴

Gen. xiv.
(Primitive
Palestine)

The only hint as to the date of the patriarchal age is given in Gen. xiv., where the invasion of Palestine by Chedorlaomer is related. The source of this narrative cannot be traced, but it may well be of venerable antiquity. It points to the time when Palestine was under the domina-

tion of the Babylonians before the close of the third millennium B.C. The confederates of the Elamite monarch Chedorlaomer are Amraphel, King of Shinar; Arioch, King of Ellasar; and Tidal, King of Goyim.⁵ If, as some scholars suppose, the identification of Amraphel with the Babylonian Khammurabi can be established, the invasion of Palestine mentioned took place between B.C. 2239 and 2196; and this gives an approximate date for the appearance of Abraham.⁶ It is but fair to add that this leaves too long an interval between Abraham and Moses to accord with the Biblical system of chronology; still less with the view now generally accepted that the Exodus took place in the thirteenth century B.C.⁶ This same chapter also enables us to form an idea of the races inhabiting Palestine during the early patriarchal period, as the advance of the Mesopotamian army is carefully described: "Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, smote the Rephaim in Ashteroth-Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness. And they returned and came to En-mishpat (the same is Kadesh), and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazazon-Tamar" (Gen. xiv. 5-7).

The invasion thus swept from North to South through the territory east of the Jordan till it reached the fortress of the Horites in Mount Seir. Turning northward by way of Kadesh the expedition next entered Western Palestine, ravaging the territory of the Amalekites and Amorites, till it encountered the army of the five kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar in the Vale of Siddim to the north of the Dead Sea. Laden with the spoil Chedorlaomer and his allies proceeded northwards, till they were overtaken by Abraham's small army at Dan, and were pursued by him as far as Hobah to the left of Damascus.⁷ On his return Abraham was met by the King of Sodom and by Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God (El-elyon) (Gen. xiv. 13-20).

A few other scattered hints in the book of Genesis enable us to complete our survey of Palestine, as it was when Abraham entered it. We are told (Gen. xii. 6) that

“the Canaanite was then in the land.” In another place (Gen. xv. 19) ten different nations are enumerated as its inhabitants — Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaim, Amorites, Canaanites, Gergashites and Jebusites. Abraham made a treaty with a King of Gerar, who bore the Semitic name of Abimelech (Gen. xxi. 22 ff.), and is called a Philistine on the occasion of a similar covenant made between him and Isaac (Gen. xxvi.).⁸ The family burying place in the field and cave of Machpelah was purchased by Abraham from the Hittites, who lived near Hebron (Gen. xxiii).⁹

Palestine
under Baby-
lonian in-
fluence

A brief sketch of the history of Palestine under Babylonian influence may throw some light on these scanty notices in Genesis.

According to some systems of chronology Sargon, king of Akkad, reigned as early as B.C. 3800, but, so great is the uncertainty as to the state of the ancient monarchs of Babylonia, that there are those who would place him a thousand years later, *cir.* 2800 B.C. Sargon, or Shargani-sharali, invaded the land of Martu (Syria) on four different occasions, and on one of his inscriptions he declares that “he crossed the sea of the setting sun.” His son Naram-Sin’s name appears on a cylinder seal, discovered in Cyprus, where it seems he received divine honours. Thus nearly a thousand years before Abraham and possibly much earlier, there existed a powerful empire in Western Asia, and the authority of a single monarch was recognised from the Persian Gulf to Cyprus.¹⁰ For an empire so extensive suitable means of intercommunication must have been available, and evidences have been discovered that in the different countries under Babylonian rule an extensive trade was carried on. How considerable this was is seen in the inscriptions of Gudêa, the builder of a great temple at Telloh. As he was not an independent sovereign but only a viceroy, Gudêa had in all probability to obtain by purchase the materials he required for his undertaking; and he seems to have sought for all that was best and costliest from every known land. On one of his monuments he mentions that the cedar-wood came from Lebanon, the stone and alabaster from the mountains in the land of Martu.

He speaks of the Upper and Lower Seas, clearly the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, of Eastern and Western Arabia. Only in reference to Elam does Gudêa allude to his having undertaken a military expedition: the products of the other countries he seems to have acquired by peaceful trade. As the date of the erection of Gudêa's temple was about B.C. 2650, his record gives us a high idea of the civilisation of Western Asia at this remote period.¹¹ The Elamites conquered Babylonia in B.C. 2280, and it was in all probability during their fifty years' supremacy that Chedorlaomer (Kudur-Laghmal) invaded Palestine. Elam was, however, defeated soon afterwards by Khammurabi, King of Babylon, often identified with Amraphel of Gen. xiv. After this monarch we have no certain evidence of Babylonian supremacy in Palestine, but it probably continued down to about 1700 B.C.¹²

The names of nations inhabiting the country in the time of Abraham enumerated in Gen. xiv. are those of the primitive races who occupied the land before the appearance of the Hebrew peoples. The Rephaim, who probably gave their name to a district in Eastern Palestine, and were still there in the days of Moses (Deut. iii. 11), were among the aboriginal inhabitants. Perhaps their very name was forgotten by the Hebrews, who knew of them only as the Rephaim = Giants, or Ghosts. Their city bore the name of Ashteroth-Karnaim (Ashteroth of the two horns).¹³ The Zuzim or Zamzummim and the Emim, who are next enumerated, were giant aborigines of Eastern Palestine, subsequently dispossessed by Moab and Ammon, the two tribes sprung from Lot—as were the Horites by the Edomites (Deut. ii. 10, 12, 20). The Amalekites were supposed to be one of the most ancient nations of Palestine (Numb. xxiv. 20); and the Amorites for a long time gave their name to the whole country.¹⁴

Ancient Peoples

Thus in Gen. xiv. we have an enumeration of the nations of Palestine before the advent of the Hebrew race. The whole setting of the chapter is archaic in the extreme, and points to a very primitive tradition.

Two important peoples have yet to be mentioned, the Canaanites and the Hittites.

Canaanites and Hittites

The former occupied the level country near the coast; the

name Canaan being applied to the district of Phoenicia in the Tel-el-Amarna correspondence. It seems likely that the Canaanites entered Palestine after B.C. 2200, the time of Chedorlaomer, though according to J they were in the land when Abraham came (Gen. xii. 6).¹⁵ A similar difficulty is caused by the mention of the Hittites in the neighbourhood of Hebron. This interesting people, according to the Egyptian monuments, lived in Northern Syria, on the Orontes, and it seems strange to find them in the South at so early a date. It must, however, be remembered that nothing is more characteristic of the Old Testament than the employment of familiar names to designate places and peoples when speaking of primitive times.¹⁶

Besides the cities of the Plain but one town is mentioned, Salem, the city of the priest-king Melchizedek. The Tel-el-Amarna correspondence makes it almost certain that Jerusalem is meant: the original name being, not Jebus as was usually supposed, but Uru-salim. There the Deity was worshipped under the name of El-Elyon, and the sanctity of this priest was emphatically recognised by the patriarch.¹⁷

There is strictly speaking no material for a connected biography of Abraham, the records being taken from a variety of sources, and resulting in no continuous narrative. For the sake of clearness we may regard him in three different aspects: (a) as a man, (b) as the ancestor of nations, (c) as he appeared to his posterity.

(a) The condition of Western Asia as revealed by the monuments certainly does not preclude our imagining that a man who, like Abraham, changed his manner of life in obedience to a divine call, really existed. Even in B.C. 2200 the religion, the civilisation, and the customs of Babylonia bore the stamp of antiquity, and there is nothing *prima facie* improbable in the legends preserved in the Targums and the Koran that Abraham was a religious reformer.¹⁸ It is not clear where the first call came to him, whether in Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. xi. 28 (P), xv. 7 (? E)), in Mesopotamia (Acts vii. 2), or at Haran (Gen. xii. 4) (J). At any rate he became a wanderer in obedience to a Divine command, crossing the Euphrates and journeying to the land of Canaan in company with his wife Sarai or Sarah, and Lot,

Salem or
Jerusalem

Abraham

As an in-
dividual

his brother's son. The rest of his family remained settled in Paddan-Aram in Mesopotamia (Gen. xxiv. 10, the city of Nahor). From this it would appear that Abraham was not, as he is often represented to have been, necessarily a mere nomad; but a member of a well established and civilised race, who became a wanderer by conviction. It may well have been that he obeyed the voice of conscience, without any hope of personal reward, in the belief that God had called him to be a blessing to the rest of mankind (Gen. xii. 3). He can therefore be regarded as the first example of faith in God, and of self-sacrifice for the sake of others.

This is the view taken of him at least eight centuries before Christ, and is doubtless based on much earlier traditions respecting him.

Though related by different writers, the *eight* promises of God to Abraham have been so arranged in Genesis as to bring into relief the progressive character of revelation. It is only by degrees that the patriarch learns the destiny in store for his posterity.

(1) When Abraham is told to go forth from his father's house, Jehovah promises to make him a great nation and to bless him, and adds, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii. 1, 2) (J).

(2) On his arrival in Canaan he is assured "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. xii. 7) (J).

(3) After Abraham's separation from Lot, the land he sees is promised to his seed (Gen. xiii. 14, 15) (J).

(4) When Abraham has defeated the Mesopotamians, he complains that he has no direct heir. A son is promised, and a solemn covenant is made between Jehovah Elohim and the patriarch. The Egyptian bondage is foretold. On this occasion Abraham "believed in Jehovah; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. xv. 6) (E).

(5) Thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael the covenant of circumcision was given, the names Abram and Sarai were changed to Abraham (the father of many nations) and Sarah, and a son was promised to Sarah (Gen. xvii.) (P).

(6) The appearance of the three men at the tent door, when a son is definitely promised to Sarah, who laughs at the notion of one so old as herself having a child (Gen. xviii.) (J).

The promises

(7) When Hagar and Ishmael were cast forth, Abraham was told "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Gen. xxi. 12) (E).

(8) At the time of the offering of Isaac. A renewal of the original promises, because Abraham had not withheld his only son from Jehovah (Gen. xxii. 16-18) (E).

Argument for
the personal
existence of
Abraham

Even in the delineation of the character of Abraham there is an absence of idealism, which makes against the theory that the traditions of Israel were dealing with a purely imaginary person. Two strange stories are told of his want of faith, and of his lack of truthfulness in dealing with strangers. There is his visit to Egypt (Gen. xii. 10-20) (J), and his sojourn with Abimelech (Gen. xx.) (E). In both cases he makes Sarah pass as his sister, and the truth is revealed by signs of Divine displeasure. Nor does Abraham's conduct towards Hagar exhibit the patriarch in a favourable light; though in the above cases it may not be the writer's intention to reflect discredit upon him. The crowning act of faith, shown in Abraham's willingness to offer up Isaac, is related with such beauty and simplicity that it is hard to relegate the wonderful struggle between paternal affection and a sense of duty entirely to the realm of myth (Gen. xxii.)¹⁹

Patriarchs
regarded as
tribes

(b) The admission that it is not impossible to imagine Abraham as a person who lived two thousand years before Christ does not necessarily preclude us from regarding much that is said of the birth of his sons as being figurative of the rise of other tribes and nations bound together by common ties of kindred. Lot and Ishmael may be historical persons, but their stories certainly have the appearance of referring to the rise of tribes more than to the adventures of individuals.

Lot, the son of Haran and nephew of Abraham, accompanied his uncle to Canaan. After the visit to Egypt, he and Abraham, standing on the mountain between Bethel and Ai, agree to divide the land, as their flocks are too great to pasture together. The generous patriarch offers the choice to his nephew, and Lot regarding the rich soil of the Jordan valley as affording wealth and ease decides to go thither, caring nothing for the fact that the men of Sodom were sinners before Jehovah. Twice is Lot delivered from peril in the land of his choice: Once by Abraham from captivity,

and again when the wicked cities were overthrown. Alone and in poverty on the Eastern shore of Jordan he and his degraded daughters become the parents of two nations—Moab and Ammon (Gen. xix. 30-38). The story of Ishmael also seems to indicate that the eldest son of Abraham was a type rather than an individual. Ishmael is of mixed parentage, his mother being an Egyptian slave. His country, the scene of Hagar's flight from Sarah, lies between Israel and Egypt. It is a wild land inhabited by warlike Bedawin, so Ishmael is compared to a "wild ass among men," free and untamable as this denizen of the wilderness. He is reared in the desert of Paran, "his hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him" (Gen. xvi. 12). Like Nahor, and Jacob, Ishmael is the ancestor of twelve tribes (Gen. xxii. 20-24, xxv. 12 ff.). Still more evident is it that Abraham's marriage with Keturah (Gen. xxv. 1-6) (P) can have no historical foundation. It signifies that the tribes of the Eastern deserts, though of Hebrew stock, were yet considered as but distant kinsmen by the races sprung from Isaac and Ishmael.²⁰

There are so many tender associations with the name of Isaac, the child of promise, that it is hard to think of him as no more than a tribe-name. Nevertheless the facts concerning him are so few, and those so closely resemble parallel events in the life of Abraham, that his personality is somewhat shadowy. The beautiful story of the journey of Abraham's servant to the home of the family in Mesopotamia to seek a wife for his master's son (Gen. xxiv.) shows the strength of the belief of the Israelites that their race was of the genuine Aramean stock, and not like the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites and Ishmaelites tainted by impure or Canaanitish blood. The story of the strife between Jacob and Esau in the womb can hardly be taken literally; but must be understood of the fundamental rivalry between two races so closely allied in blood, but so diverse in spirit, as Israel and Edom (Gen. xxv. 23).

Assuredly, however, that so exclusive a people as Israel should emphasise the fact that so many neighbouring peoples sprang from Abraham, the father of their faith, is of importance.

Abraham as
an ideal

(c) The Israelites never ascribed the beginnings of their religious knowledge to Moses, but to Abraham. Although it was widely believed that God's true Name, Jehovah, was first revealed to the Lawgiver, yet it was as the God of Abraham that He appeared in the Bush (Ex. iii. 6). To both Isaac and Jacob the God whom they serve is "the God of Abraham" (Gen. xxvi. 24, Gen. xxxi. 42). Joshua in his last address to the people says that their ancestors before Abraham were idolaters (Joshua xxiv. 2). Elijah in his great prayer on Mount Carmel addresses Jehovah as "God of Abraham" (1 Kings xviii. 36). Yet it is somewhat strange that except Isaiah (xxix. 22) and Micah (vii. 20), none of the early prophets allude to him, and in the canonical books written after the Exile his name does not occur frequently.²¹ To the different writers of the book of Genesis Abraham is evidently of great importance; and the impression they leave as to his personality is both vivid and imposing. Those who lived before and those who lived after the Exile agree in regarding him as the greatest of men, the model of piety to every Israelite. There is a grandeur about the patriarch which is heightened by the loneliness of his life, for all his surroundings only serve to show how much greater he was than the men and women of his age. But for the single appearance of the mysterious priest-king of Salem, no human being approaches him in dignity or elevation of nature.

His actions are marked by a stately courtesy and complete disinterestedness. The accounts dealing with Lot, with Abimelech and with Ephron the Hittite, though by different hands, agree in depicting the same character (Gen. xiii. (J), Gen. xxi. 22ff. (E), Gen. xxiii. (P)). Not without reason was he known in after days as the "friend of God," for his calm, contemplative nature made him ever ready to listen for Divine guidance in whatever way it should be manifested. Even were the opinion of some critics to prove right and a belief in the historical existence of Abraham should have to be abandoned, the ideal figure presented in the book of Genesis would still remain as an example alike of faith and of the noble purpose of living in this world for the sake of generations which are yet unborn.²²

The account of Isaac in Genesis is far less striking than that of Abraham. The general conception of him is that of a man of peaceful life, given to meditation and manifesting strong family affection. The only events related concerning him, unconnected with the rivalry of his sons, bear a resemblance to those told of Abraham. Alone of the three patriarchs Isaac is said to have engaged in agriculture. (Gen. xxvi. 12).²³

Isaac

The story of Jacob, the immediate ancestor of the Israelites, is told at some length, and is divisible into three main sections: (1) The rivalry between Jacob and Esau (Gen. xxv. 27-34, xxvii.); (2) Jacob's sojourn with Laban (Gen. xxix.—xxxi.); (3) Jacob's sojourn in Palestine and the doings of his sons (Gen. xxxii.—xxxv., xxxvii., xxxviii.). Here the difficulty of discriminating between Jacob as an individual and as a tribe, is even greater than in the case of Abraham. The Book of Genesis draws no such distinction, but relates tribal movements in exactly the same way as it does the personal experiences of the patriarch. The situation is complicated by the fact that some of the narratives concerning Jacob and his sons clearly belong to a much later period (*cf.* Gen. xxxiv. with what is related in Judges ix. about Abimelech).

Jacob

(1) The clue to the story of the enmity between Jacob and Esau is the deep-seated rivalry between their descendants Israel and Edom. The national characteristics appear in their ancestors. The strife between the two begins in the womb, and at his birth Jacob receives his name from his seizing his brother's heel (Gen. xxv. 22-23, 24-26).²⁴

Rivalry with Esau

Esau becomes a skilful hunter and a man of the field; whilst Jacob, for choosing the less adventurous life of a shepherd, is called "a plain man dwelling in tents."

The parents joined in the rivalry of their sons (Gen. xxv.). Isaac preferred Esau "because he did eat of his venison," and Rebecca loved Jacob. The first event recorded of the youths brings into relief the diversity of their dispositions. Esau on returning from hunting, asks Jacob to feed him with the red pottage he is preparing. Jacob, well aware of his brother's impulsive disposition, refuses unless Esau will sell him his birthright. Faint with hunger, and preferring

the gratification of the moment to future dignity, Esau exclaims, "Behold I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do unto me?" Before he gave him the food he longed for, the crafty and suspicious Jacob extorted from his brother an oath to observe their compact. It was in this way that Esau "for one morsel of meat sold his birthright" (Gen. xxv. 29-34).²⁵

But a yet more precious inheritance remained. Jacob had gained the portion of the eldest son, but neither brother had received the blessing, by which he should become heir to the promises given by God to Abraham and Isaac. This privilege Isaac destined for his favourite Esau, but Rebekah showed Jacob how to obtain it in his stead. In all literature there can be no story more pathetic than that of Esau's loss of the blessing. The blind father, deceived by the hairy gloves of Jacob, but suspicious of the tones of his voice, exclaims, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." "Art thou my very son Esau?" he inquires, and Jacob answers, "I am." The smell of Esau's garments, which Jacob had assumed, deceived his father, who began the blessing with the words, "See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed." Nothing was withheld: on Jacob is bestowed a rich territory, "the fatness of the earth and plenty of corn and wine" . . . "nations are to serve him," he is "to be lord over his brethren." . . . Whosoever curseth him is cursed, and whosoever blesseth him is blessed (Gen. xxvii. 28, 29).

When Esau appears and learns how Isaac had been duped, he utters an "exceeding bitter cry," saying of his brother: "Is he not rightly named *Jacob*, for he hath *supplanted* me these two times: he took away my birthright, and behold now he hath taken away my blessing." Isaac cannot give his beloved son a blessing comparable with that of Jacob, of whom he said, "I have blessed him, yea and he shall be blessed," but he is able to bestow on Esau the promise of a not ignoble future. Esau must live by his sword in a less favoured land, a subject to his younger brother. But the day should come when, like an untamable bull put to the plough, Esau would break loose, shaking his brother's yoke from his neck (Gen. xxvii. 39, 40).²⁶

Despite the hostility of Esau's descendants to the Israelites, the closeness of their relationship compels the author of Genesis to trace their fortunes with care. Esau, greatly to the grief of Isaac and Rebekah, married two Hittite wives, Judith and Basemath (Gen. xxvi. 34); and afterwards Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael (Gen. xxviii. 8, 9). His home was in Seir (*the rough*) in the land of Edom, and he became the leader of a band of four hundred men. A list of his descendants is given, and of the kings and dukes that ruled over his territory (Gen. xxxvi.).²⁷

Jacob, hearing that his justly offended brother Esau intended to kill him, at Rebekah's suggestion fled to her brother Laban's home in Haran in order that he might take a wife from his own kindred (Gen. xxviii. 2 (P)). On the first night he saw the famous vision of the ladder set up between earth and heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. The promise made to Abraham was again repeated, and Jacob received assurance of Divine protection. Awestruck at what he had seen, he exclaimed, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," naming the spot Beth-el (*the House of God*). Two religious acts were performed by the patriarch when he awoke: the setting up of a pillar (*maccebah*), and the registering of a vow that if God would be with him on his journey and bring him back in safety, the pillar he had set up should be God's house, and he would give a tenth of all that he possessed (Gen. xxviii. 10-22).²⁸

On reaching Haran Jacob met Rachel at the well, and after aiding her to water her flock, was favourably received by her father Laban. He agreed to serve for seven years on condition of espousing Rachel at the end of the time, and in the beautiful words of the Sacred Record, "They seemed to him but a few days, for the love that he had to her." But, when his period of servitude was ended, Laban gave Jacob his elder daughter Leah, alleging the custom of the country in justification of his deception, and compelled him to serve for another seven years. At the end of the fourteen years Jacob requested to be allowed to depart; but Laban, divining that God had blessed him on account of his son-in-law, besought him to remain. It was agreed between them

The vision at
Bethel

Jacob in
Mesopotamia

tithe

that all the goats that were speckled or spotted, and all the black sheep should be removed from the flock in charge of Jacob, and that in future every kid that was born speckled or spotted and every black lamb should be his hire. By putting almond rods with strakes peeled on them before the strongest of the flock when they conceived, Jacob managed that all the best kids should be his. In vain did Laban propose different arrangements and change Jacob's wages "ten times" (Gen. xxx. 32, xxxi. 41). The best of the flock became the property of the skilful shepherd.

Jacob's sons

During his sojourn in Haran, Jacob became the father of eleven sons, each of whom bore a name applicable to the circumstances of his birth.

Leah's first-born was called Reuben (*behold a son*), "because," said the unhappy mother, "the Lord hath looked upon my affliction, for now will my husband love me." To her second son she gave the name of Simeon (*hearing*), "because the Lord hath heard that I am hated, therefore hath he given me this son also." Her pathetic hope that she would win her husband's heart by bearing him a third son is expressed in the name Levi (*joining*), "now will my husband be joined to me." But when a fourth son was given the joyful mother cried, "This time will I praise the Lord," and named him Judah (*praise*) (Gen. xxix. 31-35).

Bilhah, the handmaid of Rachel, next bore to Jacob Dan (*judge*) and Naphtali (*wrestling*), both names alluding to the rivalry between the two daughters of Laban; and two sons were also borne by Leah's handmaid Zilpah, Gad (*fortune*), and Asher (*happiness*) (Gen. xxx. 1-13).²⁹

After the birth of the four sons of the concubines, Leah had three more children: Issachar (*this is hire*), because she had "hired" Jacob from Rachel by love-apples which Reuben had found³⁰; and Zebulun (*dwelling*), for she said, "God hath endowed me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." A daughter named Dinah was Leah's seventh child (Gen. xxx. 14-21).

Rachel after being long barren only bore one son in Haran: at his birth his mother said, "God hath taken away (*Asaph*) my reproach," and called his name Joseph, saying,

“The Lord shall add (*yoseph*) to me another son” (Gen. xxx. 22-24).³¹

Jacob, seeing that Laban and his sons had ceased to regard him favourably, and having received a Divine intimation, resolved with the concurrence of Leah and Rachel, to leave Haran. Accordingly, when Laban was absent sheep-shearing, he seized the opportunity by removing all his property across the Euphrates, Rachel taking with her the *teraphim* or household gods of the family.³² Laban pursued the fugitives, overtaking them in Mount Gilead. Being, however, warned by God in a dream, “Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad,” Laban did no more than remonstrate with his son-in-law, not only for having abducted his daughters, but also for having stolen his “gods.” Even this charge he was unable to prove, owing to the specious pretexts advanced by Rachel to prevent his searching the camels’ furniture in her tent (Gen. xxxi. 34, 35).

Jacob leaves
Laban

Finally Jacob and Laban made a covenant by setting up a heap of stones and a pillar. Jacob called the place by the Hebrew name Galeed, whilst Laban gave it the Syriac appellation of Jegar Sahadutha, both words signifying “the heap of witness.” It was also styled Mizpah (*The watch tower*), for Laban said: “The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.” The cairn also served as a boundary-stone betwixt the Aramæans and the Hebrews, for Laban added: “This heap be witness and the pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm” (Gen. xxxi. 44-55).³³

Jacob now enters upon a series of spiritual experiences. As he journeyed the Angels of God met him, and exclaiming “This is God’s host,” he gave to the place the name of Mahanaim (*two hosts*) (Gen. xxxii. 2). Shortly afterwards he heard from the messengers whom he had sent to Esau in Seir, that his brother was advancing to meet him at the head of four hundred men. This was the supreme spiritual

Jacob in
Eastern
Palestine

crisis of Jacob's life. Full of apprehension at encountering one whom he had so greatly wronged, he prepared for the worst. After a fervent prayer for support to the God who had thus far been his Protector—"For," he admits, "with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two companies"—Jacob despatched a rich present to propitiate his brother. He divided his household into companies before sending them across the Jabbok: in the first were the handmaids and their sons; next came the family of Leah; and in the rear he placed Rachel and Joseph that, in case of attack, they at least might escape (Gen. xxxii. 7-23).

Jacob himself remained alone, and "there wrestled a man with him till the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained." After this Jacob became the aggressor, and sought to detain his Adversary, Who demanded of him his name, and on hearing it, replied, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel (*God striveth*), for thou hast striven (*sārīthā*) with God and with men, and hast prevailed." But to Jacob's request that he might know the name of his mysterious Visitant, the sole reply was, "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? and he blessed him there." The awe-struck patriarch named the spot Peniel (*The face of God*), "for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." As the sun rose the patriarch passed over Penuel, halting upon his thigh, in token that his spiritual triumph had not been without its cost (Gen. xxxii. 24-31).³⁴

Jacob now met Esau, and was welcomed with generous affection. The reconciliation of the two brothers is told in such a manner as to do full justice to the good qualities of the elder. With a few masterly touches the contrast is made apparent, greatly to the advantage of Esau. Jacob's attitude throughout is one of profound humility. He calls himself Esau's servant, styling his brother "my lord," says "I have seen thy face as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me." His shrewd caution manifested itself in the way in which he managed to decline the company and protection of Esau, without giving offence. Only when he prays his brother to take the rich present he

offers "because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough," does Jacob appear in a favourable light. On leaving Esau, Jacob made his last halt in eastern Palestine at Succoth, a city which took its name from the *booths* which the patriarch erected there (Gen. xxxiii 1-17).

Jacob followed the example of Abraham in making Shechem his first resting-place on the west of the Jordan. Here he acquired land from Hamor, the father of Shechem, the Hivite prince of the country, for a hundred pieces of money. His sojourn at Shechem was interrupted by an act of perfidy on the part of his sons Simeon and Levi. Shechem had "humbled" their sister Dinah, but desired to repair the wrong by making her his wife. A solemn treaty was made between Jacob and Hamor, Shechem's father, on Hamor promising that he and his men would submit to the rite of circumcision. When the Shechemites were thus made incapable of self-defence Simeon and Levi slew them, and their father's timorous complaint "Ye have troubled me, to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land," was met with the proud reply, "Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?"³⁵ (Gen. xxxiv.).

Jacob in
Western
Palestine

By divine command Jacob left Shechem to go to Bethel, where he was instructed to raise an altar to God. He prepared for his journey by ordering his family to put away their "strange gods," and to purify themselves. Accordingly they delivered up their images and their "ear-rings," and Jacob hid them under the terebinth at Shechem. The journey was made in safety, for "the terror of God" was upon the cities, and on his arrival at Luz, Jacob erected the altar of El-beth-el. Here Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, died, and was buried at Allon-bacuth (*the oak of weeping*).³⁶ From Bethel Jacob went southward to Ephrath³⁷; there Rachel gave birth to his youngest son, calling him, "as her soul was in departing," Ben-oui (*son of my sorrow*), a name which Jacob changed to Benjamin (*son of my right hand*). Jacob halted on his southward journey beyond the tower of Eder. He is next discovered at Mamre with his brother Esau at the funeral of Isaac, who had apparently lingered for more than twenty years after blessing his sons, on what had

been supposed to be his death-bed [Gen. xxxv. 27-29 (P)].³⁸

Jacob's sons
in Palestine

The behaviour of the sons of Jacob in Canaan was marked by violence and lust. Simeon and Levi had made it necessary for the patriarch to leave Shechem. Reuben, the eldest, is said to have insulted his father by his wickedness with Bilhah. Of Judah, the fourth son, it is said that he "went down from his brethren, and became the companion of Hirah the Adullamite." By a Canaanite wife he had three sons named Er, Onan and Shelah. Er married Tamar, but died without issue; and his wife, in accordance with a custom already prevalent, was given to Onan. Onan, however, was slain by God for the shameful way in which he evaded his obligation to his deceased brother. Judah, dismayed at the loss of his two sons, hesitated to risk the life of the youthful Shelah by bestowing on him so fatal a bride as Tamar, and bade her wait till this son was of marriageable age. When, however, Tamar saw that Judah did not mean to marry her to Shelah, she disguised herself as a "harlot," that is, as one of the miserable votaries of the Canaanite worship, and stood in Judah's way when he was going to a sheep-shearing. Without suspecting her identity, Judah became by Tamar the father of two sons, Perez and Zerah (Gen. xxxviii).

Joseph

Jacob designed the elder son of his favourite wife, Rachel, for the headship of the chosen family, and invested him with the garment of a chieftain.³⁹ Two dreams revealed to Joseph that he was destined to attain to honour. In the first, he and his brothers were binding sheaves in the field, and their sheaves did obeisance to his. On another occasion Joseph dreamed that he received the homage of the sun, the moon and eleven stars. His brothers hated him for his dreams, and even Jacob rebuked his boldness, though he did not forget his son's words.

About this time Joseph was sent by Jacob from Hebron to enquire after the welfare of his brethren, who were supposed to be at Shechem. Hearing, however, that they had gone northward, he followed them to Dothan. Seeing Joseph approach, his brethren exclaimed, "Behold this dreamer cometh," and would have killed him. Reuben, how-

ever, persuaded them to cast him into a pit, with the intention of restoring his brother to Jacob on the first opportunity. In Reuben's absence, some Ishmaelite or Midianite merchants passed by on their way to Egypt, and, at Judah's suggestion, Joseph was sold to them. The brothers then took Joseph's coat, dipped it in the blood of a goat and led Jacob to believe that his favourite son had been slain by a wild beast (Gen. xxxvii. 2^b-11, 22-24, 28^a, 28^c-30, 36 E; the rest J).

Such then is the account of the sojourning of the three great patriarchs in the Promised Land related in the book of Genesis, a work evidently compiled when the Israelites had been for many generations settled in Canaan. The additions, alleged to have been made after the exile, do not materially affect the narrative, which represents the belief of the prophetic teachers concerning the origin of their nation and religion. There is throughout Genesis an evident unity of purpose, and it is of great importance to discover why these stories of primitive life were preserved and selected. Despite the compiler's use of the names of places familiar to his own contemporaries, the picture of the condition of Canaan in patriarchal days is not incorrect. Writing as they do for the edification of the men of their own age, the compilers of the patriarchal narrative completely discard the devices of antiquarian pedantry. They relate how the patriarchs went to Shechem, to Bethel, to Hebron, though well aware that in the days of which they write, these cities had not yet been built. They put the Sacred Name of Jehovah into the mouth of Abraham, despite the existence of a tradition that God did not reveal it till the days of Moses (Ex. vi. 3 (P), apparently known also to E). It is probable also that Abimelech, king of Gerar, was not one of the Philistines, but is so called because he occupied the district inhabited later by that people. But these anachronisms do not detract from the real historical value of the narrative, since they are due to the desire of the writers to make the facts more clear to their contemporaries. In portraying Canaan as a pastoral rather than an agricultural country, they carry the reader back to remote antiquity; for as the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, and the spies in

Accuracy of
narrative in
Genesis

the days of the Wanderings attest, it was full of fortified towns before the fourteenth century B.C. In Genesis, however, the word "city" is very rarely used except in connection with the Plain of the Jordan, and the general impression left on the reader is, that in the days of the patriarchs Western and Southern Palestine were not yet the homes of settled communities.

Arabs naturally disposed to receive religious impressions

The accuracy with which primitive life is described is not of itself a strong argument in favour of the antiquity of the record, because the simple habits of the pastoral Arabs do not materially alter: yet even apart from the evidence of Scripture it is by no means incredible that the patriarchs should have been the recipients of a divine revelation of a highly spiritual character. The habits of the Arab predispose him for religious impressions. The uncertainty of a nomad life impels him to look continually for help from above, and makes him reflect upon God's nature and the problem of life more deeply than if he were engaged in the wearisome routine of agriculture, or lived amid turmoil of city life. Moreover the want of a settled habitation removes the possibility of practising a religion in which a sensuous ceremonial tends to paralyse spirituality of thought. It is therefore not uncommon to find among men accustomed to the simplicity of a wandering life a surprisingly pure conception of spiritual truth. The patriarchs were thus fitted by their pursuits to be the founders of a pure religion.

Honesty of early writers

That the writers of Genesis used ancient materials may further be seen in their frank admission that the acts of the patriarchs were not always in accordance with the moral standard demanded by the prophets of Israel. The book of Genesis records without comment religious observances on the part of the patriarchs, the practice of which in the prophetic age met with severe reprobation. The choice of mountains and trees as places for worship, the use of *teraphim* or household gods, the setting up of pillars (*maççeboth*) and the like, tend to show that, if the narrative received its present shape between the ninth and seventh centuries before Christ, the object of the historians was not to depict a golden age of pure religion, but to relate what had actually happened.

Nor does the extraordinary frankness, with which they depict the faults not only of the tribal patriarchs, but of the ancestors of the sacred nation themselves, suit the theory that the Biblical story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is really the outcome of an attempt on the part of the Israelites to claim descent from the tutelary deities of the Canaanites.

The characters, especially of Abraham and Jacob, are thoroughly human. The high virtues of the elder patriarch do not exclude the possibility of weakness, nor do the obvious frailties of the younger render him incapable of showing many attractive qualities. Moreover the faults of Jacob, related without comment in Genesis, are not those which the great prophets were likely to condone, and the narrative of his adventures seems to reveal the undeveloped morality of a primitive age. The authors of the account of these early days assuredly believed that they were writing a history of what actually occurred, and doubtless drew their information from ancient sources. They had no idea of constructing an imaginary picture of a Golden Age. Their object was not to glorify the past, but to depict it with all its imperfections. For their theme is God's dealing with the men of old,—generations less privileged than their own.

The past is not intended to bind the future by its precedents: on the contrary, acts justifiable in the days of ignorance may not be repeated with impunity when fresh light has been vouchsafed. To these old historians the light of a bygone age was but the herald of a morning destined to shine forth unto the light of a more perfect day.

The book of Genesis moreover displays a remarkable insight not only into the working of the human heart, but also into what may be termed the philosophy of revealed religion. In the days of Abraham the intercourse between God and man is represented as free and unconstrained. There is no fear of anthropomorphism in the account of how God talked face to face with the man who was known as "the friend of God" (2 Chr. xx. 7; James ii. 23).

It was otherwise with Jacob: with the advance of time the old simple ideas concerning the Deity had given way to

**Religion of
Abraham and
Jacob
contrasted**

more abstract notions. Jacob communicates with God not face to face but through intermediaries. Angels deliver God's messages to this patriarch: he struggles that he may know the hidden name of the God who is remote from him. Jacob stands midway between the patriarch with whom the Covenant was made and his descendants who received the Law "as the ordinances of angels." It is the same with the rites of worship. Nothing can be simpler than those which Abraham practised; the altars at Shechem and on the mountain top between Bethel and Ai, the sacrifice, and the covenant made by dividing the sacrificial victims.* But with Jacob religious observances have multiplied, and many of these, though innocent in themselves, led in the days of his descendants to superstition and idolatry. The *maççebah*, or pillar, on which the oil was poured, the *teraphim*, which Rachel stole and retained with so much craft, the purificatory rites before approaching Bethel, and the erection of altars to El-Elohe-Israel at Shechem and to El-Bethel at Bethel, are characteristic of the way in which religion tends to become more complex, as the connection between earth and heaven is felt to be less close.

* Yet Abraham planted sacred trees, a practice regarded as objectionable in later days as Jacob's "pillars."

Chapter III

Israel in Egypt

THROUGHOUT the patriarchal period the ties which bound the descendants of Abraham to their kindred in Mesopotamia had been gradually relaxing, and after Jacob's flight from Laban the Hebrews ceased to feel any attraction towards their original home. In times of distress, even Abraham and Isaac had directed their thoughts to Egypt, and Jacob's sons followed their example. A reception was prepared for them, in which the guiding hand of God is clearly to be recognised.*

The Midianite merchants sold Joseph to Potiphar, chief of the guard, a high official in the Egyptian court. So greatly did his master trust him, that he committed all things to his care, till, owing to a base and groundless accusation, Joseph was cast into prison.¹ Even there he won the confidence of his gaoler, and was given the charge of two illustrious captives, the chiefs of the king's cup-bearers and bakers. The sleep of both the imprisoned courtiers was troubled on the same night, and on Joseph's enquiring the cause of their sadness the chief butler told his dream, and was informed that it portended his restoration to favour. His companion, hoping that his dream was equally propitious, revealed it; and learned that it foreboded death. On Pharaoh's birthday the chief butler was reinstated, and the chief baker hanged. Joseph, however, was forgotten, till Pharaoh himself was perplexed by a two-fold dream, in which we may see reflected the royal anxieties concerning the food of his people. He seemed to stand in the reed-grass by the Nile, and saw seven lean kine devour seven fat kine, and seven full ears of corn swallowed up by seven thin ears. As none of the court magicians could say what

Joseph's
adventures
in Egypt

* Appendix A at end of chapter.

this signified, the chief butler told the king how successfully Joseph had interpreted dreams in the prison, and the young Hebrew was at once introduced to the royal presence. On being informed of the purport of the dreams, he said that they portended seven years of plenty followed by seven of famine, and advised Pharaoh to provide against the years of scarcity by appointing a discreet man to store up a fifth of the spare corn, whilst the harvests were abundant² (Gen. xxxix.-xli.).

Promotion
of Joseph

Pharaoh commended the wisdom of this advice, and made Joseph the head of his house. The new minister was arrayed in the cotton vestment of a great state officer, received the royal signet-ring and a chain of gold, was placed in the second chariot, and was shown to the people with shouts of *Abrech!* (Gen. xli. 43).³ An Egyptian wife was given to Joseph, Asenath, daughter of Potiphera priest of On, and he so completely identified himself with his adopted country, that he called his eldest son Manasseh (*causing to forget*), for said he, "God hath made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." His second son was named Ephraim (*parah* "to be fruitful"). Joseph's name had been changed by Pharaoh to Zaphnath Paaneach⁴ (Gen. xli. 45-52).

The famine

During the seven years of plenty Joseph collected the corn in the store-cities, and when the dearth came he opened the granaries and sold it, not only to the inhabitants of Egypt, but to those of the neighbouring countries. When their money was exhausted, the Egyptians sold their cattle, and finally their lands, to Pharaoh for grain; and Joseph, having secured for his master the property of every class, save that of the priests, restored the cultivators their lands on condition of their agreeing to the payment of a fifth of their produce to the crown. The prudent policy of the minister pleased sovereign and people alike, since, without exacting harsh terms, he had both enriched the treasury, and saved many lives. In this way he secured a ready reception for his family when they came to Egypt (Gen. xli. 53-57; xlvii. 13-26).

Joseph's
brethren go
down to
Egypt

The famine extended to Canaan, and Joseph's brethren were among the foreigners who came to buy corn. On the occasion of their first visit Joseph pretended to mistake them for spies, and, to prove their integrity, he detained Simeon as

a hostage, and demanded of the rest that they should bring him their youngest brother, whom they had declared to be with their father in Canaan.

On their return both they and their father were terrified to find that the money they had paid for the corn had been replaced in all the sacks; and when it became necessary to go to Egypt for a fresh supply of corn, Jacob at first refused to permit them to take Benjamin, though Reuben offered to allow his two sons to be slain if he did not bring his brother back in safety (Gen. xlii. 37 E). It was only after long entreaty that Judah persuaded his father to consent to entrust Benjamin to his care.⁵ On this occasion Jacob ordered his sons to take double money in their sacks, and to carry as a present to the Egyptian governor the chief fruits, or, as he termed them, "the song of the land," balm, honey, spicery, myrrh, nuts, and almonds (Gen. xliii. 11). When the brethren came before Joseph they were graciously received, Simeon was restored to them, and a great banquet was prepared, at which Joseph feasted alone, and the Hebrews were assigned a place apart from the Egyptians. As is usual at an Eastern feast, the governor sent special dishes to his guests, Benjamin receiving the distinction of a fivefold portion. On the brethren's departure Joseph commanded his steward to place his divining-cup (Gen. xliv. 2) in Benjamin's sack, and then to send officers to arrest the man who was supposed to have stolen so highly-prized a possession. The brethren agreed that if any of them were guilty he should become the slave of the governor; but when it was found that Benjamin, their father's youngest and best-loved son, must pay the penalty, they all returned to intercede for him. In touching words, Judah explained that his father would die if Benjamin did not return with his brethren, and finally offered to become a slave himself, if only the lad were allowed to go free (Gen. xliv. 14-34 J). "Then Joseph could not refrain himself, and he cried, 'Cause every man to go out from me.' And there stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known to his brethren."

As the five more years of famine had been foretold, Pharaoh gave orders to Joseph to bring his family to Egypt. On hearing that Joseph was alive, Jacob offered sacrifices to the

Jacob and his
sons brought
to Egypt

God of Isaac at Beersheba, and, encouraged by a divine vision, the patriarchal family went down to Egypt. Judah was sent before to prepare the way, and Joseph drove in his chariot to the land of Goshen to meet his father. The brethren were advised to tell Pharaoh that their hereditary occupation was the tending of cattle, in order that the king might give them a separate home in the land of Goshen, as "every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians" (Gen. xli. 1-34).

In their new settlement of Goshen, or Geshem of Arabia,⁶ the family of Jacob long enjoyed independence and high consideration, Pharaoh's cattle being entrusted to their care. Jacob himself was presented to the king, who received his salutation or blessing, and asked him his age. The patriarch, in reply, said: "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage" (Gen. xlvii. 9).

Blessing of
Ephraim and
Manasseh

Feeling the approach of death, Jacob sent for Joseph, who came with Ephraim and Manasseh. The patriarch adopted his two grandsons, granting them the same honours as his first-born: "As Reuben and Simeon they shall be mine." When he blessed the lads, he deliberately crossed his hands so as to lay his right on Ephraim's head, and when Joseph explained that Manasseh was the first-born, Jacob assured his son that, though Manasseh was destined to be the father of a great tribe, the future of Ephraim's descendants was even brighter. To Joseph "one portion above his brethren" was bestowed. "Which," said Jacob, "I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" (Gen. xlviii.).⁷

Jacob blesses
the twelve
patriarchs

Before his death, Jacob told his sons in poetical language the future destiny of the tribes which were to spring from them (Gen. xlix). In this song, the three eldest sons, Reuben, Simeon, and Levi were cursed rather than blessed; nor is any hint given by the patriarch that the priesthood of the chosen race should be vested in the Levitical tribe.

Judah was promised that the sceptre should never depart "until Shiloh come."⁸ For Joseph the chiefest blessings

were reserved. After pronouncing this prophecy Jacob adjured his sons not to bury him in Egypt, but in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah were laid. After his death Jacob was embalmed and carried to Canaan, and the place where the Egyptians mourned him was known as Abel-Mizraim (Gen. 1. 11).⁹ Joseph's brethren feared that their brother would withdraw his protection now that their father was dead, but he reassured them, saying that, in selling him into Egypt they "meant evil against him, but God meant it for good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive." When Joseph died he made his brethren swear that they would take his body away from Egypt, whenever God should visit them. His body was accordingly embalmed and placed in a coffin which the Israelites religiously preserved (Gen. 1. 26).

The difficulties in the story of Joseph are precisely the same as those in the other patriarchal narratives; but they are increased by the natural reluctance of every appreciative reader of Scripture to regard so beautiful a tale as referring to other than an individual. The character of Joseph is delineated with the utmost skill, and brought out by touches of remarkable delicacy. So is that of Jacob and of Joseph's brethren. How natural, for example, is the feeling of remorse which their own troubles aroused in the heart of the brethren, and caused them to exclaim, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear" (Gen. xlii. 21)! How clearly does Jacob's irresolution, when his sons demand leave to go again to Egypt, reveal the timidity, the querulousness, and the affectionate character of the patriarch! "Joseph is not . . . all these things are against me" (Gen. xlii. 36). The simple honesty of the patriarchal shepherds is admirably portrayed in their interview with Joseph's steward when they explained how their money had been restored to them without their knowledge (Gen. xliii. 20-22). Reuben's half-savage instincts reveal themselves in the offer to his father, "Slay my two sons if I bring him not to thee" (Gen. xlii. 37 E); and Judah's more generous nature is shown in his pathetic

The story of
Joseph

appeal to Joseph to take him as a slave instead of Benjamin, in whose sack the cup had been found (Gen. xlv. 18 ff. J). It is almost superfluous to dwell on the natural manner in which Joseph's character has been drawn. Take for example his anxious enquiry for his father, when his brethren appear for the second time before him. "Is your father yet alive, the old man of whom ye spake?" (Gen. xliii. 27). What can be more spontaneous than the injunction to his brethren, "And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt!" (Gen. xlv. 13). The beauty of the closing chapters of Genesis is matchless, and when criticism has said its last word, they must remain as one of the most precious gems in the sacred literature of the Hebrews.

Knowledge
of Egypt
displayed

The local colouring of the story of Joseph is remarkable; whoever wrote it had a personal knowledge of Egypt. In Pharaoh's dream the cattle stand in the reed grass by the Nile (Gen. xli. 3); Joseph is raised to his office in the Egyptian manner (Gen. xli. 42 ff.); the name of his wife Asenath is Egyptian, and so is the title conferred on him by Pharaoh (Gen. xli. 45). The fifth of the produce (Gen. xli. 34; xlvii. 24) has been from time immemorial considered the proper tax on land in Egypt; the exclusiveness of the Egyptians is dwelt upon (Gen. xliii. 32; xlvii. 34); embalming the dead is mentioned as practised (Gen. l. 2, 26).

But, when due weight has been given to this local knowledge, it seems difficult to treat the story of Joseph as literal history. That it is not the work of a contemporary may be seen from the omission of every detail which would enable us to fix its date. Such information as the name of the king of Egypt, or of the city where he dwelt, is withheld; and this would surely not have been the case had the writer possessed the requisite knowledge. Nor is it easy to believe that the twelve sons of Jacob and the seventy members of his household (Gen. xlvii. 26, 27) do not signify the tribal divisions of Israel rather than persons. The documentary theory of the book of Genesis is, however, in favour of the story of Joseph being a genuine account of how the Hebrews came into Egypt. Joseph was no mere tribal hero of central Palestine, his story was a national possession. If the Judæan school wrote after the division of the kingdom,

J and E
witnesses to
story of
Joseph

they certainly thought the adventures of Joseph as important as the Elohist's of the Northern kingdom did. The double narrative is practically identical, and the witness to the truth of the story twofold. That Joseph was sold by his brethren, and became an Egyptian minister of high rank must have been universally believed by the Hebrews in the ninth century B.C. Nor is the story of a Semite becoming a great official in Egypt incredible from what we know of Egyptian affairs.¹⁰ Whilst, therefore, admitting the probability of the story of Joseph being an attempt to account for a national movement, it seems too much to deny that the events related could have happened, and to assert that the Hebrew tradition does not rest on a solid substratum of fact.

The great difficulty to the historian in dealing with the sojourn of Israel in Egypt is the absence of all data concerning the period at which it occurred. Nor does our present knowledge of Egyptology supply any really satisfactory clue to the solution of the problem.*

A long period of complete silence follows the death of Joseph, during which nothing is recorded of the descendants of Jacob, save that they increased rapidly in numbers. What their condition was can only be a matter for conjecture. It may be that they preserved the religion and customs of their ancestors, reverencing the God of Abraham and at the same time paying worship to the *teraphim* or domestic gods, as their fathers had done since the days of Jacob. As, even in the days of the oppression, the chief wealth of the Hebrews consisted in cattle, they probably continued to lead a pastoral life in Goshen, and it is not inconceivable that they from time to time retired to the desert for the purposes of holding solemn sacrifices.

In any case the Hebrews showed little disposition to adopt the religion or habits of the Egyptians, and preserved their racial characteristics unimpaired.

The long silence concerning Israel is broken in the Sacred Record by the words, "Now there arose another king over the land of Egypt, who knew not Joseph" (Ex. i. 8). Despite some very serious chronological difficulties, it is generally agreed among Egyptologists that this monarch was Rameses

Period of
Silence

The new
Egyptian
king or
dynasty

* Appendix B at end of chapter.

II., known to fame as the great warrior and builder of the nineteenth dynasty.¹¹ To find labourers for his stupendous works, Rameses made regular slave-raiding expeditions into the Soudan, and semi-independent nations, like the Israelites, were reduced to a state of servitude so bitter, that "They sighed by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage" (Ex. ii. 23).

If the oppression took place under the nineteenth dynasty, it was a time at which Semitic influence was greatly feared in Egypt, and so strong a distrust did the Hebrews inspire, that an attempt was made to check their increasing numbers, by inducing the midwives to murder the children as soon as they were born. Two of these, named Siphrah and Puah, declared that what they were required to do was an impossibility, and were greatly blessed by God¹² for their kindness to His people. The nation continued to multiply rapidly, and finally the king issued an edict ordering all the male children of the Hebrews to be cast into the Nile (Ex. i. 15-22).

Birth of Moses

In defiance of the royal command, Jochebed, the wife of Amram the Levite (Ex. vi. 20 P), managed to conceal her son for three months. When she saw she could no longer hide him, she made an ark of papyrus leaves, and having daubed it with bitumen and pitch, she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. The child was found by the daughter of Pharaoh, who adopted him, and gave him the name of Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him (*mashithi*) out of the water" (Ex. ii. 10).¹³

Like many other champions of the oppressed, the great deliverer of the Hebrews was educated by his oppressors. As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, he must have become an Egyptian by nurture, education, and even religion. Unlike Joseph, Moses had never known a Hebrew home in his youth, but had lived from infancy in an Egyptian palace. Even though his own mother had been his nurse, he was probably withdrawn from her influence before his education began. He was, no doubt, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and tradition adds that he was "mighty in word and deed" (Acts vii. 22).¹⁴

Moses flees from Egypt

Moses did not begin his career as a religious reformer, but as a champion of the oppressed. He killed an Egyptian for

smiting a Hebrew, and hid his body in the sand. On the next day he tried to reconcile two Hebrews, who strove together. The wrong-doer resented this interference, and asked, "Thinkest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?" (Ex. ii. 11-14). The news of Moses' crime was brought to Pharaoh, and being in danger of his life he escaped to the land of Midian. His first act in exile was to stand up in defence of some women at a well, whom the shepherds were preventing from watering their flocks. These proved to be the daughters of Jethro, whose son-in-law Moses became by his marriage with Zipporah. A son was born called Gershom, "For," said Moses, "I have been a sojourner (*ger*) in a strange land" (Ex. ii. 22).

In Midian, Moses was prepared for the great work of his life. His wife's father, who is known by the names of Jethro and Reuel, bore, like Melchizedek, the title of *cohên*, or priest. It is possible that he worshipped the God of the Hebrews, and his influence may have caused Moses to turn his thoughts to the history and religion of his own people, with whom the family of Jethro subsequently formed a permanent alliance. Living as he did among the free descendants of Abraham, Moses must have become convinced of the need of liberating his countrymen from their degrading servitude in Egypt, in order that they might work out their high destiny. His wanderings in the desert with the flock of Jethro made the future deliverer practically acquainted with the country to the North and East of Egypt, and qualified him for the task of leading the people through it.¹⁵

Moses in
Midian

The sacred spot in the land of Midian was Horeb, "the mountain of God." Thither Moses drove his flock and beheld a bush that burned with fire but was not consumed. The Angel, who appeared to him in the flame, told him to put off his shoes from off his feet, for the spot was holy ground; revealing Himself as the "God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses was now commanded to become the deliverer of the Israelites, and a token was given to him: "When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God on this mountain." As Jacob had done at Penuel, Moses asked the name of the God Who had appeared to him; "and God said unto Moses—I

Vision in 'the
Bush'

AM THAT I AM. . . Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." The message to Israel was to be in these words, "Jehovah the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath sent me unto you : this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations" (Ex. iii. 1-15 E ; Ex. vi. 1-8 P).¹⁶

The call of Moses, that momentous event in the history of religion, is marked by the revelation of the name of God, which had been withheld from Jacob. The question which every reader of Scripture has to decide for himself is whether Jehovah, Whose Name was thus proclaimed to Moses, was one among the many gods of antiquity, or the One and only God. There can be no doubt that the rendering of the *tetragrammaton* in the versions as "the LORD" tends to obscure the fact that it is a proper name, nor does it appear that the ancient Hebrews had any scruple in using it as such. To many of them, no doubt, Jehovah was a national God and was conceived of as hardly differing from the tutelary deities of other nations. But even if it be admitted that the Israelites had at first no very exalted conception of the nature of their God, the question remains—Did the nation evolve for itself the idea of One God of all the world from a tribal God, Whose service it adopted at the suggestion of Moses, or did the only True and living God deign to reveal Himself? In the one case, the idea, nay the very being of God, is the creation of the human mind ; in the other, He is the ruler of the Universe, who in some way made first His Name, and by slow degrees His nature, known to the Chosen People, and through them to the whole world. The Scriptural teaching of the vision that Moses saw in the Bush is, not that he received knowledge of a new God, whom he ultimately persuaded his countrymen to accept as their national deity, but that the God, who had been acknowledged by the fathers of his people, vouchsafed to him fuller knowledge than these had possessed. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had, says the Priestly Narrative, known God as El-Shaddai, but henceforth He was to be worshipped under the personal name of Jehovah, the true king and protector of Israel.¹⁷

Moses was further commanded to go with the elders of his people into the presence of Pharaoh to ask permission to depart for a three days' journey into the desert to sacrifice to Jehovah. As a proof of his mission he was given three signs,—The rod he held in his hand became a serpent on being cast upon the ground, and resumed its original form when Moses seized it; his hand became leprous when placed once in the fold of his garment, and was restored when he put it back; if these signs proved ineffectual, he was given the power of turning water into blood (Ex. iv. 1-9).

Mission of
Moses

No eagerness was displayed by Moses in accepting the Divine commission. He averred that he possessed no gift of eloquence, but that, even after Jehovah had spoken to him, he remained "slow of speech and of a slow tongue." For his want of faith the Divine voice reproved him. "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh a man dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?" But though a promise was given "I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt speak," Moses answered in tones of despair, "O Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send." "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said, Is there not Aaron thy brother the Levite? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God" (Ex. iv. 10-16).

With the consent and approval of Jethro Moses began his mission, after being assured that those who sought his life in Egypt were dead.

On his way to Egypt, however, Jehovah "met him and sought to kill him," but his wife Zipporah redeemed his life by circumcising her son with a flint knife exclaiming as she did so, "A bridegroom of blood art thou because of the circumcision!" (Ex. iv. 24-26).¹³ After this mysterious event Moses met Aaron in the wilderness, and communicated to him the purport of his mission. The two brothers lost no time in approaching the elders of Israel, and when the people heard "that the Lord had visited them, then they bowed their heads and worshipped" (Ex. iv. 31).

Circumcision
of Moses' son

Moses and
Aaron before
Pharaoh

When Moses and Aaron first came into Pharaoh's presence, in obedience to the command of Jehovah, they demanded leave for the Israelites to hold a feast to their God in the wilderness, "lest," said they, "He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword" (Ex. v. 2-3). But Pharaoh, evidently regarding this request as a mere pretext, replied, "Who is Jehovah? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go." He ordered that henceforward the people should be given no straw for brick-making, but should find the stubble for themselves, and yet perform the same amount of labour as formerly.¹⁹ The people in their exasperation naturally turned upon Moses and Aaron, saying "The Lord look upon you and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh." Moses, in his turn, remonstrated with Jehovah, "Why is it that Thou hast sent me? for since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he hath evil entreated this people, neither hast Thou delivered Thy people at all" (Ex. v. 22-23).

The struggle between Moses and Pharaoh now began in earnest. It was in all respects a religious one, for Pharaoh denied any knowledge of Jehovah, and summoned his magicians and sorcerers to aid him in the contest. Jehovah, in return, began to execute His judgments "upon all the gods of Egypt" (Ex. xii. 12).

The Plagues

It is a characteristic of the plagues of Egypt, that they are for the most part exaggerations of phenomena natural to the country, and are directed against all that was held in especial reverence by the natives. Their object was to vindicate the claim of Jehovah to a power superior to that of any of the gods of the Egyptians. After Aaron's rod had become a serpent and had devoured those of the magicians, which had assumed a similar form (Ex. vii. 12 P), Moses was commanded to meet Pharaoh by the Nile and to threaten to turn its water into blood if he would not let Israel go to serve Jehovah in the wilderness. The river was accordingly smitten by the mystic rod, so that the fish died and its sacred waters stank. To obtain drinking water, the Egyptians were obliged to dig pits near the river, that it might be purified by filtration (Ex. vii. 14-18 J, 19-23 P, 24 J). (According to P all the water in Egypt became blood.)

After this *frogs* were unnaturally multiplied throughout Egypt, no house or room being free from them. The plague was so serious that Pharaoh offered to let the people go if Moses would but remove it. When, however, the frogs died, the king hardened his heart once more (Ex. viii. 1-15).

Aaron's rod next brought countless *lice* from the sand of the desert, which Pharaoh's magicians were compelled to admit were due to "the finger of God." The effect of this visitation upon Pharaoh is not stated, save that his heart was hardened (Ex. viii. 16-19 P).

Again Moses met Pharaoh by the Nile, and once more delivered the command of Jehovah, on this occasion threatening Egypt with a plague of *flies* in case of disobedience. The next day this visitation came upon the king and his people, their houses and the very ground swarmed with flies. In Goshen there was no plague. Appalled by this calamity, Pharaoh consented to allow the Israelites to offer a sacrifice to Jehovah in Egypt. Moses, however, persisted, "It is not meet for us so to do, for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians unto Jehovah our God"; and he obtained leave from the king to lead the people a short distance into the desert. But when the plague was over, this permission was withdrawn (Ex. viii. 20-32).

The *cattle* of the Egyptians were the next to be smitten, whilst those of the Israelites were spared, but this plague had apparently no effect upon Pharaoh (Ex. ix. 1-7 P).

A plague of *boils* followed, caused by Moses and Aaron scattering ashes in Pharaoh's sight. The magicians could resist Moses no longer, for they too were smitten with the boils (Ex. ix. 8-11P).

Moses next stretched forth his hand and Egypt was smitten with such a storm of *thunder and hail* as had never been known "since it became a nation." This plague did not come without due warning. Pharaoh was told that Jehovah had only permitted him to stand "for to shew in thee My power and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth," and the king and his people were advised to drive in their cattle before the storm. When the tempest broke, it destroyed the trees and crops, but the wheat did not suffer because it was not yet ripe. So appalling was

this visitation that Pharaoh offered to let the Israelites go, if only Moses would cause it to cease. No sooner, however, was the storm quelled than the king hardened his heart once more.²⁰ The land of Goshen was spared in token of God's favour to Israel (Ex. ix. 13-35).

Pharaoh was now threatened with a plague of *locusts*, whereupon his own servants implored him to yield. Before doing so, however, he asked Moses who were to go, and on being informed that the whole nation must depart, the king declared that the request to sacrifice was a mere pretext to cover an evil design. In his anger he ordered Moses and Aaron to be driven from his presence; but when a strong east wind brought the locusts, and the land was completely stripped of verdure, he implored their aid. A west wind drove the locusts into the Red Sea, and Pharaoh again refused to let Israel go (Ex. x. 1-20).

The plague of *darkness* followed that of the locusts. It is described as darkness "which might be felt," and continued for three days in Egypt, the Israelites alone having light in their dwellings. Pharaoh made a further concession to the people by allowing them to depart without their cattle. This Moses refused. "There shall not an hoof," said he, "be left behind." In consequence of this he was ordered to see the king's face no more. His reply to Pharaoh was: "Thou hast spoken well: I will see thy face again no more." But before he left the presence Moses delivered Jehovah's message to Pharaoh. One more plague must smite Egypt—All the *first-born* must die, from the first-born of Pharaoh to the first-born of the slave-girl at the mill, as well as the first-born of the cattle: Israel alone should be spared. The champion of Jehovah's people went out from the king "in hot anger" (Ex. x. 21—xi. 8 J and E).

**Order to kill
the Passover**

Moses now, by God's command, summoned the elders of Israel, and commanded them to take lambs according to their families, and "to kill the Passover." The blood of the victims was to be sprinkled on the lintel and two side-posts of the door of every Israelite house, in order that the destroying angel might pass over it and spare. The feast was to be observed "for an ordinance for ever," and when children asked its meaning in days to come, they were to be told, "It

is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians" (Ex. xii. 26-27).*

That night Jehovah smote the *first-born* of Egypt, both man and beast, and "there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." In despair at so fearful a visitation, the Egyptians thrust out the Hebrews, and they left Egypt with all their cattle, taking with them whatever they chose to demand (the word "borrowed" in the A.V. is misleading, the Hebrew is they asked) in "jewels of silver and jewels of gold." The sacred narrative seems to imply that the nation marched out like a victorious army, "spoiling the Egyptians" before they withdrew (Ex. xii. 34-36 E).

First-born
smitten

The importance of the Exodus in the history of Israel can hardly be exaggerated. The whole destiny of the chosen people was in after days moulded by the belief that they had been Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and that Jehovah had brought them out thence with a "mighty hand and with a stretched out arm." The prophets made the obligation to worship Jehovah, and to serve no other God, to depend upon the fact that He had delivered His people from Egypt. It was for this reason that the nation believed itself to be a chosen people, separated by Divine interposition from all nations of the earth. The Exodus is, in short, the pivot on which the whole history of Israel turns. It was because they believed that God had brought them forth out of Egypt that the people became what they were, and what they still are. Truly it is incredible that a tradition, fraught with such tremendous consequences, should have been a baseless invention of the mind of man!²¹

Importance of
the Exodus

The route by which the fugitives could have reached Canaan most easily was known as "the way of the Philistines." Following it they would have to take a northerly course, cross Lake Menzaleh, and march along the coast of the Mediterranean by the famous Serbonian bog, till they came to the "River of Egypt" at El Arish, which formed the border of Palestine. Despite the express testimony to the contrary of one of the early narrators in the book of Exodus,

Flight of
Israel

* Appendix C at end of chapter.

the theory has been recently maintained that this route was actually taken by the Israelites, and that Pharaoh lost his army in the Serbonian morass.

The biblical narrative says that God would not permit the Israelites to choose the shortest way to Canaan, "Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." This road was naturally barred by Egyptian fortresses, as well as being the one by which the Canaanites would be constantly on the watch against invaders. The emigrant horde, therefore, unable to encounter such formidable obstacles, made straight for the desert, which lay to the east of Goshen, journeying from Rameses to Succoth, and encamping at Etham in the edge of the wilderness.²² One narrator is careful to mention that the nation went out of Egypt armed, and the bones of the patriarch Joseph accompanied its march (Ex. xiii. 18, 19 E). The road was miraculously indicated by a cloud which became a pillar of fire by night.

The Crossing
of the Red
Sea

No sooner had the Egyptians recovered from their panic, than they resolved if possible to overtake the Israelites and to detain them by force. Several records of the overthrow of the hosts of Pharaoh are preserved in the book of Exodus. The earliest of these is the so-called Song of Moses, a poem uttered by the deliverer when the Red Sea was passed, "and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore." The refrain of this triumphant ode was sung by Miriam "the prophetess, the sister of Aaron," who went forth timbrel in hand, at the head of the Hebrew women and cried, "Sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea" (Ex. xv. 21).

The Song of
Moses

This song celebrates Jehovah as a warrior, Who has cast Pharaoh's hosts into the sea. "The deeps cover them," "they went down into the depths like a stone." At the blast of Jehovah's nostrils, "the waters were piled up," "the floods stood upright as an heap," "the deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea." When the enemy said, "I will overtake," Jehovah "blew with His wind, and the sea covered them, they sank as lead in the mighty waters."

The imagery of the poem is bold, its similes vivid and

daring ; it recalls Deborah's description of the overthrow of the Canaanites, when "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." Were this the only record of the occurrence, a possible inference would be that a great battle between Israel and the Egyptians was fought, and that by Jehovah's aid His people triumphed, their enemies being driven into the sea and overwhelmed by the waters in a violent storm.

The most ancient prose version of the occurrence says that, when Pharaoh and his army drew near, Jehovah rebuked Moses saying, "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward ; lift up thy rod and stretch out thy hand over the sea and divide it." In the night the pillar of cloud moved to the rear of Israel, giving darkness to the Egyptians and light to the people, so that "the one came not near the other all the night." A strong east wind caused the sea to go back all that night, the waters were divided and the sea was made dry land. In the morning "Jehovah looked forth upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and troubled the Egyptians." In their discomfiture they cried, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them," for Jehovah had "bound their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily." Then "the sea returned in his strength, and Jehovah shook off the Egyptians in the midst of the sea" (Ex. xiv. 10b-12, 15-20, 24-25, 27, 30-31 J).

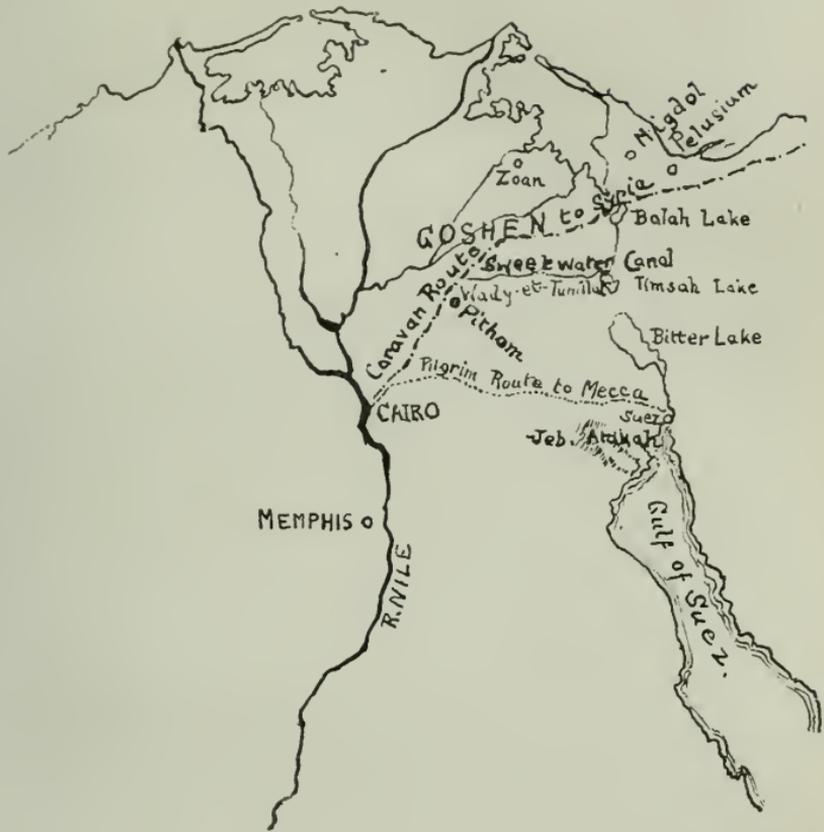
The early narrative

The latest account, found in the Priestly Narrative, appears to be the work of a writer who knew Egypt well, and had a definite idea as to the locality of every event connected with the Exodus. In this it is said that the Israelites had been commanded to turn back from Etham, and to encamp before Pi-hahiroth between Migdol and the sea. This placed them apparently at the mercy of Pharaoh, who triumphantly exclaimed, "They are entangled in the land : the wilderness hath shut them in." Pharaoh found the people encamped by the sea beside Pi-hahiroth and Baal-Zephon. Moses had to bear the bitter reproaches of the terrified fugitives. "Because," asked they, "there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" The deliverer, however, exhorted the people, "Stand still and

The later account (P)

see the salvation of the LORD." Moses then stretched out his hand over the sea, and the waters were divided, and appeared as a wall to the Israelites upon their right hand and upon their left, so that they went over on dry land. The Egyptians pursued after them, and when they were in the midst of the sea, Moses again stretched forth his hand and the waters overwhelmed them (Ex. xiv. 1-4, 8-9, 10a, 13, 14, 21-23, 26, 28-29 P).²³

It may appear to some that the miracle of the passage of the Red Sea is after all due to an attempt to express in sober prose the language of an ode of triumph, but it is by no means impossible that the path for the Israelites was made by the wind, which drove back the shallow water of the lakes to the north of the Gulf of Suez. Similar occurrences have been recorded and are accepted as historically true, and it is noticeable that the early account attributes the safety of Israel and the destruction of the Egyptian army, to Jehovah's use of the violence of the wind for His own purposes. It seems probable that the Israelites turned upon their pursuers, when their chariot wheels were clogged in the moistening sand, and drove them back to meet the returning waters. In this case the passage of the Red Sea would rank among the so-called decisive battles of the world. Never did a greater issue hang upon the strife of armies, than when Pharaoh's army perished in the waves. The future of the human race depended on whether the fugitive Hebrews could escape on that day from the house of bondage or not. Well may Psalmist and Prophet celebrate the victory of Jehovah's people, when "God brought them forth out of Egypt." Well may the Christian Apostle compare the passage of the Red Sea to the Sacrament of Baptism, whereby men are brought out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God! (1 Cor. x 1-2).



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE EXODUS.

The Israelites might have escaped from Egypt by three routes : (1) The Way of the Philistines, *i.e.* the Caravan Route to Syria, (2) the Wady Et-Tumilat, (3) from Cairo or Memphis to Suez. The position of Goschen, it will be seen, favours the second alternative. The traditional crossing is south of Suez and the Jebel Atakah, the mountain which 'shut them in' and made retreat impossible. The Migdol in this map is *not* the Migdol of Exodus.

Appendix A

Egyptian History in Connection with the Semites

THE Egyptians are considered by the author of the great geographical chapter in Genesis x. to belong to the same branch of the human family as the Ethiopians and Phœnicians; the four sons of Ham being Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. The Hebrew name for the country is Mizraim, a dual form meaning the two Mizrs, *i.e.* Upper and Lower Egypt.

On the monuments of the kings of the early dynasties of Egypt no traces of intercourse with the Semitic nations have been discovered, nor is it till the twelfth dynasty that these races appear on the scene. Under Amenemhat I., the founder of this famous dynasty, an Egyptian of rank named Sanehat, having, like Moses, offended his sovereign, fled to Syria, establishing himself somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hebron. His sons became chiefs in the land of their exile, but Sanehat desired in his old age to return to his country, and, having made his submission, he was allowed to do so.

Before Sanehat died, about B.C. 2750, he left an account of his adventures, this being the first recorded example of an Egyptian going among the Semites. A century or so later a picture on one of the tombs at Beni-hassan records a visit of an Asiatic tribe called the Aamu to Khnum-hotep, the governor of an Egyptian town. These visitors are no barbarians, their clothing is rich, one of them is playing on a lyre, their women are gaily clad and wear socks as well as sandals, the children are carried on asses, which are also laden with weapons and merchandise, two scribes walk in front of the party to introduce it to the presence of the governor. If, as some suppose, Abraham went down to Egypt in the days of the same dynasty, he probably came into the presence of Pharaoh in a somewhat similar manner.

The Semites, however, soon began to enter Egypt in less

pacific guise. With the close of the twelfth dynasty the Hyksos appeared in Upper Egypt, making Avaris on the eastern frontier their camp, and garrisoning it with 250,000 men. The Hyksos kings, however, resided chiefly at Memphis, from whence they were able to exercise control over both Upper and Lower Egypt. At first the invaders made war upon the institutions, and even the gods of Egypt; but they ended by adopting the customs and religion of the country. A tradition says that Joseph went down to Egypt in the days of Apepi, one of the last of these Hyksos monarchs, which would account for a high office being conferred on the patriarch, as well as for the hospitable reception of his family.

The Hyksos domination in Lower Egypt lasted for many centuries, probably twenty generations having passed between the first appearance and the final overthrow of these alien rulers by Aahmes, the founder of the eighteenth dynasty. The invaders retired to Palestine, "and," says Manetho, "there built Jerusalem." But their long sojourn in the country resulted in the infusion of much Semitic blood, and the fear of invasion from the North forced Egypt to become an aggressive power in Asia. The kings of the eighteenth dynasty established their dominion in Syria, and under them Egypt took her place among the great empires of the ancient world. Thotmes I. was the first to reach Mesopotamia; but it was the long period of peace and tranquillity which ensued under the great Queen Hat-shepsut that developed the resources of the monarchy, so as to enable Thotmes III. to become the real founder of the Egyptian Empire. The inhabitants of Western Asia, once the terror of Egypt, now submitted to its ruler, and many were employed as slaves in constructing the monuments of their conqueror. Thotmes III. was a mighty builder, and appears to have been the first to use his foreign captives for the erection of his temples and palaces. On his monuments are representations of the scenes, so pathetically described in the book of Exodus. The taskmasters are there, armed with sticks, and addressing the labourers thus, "The stick is in my hand, be not idle."

The relations existing between Egypt and Syria are shown in the great collection of tablets discovered at Tel-el-Amarna. These are written, not in hieroglyphic, but in the Babylonian cuneiform character, then current in Syria. The city was built by the reforming king, Amenhotep IV. (B.C. 1383-1365, according to Petrie), in order that he might practise the wor-

ship of the sun disk (Akhen) undisturbed. So entirely did this monarch break with the traditional religion of his people, that he assumed the name of Akhenaten and tried to erase that of the god Amen, which he himself had borne, from all monuments throughout his dominions. Although the sun-god had long been worshipped at Heliopolis, the religion introduced by this monarch was a novelty, due to non-Egyptian influence. Akhenaten broke even with the conventions of the national art, and had himself portrayed, not, after the fashion of most kings, as an almost divine being, but in a perfectly natural manner. The extremely realistic pictures of life and scenery in the decorations of the palace at Tel-el-Amarna are completely unlike all other Egyptian representations, and afford an evidence of the transforming influence of the new faith. But, like other royal attempts to reform religion, that of Akhenaten failed. At his death the priestly party rallied, and the very city he had founded was perforce abandoned. This striking episode in the religious life of Egypt, which has only recently become known, proves the possibility of a religious controversy in ancient Egypt, like that between Jehovah and the gods of Egypt, and perhaps throws some light upon the legend that Moses himself was an Egyptian priest.

Among the tablets discovered at Tel-el-Amarna are letters from the petty princes of Syria to the king of Egypt, many of whom complain of the difficulty of maintaining themselves against a formidable attack by a people called Khabiri, or confederates. Abdi-Hiba, king of Jerusalem, for example, writes urgently, imploring help against these invaders, and assuring Pharaoh of his complete loyalty. "As for me," he says, "it was not my father, nor was it my mother, that set me in this place; it was the king's strong arm that caused me to enter into my father's house. Wherefore should I do evil unto the king my lord?" The number of biblical names found on these tablets, as well as in the earlier lists of Thotmes III., is remarkable. Jacob-el and Joseph-el are said to occur as well as Abimelech; and places like Askelon, Gaza, Lachish and Keilah are also mentioned.

The victorious monarchs of the eighteenth dynasty treated their Syrian subjects with a certain respect. Intermarriage between the royal family and the princes of Syria was not unknown, the produce of Phœnicia, and especially its manufactures, was coveted, and the number of Syrians in Egypt is attested by the markedly Semitic type of countenance of the

kings and their families during this age. Amenhotep IV.'s minister bore the decidedly Phœnician name of Dudu, which recalls that of the Carthaginian Dido, and the Hebrew David.

With the accession of the nineteenth dynasty a complete reaction against Semitism ensued. The attempt to introduce the Akhen worship had made the priests suspicious of all foreign influence, causing them to foster those prejudices against aliens inherent in the Egyptian character. The third king of the dynasty, Rameses II., was constantly engaged in war with the Kheta, as the Hittites are called, and representations of his exploits in the great battle of Kadesh, where this king boasts that he in person held back the advancing army of the enemy, were repeated by the royal artists throughout Egypt. Rameses II. was a mighty builder. He cut a canal from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, and built a great wall ninety miles in length from Pelusium to Heliopolis. His temples, among which are the so-called Memnonium at Thebes and the rock temple of Ipsambul in Nubia, are conceived on an equally magnificent scale. To accomplish these works slaves and captives were collected from all sides, and Egyptologists generally pronounce this Rameses to be the Pharaoh of the oppression. During his reign of sixty-seven years the Israelites may well have found their servitude so bitter that "they sighed by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage."

Rameses II. was succeeded by Menephthah, the Amenophis of Manetho, who is the first Pharaoh to make any allusion to the Israelites. This is in fact the earliest appearance of the name on any monumental record. Apparently the people were already one of the nations settled in Syria, and were employed in agriculture, for the inscription says, "The Israelites are ruined, their crops are destroyed." Seti II. followed Menephthah, and if Rameses II. is the Pharaoh of the oppression, one of these princes must have reigned during the Exodus.

Appendix B

The Traditions and Date of the Exodus

THE earliest written biblical accounts of the sojourn of Israel in Egypt probably date from the ninth century B.C., and

though a minute knowledge of Egyptian life and customs is everywhere apparent, there is a complete absence of any chronological data. The use of the term Pharaoh is a remarkable illustration of the manner in which the story was written for the benefit of readers who cared little for the facts of Egyptian history. Each king of Egypt had his special name, and certainly none were known to their people as "the Pharaoh." The word means "the great house," and may be compared to "the Sublime Porte," which is now applied to the government of Turkey. Pharaoh seems to have been the name given by the inhabitants of Canaan to all the rulers of Egypt indifferently. It is only at a comparatively late date that the biblical historian gives us the actual name of a king of Egypt, like Shishak in the days of Rehoboam, So the contemporary of Hoshea, and Necho and Hophra in Jeremiah's time. It is impossible therefore to do more than to conjecture what name the different Pharaohs actually bore in the days of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses.

The legends of the Exodus from non-Jewish sources do not greatly help us in determining its date. The most ancient of these is that preserved by Manetho, an Egyptian priest, who wrote in the third century B.C. His account of the Exodus has the advantage of being independent of the biblical narrative, and in this lies its chief historical value. Manetho is quoted at length by Josephus in his treatise against Apion, the calumniator of the Jews. He says that Amenophis, king of Egypt, desiring to see the gods as his ancestor Horus had done, sought the advice of a friend who advised him to remove all the lepers from his dominions, in obedience to which advice Amenophis put them to forced labour on the eastern frontier of Egypt. Unfortunately, among these oppressed lepers were certain priests, and it was foretold to the king that he must endure a period of exile and misfortune as a punishment for this impiety. After this, Amenophis, at the request of the lepers, gave them Avaris, the ancient camp of the Hyksos, which the impure people fortified, choosing for their leader Osarsiph, a priest of On (Heliopolis). Osarsiph assumed the name of Moses, and the rôle of a religious reformer. He directed his attacks on the animal worship of Egypt, advising his followers to eat the sacred cattle, and at the same time to hold no communication with the rest of mankind, but only with one another. With the aid of the Hyksos of Jerusalem, Moses overran Egypt, forcing Amenophis to retire first to

Memphis, and finally to Ethiopia, whither he succeeded in removing the sacred bull of Apis. When the period of exile, foretold by the gods, had elapsed, Amenophis returned, and, assisted by his son Rameses, expelled Moses and his associates, driving them to the confines of Syria. These events are said to have happened 518 years after the expulsion of the Hyksos.

The other traditions furnish us with few further particulars. One of them, however, says that the Exodus took place under Bocchoris, a king of the twenty-fourth dynasty, and others tell the story of the asses guiding the fugitives to springs of water, and being worshipped in consequence by the Jews. The Sabbath day's rest is also said to commemorate the halt of the people after a six days' flight, and an attempt was made to derive the word from an Egyptian word *sabbo*, a boil. The legend recorded by Manetho is said to confirm the view that Rameses II. was the Pharaoh of the oppression, and Menephthah or Seti of the Exodus. The most important arguments in favour of this seem to be the following :—

- (1) The period of the eighteenth dynasty was one in which the Egyptians showed no fear of Semitic influence, but the Pharaohs of the nineteenth were intensely national, and may truly be described as "new kings who knew not Joseph."
- (2) Rameses II. built Pithom, the city which the Bible says was erected by the forced labour of the Israelites.
- (3) The name Amenophis is only a Grecised form of the Egyptian Menephthah.

Against these, however, three equally weighty reasons for placing the Exodus at some other period may be stated :—

- (1) Menephthah on his stele implies that the Israelites were already in Palestine in his day. *
- (2) Menephthah and Seti were powerful kings, and there is no trace of Egypt's having been in a disturbed condition in their time, as it apparently was when the Exodus took place. It was not till after Seti's death that a period of disorder commenced.
- (3) The chronological system in the Bible is at hopeless variance with this theory. Rameses II. died about the middle of the thirteenth century B.C., and, if he is the

* Though Jezreel and not Israel may be the right rendering.

Pharaoh of the oppression, the Exodus must be placed about B.C. 1240 at the earliest, and possibly as late as B.C. 1200. Solomon's temple, which is said to have been erected 480 years after the Exodus, cannot have been built later than 950 B.C.). It is not easy to see how the wanderings in the desert, the conquest of the land, the age of the Judges, and of Eli, Samuel, Saul, and David can be compressed into two centuries and a half. The biblical system of chronology may be merely approximate, but it seems hardly time to set it entirely aside before a more accurate knowledge of the facts of Egyptian history is obtained.

Appendix C

The Passover

THE first interruption to the narrative of the Pentateuch is the insertion of different laws in connection with the Passover, the feast of Unleavened Bread, and the dedication of the First-born. In this the codes of J, E, and P are placed side by side.

From the Elohist, a native of Northern Palestine, comes the information that the feast of Unleavened Bread was connected with the Exodus. So great was the haste with which Israel departed that "The people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. . . . And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt" (Ex. xii. 34 and 39). From this it may perhaps be inferred that at the feast of Unleavened Bread the Exodus was commemorated in the Northern kingdom long before the eighth century (Ex. xii. 21-27).

The Jehovist gives the following rules for the celebration of the Passover—

- (1) The lambs are to be killed according to the number of the families.
- (2) It is to be observed for an ordinance for ever.
- (3) When children ask "What mean ye by this service?" this explanation of its origin is to be given: "It is

the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, Who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt."* . . .

No mention is here made of any Paschal meal, but the blood ceremonial is the all-important feature.

Quite distinct from the Paschal rules are those of the feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. xiii. 3-10)—

- (1) When the Israelites are in possession of the Land they are to observe it in the month Abib.
- (2) It is to last seven days.
- (3) Its meaning to be explained to children. "It is because of that which the Lord did to me when I came forth from Egypt."
- (4) It is to be kept in its season from year to year.

The law of the redemption of the first-born follows that of the Passover, and the explanation is to be given to the son, who enquires "What is this?" (Ex. xiii. 11-16). "By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt from the house of bondmen: and it came to pass when Pharaoh hardened himself against letting us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt. . . . Therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the womb, being males; but all the first-born of my sons I redeem."

The laws are supplemented in the "Book of the Covenant" by the following precepts: "The feast of Unleavened Bread shalt thou keep: seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread . . . at the time appointed in the month Abib, for in it thou camest out of Egypt" (Ex. xxiii. 15). "The first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto Me. Likewise thou shalt do with thine oxen and with thy sheep" (Ex. xxii. 29b-30a). These precepts are repeated in the Ten Words, given to Moses after the making of the Golden Calf, with the addition of a Paschal law, "Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover be left until the morning" (Ex. xxxiv. 25).

Before the priestly regulations for the Passover are related, the Deuteronomic law must be set forth as illustrative of the process by which the meal was united with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Especial stress is naturally here laid upon the obligation to sacrifice the Passover only in the place chosen by Jehovah, "to cause His name to dwell in" (Deut. xvi. 1-8).

* Hastings' *Dict. of Bib.* Art. Passover, p. 684b.

Otherwise, the regulations given by the Deuteronomist bear a resemblance to those of the Jehovist. The month Abib is to be observed by celebrating the Passover, with which unleavened bread, "even the bread of affliction,*" is to be eaten in memory of the deliverance from Egypt. The feast is to be eaten at sunset, and the flesh of the sacrifice of the Passover must not remain till the morning. Unleavened bread is to be used for six days, and on the seventh a solemn convocation is to be held, on which no work may be done. One remarkable difference between D and J is that in the later code the paschal sacrifice may be of the flock or a calf. Another noteworthy feature in D is the command to *boil* the flesh,† and, as a proof that the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread were not yet entirely united, the people are allowed to return home after eating the paschal meal; for it is said, "And thou shalt return in the morning and go unto thy tents." According to many critics the legislation of the prophet Ezekiel comes between the laws of Deuteronomy and those of the Priestly Code (Ezekiel xlv. 21-24). He directs that in both the first and seventh month a bullock without blemish is to be offered on the first day as an atonement. "And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering, and put it upon the door posts of the house . . . and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court." The passover is to be kept on the fourteenth (? fifteenth) day of the month, and it is to be "a feast of seven days, unleavened bread shall not be eaten." Nothing is said of the paschal meal, but the prince is ordered to provide a bullock as an offering for himself and the people.

The Priestly Code in most cases gives first the law of the Passover and then that of the Unleavened Bread. Much fuller directions are given here for the paschal celebration than either in J or D.

* The unleavened bread is nowhere else called the "Bread of affliction" (*lehem'oni*) in any of the Pentateuchal Codes. Hastings' *Dic. Bible*, p. 685*b*. In the opinion of several German critics vv. 3*b*-4 are spurious, and one of them (Stearnagel) assigns all allusions to the Feast of Unleavened Bread to an E source.

† In primitive times sacrificial meat was boiled, *e.g.* Gideon (Judges vi. 19) Eli's sons (1 Sam. ii. 13, 14). At a later date boiling the paschal victim was expressly prohibited (Ex. xii. 9).

- (1) Though the civil year began in autumn, the paschal month was to be reckoned as the first month (Ex. xii. 1-13).
- (2) A lamb without blemish was to be selected on the tenth day and killed on the fourteenth "between the two evenings."
- (3) The flesh was to be roasted, and not to be eaten raw or boiled; and bitter herbs were to be eaten with it.
- (4) Each household was to kill a lamb, and if they did not number sufficient for the feast, they might combine with another family.
- (5) Strangers and sojourners were forbidden to eat the passover unless they had submitted to the rite of circumcision * (Ex. xii. 43-51).

In addition to these regulations there were two which were subsequently considered only to apply to the Egyptian Passover, viz. :—

- (1) To sprinkle the lintel and the door post with blood.
- (2) To eat the feast in haste, loins girded, shoes on feet, and staff in hand.

For the feast of Unleavened Bread a few additional rules are added :—

- (1) It was to last from the fourteenth to the twenty-first day of the month (Ex. xii. 14-20).
- (2) Anyone in whose house leaven was found during that period was to be "cut off from Israel."
- (3) There was to be a holy convocation on the first as well as on the seventh day of the feast.

In the books of Leviticus and Numbers the Passover is separated from the feast of Unleavened Bread. "On the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord" (Lev. xxiii. 5, 6; Numb. xxviii. 16, 17). The latter is also connected with the waving of the first sheaf of the harvest before Jehovah, before which no new corn could be used for food (Lev. xxiii. 11-14). In the book of Numbers it is provided that those who happened

* This law was supposed to have been delivered at Succoth, where the mixed multitude was present with the Israelites. Hastings' *Dic. Bib.* 'Passover,' p. 686a.

to be unclean at the time of the Passover, might celebrate it a month later (Numb. ix. 1-14).

It must be acknowledged that the Passover was the only part of the twofold festival which was celebrated in Egypt, and it is implied that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was not observed till the Israelites became an agricultural people, and settled in Canaan.

The Paschal rites in Egypt are just such as an Arab tribe might have performed on a similar occasion. The lambs were the first-fruits of their herds, which they naturally sacrificed at this season of the year. The abstinence from leaven as a symbol of corruption is enjoined by the Jehovistic code in the case of all sacrifice. The blood sprinkled on every house was the sign of life. The consumption of the whole victim was the usual accompaniment of such an all-night festival (*παυυχις*).

The only recorded celebrations of the Passover in the Old Testament, like the Egyptian Festival, inaugurate some new step in the nation's history.

- (1) In the days of Joshua the manna ceased when the Passover had been kept, and the people began to eat the corn of Canaan (Josh. v. 10-11 P).
- (2) When Hezekiah kept the Passover, he had purified the land for the true worship of Jehovah (2 Chr. xxx.).
- (3) Josiah began his reformation, in accordance with the newly discovered Law, by a solemn Passover (2 Kings xxiii. 21-23).
- (4) When the second temple was dedicated a paschal celebration is recorded (Ezra vi. 22). In the preceding verse it is said that the children of the captivity had separated themselves from the "filthiness of the heathen of the land."

From the foregoing considerations the following conclusions appear to be at least tenable :—

- (a) The Israelites may have held a feast accompanied by the sprinkling of blood on the houses before the Exodus.
- (b) They were accustomed as shepherds to observe a spring festival by sacrificially eating the first-born of the lambs, goats, and perhaps the cattle.
- (c) The first of their three agricultural festivals in Canaan, on which they appeared "before Jehovah," was that of

Unleavened Bread ; and this in early times was connected with the deliverance from Egypt.

- (d) The Paschal meal ultimately became the first act of the feast of Unleavened Bread.
- (e) Hence the expression, "The feast of Unleavened Bread" which is called the Passover" (St Luke xxii. 1).

The time of the Paschal feast is variously determined in the different Codes. J and D say it is to be celebrated in the month Abib (the month of barley), and D implies that the time of the feast depends upon the condition of agriculture, for the direction given for calculating the day of the feast of weeks is "From the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn" (Deut. xvi. 9). In P an astronomical reckoning is adopted ; the Passover is to take place at the full moon on the fourteenth day of the first month, and the Feast of Weeks on the day following the seventh Sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 5, 15, 16).

Chapter IV

Israel in the Wilderness

WITH the passage of the Red Sea the Israelites had entered upon freedom, and their leader upon countless anxieties. The people who followed Moses were not as yet worthy of the name of a nation. The Hebrew fugitives joined as they were by a mixed multitude of Egyptians anxious to escape from their native country, lacked order, cohesion, discipline. The majority, entirely without experience of a wandering life, looked to Moses for help and encouragement, and above all for food and water. All the vices, which years of slavery had engendered, seem to have been at different times manifested by the Israelites. They showed themselves to be faithless, fickle, easily disheartened, always ready to complain, often disposed to give up all that had been won, and to return to the house of bondage once more.

The Hebrew
Fugitives

As in the book of Micah the three deliverers of Israel from Egypt are said to have been Moses, Aaron,* and Miriam (Micah vi. 4), it is conceivable that the part played by Aaron and his sister was more important than that assigned to them in the biblical records. It may be that Aaron's eloquence had been the chief means of arousing in the people the determination to throw off the yoke of Egypt; and that Miriam, as a prophetess, had taken the lead among the women of Israel in inciting their husbands to make an effort for freedom. But in the books of Exodus and Numbers there are indications that Moses could not always rely upon the support of his family. Aaron proved faithless in the matter of the Golden Calf (Ex. xxxii.); whilst Miriam was punished with leprosy for murmuring against Moses and his Cushite wife (Numb. xii. 1). The figure of the deliverer is

Moses, Aaron
and Miriam

* In the original *strata* of J and E Aaron's name is not mentioned.

a pre-eminently solitary one; on his shoulders fell the burden of guiding the people through the deserts, and welding them into a nation. The crushing sense of his responsibilities found expression on one occasion on which Moses cried to Jehovah in his anguish, "Wherefore hast thou evil entreated thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? have I brought them forth, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing-father carrieth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers" (Numb. xi. 11).

Character
of Moses

An epithet is applied to Moses in the Bible hardly consistent with the view that he was a great leader of men. He is called "very meek" (Numb. xii. 3); the word used being generally applied in the Psalms to the poor and afflicted ones of the nation. Yet this characteristic seems to have been one of the secrets of his success. Moses was able to endure the difficulties of his position in silence, nor did the unreasonable and childish conduct of the people ever provoke him to abandon his task. He went on steadily day by day attending to their interests, hearing their disputes, doing justice between man and man, waiting patiently for signs of improvement, which seldom, if ever, manifested themselves. Educated amid all the splendours of an Egyptian palace, he devoted his life to the government of a half-civilized and undisciplined horde, bearing with waywardness, folly, and ingratitude with unshaken constancy, and by his sublime endurance winning from posterity the fame of having been the "most enduring of men."¹

The exact route of the Israelites after crossing the Red Sea can never be known. Tradition is almost uniformly in favour of their having followed the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez till they came to the neighbourhood of the southern mountains in what is now known as the Sinaitic peninsula. This view of the position of the mount of the Law is, however, open to one very serious objection. Since the close of the third dynasty the district had been one of the most highly-prized possessions of Egypt. Its mines were so extremely valuable that garrisons were constantly main-

tained to protect them, so that, had the Israelites attempted to enter the country, they would have found themselves once more face to face with Egyptian troops. Of course it is conceivable, though scarcely probable, that the distracted condition of Egypt at the time of the Exodus had led to the temporary abandonment of the peninsula.²

It has consequently been held that the fugitives followed the modern pilgrim route straight across the desert to the Gulf of Akabah, and that the site of Sinai must be sought for among the mountains of Arabia, though neither Scripture nor tradition gives much support to this view.³

The Israelites first entered the wilderness at Shur, where they advanced for three days without finding water, and when at last they came to a place called Marah, the pools were found undrinkable. The people murmured, but Moses made the waters sweet by casting a tree into them, and on this occasion gave the people "a statute and an ordinance" promising in Jehovah's name that, if they would be faithful to God's commands, He would put none of the diseases of the Egyptians upon them (Ex. xv. 26).

The Wilder-
ness of Shur

At Elim, the next station, the wanderers were refreshed by the sight of twelve pools and seventy palm trees, and then they entered "the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai" (Ex. xvi. 1). Again a murmuring, like that at Marah, broke out in the protest, "In the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth to this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger" (Ex. xvi. 3).

Jehovah's answer to these complaints was a promise to "rain down bread from heaven," and when the people presented themselves before Him, His glory appeared in the cloud. Moses was commanded to assure the people, "At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread." In the evening quail came in such abundance that they covered the camp, and in the morning, "when the dew that lay was gone up" a substance with the appearance of hoar frost was seen upon the ground. It received the name of manna, from the exclamation of the people as they beheld it *Manhu* ('Tis a gift). It proved to be sweet and nourishing as food and was Israel's chief

The Manna

sustenance throughout the wanderings. It is related that a double portion was given every sixth day in order that the Sabbath might not be profaned, and that no one could gather more than another. "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack" (Ex. xvi. 4-36).⁴

Amalek

The next halting-place was at Rephidim, where water again failed, but was procured by Moses' smiting the rock. Here the Israelites fought their first battle with their hereditary foes, the Amalekites. These fierce Arabs had been for days harassing the march by cutting off stragglers, so at Rephidim Moses commanded Joshua to attack them with a picked body of men. During the progress of the fight the deliverer watched the battle from a hill, holding up his hands in supplication. As long as the hands of Moses were outstretched, Israel prevailed, but when in weariness he let them fall, Amalek prevailed. Perceiving this, Aaron and Hur, who were with him, supported his hands, till, at the going down of the sun, Joshua had won a complete victory. Perpetual war was declared by Jehovah against Amalek, and Moses was ordered to record the Divine sentence in a book, and to "rehearse it in the ears of Joshua." An altar was erected in memory of this event, called Jehovah-Nissi (*Jehovah is my banner*) (Ex. xvii.).

Jethro visits
Moses

It was at Rephidim that Jethro restored to Moses his wife Zipporah, with his two sons Gershom and Eliezer. When the priest of Midian arrived, Moses did obeisance to him, and conducted him to his tent, where he told him of all the mighty works of Jehovah. Jethro acknowledged Jehovah to be greater than all gods, and offered a solemn sacrifice, to which Aaron and the elders of Israel came in order to "eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God" (Ex. xviii. 1-12).

On the next day Moses, as was his wont, occupied himself from morning to evening in deciding disputes among the people, who came to him "to enquire of God." "I judge," he told Jethro, "between a man and his neighbour, and I make them know the statutes of God and His laws." But as the task was evidently beyond his strength, his father-in-law advised him to appoint rulers of thousands, of hundreds,



THE WANDERINGS IN THE WILDERNESS.

The object of this map is to shew the nature of the country, which is rugged and mountainous and intersected by dry water courses. The Mount of the Lawgiving is variously placed: (1) In the peninsula either Jebel Serbal or Jebel Musa, (2) in the neighbourhood of Kadesh, and (3) East of the Gulf of Akabah. The fugitive Israelites might (a) have followed the Gulf of Suez, or (b) have taken the ordinary road from Suez to the Gulf of Akabah. In the journey from Kadesh to Eastern Palestine they went round the border of Edom to Elath, and then took the ordinary road to Damascus, halting in the plains of Moab.

of fifties, and of tens, to decide all smaller matters, and to reserve only the most difficult cases for himself. After this Jethro departed "into his own land" (Ex. xviii. 13-27).⁵

According to the Priestly Tradition, Israel reached Sinai in the third month after their departure from Egypt. If the Sinaitic peninsula is the scene of the law-giving, no surroundings could be more calculated to impress the people with awe. The cliffs rise precipitously from the plain, and the mountains form natural altars, so that Moses as he ascended them might well be described as going "up unto God" to receive Jehovah's first message to Israel—"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me from among all peoples: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation."⁶ In answer, the people exclaimed, "All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do" (Ex. xix. 4-8).

Arrival at
Sinai

Three days were set apart in order that due preparation might be made before Israel met their God. All the people were instructed to wash their garments, and to sanctify themselves. If man or beast so much as touched the mountain, the penalty was death. The culprit must "be stoned or shot through," for no human hand might be laid upon one who had been in contact with so holy a spot. Priests and people had alike to be warned not "to break through and come up unto the Lord," when He should manifest His presence (Ex. xix. 9-25).

At this supreme moment, Jehovah, amid thunderings and lightnings, proclaimed His will in the Ten Words or Commandments, which have been accepted by all as the basis of man's duty to God and to his neighbour. God prefaced them by declaring His name. "I am Jehovah, thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bond-men" (Ex. xx. 1).⁷

The Ten
Words

The splendour of this revelation is its simplicity. It propounds no subject for theological speculation; it speaks only of devotion to God, as the embodiment of all righteousness. Never was conduct more directly and absolutely connected

with religion. The Ten Words, as they are called in Hebrew, stand in the Bible by themselves; they are the only laws spoken by Jehovah to the whole nation of Israel. So terrified were the people by the voice they had heard, that they begged that the remainder of the message might be given to them through a mediator, and Moses once more entered into the thick darkness. But we may gather from the Sacred Narrative that the subsequent laws were regarded as inferior to the Ten Words, because they did not come to the nation direct from the mouth of Jehovah.

The Ten Commandments are the everlasting proclamation of His will, sufficient in themselves to show that He is the One and Only God. It is because He demands righteousness that all must worship Him with simple hearted devotion. No God can be honoured before the Face of One Who, in the summary of the Divine legislation given by Moses and approved by Christ Himself, commands us "To love the Lord thy God with all thy soul and with all thy mind," and "thy neighbour as thyself" (Deut. vi. 5; Lev. xix. 18; Mark xii. 30, 31).

the Book of
the Covenant

The laws contained in the oldest documents are included in the "Book of the Covenant," so called on the occasion of its delivery by Moses to Israel—"And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. xxiv. 7, 8).

This code seems to be in a sense the foundation of the polity of Israel. The laws in it deal with (1) religious worship, (2) persons, (3) property.

law of
Worship

1. Sacrifices are assumed to be so natural a part of the religion of the Hebrews, that it did not appear necessary to enjoin the practice of offering them. They are divided into two classes, burnt offerings and peace offerings. The Israelites are instructed to make their altars of earth or of unhewn stones, and without steps (Ex. xx. 24-26).⁸

No special place is set apart for sacrifices, but a promise is given by Jehovah, "In every place where I record my name,

I will come unto thee and I will bless thee" (Ex. xx. 24). Jehovah claims as His right the first-born son, the first-born of all cattle (Ex. xxii. 29, 30), the seventh day (Ex. xxiii. 12), and the seventh year (Ex. xxiii. 11). The Sabbath is to be kept as a day of rest, "That thine ox and thine ass may have rest, and the son of thy handmaid and the stranger may be refreshed" (Ex. xxiii. 12). Only three feasts are mentioned, at which all males are ordered to appear before Jehovah: that of Unleavened Bread, in memory of Israel's coming forth from Egypt in the month Abib; the feast of Harvest, the "first fruits of thy labours"; and the feast of Ingathering (Ex. xxiii. 14-17). Three precepts are added: (1) No leavened bread may be used in sacrifices (Ex. xxiii. 18); (2) first fruits are to be brought to the house of Jehovah (Ex. xxiii. 19); (3) "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk" (Ex. xxiii. 19). The Israelites are warned: "Ye shall be holy men unto me"; and in token of this they must scrupulously abstain from animals killed by wild beasts (Ex. xxii. 31).

Such then are the simple directions for religious observance in the earliest code of ancient Israel's "Sermon on the Mount." They are alike conspicuous for plainness and simplicity, and for a complete absence of insistence on any elaboration of ceremonial.

2. The laws affecting persons recognise, as necessary institutions, both slavery and polygamy, as well as the duty of exacting personal vengeance for injuries, but precautions are taken to modify any undue severity in their operation.

Laws of
Persons

The slave is acknowledged to be his owner's "money," yet he is by no means without rights. He may be beaten; but, if during chastisement he loses an eye or even a tooth, he is to be set free (Ex. xxi. 26, 27). If a master kills a slave he is liable to punishment, though the loss of the man's services is deemed a sufficient penalty, if the death should take place some days after the blow that caused it (Ex. xxi. 20, 21). No Hebrew might be kept as a slave for more than six years, except of his own free will. If, however, his master had given him a wife during the period of servitude, he could only retain her by consenting to continue in bondage for life. In this case the master had to place the slave against the

door or door-post of his house, and, in the presence of the judges, bore his ear through with an awl (Ex. xxi. 1-6). The honour of female slaves was scrupulously guarded; under no circumstances might a Hebrew woman be sold to a foreigner (Ex. xxi. 7-11).⁹

One great evil of polygamy, a practice which seems to have been comparatively rare among the Hebrews, was provided against by the law that, if a man took a second wife, the rights of the first should remain unimpaired (Ex. xxi. 10).

The duty of avenging a man's death fell upon his next kinsman, and the law allowed no escape to the man guilty of intentional murder: the culprit might be taken from the very altar of Jehovah. In case of accidental or unpremeditated homicide, it was promised that places of sanctuary should be provided (Ex. xxi. 12-14).

Sorcery and bestiality were punishable with death (Ex. xxii. 18-19).

Property

3. The laws of property suppose the people to be settled in their own land and relate mainly to injuries done to cattle, or to crops (Ex. xxi. 28—xxii. 15). Thieves were to be punished by a fine of double the value of the stolen goods (Ex. xxii. 4). It is not certain whether disputes concerning property were to be submitted to the judges, or to be decided by an appeal to God, as the word *Elohim* is used in both senses (Ex. xxii. 8).¹⁰ It was forbidden to lend money to the poor on interest, and the garment taken as a pledge had to be restored at night-fall (Ex. xxii. 25-27).

Principles of the Law

But the most important part of the laws of the Covenant are the principles laid down in them. This primitive law-book is characterised by a spirit of such true benevolence, that it is no unworthy precursor of those laws which Christ delivered in the Sermon on the Mount. Its precepts are truly Divine, "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray bring it back to him again." "If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help him" (Ex. xxiii. 5). "A stranger shalt thou not oppress, for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex. xxiii. 9). On such principles the polity of the people of Jehovah was to rest, and the greatness

of the revelation on Sinai appears in the way in which a spirit of mercy and forbearance was made to permeate the legislation delivered to Moses.

After this law had been read to the people, they solemnly accepted it, and Moses ratified their action by sacrifices, and by sprinkling of the "blood of the Covenant." "Then," says the sacred narrative, "went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness." The dignity and reserve with which this vision is described, seem to be the very perfection of poetry (Ex. xxiv. 9, 10).

Priestly Tradition further relates that Moses received on Mount Sinai full directions for the erection of a tabernacle in which all acts of worship to Jehovah should be duly performed; and an earlier document preserves the belief that the law-giver spent forty days on the mountain in communion with God (Ex. xxv.—xxxv.; xxxv.—xl. P); (Ex. xxiv. 18 E).

The
Tabernacle

In the absence of Moses the people waxed impatient, and demanded of Aaron that he should make a visible symbol of their God to "go before" them, "For," said they, "as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him" (Ex. xxxii. 1).

Aaron showed no reluctance in complying with the request of the people, but ordered them to give him their jewels, and out of the gold he made the image of a calf, and said, "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." A solemn feast to Jehovah was proclaimed, an altar was built, burnt offerings were offered and peace offerings brought, and "the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" (Ex. xxxii. 6).

The Golden
Calf

Aaron's conduct had brought the whole question of the worship of Jehovah to an issue. In making a calf (or bull) to represent Him, he had practically reduced Jehovah to the rank of a mere tribal god.¹¹ Herein lay the whole principle for which all the prophets contended. From time to time the Israelites no doubt regarded Jehovah as the god of their nation, almost in the same sense as Chemosh was the god of Moab. Against this the better spirits of the nation never

ceased to protest, by maintaining that the God of Israel was absolutely unique, the Only True God before whom the gods of the heathen were but vanity.

Jehovah Himself informed Moses of the apostasy of Israel, and the dialogue between the law-giver and his God shews how partially even Moses had apprehended the Divine Nature. Jehovah's words were, "I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people: now therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation." But Moses, singularly destitute of personal ambition, shewed no desire to be exalted at the expense of the people whom he had delivered. He prayed Jehovah to remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and how He had delivered Israel out of Egypt, adding in remonstrance, "Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, saying, For evil did he bring them forth to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?" (Ex. xxxii. 9-14).

Before Moses left the Divine presence, he received the two tables of the testimony, written with the finger of God (Ex. xxxi. 18), and as he descended the mountain with his minister, Joshua, they heard the shouts of the people. Joshua said, "There is a noise of war in the camp," but Moses answered, "It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the cry for being overcome; but the noise of them that sing do I hear" (Ex. xxxii. 17, 18). When they came nearer, and saw the people dancing round the calf, Moses in his anger "cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the Mount" (Ex. xxxii. 19). Directly he came to the people Moses had the calf burnt and ground to powder, which he mixed in water, and forced its worshippers to drink. When Moses enquired of his brother, "What did this people unto thee that thou hast brought a great sin upon them?" Aaron tried to excuse himself by saying that the people had begged him to make a god for them, and had given him their golden jewels to cast into the furnace, adding, "and there came out this calf." For so great a sin against Jehovah, vengeance had to be taken: and Moses, when he "saw that the people had broken loose, for Aaron had let them loose for a derision among their enemies,"

Moses and
the Golden
Calf

cried, "Who is on the Lord's side?" His own tribe rallied to his call. Levi, it is recorded in the 'Song of Moses,' "said of his father and of his mother, 'I have not seen him'; neither did he acknowledge his brethren" (Deut. xxxiii. 9), and attacked the people, slaying no less than three thousand of them. Moses again sought pardon from God, begging that he might be the sufferer, and not the erring Israelites, in these touching words, "Yet now if Thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of Thy book." Forgiveness was granted with the warning, "Nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them." From henceforth Jehovah said that His angel should guide Israel through the desert to their promised home, but that He would not accompany them Himself. In token of penitence, the people "stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb onwards" (Ex. xxxii. 15-35; xxxiii. 6.)

Moses did not after this have to ascend the mountain, but was allowed to commune with Jehovah in the Tent of Meeting, which he used to pitch without the camp. When Moses entered into it the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the Tent. "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face as a man speaketh to his friend." It is recorded that after these interviews "his minister Joshua the son of Nun departed not from the Tent" (Ex. xxxiii. 7-11).¹² Two petitions were now made by Moses: that Jehovah would still accompany the march of Israel, and that a vision of His glory might be vouchsafed. To the first the reply was, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." But even to Moses no complete vision of Jehovah's glory could be given. "Man shall not see Me and live." Yet Jehovah consented to put His servant in a cleft of the rock, and to cover him with His hand, whilst He passed by and proclaimed the Name of Jehovah: "The LORD, the LORD, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin: and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation" (Ex. xxxiii. 12—xxxiv. 7).¹³

Moses speaks
face to face
with God

This vision was seen on Mount Sinai, when Moses presented the new tables of stone which he had been ordered to make, and Jehovah inscribed on them His commandments. A covenant was made; and the Israelites were enjoined to make no treaty with the people of the land whither they were going. Ten more commandments accompanied the giving of this second covenant.

The
Tabernacle

A large portion of the Pentateuch is occupied by laws relating to the life and worship of Israel, and to the institution of its priesthood. The nation devoted its energies at this time to the construction of a portable sanctuary, which, to English readers, will always be known as the Tabernacle. Such was the zeal of the people that they brought "much more than enough for the service of the work which Jehovah commanded to make." The two makers of the Tabernacle were Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.

The Tabernacle was designed on the model of a temple, that is to say, there was a large outer enclosure, in the midst of which was the shrine with the altar of burnt sacrifice standing before it. The shrine was constructed of boards of acacia wood covered by tent-curtains and carpets, and was divided into two parts called the Holy place and the Holy of Holies. In the inner sanctuary was the Ark of the Covenant, the most sacred possession of the nation, containing the Tables of the Testimony. Above the Ark was the Mercy-Seat, on each side of which were two winged figures or cherubim. The inner sanctuary was separated from the outer by a veil. Before the veil, in the Holy Place, stood the Altar of Incense, and the Table, on which were placed the seven-branched candlesticks and the 'bread of the faces' or shew-bread. The arrangements were such that the whole sanctuary could be transported without any difficulty, and at the same time was well suited to a simple but orderly worship.¹⁴

Departure
from Sinai

When the Israelites were about to leave Sinai, Moses invited his brother-in-law, Hobab, the son of Reuel the Midianite, to become their guide. "As thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou shalt be to us

instead of eyes. And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what good soever the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee." In this way the permanent alliance between Israel and the Kenites was made (Numb. x. 29-32).¹⁵

The Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah had also its share in guiding the people, preceding them three days to seek out a resting-place. When the Ark was moved, Moses said, "Rise up, O LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel" (Numb. x. 35, 36; Ps. lxxviii. 1).

With the departure from Sinai, the second stage in the story of the Exodus is entered upon. Israel had been brought to the mountain to receive the Law, and was now at liberty to conquer a home. But events proved that further discipline was needed before a fugitive horde of Egyptian slaves could become a victorious nation. In the book of Deuteronomy the distance between Horeb and Kadesh is said to be eleven days (Deut. i. 2), but, as twenty stations are enumerated in that of Numbers (xxxiii. 16-36), it is possible that the route taken was not the direct one. On this comparatively short journey, however, the Israelites gave convincing proofs of their lack of disciplined self-control. Before they reached their first halting-place they murmured, and as a punishment fire consumed part of the camp, and was only quenched at the prayer of Moses. The place was known from this circumstance as Taberah (*burning*) (Numb. xi. 1-3).¹⁶

Immediately after this, the mixed multitude, which had accompanied the Israelites from Egypt, began to complain that the manna was not proper food for them, and induced the rest of the people to join in their murmurings. "We remember," said they, "the fish which we did eat in Egypt for nought, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlick, but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all; we have nought save this manna to look to" (Numb. xi. 5, 6.)

At this Moses complained to Jehovah that the task of governing the people was too great for him, and was ordered to summon seventy of the elders of the people before the

March to
Kadesh

Eldad and
Medad
prophecy

Tent of Meeting, that they might be given a spirit of wisdom to assist in the work of ruling over Israel. On the elders presenting themselves, the cloud came down on the Tent and the spirit of Jehovah was poured out upon them, and they prophesied, but, adds the Sacred Record, "they prophesied no more." Two of their number, named Eldad and Medad, had not gone to the Tent, but the spirit descended on them, and they also prophesied. This was told to Moses, and Joshua, his minister, full of zeal for his master's honour, said, "My lord Moses, forbid them." And Moses said, "Art thou jealous for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His spirit upon them." (Numb. xi. 11-29).

In accordance with a promise made by God, the wind brought the quails in such abundance, that "he that gathered least gathered ten homers," but no sooner was "the flesh between their teeth" than a plague smote the people, and the place was known as Kibroth-hattaavah (*the graves of lust*). (Numb. xi. 30-34.)¹⁷

Miriam
smitten

Hazereth, the next halting-place, was the scene of a dissension in the family of Moses. Miriam, his elder sister, and Aaron, spake against him "because of the Cushite woman he had married," and questioned his claim to be the sole mouthpiece of God to the people. "Hath the Lord indeed only spoken by Moses?" was their cry; "hath He not spoken also by us?" The three were suddenly summoned to the Tent of Meeting by Jehovah, and the superiority of Moses to all others was plainly declared. Ordinary prophets might learn the will of God by dreams and visions, but "My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in all mine house: with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark speeches; and the form of the Lord shall he behold." As a sign of the Divine displeasure, Miriam was smitten with leprosy; Aaron, awestruck at the sight, besought his "lord Moses" not to lay the sin upon her. At Moses' intercession, Miriam was healed, but she had to remain outside the camp for seven days, nor did the people leave Hazereth till she had been readmitted (Numb. xii.).

The Spies

The Israelites next entered the wilderness of Paran, "that

great and terrible wilderness," as Moses calls it (Deut. i. 19), from whence the first attempt to win a home for Israel had to be made. Before taking action, however, Moses chose a representative of each of the twelve tribes, and sent them to spy out the land. As the native inhabitants were certainly well aware of the Israelites' intention to attack them, the spies were ordered to go up into the mountain, where they would be less likely to be observed, and to bring back a full report. "See the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, whether they be few or many; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in camps or in strongholds, and what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not," etc.

The spies seem to have gone no further North than Hebron, and to have returned to Kadesh bringing with them from the valley of Eshcol so large a cluster of grapes, that it took two men to carry it. The report they gave of the land was, according to one account,* highly favourable. "It floweth with milk and honey." But the difficulty of conquering it seemed to them insuperable. The cities were "fenced and very great," and the natives appeared to be of gigantic size and strength. "We were," said the spies, "in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (Numb. xiii.).¹⁸

Again the people murmured, and cried in despair, "Our wives and our little ones shall be a prey: were it not better for us to return into Egypt?" . . . "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." Again did Moses intercede for Israel, and in answer to his prayer the nation was pardoned, though the generation, which had proved faithless so often was informed that none of them should ever see the land, except Caleb, the representative of the tribe of Judah, who had exhorted the people not to be discouraged at the report of the spies. To him Jehovah promised the land whereinto he went, "Because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully" (Numb. xiv. 24), but for

* The narrative followed is that of J. In P the land is unfavourably described, and the spies are said to have searched as far north as Hamath.

their lack of trust the Israelites were condemned to wander for forty years in the desert (Numb. xiv. 34).

Despite the Divine command, "Turn ye and get you into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea," the Israelites decided to make an attempt to enter Canaan. Moses told them that, as "the Lord was not among them," they would assuredly suffer defeat, and the Ark was not allowed to accompany the army. Notwithstanding this warning the attempt was made and ended in disaster, the Amalekites and Canaanites from their mountain fastnesses chasing their assailants "from Seir to Hormah." "The Lord," says Moses, after speaking of Israel's sin in the matter of the spies, "was angry with me for your sake" (Deut. i. 37). It seems possible that the hasty words, which lost Moses the privilege of leading the people into the land, were spoken at this time. After the death of Miriam in Kadesh, the people murmured for lack of water. When Moses and Aaron were commanded to strike the rock, Moses addressed the people saying, "'Hear now, ye rebels, shall we bring you water out of this cliff?' And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed not in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them. These are the waters of Meribah (*strife*), because the children of Israel strove with the LORD and he was sanctified in them" (Numb. xx. 1-13).¹⁹

Excluded from the Promised Land, Israel had now to spend thirty-eight years in wandering through the desert. Of this long period hardly anything is recorded. All that is said about it in Moses' last address to the people is, "So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according to the days that ye abode there" (Deut. i. 46). The lack of information concerning Israel's wandering is not surprising. As God's Chosen People led on to victory by His visible presence, their every movement was worthy to be chronicled; but when the immediate Divine guidance was to all appearance withdrawn, they sank to the level of a mere nomad tribe and doubtless experienced the fluctuating fortunes of a Bedawin horde. As, at the expiration of these penal wanderings, the people were still in Kadesh, it is not probable that they went into the Eastern desert at all, but seem to have confined themselves

Israel
defeated
at Hormah

The forty
years'
wanderings

to the Badiet-et-Tih, the Wilderness of the Wanderings, to the north of the Sinaitic peninsula. Kadesh must, however, have been their rallying place, and in after days this spot was regarded with almost as great reverence as Horeb itself.

But the ages of silence in the history of the Hebrews were generally times of growth. These thirty-eight almost uneventful years are one of those numerous gaps in the nation's history, during which real progress was made. From them Israel emerged, transformed from a fugitive body of slaves into a nation, and it is an evidence of the greatness of the character of Moses, that he knew how to wait in silence, till his people were ready to advance to conquest in obedience to Jehovah's command.

To this period of wandering belong more than one serious rebellion against the authority of Moses. The tribe of Reuben, unable to forget that their ancestor was the first born of Jacob, resolved to assert its claim to the leadership of the nation. Accordingly three of its chieftains, Dathan, Abiram, and On, formed a conspiracy against Moses, accusing him, not only of deceiving the people by bringing them into the desert on the pretext of giving them a land flowing with milk and honey, but also of trying to make himself a prince. Moses ordered the people to separate themselves from these rebels, and boldly staked his authority upon a manifestation of Divine vengeance—"If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord create a creation, and the ground open her mouth and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down alive into Sheol: then ye shall understand that these men have despised the Lord." This terrible fate overtook the Reubenite malcontents: as Moses spake, "the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households" (Numb. xvi. 1-35). Rebellions

Dissensions also arose in Moses' own tribe of Levi. Korah a prominent member of it put himself at the head of 250 princes of the congregation, and complained that Moses and Aaron took too much upon themselves seeing that the whole congregation had been consecrated to God. Korah Korah

and his company were invited to appear before Jehovah at the Tent of Meeting bearing censers, and "fire came forth from the Lord and consumed them."²⁰ When the people murmured against Moses and Aaron saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord," they were smitten by a plague. Aaron, however, at Moses' command took his censer and made atonement. "And he stood between the dead and the living: and the plague was stayed." After this the representative of each tribe was bidden to take a rod and to inscribe his name on it. The rods were laid up in the Tent, and Aaron's rod for the tribe of Levi budded and bore almonds, in token that Jehovah had chosen the tribe of Levi to minister to Him. The rod was ordered to be kept in the Ark (Numb. xvii.).

Last march
to Canaan

When the years of wandering were ended Moses led the Israelites upon the last stage of their journey, the march to the Land of Promise. Their object was the fords of the Jordan. The shortest route lay through the territories of Edom and Moab.

The country occupied by Edom extended from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Akabah, and comprised what is now known as the Wady-El-Arabah. Edom, at this time a beautiful and extremely fertile district, was held by a warlike race well able to protect the country from invasion. The Israelites evidently wanted to enter Edom at Petra, and to make their way across the Arabah, and by one of its Eastern valleys leading to the present pilgrim route from Damascus. An embassy was accordingly sent to the king of Edom "informing him how God had delivered his brother Israel" from Egypt, and asking him for permission to pass through his land. "We will not, so ran the request of the Israelites, pass through field or through vineyard, neither will we drink of the water of the wells; we will go along the king's highway, we will not turn aside to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy border" (Numb. xx. 14 ff.).

Death of
Aaron

The people had, in the meantime, advanced as far as the frontier, and halted near Mount Hor, in the neighbourhood of the great fortress of Petra, to await the reply of the Edomites. Here Moses, by Jehovah's command, took Aaron and his son Eleazar up the mountain, and after Eleazar had been

invested with the insignia of the priesthood, Aaron died "there on the top of the mount," and was mourned by Israel for thirty days (Numb. xx. 24-29).

At this time Arad, a Canaanite king, attacked the Israelites and took some prisoners;²¹ and the king of Edom assembled so formidable an army to resist any attempt to cross his territory, that the only way open to Israel was to turn southward to the Gulf of Akabah, and from thence to reach their destination by the Eastern border of Edom (Numb. xxi. 1-3). The journey was a terrible one; and, as usual, the people murmured against Moses. As a punishment fiery serpents were sent, and when the people repented, Moses was instructed to make an image of a serpent and to set it upon a standard. "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten when he seeth it shall live" (Numb. xxi. 8).²²

When the weary travellers reached the border of Moab, the following halting-places are recorded in the book of Numbers. (1) Oboth, Iye-Abarim, "in the wilderness which is before Moab, toward the sunrising," (2) the valley of Zered, (3) the river Arnon, on "the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. Wherefore it is said in the book of the Wars of Jehovah:—

"Wahab in Sufeh
And the valleys of Arnon,
And the slope of the valleys
That inclineth toward the dwellings of Ar,
And leaneth upon the border of Moab" (Numb. xxi. 14).²³

(4) Beer (a well), so called because here water was obtained by the labour of the people, in which their chiefs heartily joined. A short poem commemorates the event.

"Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:
The well which the princes digged,
Which the nobles of the people delved,
With the sceptre, and with their staves"

(Numb. xxi. 17-18).

Finally, after encamping at (5) Mattanah, (6) Nahaliel, (7) Bamoth, Israel reached (8) "the valley that is in the field of Moab, and (9) "the top of Pisgah which looketh down

upon Jeshimon." The days of wandering were at an end; the hour of conquest had come.

Sihon
defeated

Sihon, an Amorite king, had succeeded in capturing several of the cities of the Moabites, and was reigning in Hesbon over a territory extending southward to the Arnon. To this king the Israelites preferred the same request as had been made to the Edomites. No prohibition, however, to use force in case of necessity prevented them from attacking Sihon, when he led his army against them as far as Jahaz on the southern bank of the Arnon. Here a battle between the Israelite and Amorite forces took place, in which the Chosen People gained their first victory since the discomfiture of Amalek at Rephidim, thus becoming masters of the whole territory of Sihon. They were now able to establish themselves by the Jordan in the plains of Moab, a little to the north of the Dead Sea, their encampment extending northwards from Beth-Jeshimon to Abel-Shittim. They did not enter the country of the Ammonites "for the border of the children of Ammon was strong" (Numb. xxi. 21-24).

Israel en-
camped in
the Plains of
Moab

The encampment on the Plains of Moab is of equal importance with those at Mount Sinai and Kadesh. Here God turned the curse of Balaam into a blessing, and from thence the armies of Israel advanced to attack Midian, and to conquer Bashan. Here Moses delivered his solemn farewell address to Israel, and in the neighbouring mountain of Nebo the great leader died. It was in the plains of Moab also that Joshua received his commission to lead Israel across the Jordan to the conquest of the land.

Bashan
conquered

Masters of the territory of Sihon, the Israelites now began a campaign against Og, the king of Bashan, which ended in his defeat at Edrei. No less than seventy walled cities were seized by the victorious Israelites, who by this means became possessed of Eastern Palestine from the Arnon to the snow-clad mountain of Hermon. Og was the last of the Rephaim, an aboriginal race believed to have been of gigantic stature, and his "bedstead or sarcophagus of basalt" was shown in Rabbath Ammon in the seventh century B.C. (Numb. xxi. 33-35; Deut. iii. 1-11). Part of his territory was subsequently occupied by Jair, the son of Manasseh, who gave to the district the name of Havvoth-Jair (Numb. xxxii. 41-42; Judg. x. 4).²⁴

As in the case of Israel's departure from Egypt, the principal adversaries of Jehovah's people had been the magicians of that country, so a contest with the greatest soothsayer of the East preceded their entrance into the Promised Land. The discomfiture of Balaam was remembered as Israel's crowning triumph, and in the eighth century B.C., the prophet Micah alludes to it as an example of Jehovah's special favour to His people (Micah vi. 5).

Balak, king of Moab, apprehensive of the power of Israel as shown in the complete overthrow of Sihon, declared, "Now shall this assembly lick up all that is round about us as the ox licketh up the grass of the field." Convinced of the futility of any attempt to meet the army of Israel in the field, the king resolved to call to his aid a powerful prophet named Balaam, who dwelt at Pethor, by the Euphrates, requesting him to curse the people, in order that by this means he might be able to expel them from the territory of Moab; "For," said Balak, "I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed." Envoys were sent to Balaam, "with the rewards of divination in their hands." At first the prophet was forbidden by God to go, but when a second embassy of Moabite princes, "more and more honourable" than the first, arrived, Balaam bade them wait for a night, to see whether God would allow him to accompany them. On this occasion he was permitted to go to Balak, but God warned him, "Only the word which I speak unto thee that shalt thou do."

On Balaam's journey the Angel of Jehovah withstood him, and, as a sign, the ass, on which the prophet rode, was made to speak, and to rebuke his madness in defying the Divine command.

The king of Moab met Balaam at his city of Kiriath-huzoth, and the next morning led him to the heights of Baal, which overlooked a part of the encampment of Israel. By the prophet's orders seven altars were erected, and seven bullocks and seven rams offered upon each of them. Balaam then uttered his first prophecy with the question, "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? And how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?" Israel, he foretold, would be countless as the dust, yet "a people that dwell

alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numb. xxiii. 8-10).

The second prophecy was delivered after similar sacrifices had been offered in the "Field of the watchmen" (*Zophim*). Balak conducted the prophet to this place in the hope that he might be allowed to curse only a part of Israel. This time Balaam addressed Balak in terms of rebuke: "Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor: God is not man that He should lie; neither the son of man that He should repent." In words like those with which Moses blessed the tribe of Joseph, the prophet compares Israel to a wild ox, and, re-echoing Jacob's blessing of Judah, he says, "Behold the people riseth up as a lioness, and as a lion doth he lift himself up" (Numb. xxiii. 19-24).

Horrified at such blessings being bestowed on his enemies, Balak cried, "Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all;" but Balaam answered that he had already warned him, "All that Jehovah speaketh that must I do." In despair the king of Moab led the seer up "to the top of Peor that looketh down on Jeshimon," perhaps to the very place from which Moses afterwards saw the Land of Promise. The whole encampment was now visible to Balaam, and he cried—

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob,
Thy tabernacles, O Israel!
As valleys are they spread forth,
As gardens by the river side. . . ." (Numb. xxiv. 5-6).

Again the words of the second prophecy were repeated, with the addition of the blessing God had given to Abraham, "Blessed be every one that blesseth thee, and cursed be every one that curseth thee" (Numb. xxiv. 9).

Then, as Balak "smote his hands together," and in his wrath bade Balaam "Flee to thy place: I thought to promote thee to great honour; but lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour," Balaam said, "Behold I go unto my people: come and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days."

The seer now looks into the distant future.

“ I see him, but not now ;
 I behold him, but not nigh ;
 There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
 And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.”

The star is the world-subduing Conqueror, before whom Moab and Edom are destined to perish. Israel will then do valiantly, whilst Amalek, “the first of the nations,” falls, and the rock fortress of Kain no longer protects him. Asshur next appears as a conquering people, and at last from the unknown West the ships of new nations appear (Numb. xxiv. 17-24).²⁵

“And,” adds the Sacred Narrative, “Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place : and Balak also went his way.”

Israel after hearing the voice of God on Sinai was guilty of worshipping Him under the degraded form of a Calf, and now, scarce had the blessings of Jehovah pronounced by Balaam’s unwilling lips died away, than the people practised the impure rites of the Baal of Peor. For this terrible relapse into idolatry Moses was commanded, “Take all the chiefs of the people, and hang them up unto the LORD before the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel.” It is said that the Midianites, at the instigation of Balaam, led the Israelites astray on this occasion, and that Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, executed judgment on a guilty Israelite by name Zimri, and his Midianitish paramour. For this he was rewarded by the promise of an everlasting priesthood (Numb. xxv. 13 P, Ps. cvi. 30, 31). Israel, it is further related, undertook a war of vengeance against the Midianites, for seducing the people into so great a sin against Jehovah. The manner in which this is related shows the difference between the more primitive and the priestly method of relating history. The Midianites are said in the Priests’ Code to have been defeated without Israel’s losing a man, this bloodless victory being followed by a general massacre of all except the female children. The conquerors, however, were ordered to take great care to secure ceremonial purity after their work of vengeance ; elaborate directions being given as to the way in which the booty was to be purged before use. The whole passage is illustrative of the legalism of a later age, and is surely one which can without offence be

Baal-Peor
 and the
 Midianites

relegated to a comparatively late period in the history of Judaism (Numb. xxv.—xxx. P).²⁶

Reuben and
Gad given
the lands of
Sihon and Og

Only one more act is recorded of Moses, the grant of the conquered lands of Sihon and Og to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, on condition of their sending warriors to help in the conquest of Western Palestine. In his address to them the aged prophet admonished the tribes, who had thus received inheritances, to be true to their promise, adding the solemn adjuration, "But if ye will not do so, behold ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out" (*Heb.* Consider the guilt which will come upon you) (Numb. xxxii. 23).

It was believed that Moses before his death assembled the people in the Plains of Moab, and delivered to them as a last charge the discourses contained in the fifth book of the Pentateuch; the "second law" as the Alexandrian translators term it. The date of the compilation of the book of Deuteronomy, one of the most spiritual in all the Old Testament, is still a matter of controversy, but the teaching it contains is worthy of being an embodiment of the last words of the great lawgiver. At the end of this book are two poems attributed to Moses: the Song, which he, and Joshua the son of Nun, "spake in the ears of all the people" (Deut. xxxii.), and the "Blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death" (Deut. xxxiii.). The ninetieth Psalm, one of the most solemn and beautiful meditations on the brevity of human life, is called, "The prayer of Moses the man of God."

Death of
Moses

At last Moses at God's command went up from the plains of Moab unto Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah. At the beginning of the wanderings he ascended the Mount of the Law, at the close he went up Nebo, the Mount of Prophecy, destined in after days to be chosen for the ascension of Elijah unto heaven (Numb. xxiii. 14; 2 Kings ii. 11), and recently the scene of Balaam's unwilling blessing upon Israel. From the summit Moses saw the nation he had led so faithfully, and beyond the camp of Israel the Land which the people were to receive from Jehovah. The lawgiver's eye undimmed by age saw it all. "The land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh,

and all the land of Judah unto the Western Sea; and the Negeb, and the Arabah of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar." There in view of the Land which he had sought, but might not enter, Moses died and was buried "in the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-Peor," the scene of Israel's sin. The tombs of Abraham and Isaac, and the sepulchre of Aaron are still the objects of pious or superstitious veneration; but of Moses it is said, "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." Yet, as the unknown writer of the seventh century B.C. remarks, "There hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face" (Deut. xxxiv. 10). Nor did there, till One came who said of the great Lawgiver, "He wrote of *Me*" (John v. 46).

Chapter V

The Conquest and Settlement of Canaan

Israel in
Eastern
Palestine

AT the time of the death of Moses the Israelites were already in possession of a considerable tract of country; but it was not in Eastern Palestine that the nation could hope to work out its high destiny. It was necessary for the progress of Israel, that the nomadic habits of their ancestors should be abandoned for the settled life of an agricultural community. Moses, reared as he had been in the midst of Egyptian civilization, could hardly have desired his countrymen to know nothing better than the undisciplined life of the Bedawin, and he naturally set before Israel the idea of possessing a country, in which an organized national life could be attained. So successful were his labours, that only two tribes were satisfied with continuing to lead a pastoral life in Eastern Palestine, and these were ready to help their brethren to a settlement in the country protected from the marauders of the deserts by the deep trench of the Jordan valley.

The tents of Israel at this time extended from the shores of the Dead Sea to Abel-Shittim, a distance of over six miles (Numb. xxxiii. 49). Across the Jordan lay Jericho, a Canaanite city, the possession of which was indispensable to the attainment of a firm footing in Western Palestine. It was spring; the time at which the river overflows its banks, and consequently, the inhabitants of the west country, deeming the Jordan to be unfordable, were little apprehensive of an invasion from the east (Josh. iii. 15).

Joshua

Moses had been succeeded by Joshua, his faithful companion, who throughout the desert wanderings had borne the title of his "minister." The name of Joshua shows that

the bearer of it was a devoted worshipper of Jehovah ; for, by Moses' command, the Divine Name had been added to his original designation ; Hoshea being changed into Joshua (*Jehovah is Salvation*) (Numb. xii. 16).¹ This practice, common in later times, was most unusual throughout this age ; not even the sons of Aaron being called by names compounded with that of the God of Israel.

Joshua's first act was to send two spies to Jericho to obtain information. These sought a lodging in the house of Rahab the harlot. She was a member of a family well known in Jericho, and being convinced that the Israelites were destined to prevail over her countrymen, she refused to surrender the spies to the emissaries of the king of Jericho, concealing them among the flax stalks lying on her roof. In return for this service they swore to preserve her and her relatives, when the city should be taken. As Rahab's house was on the wall, she was able to facilitate the escape of the spies from the city, and by her advice they hid themselves in the mountains above Jericho, till the men sent by the king to pursue them had returned from searching the valley as far as the fords of Jordan.

The Spies
sent to
Jericho

It had been agreed between the spies and their hostess that when the city should be sacked Rahab's house should be known by a scarlet cord, and that the lives of all those found in it should be preserved. On their arrival at the camp, the spies assured Joshua, "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land, and moreover all the inhabitants of the land do melt away before us" (Josh. ii.).

Joshua and his army now marched about six miles from Shittim to the Jordan, and remained encamped on the very brink of the river for three days before the order was given to make the passage. At the word of command the Levitical priests advanced bearing the sacred Ark, and as their feet touched the water, the stream was stayed at a place called Adam, about seventeen miles north of Jericho, and they and all the people passed over on dry ground. Twelve stones, borne before the Ark by representatives of the tribes, were set up where the Israelites encamped that night, to be a perpetual memorial of this miraculous passage of the Jordan² (Josh. iii., iv.).

Joshua
crosses the
Jordan

Camp at
Gilgal

The spot chosen for the first camp of Israel is said to have been called Gilgal, because there all who had been born in the desert, were circumcised, and Jehovah said, "This day have I rolled away (*gallothi*) the reproach of Egypt from off you." Here also the Passover was kept, and as the manna had ceased the Israelites began to eat the corn of the land (Josh. v. 2-12).

Jericho

Jericho was evidently regarded by the invaders as a most formidable obstacle, for while the city stood they had no hope of gaining possession of the high lands beyond, from which the rest of Canaan had to be attacked. A solemn vow must have been taken at Gilgal to make no profit out of the fall of the city, but to consecrate everything to Jehovah, if He would but deliver Jericho to Israel. No living thing was to be spared; the silver, gold, bronze, and iron were to be given to the service of the Sanctuary. This practice was not infrequent, and the violation of an oath devoting an enemy and his possessions to Jehovah for destruction, was regarded as the most serious of crimes.³

Joshua's
vision

A vision prepared Joshua for his enterprise against Jericho. Seeing a man standing with a drawn sword in his hand, he asked him, "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" and received the mysterious answer, "Nay, but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." Joshua was then commanded to put off his shoes, for he stood on holy ground (Josh. v. 13-15).

Jericho
destroyed

Jericho was now formally invested, "None went out and none came in." The history of its capture is related in poetical language. For six days did the priests of Jehovah bear the sacred Ark around the walls, followed by the army in solemn silence, and on the seventh day Joshua ordered his men, "Shout, for the LORD hath given you the city." At the shout of Israel the walls of Jericho fell down, and all the inhabitants were put to the sword. Everything was "devoted," no captives might be taken as slaves, nor might a head of cattle be driven away. The city was burned to the ground, and a solemn curse pronounced on the man who should presume to rebuild it. The death of his first-born was the price to be paid by one presumptuous enough to lay its foundations; the loss of the youngest son

must follow the setting up of the gates (1 Kings xvi. 34). The oath to Rahab was scrupulously observed, and she was not only given her life, but was recognised as a member of the nation, her descendants being incorporated with Israel, for it is said "She dwelleth in Israel unto this day"⁴ (Josh. vi.)

With Jericho in ashes behind them the victorious Israelites, by the advice of their scouts, determined to assault Ai, a small city in the neighbourhood of Bethel. The place was so weak that Joshua was advised to send no more than three thousand men from Gilgal against it, but these completely failed to take the town, being ignominiously put to flight by the inhabitants.

The Israelites were filled with despondency: "The hearts of the people melted and became as water." Joshua and the elders remained all day prostrate before the Ark with rent garments and dust on their heads, and were told, "There is a devoted thing in the midst of thee, O Israel, thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the devoted thing from among you" (Josh. vii. 2-15).

To ascertain the guilty person each tribe was brought before Jehovah. By the casting of lots, or some other similar method, the tribe of Judah was taken. The clans of the tribe next presented themselves, and the Zerahites were indicated. Of the Zerahites the guilt was declared to be in the family of Zabdi. Finally, when the house of Zabdi were put to the ordeal, Achan, the son of Carmi, was pronounced to be the culprit. Joshua begged the unhappy man to "give honour to the God of Israel" by confessing his sin, and Achan admitted that he had stolen from the spoils of Jericho a mantle from Shinar, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels. From the camp of Gilgal he was led up towards Jericho to the gloomy valley of Achor (*trouble*), and Joshua sternly asked, "Why hast thou troubled us? The Lord shall trouble thee this day." Achan's plunder was then burned, and he with all his family were stoned. A great cairn was raised over the spot, and from this circumstance the valley is said to have received its name of Achor (Josh. vii. 16-26; Hosea ii. 15).⁵

Joshua now made a second attempt upon Ai, and this time he received a Divine warning to take every precaution

Israel
repulsed
at Ai

Achan's
trespass

Ai taken

to render it successful. Placing an ambush of three thousand⁶ men to the west of the city, he attacked it with the rest of his army. Again the Israelites were driven back, and pursued by the defenders, who, in the excitement of victory, left the town unguarded. The men in ambush thereupon rushed in and set Ai on fire; and when they saw the smoke rise up from the city, the rest of the Israelites took courage and turned on their pursuers. The army of Ai, discouraged by the loss of their town, was hemmed in by the Israelites and utterly annihilated; the inhabitants were all put to the sword. Ai, whose very name means ruins, was made a heap for ever (*Tel Olam*), and its king was brought before Joshua and hung. His body was taken down at sunset, and a great mound raised over it at the gate of his ruined city⁷ (Josh. viii. 1-29).

The assembly
at Shechem

The Deuteronomist says that after the destruction of Ai, Joshua led the Israelites to Shechem, and, in accordance with the command of Jehovah to Moses, built an altar of unhewn stones and "offered burnt offerings and slew peace offerings." On the stones he wrote a copy of the Law of Moses, and after stationing half the people on Mount Gerizim, and half on Mount Ebal, the blessings and curses were recited. This incident implies a long march through an unconquered country, and would appear to be historically impossible, were it not for the fact that in the book of Joshua nothing whatever is said of the conquest of the territory afterwards given to Ephraim and Manasseh on the west of Jordan, though it is assumed to have been one of the few assured possessions of Israel at Joshua's death⁸ (Josh. viii. 30-35).*

The
Gibeonites

The Israelites next made an alliance with four cities to the south-west of Ai, confederated under the leadership of Gibeon. It is related that a treaty so contrary to the spirit of the command to have no dealings with the Canaanite population was obtained by craft. The Gibeonites pretended to have come from a distant land and appeared in the guise of travellers whose clothes and provision showed traces of a long and weary journey. The people rashly pledged themselves by oath to enter into a treaty with the Gibeonites, and not even the discovery of the fraud could annul their

* Though Shechem is especially described as a Canaanitish town in the days of Abimelech the son of Gideon.

obligation to do so. The lives and cities of the Gibeonites were spared, but as a punishment for their deceit they were made slaves to the Sanctuary of Jehovah. By this alliance Israel obtained a foothold in the Hill Country (Josh. ix.).

The news that a treaty had been made between the Gibeonites and Israelites was the signal for war in Southern Canaan. Five Amorite kings attacked the allies of Israel, who at once summoned Joshua to their aid. The cities of the five kings did not, like those of the Gibeonites, lie within a few miles of one another, but covered a wide area. Jerusalem is nineteen miles from Hebron, and Jarmuth lies to the west, at a distance of fifteen miles from either city. Lachish and Eglon were contiguous to one another, and were situated eighteen miles due west of Hebron. Well might the Gibeonites say in their message to Joshua, "Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the hill country are gathered together against us" (Josh. x. 1-6).

Joshua made a night march from the Israelite camp at Gilgal, reaching Gibeon before the Amorites were aware of his approach. The battle that ensued secured the hills for the invaders. The Amorites, in their endeavour to reach the Shephelah, fled north-westward by way of the descent of Beth-horon. There a terrific storm burst upon the panic-stricken army. "The LORD," it is said, "cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah."

The five kings fled to Makkedah, a town not far from the coast, and there took refuge in a cave, but even the news of their capture did not prevent Joshua from completing his work of destruction. "Roll," said he, "great stones unto the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them; but stay not ye; pursue after your enemies; and smite the hindmost of them: suffer them not to enter into their cities, for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand." It was not till victory was assured, and "none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel," that Joshua came to the camp at Makkedah, and ordered the five kings to be brought out of the cave. As a sign that Israel would in the end subdue the whole land, Joshua made the Hebrew chieftains put their feet on the necks of the captives saying,

“Be strong and of good courage, for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.” The fate of the five kings was the same as that of the king of Ai, they were slain, and their corpses, after being exposed on a gallows, were flung into the cave, in which they had taken refuge (Josh. x. 7-27).

“Staying” of
the Sun and
Moon

It was on the occasion of this battle, one of the most decisive of all Israel's victories, that Joshua, in the words of the ancient book of Jashar, prayed, saying:—

“Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon ;
And thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon,
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
Until the nation had avenged herself of their enemies.

And there was no day like that before it or after it,
That the Lord listened to a man's voice :
For the Lord fought for Israel” (Josh. x. 12, 14).⁹

This may be considered to be the end of Joshua's first campaign. The camps at Makkedah and Gilgal gave the invaders an iron grip on the Highlands of Central Palestine, by making them masters of the path of Beth-horon, which gave access to the Shephelah on the west, and of the roads, formerly commanded by Jericho, leading from the western hills to the Arabah.

Conquest
of Judah

According to a somewhat late summary of Joshua's campaigns, the Israelites from their camp at Makkedah devastated the whole of South-western Canaan. Libnah was first taken and destroyed ; the same fate befell Lachish, and its immediate neighbour Eglon. The conquerors then marched eastward to sack Hebron, a like fate attending Debir. In a single campaign the whole country was devastated from Gaza on the coast to Kadesh Barnea. Joshua is in fact credited with having destroyed “all that breathed, as the LORD the God of Israel commanded” (Josh. x. 29-43). This, with similar passages in the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua, has caused pious souls no small perplexity. But, though these extensive massacres were perhaps inserted at a later period to show how literally the commands to extirpate the Canaanites were carried out, before the faith of Israel waxed lukewarm, they show a spirit completely alien to that of the New Testament.

A tendency was manifested in later days to regard Moses and Joshua as leaders of a sacred nation bound by a theocratic law, and occupied in ritual observance, which had only to stand still and see the salvation of Jehovah. Under such circumstances, Israel merely awaited the Divine command to rush upon their discomfited enemies, and put them with their wives and children to the sword. Such a picture of the conquest of Canaan presents us with an awful view of the nature of Jehovah, as a God who rendered the enemies of His people helpless before them, and then encouraged Israel to give their fiercest passions the most abundant scope. It is however highly probable that this view of Joshua's campaign is that of the legalists, who revised the ancient history of Israel with the object of showing how literally the men of old carried out the will of Heaven by destroying the idolatrous Canaanites. The earliest records are not in favour of this theory; but they represent the conquest of Canaan by Israel as a slow and gradual process, attained less by the united efforts of the whole nation than by the isolated enterprises of the tribes (*cf.* the account in Joshua with Judges i. 8-21).¹⁰

Massacre of
Canaanites

There is, however, good reason for accepting the view that the sudden incursion of all the tribes of Israel under Joshua had evidently shattered the power of the Canaanites to resist the progress of the invaders. The passage of the Jordan in the time of flood, the assault on Jericho, the march from Gilgal to Gibeon in a single night, and the terrible onslaught on the following day, which swept the army of the five kings from the hills of Bethel to the Maritime Plain, inspired such terror that the arms of Israel were for a time irresistible. The conquest of Mount Ephraim may, for example, have been so easy that no record of it was preserved. But, according to the book of Judges, the subjugation of the south was a slow and difficult enterprise, the work of tribes and powerful families, rather than that of the entire nation under the command of Joshua.

Only one other campaign is recorded to have been undertaken by Joshua. Jabin, king of Hazor in the North, made a confederacy against Israel among the neighbouring sovereigns, and was overthrown in a decisive battle at the waters of Merom. The Israelites showed far less zeal in

Joshua in
Northern
Israel

destroying the cities of their enemies than in their earlier expeditions. It is true that every human being is said to have been massacred, but no city, save Hazor, was reduced to ashes. The Israelites had evidently come to regard themselves as settlers, and to look upon cities as desirable for future use (Josh. xi. 1-15).

Joshua gives inheritances to Judah and Joseph

Only two tribes received their inheritance from Joshua. The house of Judah obtained the territory of the five kings, and Caleb had permission from Joshua to wrest Hebron from the Anakim. In reward for having proved the one faithful spy forty-five years before, the old chieftain had received from Moses a promise of the district explored by him, and he was now able to assure Joshua, "Lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me" (Josh. xiv. 6-15; xv 13-20; Judg. i. 10-15).¹¹

For the powerful house of Joseph, of which Joshua was himself a member, the rich inheritance of Central Palestine was reserved. Mount Ephraim, as the district was afterwards styled, became the centre of Israelite life. Here was Shechem where the body of Joseph was buried; Shiloh the resting-place of the Sanctuary; Timnath-serah the inheritance of Joshua; and Gibeah the home of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest (Joshua xix. 49, 50).

Dissatisfaction of the Josephites

But the Josephite tribes, dissatisfied with their lot, complained to Joshua that it was insufficient. They held the hills, but could acquire no land in the rich valley of Jezreel, nor around Bethshean, because of the invincible war-chariots of the Canaanites. Joshua assured them that though the district they coveted was like a forest they should hew down its powerful inhabitants, and in the end dispossess the Canaanites, "though they have chariots of iron and though they be strong" (Josh. xvii. 14-18).

Seven tribes given unconquered territory

The seven tribes which had as yet received no inheritance are said to have been assigned the parts of the land hitherto unconquered. They assembled at Shiloh, and at Joshua's command each tribe sent three representatives to divide the country into suitable inheritances. On their return, Joshua "cast lots for them in Shiloh in the presence of Jehovah" (Josh. xviii. xix.).

Before his death Joshua assembled the people to Shechem and delivered a discourse on the history of the nation.¹² He reminded his hearers that their fathers, when they dwelt beyond the Euphrates, had worshipped other gods: nevertheless Jehovah called Abraham to serve Him. Esau received from Jehovah an inheritance in Mount Seir, whilst his brother Jacob went down to Egypt. Moses and Aaron were sent to deliver Jacob's children, and Israel triumphed at the Red Sea; because, said Joshua, Jehovah "put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them and covered them." Israel dwelt long in the Wilderness, but Jehovah gave them the land of the Amorites beyond the Jordan, and turned Balaam's curse into a blessing. At last Israel crossed Jordan and fought with the men of Jericho. Jehovah "sent the hornet before them" and they drove out the two kings (according to the LXX.) of the Amorites. But Joshua did not forget to remind the Israelites that they had won the land "not with thy sword, nor with thy bow."

Assembly
at Shechem

After this summary of the national history, Joshua exhorted the people to put away the gods their fathers had served beyond the River and in Egypt, and to serve Jehovah; or if they were unwilling to do this, to choose whether they would worship their ancestral gods, or the deities of the Amorites. "But," adds the aged hero with a fine simplicity, "as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." Then followed a strange controversy. The Israelites declared they would not forsake Jehovah, who had delivered their fathers from Egypt and given them the land—"We also," said they, "will serve Jehovah, for He is our God." But Joshua replied, "Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for He is an holy God; He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression nor your sins." The people reiterated their resolve, "Nay, but Jehovah our God will we serve; and unto His voice will we hearken." Joshua then made a covenant with the people, and established a statute and ordinance for them at Shechem. In true patriarchal fashion he set up a great stone in attestation of this resolution, "Under the oak that was in the Sanctuary of Jehovah" (Joshua xxiv. 1-25).

Joshua died at the age of 110, and was buried on his own land in Timnath-Serah. With him the Mosaic age

Death of
Joshua

ended, and the pure worship of antiquity only endured till all his companions were dead. "Israel," it is said, "served Jehovah all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua and had known all the work of the Lord that he had wrought for Israel" (Josh. xxiv. 29-31).

Period of
transition

The period that follows the death of Joshua was for the Israelites one of transition. Their nomad habits were perforce abandoned, and they gradually acquired those of a settled nation. The territory occupied was a narrow one, and intercommunication must have been very difficult. The tribal spirit tended to increase, and to obliterate those national feelings which had actuated Israel in the days of Moses and Joshua. The wars of this age are for the most part waged by individual tribes, and mutual jealousies were at times so bitter, that they could not be allayed without civil bloodshed. Only on rare occasions of extreme peril, and then only for a short time, could the Israelites be persuaded to act together as a nation. The bands of political unity between the different tribes seem to have been as feeble as possible. Nor did any strong religious impulse contribute to weld Israel together. The practice of agriculture, in the view of most ancient nations, was due to the Divine teaching received by the men of old. The farmer, according to Isaiah, knows how to grow his produce, because "his god instructs him." Among Semitic people, every field, every well, every tree, had its tutelary god, who needed to be approached before the crop could be reaped. In adopting the occupation of the Canaanites, the Israelites almost of necessity practised those religious observances in honour of the deities of the locality which were considered indispensable to successful farming. In thus attempting to propitiate the gods of the place, the Israelite cultivator was not perhaps conscious of deliberately forsaking Jehovah, but imagined that he was only paying what was due to the Baalim and Astaroth, who gave him his corn and wine (Hos. ii. 8). It has been suggested that to the uninstructed Israelite, Jehovah was a shepherd's god, delighting in offerings from the flock and herd, whilst the gods of the Canaanites, as protectors of the fruitful soil, claimed its produce. It was in this way that the Canaanite nature-worship was com-

bined with the monotheism of the service of Jehovah, and became a pregnant source of calamity to Israel.¹³

The book of Judges in its present form attributes all the troubles of the nation to its inclination to worship the Baals and Astartes of Canaan, and endeavours to show how apostasy from Jehovah is the sole source of woe to Israel. Being written to enforce this lesson, the structure of the greater portion of the book is somewhat artificial. In every case apostasy, invasion, punishment, repentance, and deliverance follow in regular succession. For this reason the chronology seems to be constructed on the assumption that the Judges formed a continuous succession like the kings who succeeded them.

The construction of the book of Judges

As, however, during this period Israel was not brought into connection with nations like Assyria or Egypt, whose chronology is in any way known, the question of the date of each event is comparatively unimportant, and for the sake of clearness the history of the time may be related in a series of tribal narratives.

Tribal history

I. The Reubenites and Gadites had asked Moses to assign them the district conquered from Sihon, as their flocks were numerous, and they preferred to continue to lead a pastoral life. On receiving the lawgiver's consent they occupied the cities which Sihon had originally taken from the Moabites. This territory, especially the southern portion assigned to Reuben, was always a debatable land, held alternately by Israelites and their Moabite and Ammonite rivals. The two tribes shared in the campaign in Western Palestine, and at its conclusion were dismissed by Joshua to their own country. It has been suggested that the occupation of the district of Bashan by the Manassite clans was in reality caused by the western tribe sending its surplus population across the Jordan to found a new settlement. Jair, the founder of this colony, was one of the minor judges, though in the book of Numbers it is implied that he was a contemporary of Moses (Numb. xxxii. 41; Judg. x. 3-5).

Eastern Tribes

The trans-Jordanic tribes never played a really important part in the national history, and in early days it was feared that they might soon cease to regard themselves as Israelites. No sooner had the Reubenites and Gadites departed to

The altar erected by Reuben and Gad

their inheritance, than they erected an altar by the Jordan. The part of the nation, that occupied the western country, regarding this as an act of apostasy from Jehovah, prepared to march against them, but before doing this they sent an embassy headed by Phinehas the son of Eleazar, asking, "Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, that ye must turn away this day from following the LORD?" Sooner than be guilty of such a crime it were better that the eastern territory should be abandoned. "If the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over into the land of the possession of the Lord, wherein the Lord's Tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us: but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God."

The Eastern tribes earnestly repudiated any such intention, declaring that they had only built the altar in token that they too had a portion in Israel, and to silence the objection that the children of their Western brethren might make by asking, "What have ye to do with Jehovah the God of Israel? for Jehovah hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad." They added that they had no idea of using the altar for sacrificial purposes: it was to be simply a memorial. This answer satisfied the Western tribes, and the altar was called Ed, "for it is a witness (*ed*) between us that the LORD is God" (Josh. xxii.).¹⁴

Still these tribes had no great sympathy with those beyond the Jordan, for, when Gideon the Manassite was pursuing the Midianites, his demand for assistance was refused by the inhabitants of Succoth and Penuel. On another occasion, about to be related, an attempt of the Ephraimites to interfere with the affairs of the trans-Jordanic tribes led to a war. The Ammonites had oppressed not only the inhabitants of Gilead but also Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim for eighteen years, and when the people cried to Jehovah, He replied, "Ye have forsaken Me and served other gods; wherefore I will save you no more." At last, however, Jehovah had pity on His people. The Gileadites in their despair had decided that the man who would save them from their enemy should be their head, and they sent to Jephthah

a man of illegitimate or servile birth, like Abimelech, who had been driven out from his father's house, and had taken refuge in the land of Tob where he became the head of a band of freebooters. At the earnest request of the chiefs of Gilead he was induced to lead the army against Ammon on condition that he should be made their ruler in case of success.

Jephthah began by asking the king of Ammon the cause of the war with Israel, and was informed that it was because Israelites, when they came up out of Egypt, had taken the Moabite territory from the Arnon to the Jabbok. A long argument is put into the mouth of Jephthah, in defence of Israel's right to the territory in dispute. It had been taken not from Ammon or Moab but from Sihon; it had not been claimed by Balak king of Moab when Israel occupied it, nor by his successors during three centuries. Jehovah dispossessed the Amorites before the Israelites, and gave them the land; and the Ammonites should be content with that which "Chemosh their god had given them" (Judg. xi. 12-28).

Jephthah's
embassy
to the
Ammonites

Arguments like these could not prevent hostilities. Jephthah invaded the debatable land, attacked the Ammonites at Aroer on the Arnon, and drove them northward to Minnith near the Dead Sea (Judg. xi. 29-33).

The Ephraimites evidently considered Jephthah's action in attacking Ammon as a presumptuous encroachment on their privilege of taking the lead in Israel, and, after mutual recriminations, a battle took place in which the Ephraimites were defeated and fled to the Jordan. The fords, however, were seized by the Gileadites, and every one, who betrayed his Ephraimitic origin by pronouncing the test-word Shibboleth as Sibboleth, was slain (Judg. xii. 1-6).

Jephthah is best known for his tragic vow to Jehovah made before the war with Ammon. "If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into mine hand, then it shall be, that whosoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, he shall be Jehovah's and I will offer him up for a burnt offering." At Mizpah his only daughter came to meet him. "And it came to pass when he saw her that he rent his clothes and said, Alas, my daughter, thou hast brought me very low . . . for I have opened my mouth to Jahveh

Jephthah's
daughter

and I cannot go back." Her reply was worthy of a hero's daughter, "My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth: forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon." She asked only a respite of two months, to depart with her companions to the mountains. When she returned, the sacred story with dignified reserve adds, "He did with her according to his vow, which he had vowed." The fate of Jephthah's daughter was celebrated by the maidens of Israel every year (Judg. xi. 34-40).¹⁵

The story illustrates the wild character of the natives of Gilead, and the fidelity with which a solemn vow was literally fulfilled. The terrible picture is in a measure redeemed by the fact that no selfish desire for victory led Jephthah to make a sacrifice of his only child, and that the maiden with heroic magnanimity urged her heart-broken sire to be true to the solemn oath he had sworn. The sorrow of the father and the willingness of his victim gave a noble pathos to the story.

The trans-Jordanic tribes are alluded to in the early poetry of the Hebrews, in the Blessings of Jacob, and of Moses, and the Song of Deborah.

There is a remarkable unanimity in the Sacred Records that the tribe of Reuben could never be safely relied upon. The patriarch himself appears to have tried to claim the headship of the family in his father's lifetime by appropriating Bilhah, the concubine of Jacob. For this he was deprived by his father of the right of leading the chosen race. Jacob, in blessing the tribe, says of Reuben:

"Unstable as water,* have thou not the excellency;
Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed,
Then defiledst thou it" . . . (Gen. xlix. 3-4).¹⁶

In the Desert, the rebellion of the Reubenites, Dathan, Abiram and On, was directed against the authority of Moses;

* Heb. 'Bubbling up like water.' In Arabian poetry the metaphor of a boiling pot is used of a warrior eager for battle. Though Reuben is a warrior, his father will not choose him.

and in Deuteronomy the Lawgiver predicts that no noble future is for this tribe :

“ Let Reuben live and not die
But let him be men that can be numbered ” (Deut. xxxiii. 6).

At a later time Deborah taunts the Reubenites for not joining the league against Sisera, because of their instability and lack of power to arrive at any decision.

“ Why satest thou among the sheep-folds,
To hear the bleatings of the flocks ?
At the watercourses of Reuben
There were great searchings of heart ” (Judg. v. 16).

Intent on present ease, the Reubenites had chosen the earliest conquest of Israel. The land of Sihon, which could never be securely held, was a district ill-suited to the development of a tribe worthy to lead a nation. The warriors of the tribe of Gad, on the other hand, were distinguished for their skill in border warfare. When Gad was born, Leah said, “ Fortune (or a troop) cometh,” the word Gad having both significations. Jacob plays on his son’s name when he says :—

The Gadites

“ Gad ; a troop shall troop on him,
But he shall troop on their rear ” (Gen. xlix. 19).

Moses pronounces a blessing upon the man who shall “ enlarge Gad,” and adds, alluding to the warlike character of the tribe,

“ He dwelleth as a lioness ” . . . (Deut. xxxiii. 20).

The Manassite settlement across the Jordan is spoken of by Jacob when he says that Joseph is like a fruitful bough, whose branches “ ran over the wall,” *i.e.* the barrier of Jordan (Gen. xlix. 22). Moses compares Joseph to a wild ox, whose spreading horns were symbolical of the extended character of the dominions of his descendants (Deut. xxxiii. 17).

Manassites

II. The two south-western tribes of Judah and Simeon acted in concert ; in the Song of Moses, Simeon is not mentioned, and the prayer for Judah is :—

South-
western
Tribes

“ Hear, O Lord, the voice of Judah,
And bring him in unto his people :
With his hands he contended for himself,” etc. (Deut. xxxiii. 7).

If the last line is correctly rendered by the Revised Version, it exactly describes the attitude of Judah during the period of the Judges. The tribe mingled but little with the other tribes; in Deborah's song it is not even mentioned. Save Othniel it produced no great deliverer, but spent its strength in petty wars against the tribes of the South. The isolation of Judah from the other tribes is an important feature throughout its history. The patriarch himself is recorded to have gone down "from his brethren and turned in to a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah," and the somewhat repulsive story related in Genesis xxxviii. apparently points to tribal alliances with the Canaanites of the south, some of which ended disastrously.

This tribe shewed great readiness to welcome aliens and foreigners. Both Caleb and Othniel appear to have joined it as allies. Rahab of Jericho married into the tribe, as did Ruth the Moabite. The Negeb or southern district was partitioned among the Jerahmeelites, the Kenites and the Judahites. This certainly tended to give Judah a position distinct from the rest of Israel.

The only members of the house of Israel with whom the tribe of Judah seems to have maintained a constant friendship were the Simeonites and Levites. The position of the tribe of Levi, so closely connected in the story of Jacob with Simeon, is difficult to determine, since the precise time at which the Levites began to be recognised as a sacred order is not known. The Levites mentioned in Judges are connected with Bethlehem in Judah, and it may be conjectured that their close relationship to the Judeans ensured them a more hospitable reception there than elsewhere.¹⁷

Despite his isolation from his brethren, the great qualities of Judah were recognised by Jacob, who, after denouncing the cruelty and violence of Simeon and Levi, promised a brilliant future to his third son:

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
Nor a law-giver from among his descendants,
Till He come, Whose it is."¹⁸

The position of the great tribe amid its mountain fortresses is graphically described by the patriarch as that of a

lion crouching, whom no man dares to provoke (Gen. xlix. 8-12).

With the permission of Jehovah, Judah and Simeon, accompanied by the sons of Hobab the Kenite, went up from the city of Palms (Jericho) against the Canaanite king Adonibezek of Bezek, a ferocious monarch, under whose table seventy kings deprived of their thumbs and great toes used to be fed on broken meats. His conquerors treated him with like barbarity, and he died at Jerusalem acknowledging the justice of his fate, "As I have done, so God hath required me" (Judg. i. 7).

The city of Hebron was taken by Caleb from the Anakim chiefs Sheshai, Ahimam, and Talmi, and the conqueror promised his daughter Achsah to the man who should take Kiriath-Sepher, afterwards called Debir. By the capture of this city of Kenaz, Othniel, the son of Caleb's kinsman, won her. Achsah's dowry was a district of the Negeb, but at the suggestion of her husband, she pretended to fall from the ass on which she was about to leave her home, and when her father, anxious for her safety, enquired what had happened, she begged him to add to her portion the upper and lower springs so necessary to make the barren district of any real value (Judg. i. 10-15; Josh. xv. 13-19).

Othniel, at a later time, became the first judge or deliverer of Israel from a foreign invader, Cushan-rishathaim, who is styled king of Syria of the two rivers (Judg. iii. 7-11).¹⁹

III. North of Judah lay the small tribe of Benjamin, **Benjamin** which played a most important part in the history of early Israel. Never sufficiently strong to excite the jealousy of other tribes, and protected alike by the tribes of Joseph, and by Judah, the Benjamites were distinguished for their powerful individuality. "Benjamin," says Jacob, "is a wolf that raveneth" (Gen. xlix. 27); but Moses, thinking of the secure position of his tribe, says of him, "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him" (Deut. xxxiii. 12). It was Benjamin that produced the second deliverer of Israel.

Eglon, king of Moab, crossed the Jordan and seized **Moabite oppression** Jericho, which, though not yet fortified, had apparently been rebuilt. Here he established himself, and tyrannised over the neighbouring district by exacting a heavy tribute from

the inhabitants. The bearer of the tribute was a Benjamite, Ehud, son of Gerar, who had lost the use of his right hand. He offered the present he had brought, sent away his companions, and returned alone. When he came into the presence of Eglon, he declared that he had a private communication for the king, and, on being left alone with him, announced that his message was from God. Eglon thereupon rose up in reverence, and Ehud seizing his dagger in his left hand plunged it into the king, escaped to the Highlands of Ephraim, and sounded the alarm. The people forthwith assembled, and seizing the fords of the Jordan slew 10,000 Moabites (Judges iii. 12-30).

The Ben-
jamite war

During the lifetime of Phinehas, and therefore not long after the conquest of Canaan, the Benjamites for a time defied all the rest of Israel. A Levite, returning with his wife from Bethlehem in Judah to his home in Ephraim, after refusing to lodge in the non-Israelite town of Jebus, reached Gibeah a city of Benjamin. He was hospitably welcomed by an aged man, but the people of Gibeah attacked the house, and, to save his own life, the Levite gave them his unfortunate companion. In the morning he found her corpse on the threshold. Forthwith he divided the body into twelve pieces, and sent them round Israel. The tribes met at Mizpah, and demanded of the Benjamites the surrender of the criminals. On their refusal, a war broke out in which Benjamin, after some initial successes, was defeated, and all the tribe massacred, save 600 warriors who took refuge in the Cliff of Rimmon. With these the rest of Israel made peace, but could not give them wives because of an oath which they had sworn. To prevent the loss of an entire tribe, the survivors of Benjamin were allowed to seize the maidens as they danced at the vintage festival at Shiloh. A later account says that wives were also provided by a wholesale massacre of the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, because they refused to join in the war against Benjamin; 400 virgins alone were spared and given to the tribe (Judg. xix.—xxi.).

There is, however, reason to believe that this terrible vengeance on Jabesh Gilead was no part of the original story. A relationship, however, certainly did exist between that distant city and Benjamin, as is attested by the history

of Saul, who began his warlike career by saving it from Nahash the Ammonite (1 Sam. xi.).

IV. The northern group of tribes appear prominently on one occasion during this period. The Northern Tribes

Jacob foretells the future of the tribe of Issachar in a striking simile, in which he compares his son to an ass crouching down between the sheepfolds. Nothing can better describe the territory of Issachar in the great plain of Esdraelon. The land is exceptionally fertile, but ill protected from invasion, and Issachar had to pay for so rich an inheritance, by

“ Bowing his shoulders to bear,
And becoming a servant under taskwork ” (Gen. xlix. 15).

The tribe of Issachar had little peace in their rich valley. Sisera, the captain of Jabin the Canaanite king of Hazor, seized Harosheth of the Gentiles on the eastern spurs of Carmel, and from thence “ he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.” The nation was roused to action by a prophetess, named Deborah, who sent to Kadesh in Naphtali, summoning a chieftain, named Barak, to assemble the northern tribes to Mount Tabor and from thence to make an attack on Sisera. Barak refused to undertake so great an enterprise unless accompanied by Deborah, and the prophetess agreed to go, after warning him that he would not gain honour by the expedition, for Jehovah “ would sell Sisera into the hand of a woman ” (Judg. iv. 9).

This war against Sisera was a national undertaking, in which all the tribes were urged to co-operate. The Israelites living in Eastern Palestine refused the invitation. Gilead “ remained beyond Jordan,” and Reuben held “ great debates ” but never came to the war. The maritime tribes of Dan and Asher were evidently in no position to answer to the call, but Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh joined the confederacy (Judg. v. 14, 15).

The details of the defeat of Sisera are very obscure, the prose account of the battle in Judges iv. placing the scene at Mount Tabor, and the poetical in the following chapter, at Taanach by the streams of Megiddo, about sixteen miles to the south-west. It may however be possible to reconcile this The victory over Sisera

apparent discrepancy by supposing that two Israelitish armies attacked the Canaanites. Barak with the northern contingent, consisting of the tribes of Zebulon and Naphtali, occupying Mount Tabor, whilst the forces of Ephraim and the southern tribes mustered near Taanach, the valley between being held by the Canaanites. The charge of Barak's troops down the slopes of Tabor threw the chariots of Sisera into confusion. The southern contingent then made an attack on the Canaanites at Taanach, driving them northward to the banks of the Kishon, whither the army routed by Barak was also forced to flee. As the river was in flood, and the rain had made the ground too heavy for the Canaanites to manœuvre their chariots to advantage, everything favoured the tactics of the Israelite infantry, whose forces, as they approached one another, were able to drive the fugitives into the swollen stream. Thus, it is said, "The river Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon." Sisera tried to escape to his camp at Harosheth, but, finding his retreat cut off, he turned southward to a place called Kadesh (*Tel Abu Kadeis*), to the tent of his ally, Heber the Kenite. There he was met by Jael, Heber's wife, who offered him hospitality, and when the wretched man had been lulled to security by her reception, either smote him down with the great tent hammer, or drove a peg through his temple as he slept. When Barak arrived at her tent Jael came to the door and said, "Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest" (*Judg. iv.*)²⁰

The victory of Barak is the greatest episode in this period of Israel's history. It was the only occasion on which a large number of tribes acted in concert against a foreign enemy, and its result was absolutely decisive. Never again did the Canaanites disturb Israel. For years their chariots of iron had prevented any attempt to conquer the fertile lowlands, but Barak had shewn that even these were not invincible. His great victory was commemorated in one of the finest war-songs in Hebrew literature. To Deborah it seemed as though Jehovah had left Sinai to lead His people to victory in Canaan :

" Lord, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,
When thou marchest out of the field of Edom,

The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
 Yea the clouds dropped water ; the mountains flowed down,
 Even yon Sinai at the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel "

(Judg. v. 4, 5 ; Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8).

V. The tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, the sons of Joseph, for centuries occupied the first place in Israel. It is recorded that Jacob on his deathbed placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, and his left on that of Joseph's elder son Manasseh, in token that the younger tribe had the greater destiny in store ; and though no great hero of antiquity after Joshua was of Ephraimitish descent (though Samuel was born in Ephraim), this tribe's right to pre-eminence seems to have been generally conceded. Throughout this period Ephraim's attitude to the other tribes was characterised by an assumption of superiority not always justified by events.

The house
 of Joseph

The one great deliverer of Israel who sprang from the house of Joseph was Gideon a Manassite. In his days the Midianites, a wild desert tribe, had joined with Israel's bitterest enemies the Amalekites, and with the children of the East, in oppressing the nation. The Israelites, expelled from their cities, were forced to take refuge in the mountain caves, their crops were destroyed and their cattle carried off, and this appalling devastation of the land reached up to the walls of the Philistine city of Gaza. A prophet appeared in Israel charged with a message of Jehovah that the neglect of His service was the cause of these calamities. When this state of things had lasted for seven years, the Angel of Jehovah came and sat under a sacred tree in Ophrah, belonging to Joash the Abiezrite. Whilst his son Gideon was threshing his wheat in the winepress, instead of, as was customary, on a hill top, in hopes of eluding the vigilance of the Midianites, he was saluted by the angel with the words, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour," and told to go and smite Midian. Gideon replied, "My *clan* is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." The Angel, however, assured him that Jehovah would be with him, and, seeing that his visitor was no ordinary person, Gideon begged him to accept a present in token of his submission. A most interesting description of the primitive ritual of sacrifice follows : Gideon brings a kid,

which he had boiled, with unleavened cakes. The flesh of the kid he puts in a basket, and the broth in a pot. The Angel orders him to lay the flesh and the cakes on a rock, and to pour out the broth. The acceptance of the sacrifice is shewn by fire going forth from the rock and consuming the offering at the touch of the Angel's staff.²¹ Gideon, perceiving that he had seen Jehovah, built an altar called Jehovah-shalom (*Jehovah is peace*), which, says the narrator, still existed in his day. That night Jehovah ordered Gideon to destroy the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah that stood by it. This he did under cover of darkness, and when his father was ordered to bring his son to be punished for sacrilege, he replied, "Let Baal plead." Gideon was from this known as Jerub-baal (*let Baal plead* * or Baal strives).²²

After this the spirit of God came on Gideon and he assembled first his own clan of Abiezer, and then the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulon, and Naphtali. Having done this, he requested a sign from God, to prove that he was chosen to deliver Israel. The fleece he spread on the threshing-floor was first wet with dew, when the ground was dry, and then dry when all around was wet. In this way was signified the indispensable quality of a nation's leader; vigour and energy when all others were destitute of spirit, and calmness when all were eager for the fray (Judg. vi.).

Gideon's army was chosen by a twofold trial. First, all who feared were ordered to depart, and out of 32,000 there remained but 10,000. In order that Jehovah might save Israel, without giving the nation the possibility of boasting, another test was imposed. The 10,000 were taken to the Spring of Harod (*Trembling*). Those who bowed to drink were rejected, because they shewed undue haste; the 300 who exhibited self-restraint, and drank by putting their hands to their mouths, alone were chosen.

Gideon decided upon a desperate, though wisely conceived, attempt on Midian. The 300 men were to approach the enemy's camp at night with torches concealed in pitchers, and to throw the Midianites into confusion by suddenly breaking the pitchers and showing the lights. Gideon himself with his servant Phurah had previously gone down to

* Literally, "Baal strives," Baal being used for Jehovah.

the Midianites' camp, and heard a soldier telling his companion how he had dreamed of a barley cake rolling into the camp and upsetting his tent. The friend interpreted the dream by saying, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: into his hand God hath delivered Midian and all the host." Gideon, assured of the success of his expedition, gave the words of the interpreter of the dream as the watchword for the night. His ruse succeeded perfectly. The Midianites, hearing the shout of the Israelites and suspecting treason in their own camp, possibly on the part of their Amalekite allies, began to fight with one another, and to flee in confusion. Then Naphtali and Asher and all Manasseh rose and joined in the pursuit, and when the fugitives reached the fords of the Jordan they found that the men of Ephraim had been warned to intercept their passage. The two chiefs of Midian, Oreb (the Raven) and Zeeb (the Wolf), were slain by the Ephraimites at a rock and winepress, which afterwards bore their names. Finding that Gideon had crossed the Jordan, the Ephraimites bore the heads of the chieftains to him, bitterly reproaching him with not having called them to the battle. He answered them with the question, "Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?" meaning that, as the grapes gleaned in Ephraim were more than the whole vintage of Gideon's native place, so their slaughter of Oreb and Zeeb was of more importance than all his previous exploits. The hero's modest answer turned aside the wrath of Ephraim (Judg. vii. and viii. 1-3).

On the east of the Jordan Gideon continued the pursuit of the rest of the Midianites and of their kings Zeba and Zalmunna. He had led his three hundred warriors as far as the river Jabbok, and had been rebuffed by the elders of Succoth and Penuel. After a grim threat of vengeance, he went "by the way of them that dwell in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah," and surprised the Midianite army. Zeba and Zalmunna were taken prisoners, and Gideon returned to give the princes and elders of Succoth, whose names he had obtained from a native of the town, the severe punishment he had promised, and to break down the tower at Penuel. The lives of Zeba and Zalmunna would have

been spared, had they not slain Gideon's brothers at Mount Tabor, whom they described in answer to the hero's question, "As thou art, so were they: each one resembled the children of a king" (Judg. viii. 18).²³ As a reward for his great services the Israelites offered to make Gideon their king; but he replied, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, Jehovah shall rule over you." He contented himself with asking for the earrings of the Midianites, and the chains about their camels' necks. With these he made an ephod* and established a sanctuary at Ophrah. The passage in which Gideon is blamed for this act of apostasy is probably later; it is more probable that the object of the original story was to shew how he devoted all his share of the spoil to God. Like Moses and Joshua, Gideon refused to use his position as a conqueror for any selfish ends; but unlike them he lived in some state, and had a large harem and numerous sons. A concubine bore him a son named Abimelech, who was destined to prove the ruin of his family (Judg. viii. 4-32).

Abimelech

After the death of Gideon Israel "went a whoring after the Baalim and made Baal-berith their God." The worship of Baal-berith (*the Lord of the covenant*) probably means that the Israelites and Canaanites of Shechem and the neighbourhood formed a confederacy under the protection of a deity, who may possibly have been regarded as Jehovah Himself. That such a confederacy actually existed is perhaps implied in the old story of Jacob's dealings with Hamor the father of Shechem. The mother of Abimelech was in all probability not counted as a wife because she was of Canaanite birth. The Shechemites at Abimelech's suggestion gave him the whole support of their confederacy, and supplied him with money taken out of the temple of their covenant. Abimelech hired a gang of ruffians and put sixty-nine of his brothers to death, leaving only one survivor in Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon. The Shechemites, far from censuring this crime, anointed Abimelech king by "the oak of the pillar that was in Shechem." Jotham on being informed of what had happened, took his stand upon Mount Gerizim, from whence he spoke a parable or fable. The trees,

* Here the ephod is not a coat, but an image.

said he, wanted a king, so they invited the most valued of their number to undertake the office. The olive, the fig and the vine all declined to leave their useful function of bearing fruit to wave themselves over the other trees. When however the bramble was asked, he agreed with alacrity, saying, "Come, and put your trust in my shadow, and if not let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon." The meaning of this fable appears to be that worthy men cannot leave their work for the unprofitable office of a ruler, at which the worst of men like Abimelech eagerly grasp. These, like the bramble, are impotent for good, but, as the forest fires attest, powerful for harm (Judg. ix. 6-21).

The men of Shechem soon became tired of Abimelech, and during the annual vintage festival they openly renounced allegiance to him. At the instigation of a certain Gaal, the son of Ebed, the native Canaanite element in Shechem raised the cry, "Serve ye the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem." Abimelech was absent at the time, and the manner in which he crushed the revolt proves him to have been a cruel but able tyrant. Gaal was defeated, and Shechem taken. A last stand was made in the temple of the god of the covenant, but Abimelech with his own hands cut down a branch, and bidding his men to follow his example, raised a fire around the building, and burned a thousand Shechemites alive. The insurgents made a further resistance at Thebez, a town north of Shechem, where Abimelech was smitten by a woman who cast a millstone on his head and broke his skull. He called upon his armour-bearer to kill him lest he should merit the reproach of having died by a woman's hand²⁴ (Judg. ix.).

VI. The small tribe of the Danites had an eventful The Danites history. Jacob makes a play on the name of the patriarch when he says, "Dan shall *judge* his people." Moses speaks of him in his northern home as a young lion who "leaps from Bashan." Deborah, however, taunts him with "going forth in ships" when he ought to have been warring with Sisera, a proof that at the time of the Canaanite oppression, the tribe had its home in the neighbourhood of the Maritime Plain.²⁵

**The
Philistines**

The Philistines, the most formidable foes to Israel, had probably arrived in Canaan in the days of the Judges, and soon made their presence felt. The coming of this able and energetic race introduced a completely new element into the country. With the other nationalities the Hebrews had many points in common, and were in danger of adopting their customs, but they had no such leanings towards the Philistines. Circumcision, universally practised by the Hebrew races and their neighbours, was neglected by the new-comers, who were accordingly branded with the epithet "uncircumcised." The Greek word employed to translate Philistine means an "alien." But strangers though they were they gave their name to the whole country, and the land of the Amorites, Canaanites, and Israelites, is most commonly known as Palestine.²⁶

As conquerors the Philistines acted in a totally different manner from the earlier oppressors. The Midianites and Moabites had come to plunder, but the Philistines conquered in order to rule. They disarmed the Israelites and forced them to do their bidding. The struggle between the two nations lasted for generations, and ended in the Israelites becoming masters of Palestine. In early days, however, the tribes bordering on the territory of the Philistines were reduced to a condition of abject submission.

The Danites, at the time of the birth of their great hero, had been driven by the Philistines from the coast to the upper part of the Valley of Sorek, and had begun to establish themselves near the territory of Judah. The wife of a Danite named Manoah, belonging to the town of Zorah, had long been barren, but was warned by a Divine Messenger that she was destined to bear a son, who was to be no ordinary child. From the womb he was to be dedicated to Jehovah as a Nazarite, in token of which his mother was commanded to abstain from wine and strong drink, and to observe the laws of ceremonial purity with unusual care; "For," said the Messenger, "the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb to the day of his death."

Manoah, on hearing that he was to become the father of so wonderful a child, prayed that Jehovah would deign once more to send His Messenger to teach him and his wife what

they were to do. Once more Jehovah's Angel presented himself, and on this occasion proved that he was no mere man by ascending in the flame of the sacrifice, which Manoah offered. He had previously refused to reveal his name, "seeing it is wonderful," and Manoah in terror cried to his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God." But she consoled her husband, "If Jehovah were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meal offering at our hand, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told such things as these" (Judg. xiii.).

When the child was born he received the name of Samson (*Shimson* diminutive of *Shemesh*, the sun), and as he grew up he shewed clearly that he was moved by the spirit of Jehovah.

The Philistines were at this time dwelling in apparent amity with the Danites, and their town of Timnah was not more than four miles distant from Manoah's home at Zorah. Here Samson saw a Philistine woman, who pleased him, and he asked his father to demand her in marriage. Manoah was greatly perplexed at his son's desiring a wife from among "the uncircumcised Philistines," not knowing "that it was of the Lord; for he sought an occasion against the Philistines."

On his way to Timnah to see his bride Samson performed his first recorded feat of strength. When a lion attacked him in the vineyards, "the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand." On his return he found honey in the lion's carcass; and when the day of his marriage feast arrived he propounded a riddle—

"Out of the eater came forth meat,
And out of the strong came forth sweetness";

making a wager of thirty linen garments and changes of raiment that none of his thirty companions could guess it. During the week the feast lasted, his wife tormented him to tell her the answer, and when Samson, worn out by her importunity, revealed it, she told it to the bridal guests, who had threatened to burn her in her house if she did not discover her husband's secret. On the last day of the feast Samson's friends asked him, "What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?" Seeing that the riddle

Samson's
marriage
and its
consequences

was discovered, Samson replied in rude rhyme, which may perhaps be rendered—

“Had ye ploughed not with my cow,
My riddle had perplexed you now!”²⁷

Leaving his bride, he then made a journey of two days to Ashkelon, and smote thirty Philistines, paying his wager with their garments (Judg. xiv.).

But the tragedy of the bridal feast did not end thus. Samson's father-in-law gave his wife to his companion during his absence, and, in revenge, the Danite hero caught three hundred foxes and turned them in pairs (with a firebrand tied between the tails of each pair) into the Philistines' corn. In revenge for the loss of their crops the men of Timnah burnt Samson's wife and her father. After attacking the Philistines single-handed and “smiting them hip and thigh with great slaughter,” Samson retired to the Cliff of Etam (Judg. xv. 1-8).

From this stronghold the Philistines were unable to dislodge him, so they marched into the surrounding country belonging to Judah. The inhabitants, terrified at the prospect of an invasion, agreed to surrender the champion of Israel. Three thousand of them came to the Cliff of Etam, and induced him to allow himself to be bound with ropes. But when the Philistines approached to seize him, “the spirit of Jahveh came mightily upon him, and the ropes that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands melted from off his hands.” Seizing a jawbone of an ass, Samson smote a thousand Philistines and then cast it aside, crying—

“With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps,
With the jawbone of an ass have I smitten a thousand men”
(Judg. xv. 16).

From this circumstance the hill was called Ramath-lehi (*Height of the Jawbone*). At his prayer God clave the hollow place in Lehi and water gushed forth. Hence the name of the well was En-hakkore (*the well of him that called*) (Judg. xv. 9-20).²⁸

It is also recorded in another narrative that Samson was taken by the Philistines in Gaza, whither he had been

attracted, as usual, by some woman, and that he bore the gates of the city to the mountain before Hebron, a distance of twelve miles.

Again the hero fell under female influence, which this time proved his ruin. Near his home in the Vale of Sorek dwelt Delilah, who for a great reward agreed to betray him to the Philistines. Thrice did Samson deceive his betrayer; by telling her that his strength would depart if he was bound by seven new bow-strings, or with new ropes, or if the seven locks of his hair were woven into the web of the loom. Thrice did Delilah put him to the test by binding him, and crying, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson."

Delilah

At last, however, he revealed the fatal secret that his strength lay in his hair, and that if his locks were shorn he would be like an ordinary man. In his sleep, the traitress called a man to shave the seven locks, into which his hair was braided, and awoke him with the cry, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" This time he wist not that the Lord had departed from him till he was seized and blinded.

The last scene of Samson's life is in Gaza in the temple of Dagon, the corn god of Philistia. His strength had returned as his hair began to grow, and he was led forth to make sport for his masters. As he rested with his hands on the two pillars, on which the house was supported, he prayed, "O Jehovah, God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. . . . And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life" (Judg. xvi.).

The stories concerning the individual exploits of the great Danite judge, are supplemented by the account of how 600 Danite warriors left the camp of Dan, and formed a settlement in the extreme north of Palestine, where they set up a famous sanctuary to Jehovah.

The Danite
Sanctuary

The Danites, having apparently at this time no more territory than the district round Zorah and Eshtaol, the scene of the exploits of Samson, resolved to seek another

home. Accordingly they sent five representatives of their clans, to see whether they could discover a suitable settlement. As they passed through the Highlands of Ephraim, they recognised by his voice a young Levite of Bethlehem, with whom they had been acquainted.

The youth, perhaps a grandson or descendant of no less a person than Moses, told them that he had been hired by a certain Micah to minister in a sanctuary, which Micah and his mother had dedicated to Jehovah. It contained various sacred objects such as an ephod and teraphim, and was evidently regarded with deep veneration in the neighbourhood. Micah—as his name suggests, a fervent worshipper of Jehovah—was very proud to have secured the services of a Levitical priest, and felt sure that, for this reason, “the Lord would do him good.”²⁹

The Danites inquired of the priest whether their enterprise had the sanction of God, and were told, “Before the Lord is your way wherein ye go.” Encouraged by this response they proceeded northward towards the sources of the Jordan, where they found a city, called Laish, inhabited by a peaceful colony of Zidonians, which could be seized without difficulty.³⁰

On their return they advised their tribesmen to secure so favourable a spot, and 600 Danite warriors forthwith marched to a place near Kirjath-jearim, hereafter known as Mahaneh-Dan. From thence they advanced through the Highlands of Ephraim, and stopping at Micah’s house, seized his *sacra*, and induced his priest to desert his service. “Is it better,” they asked, “for thee to be priest unto the house of one man, or to be priest unto a tribe and family in Israel?” In vain did Micah attempt to recover his property: the Danites, threatening him with violence if he remonstrated, continued their journey to Laish. The city was soon taken, and its name changed to Dan. Here Micah’s ephod and teraphim found a permanent home, and the faithless Levite became the ancestor of the priests of the northern sanctuary, and ministered there “until the day of the captivity of the land” (Judg. xvii., xviii.).

No reader of the book of Judges can fail to notice that many incidents are recorded without a word of disapproval,

which merit the most severe condemnation. The savage treachery of Jael and Ehud, the sensuality of Samson, and the awful sacrifice made by Jephthah, are told without comment, if not commended. In addition to these, many of the narratives, like that of the criminal career of Abimelech, seem to contain little material for edification, nor is it easy to account for their presence in a Sacred Book.

But before pronouncing the book of Judges to be unprofitable, it may not be out of place to consider the object of the teacher who reduced these ancient records into their present form. The age of the Judges was one during which the ties, binding the Israelites together in the wilderness, had become relaxed. As long as the people were under the stern discipline of the desert, ruled by a Moses, or a Joshua, constantly within sight of the national sanctuary, they made steady progress. But once they were in possession of a territory of their own, and each tribe lived in isolation, discipline became relaxed, and the pure worship of Jehovah began to be corrupted by the idolatrous practices of the Canaanites. The consequence was that the strength of Israel rapidly waned; the nation seemed not only unable to conquer new territories, but incapable of holding its own; there was little united action among the tribes, and less and less of the spirit of true religion. With the decay of Israel's faith the whole fabric of society was threatened with dissolution, and the legends of the period, preserved by the compiler of the Judges, shew to what a state the Chosen Race had sunk. The very absence of any sign that those who related these stories were conscious of their being specially worthy of censure, is an eloquent proof of the absence of any moral sense in the days "when there was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg. xxi. 25).

But history not unfrequently relates the crimes and blunders of the rulers of nations, and has nothing to say concerning that silent life wherein their strength or weakness really lies. On the private life of an Israelite township in the iron age of the Judges, the Sacred Record throws a gleam of light.

Elimelech and his family, by stress of famine, were driven Story of Ruth

from Bethlehem-Judah to Moab. There his sons married, and both he and they died, leaving the widowed Naomi and her two daughters-in-law. Both wished to accompany the mother of their husbands to her old home, and one of them named Ruth refused to leave her, saying, "Intreat me not to leave thee and to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; Jehovah do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

The two friendless women found a kindly reception at Bethlehem, and Ruth, when she went to the field of Boaz, the kinsman of her husband, who had heard of her fidelity to Naomi, was treated with marked favour and allowed to glean among the maidens of his household.

Knowing that Ruth had a legal right to claim the protection of Boaz, Naomi told her to lay herself at his feet as he slept after the feast which concluded the threshing of the corn. On discovering her, Boaz declared that he would take her to wife, if the man who was more closely akin to her husband than he, and might marry her if he desired, should refuse to do so.

Boaz himself took his seat at the city gate, and after inviting the nearest kinsman of Mahlon, Ruth's husband, to sit by him together with ten of the elders, asked him whether he was ready to accept the obligation of continuing Mahlon's line by marrying Ruth, for by this means only could he redeem the property of the dead man. On his refusal Boaz formally accepted the duty of acting as next of kin to Mahlon, and took Ruth to be his wife. The son of this marriage was Obed, the grandfather of David. Thus Ruth the Moabitess became one of the ancestresses of Christ.

There is no more beautiful story in the Old Testament than this; the resignation of Naomi, the fidelity of Ruth, the dignity and purity of every action of Boaz, are told with inimitable grace and delicacy. If this is a true picture of home life in early Israel, the nation had indeed hopes of future greatness, and the little town of Bethlehem was no

unfit spot to be the birthplace of the Christ, whose descent is traced through Boaz and Ruth the Moabitess.

Though the majority of modern critics consider the book of Ruth to belong to the age of the Captivity, there is not sufficient unanimity on this point to reject the received opinion that it is a continuation of Judges.

Chapter VI

Priest, Prophet and King

Eli

AFTER the death of Phinehas the book of Judges makes no mention of the national sanctuary. The venerable Ark of the Covenant itself appears to have been completely neglected, nor do the descendants of Aaron seem to have had any influence. Suddenly, however, without any explanation being vouchsafed, Israel is found to be under the guidance of a priest at Shiloh. The restoration of sacerdotal authority by Eli is sufficient proof that he was no ordinary man. Unlike the earlier Judges, he is credited with no great deliverance or deed of personal valour. He was not even a member of the family of Eleazar and Phinehas, but a descendant of Ithamar, the youngest son of Aaron. Yet it must have been owing to his influence that the Ark had again become the centre of the religious life of Israel. He is represented in the book of Samuel as a grave and venerable man of kindly demeanour and gentle nature, a strange figure in a violent and lawless age. May we not conjecture that the Israelites, seeing no present hope of deliverance from their Philistine oppressors, had turned for consolation to the sanctuary of Jehovah, and had found in His priest a wise and upright Judge?

The
Sanctuary
at Shiloh

Eli's temple or tabernacle, for it bears both names, was illustrative of the transitional character of the nation at this time. It was placed, like some Canaanite sanctuary, on an eminence within the city, and, as ruins marked the spot in the days of Jeremiah, its materials were evidently more durable than those of the ancient Tabernacle (Jer. vii. 12). Yet it is not impossible that some of the curtains which covered the shrine in the wilderness may have survived the neglect of centuries, and in a measure justified the sacred

writer in applying to this building the name of the Tent of Meeting (1 Sam. ii. 22 ; Ex. xxxviii. 8).

The arrangements were evidently of the simplest. Nothing is said of the numerous Levites who aided the priests in their ministrations in the desert, nor of the profuse splendour of the Mosaic sanctuary. The Ark alone is mentioned, with a lamp, which can scarcely have been the seven-branched candlestick, burning before it. Eli, his two sons Hophni and Phinehas, and their servant appear to have been the only officials, except the women, who, as in the days of the wanderings, ministered at the door of the Tabernacle. The ceremonies were probably anything but elaborate. The people resorted to Shiloh to offer annual sacrifices of peace-offerings concluding with a meal, part of the victims being reserved by custom for the priests (1 Sam. i. 4 ; ii. 12-17). In front of the temple was the official seat of Eli, who acted in the twofold capacity of priest and judge, regulating the conduct of the worshippers, and deciding the disputes of the people (1 Sam. i. 9).¹

Rude and simple, however, as the arrangements at Shiloh may have been, they mark a great advance on the anarchy of the previous age. At the least some sort of central authority was now recognised in Israel, some desire for a regular administration of law evinced. As long as Eli was able to control affairs, all seems to have gone well, and it was not till his sons undertook the exercise of the priestly functions that the sacerdotal judgeship fell into disrepute. Even then they were guilty of no formal act of apostasy, nor is any charge of idolatry brought against them. Their sin is said to have consisted in the greed they displayed in exacting more than the priestly due, and possibly in acts of immorality, like those which were unblushingly practised in Canaanite temples (1 Sam. ii. 22). In vain did Eli attempt to repress these excesses. He pointed out that his sons were guilty of no ordinary offence. "Ye make the Lord's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, God shall judge him," meaning that God, or His representative the judge, acts as arbiter when it is a case of man sinning against man. The case of the priests, however, was that of men outraging the majesty of Jehovah, and nothing could stand between them and His wrath. "If a man sin against the Lord, who shall

Eli's sons

intreat for him?" But the reproof of their father had no effect; the sons of Eli had already filled up the measure of their iniquity. "They hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them" (1 Sam. ii. 23-25).

Birth of
Samuel

At Shiloh, in a sanctuary presided over by a priest too feeble to restrain his sons, whose profligacy had made the very service of Jehovah to become a byword, one of the most blameless characters of ancient Israel was being educated. The circumstances of his birth were different from those which attended that of Samson, the last of the ancient Judges. No angelic visitant announced it; it was due "to the prayers of a devout mother, who voluntarily dedicated her son to the service of Jehovah."

Elkanah, a native of Ramathaim-Zophim in the highlands of Ephraim, had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. It was his custom to visit Shiloh with his family once in every year to make his offerings to Jehovah. On one occasion, his favourite wife Hannah, who was barren, had been so provoked by the continued taunts of her rival, that she refused to partake of the sacrificial meal. After Elkanah had in vain endeavoured to console her, she went forth and stood before the sanctuary. In her misery, she made a vow before Jehovah that if He would give her a son, he should be a Nazarite, dedicated to the service of God, as long as he lived. Eli, mistaking her deep emotion for drunkenness, which may have been but too common an accompaniment of the sacrifices at Shiloh, rebuked her; but, on hearing the true cause of her emotion, he dismissed her with his blessing. Hannah's prayer was heard: she bore a son, and called him Samuel. As soon as he was weaned, he was brought to Eli, and solemnly dedicated to minister before Jehovah (1 Sam. i.).

Song of
Hannah

His birth was the occasion of a Song, attributed to his mother Hannah, which finds an echo in the Magnificat of the Blessed Virgin. This Song though probably composed for some other occasion, is more applicable to the circumstances of the time than may at first sight appear.* It may be regarded as the prophetic utterance of a holy woman, who recognises the fact that her own personal experience is but a type of God's

* It is however most unlikely that it emanated from Hannah. All that is possible is to justify its presence in 1 Samuel as a late addition.

dealings with Israel. The barren wife, scorned by her rival, represents the people of Jehovah, despised by the nations of the world. It was a period of deep abasement for Israel, but the removal of Hannah's reproach by the birth of Samuel was a sign that a happier day was about to dawn. Jehovah, the rock of Israel, alone is holy: there can be none like Him. How, then, can men boast in His presence? All the vicissitudes of human life are attributable to Him. "The LORD killeth and maketh alive; He bringeth down to Sheol and bringeth up." He it is who can exalt the humble from the very dunghill to a seat among the princes. "For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and He hath set the world upon them." Surely then Israel, the chosen race, may take courage. The Philistine oppression cannot last for ever. "They that strive with the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them shall He thunder in heaven." His own people shall triumph under a king, whom Jehovah shall recognise as His Anointed. Well does this Song of Hannah express the hopes of the mother of a child, destined by God to be His instrument in raising Israel from degradation, and in animating it with a new spirit (1 Sam. ii. 1-10).²

Before, however, the youthful Samuel could enter upon the active work of his life, he had to witness the most crushing disaster endured by Israel since the Exodus. By their crimes the sons of Eli had brought ruin upon this branch of the house of Aaron, but not before their father had been twice warned of the impending calamity. "A man of God" came to Eli with a message prefaced by the solemn words, "Thus saith Jehovah." The aged priest was reminded that God had revealed Himself to Aaron in Egypt, and that his family had been chosen by Him out of all the tribes of Israel "to offer upon Mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before Me." It had been God's purpose to allow the priestly family of Eli to "walk before Him for ever," but the sin of his sons had made this impossible. Jehovah would not depart from His own law. "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." The days were coming in which the house of Eli would fall from its high estate, and his descendants would see a rival officiating in the habitation

Message
to Eli

of Jehovah, at the very time when God's blessings were being freely bestowed on Israel. The whole family were to be under a curse; none were to attain to old age. If any were spared, it was to be for shame and sorrow, "to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart." In place of Eli's apostate stock, God would raise up a faithful priest, to whom the remnant of this once famous house would come and cringe for a living in one of the meanest of the priestly offices. As a sign to Eli that these calamities would befall his family, Hophni and Phinehas were to die on the same day (1 Sam. ii. 27-36).

Samuel at
Shiloh

From childhood Samuel seems to have been regarded as a priest rather than as an attendant at the sanctuary. In common with the rest of the hierarchy, he wore the linen ephod; and every year his mother brought him a tunic, specially made for her son, which only persons of rank appear to have worn. He did not minister to Eli as Joshua had done to Moses, but he is described as ministering "unto the Lord before Eli" (1 Sam. iii. 1).³

Night was drawing to a close, when Samuel, who was asleep in one of the chambers of the temple, possibly in the very presence of the Ark, was called by name. Thrice did he run to Eli, thinking he had been summoned, and the third time "Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child." He told Samuel to answer the voice, "Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth." Thus the child learned the doom decreed by Jehovah against His priests. Eli solemnly adjured Samuel to tell him what he had heard, and on learning it, exclaimed in resignation, "It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Sam. iii. 18).

The Ark
taken against
the Philistines

No mention has been made of the Philistines since the days of Samson, but it appears probable that the Israelites had at this time felt the weight of their oppression for many years. For reasons that are not given the Israelites seem to have resolved to become the aggressors. A battle was fought at Aphek, in which the Philistines had the advantage. The Israelites, however, decided to renew the contest, and, to make victory more certain, fetched the Ark from Shiloh. When it arrived under the charge of Hophni and Phinehas, the whole army shouted to welcome the pledge of Jehovah's presence in its midst. The Philistines, hearing that the Ark

had arrived in the camp of the Hebrews, were discouraged at the thought that "these are the gods that had smote the Egyptians with all manner of plagues in the wilderness" (1 Sam. iv. 8); but at the same time they resolved to fight bravely, and never to submit themselves to the state of servitude to which they had formerly reduced Israel. In the end they won a complete victory. The Ark proved no talisman to protect an unfaithful people. Thirty thousand Israelites perished; Hophni and Phinehas were slain, and the Ark of God was taken.

A single fugitive carried the dreadful tidings to Shiloh, where Eli, seated in his accustomed place before the Sanctuary, was eagerly awaiting news of the Ark. The venerable priest, now ninety-eight years of age, was quite blind, and could hear only the sound of lamentation. When he asked the reason of the uproar in the city, they brought the messenger into his presence. Hearing that he had come from the army, Eli asked, "What is there done, my son?" and was told, "Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead." National disgrace and disaster, and family bereavement were calamities indeed, but the worst had yet to be related. When Eli heard that the Ark of God was taken, he fell back from his lofty seat and died. On learning what had happened, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, gave birth to a son prematurely, calling him with her dying breath "Ichabod" (*no glory*), for the Ark, the glory of Israel, was gone" (1 Sam. iv.).

But if Jehovah had for a while withdrawn His protection from Israel, He had not ceased to defend the sacred treasure of the nation. The Philistines soon found to their cost that the Ark of the God of Israel could not be insulted with impunity. At Ashdod, the city nearest to the battle-field, the Ark was set up in the house of Dagon, the tutelary god of Philistia. Twice was the image of this divinity hurled from its pedestal as by some invisible hand, being the second time broken in pieces as it fell prone on the threshold of the temple. "Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day." The men of Ashdod were

Death of Eli

**The Ark in
Philistine
keeping**

at the same time smitten with foul diseases, and in their terror they sent the Ark to Gath. Pestilence attended its arrival; and it was despatched to Ekron, but the Ekronites protested against receiving so dreadful a guest into their city. For seven months the ark remained in the land; till the five *serens* or lords of the Philistines assembled to decide what was to be done. The priests and diviners advised that an atonement to Jehovah should be made in the form of five golden mice and five models of the boils by which the plague had manifested itself. These, they suggested, should be put in a coffer which was to accompany the Ark. In order that the Philistines might be sure that the plague was sent by Jehovah as a punishment for the seizure of the Ark, the priests ordered a new cart to be made and two milch kine to be yoked to it (as in 2 Sam. vi. 3). Their calves were to be shut up; and if the mothers, ignoring the voice of nature, were willing to desert their offspring and draw the cart bearing the Ark into the territory of the Israelites, it would be manifest to all that the plague had been sent by Jehovah (1 Sam. vi. 1-11).

Plague at
Bethshemesh

The cows, lowing as they went, drew the cart to Bethshemesh. It was the time of harvest: the inhabitants were reaping in their valley, and rejoiced to see the Ark, which came to a great stone in the field of a certain Joshua. The Levites reverently placed the Ark and the coffer containing the trespass offerings on this stone, and solemnly sacrificed the cows which had brought it. But the presence of the Ark was as terrible to the Israelites as it had been to their enemies, and seventy men were smitten with death for gazing on it with irreverent curiosity⁴ (1 Sam. vi. 12-18).

The Ark at
Kirjath-
Jearim

Appalled by this disaster, the men of Bethshemesh besought the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim to come down and receive the Ark. Here it found a resting-place for many years in the house of Abinadab on the hill. His son, who bore the priestly name of Eleazar, was specially set apart to watch this inestimable treasure (1 Sam. vi. 19-21, vii. 1).

The capture of the Ark marks the conclusion of a period, for even whilst it abode in the Israelite city of Kirjath-jearim, it was in reality lost to Israel. The Philistines, it is true, were unable to keep it as a trophy of victory in the temple of Dagon, but the Israelites were equally powerless

to restore it to their national sanctuary. It may be that, like the Philistines, they were deterred by dread of Divine vengeance from removing it; but it is equally probable that their victorious enemies sternly prohibited any attempt to revive the worship of Jehovah in its vicinity. Kirjath-jearim was not far from the frontier, and the Ark was still under their control. For all practical purposes the venerable *palladium* of Israel remained in the hands of the uncircumcised, and without it no sanctuary could command the veneration of the entire nation.

Thus the worship of Jehovah sustained a serious check when the Ark, whereby He had so often manifested His presence and revealed His will, was taken. How the temple at Shiloh fell is not recorded, but to later generations its ruins remained an abiding testimony of how once, as a just punishment for their sins, Jehovah had abandoned His people to their enemies. (Jer. vii. 12-15, xxvi. 6.)

Effects of
the loss of
the Ark

By Shiloh's fall an important link with the age of Moses was broken. The Sanctuary containing the Ark was a perpetual witness to the spiritual blessings enjoyed by all the tribes in the days of old, and must have acted as a means of maintaining a certain unity. Bereft of these visible tokens of its glorious past, the nation was in serious danger of apostasy, and it is not inconceivable that the fatal movement which subsequently led Northern Israel to worship first the calves at Dan and Bethel, and finally the Tyrian Baal, dates from this period.

By the capture of the Ark, which was rightly believed to have been a punishment for the sins of their order, the priesthood also lost their power, nor did they ever, at least in Northern Israel, regain the spiritual influence that they had once possessed. The tribe of Ephraim suffered by the fall of Shiloh in no longer having the national sanctuary within its borders, nor could it reassert its political supremacy among the tribes for a considerable time.

But the loss of the Ark was felt most bitterly as being the sign of the withdrawal of Jehovah's presence from Israel. Like all other nations of antiquity, the Israelites took no matter in hand without trying to ascertain whether

it was the will of Heaven that it should succeed. It was the duty of the priest to declare if an enterprise had the approval of Jehovah, and to discover this, he made use of the jewels on the ephod, and perhaps of the Ark itself. The Israelites in primitive ages required that the local presence of Jehovah in their midst should be manifestly assured to them, that they might be able to learn His will; and with the Ark no longer at hand, and the priesthood discredited by its loss, they must have fallen almost into a condition of despair.

Samuel and Prophetism

That Samuel was able to raise them out of this state, and animate them with new hopes, is his greatest claim to be, after Moses, the second founder of the nation.

From childhood he was known to live in constant communion with Jehovah, and as a man he was known as "the seer." But after his time the seer (*roeh*), the man who saw visions, made way for the *nabi* or prophet, whom the spirit of Jehovah moved to declare His will (1 Sam. ix. 9). Samuel's chief glory is that the prophetic dispensation is traced to him. Not that he was the earliest regarded by posterity as a *nabi*, this title being applied to Abraham, Moses, Miriam and others. But the great development of prophetism in Israel, fraught with such momentous consequences, was due to his initiative. He must have recognised the truth that, though the divine call to the prophetic office may come to any man, they are most likely to receive it who prepare themselves for it by devout communion with God. For this object men were banded together in societies or schools for the purpose of devotional exercises in which music was largely employed. These companies of prophets gave Israel a constant supply of teachers in men called by God to their office, prepared for their work in company with others who, like them, desired to receive the Divine spirit. As servants of God drawn from every tribe and every class of the community, they became the constant witnesses of Jehovah throughout Israel, upholding His claims with greater zeal than could be expected from any caste of hereditary priests.

Nothing is known of the system of preparation for the prophetic office. Those who received this special training

were known as the "sons of the prophets," but it was not considered indispensable for a recognised prophet to have belonged to one of the schools. The prophets adopted in later times a distinguishing dress, and no doubt submitted to certain austerities; they were usually married, however, and possessed homes of their own. In the ranks of the order men of every kind were to be found, from teachers of the loftiest spiritual truths to insane fanatics and venal impostors. But every prophet of Jehovah was His professed champion, pledged to resist any disloyalty to the God of Israel. Attempts to encourage the worship of foreign deities were consequently certain to provoke the hostility of the entire fraternity. In organising prophetism Samuel made a complete national apostasy from Jehovah impossible.

Though not a priest, Samuel provided for the sacrificial worship which by the ruin of Shiloh may have been for a while suspended. His procedure is not sanctioned by the Mosaic law, which was either unknown at this time or rendered impracticable by circumstances. He permitted, if he did not encourage, sacrifices to Jehovah on the high places. At his home at Ramah it was his custom to preside when the people sacrificed on a hill-top in or near the city, and similar gatherings are recorded at Gilgal and at Bethlehem.

Like Moses, Samuel considered it a part of his duty to exercise judicial functions. Every year he made a circuit from his house in Ramah to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah, and in his old age he placed his sons in the south of Judah at Beersheba (1 Sam. vii. 16; viii. 1, 2).

He had secured the confidence of the people by gaining a victory over the Philistines, though on this occasion his conduct was that of a priest rather than of a general. He assembled the nation at Mizpah, and exhorted them to put away the Baalim and Ashtaroth and to serve none but Jehovah. In token of their penitence all Israel fasted "and drew water and poured it out before Jehovah." When the Philistines saw that the Israelites had assembled together, they at once marched against them, and the affrighted people begged Samuel, "Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that He will save us out of the hand of the Philistines." **Ebenezer**

A complete victory was gained by Israel, in memory of which Samuel set up the stone of help (Ebenezer) between Mizpah and Shen (1 Sam. vii. 5-12).

Samuel as
a Judge

Samuel's judgeship was marked by peace and prosperity. It is surprising to notice that so ardent a servant of Jehovah allowed the Israelites to make a treaty with their old foes the Amorites, but this alliance evidently checked the encroachments of the Philistines. The Israelite cities which they had taken were restored "from Ekron even unto Gath" (1 Sam. vii. 14); and in the enjoyment of the benefits of a purer religion and an orderly government, the people entered upon a more vigorous period of national life. By ruling Israel not only in the name, but under the direct guidance of Jehovah, Samuel had in fact revived the theocracy of the age of Moses. Like the Lawgiver, he kept no state, exacted no tribute, and bore no title of honour. To the people of Ramah he was known as "the seer"; and he was accustomed to give advice even on trivial matters to those who sought it. But he had so impressed the people with the desire for a settled government, that, no sooner did they find that his sons were not likely to walk in his steps, and that the Philistines had again become dangerous, than they demanded that he should give them a king (1 Sam. viii. 4, 5).

The demand
for a king

It was not an unnatural request. The weakness of Israel had been due to a lack of unity. In early days the love of independence had been manifested by a dislike of any exercise of authority, and the result had been that the very existence of the nation had been threatened. Surrounded as they were by foes, holding a mere strip of territory on a most precarious tenure, it now seemed indispensable to force all the tribes of Israel to act in unison under a single head.

Equally intelligible was Samuel's reluctance to set a king over the people of Jehovah. The institution of a human monarchy seemed to him to be an act of disloyalty to God, and besides this the prophet had all the prejudices of an ancient Israelite against the exercise of arbitrary power. He warned the people that their king would force them into military service, that they would have to perform compulsory labour on the royal estates, that their property would be no longer their own, but liable to taxation, and even to confisca-

tion. But his words had no effect : the nation was determined to be like other nations, with a king "to judge them and fight their battles"; and when Samuel cried unto Jehovah he was told to grant the people their desire, "for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam. viii. 6-18).^{4a}

Thus, despite the remonstrances of the first of the prophets, Israel became a people under a monarch of its own.

The history of the election, appointment and reign of Saul abounds in obscurities and contradictions; and the difficulty in relating it is enhanced by the fact that the text of this portion of the first book of Samuel is in many places defective. The chief facts concerning him are: (1) he was appointed king by the influence of Samuel; (2) he relieved the town of Jabesh-Gilead, when besieged by the Ammonites; (3) he conducted a successful expedition against the Amalekites, and for various reasons he incurred the displeasure of Samuel; (4) aided by his son Jonathan, he waged war with varying fortune against the Philistines; (5) after raising David to a position of honour, he spent years in pursuing him with relentless hostility; (6) he met his death on Mount Gilboa in battle with the Philistines.

Difficulties
in life of Saul

But every attempt to examine closely into the circumstances of the reign of Saul is met by statements of a conflicting character.

In one place he is represented as a mere youth, so ignorant of public affairs that he has not so much as heard of Samuel (1 Sam. ix.; x. 6-14); in another, as a man in the full maturity of his powers at the time of his election (1 Sam. xi.). He is told by Samuel to await him at Gilgal (1 Sam. x. 8), yet Samuel assembles the people to elect him king at Mizpah (1 Sam. x. 17). He is acclaimed by all the nation as king, and instantly retires into private life, only to emerge, when Jabesh-Gilead is attacked by the Ammonites (1 Sam. x. 26 and xi.). After he had reigned but two years (according to one interpretation of 1 Sam. xiii. 1) he has a son old enough to be acknowledged one of the first warriors in Israel. The length of his reign and the order of events cannot be determined, and the only satisfactory explanation of the biblical narrative is to assume that it consists of a number of popular tales

concerning the first King of Israel, arranged in no very systematic fashion.⁵

Advantages
in having a
Benjamite
king

Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, the son of Kish, and the nephew of Ner, two men of wealth and importance. There is nothing unnatural in the tribe of Benjamin giving Israel a monarch. Its smallness disarmed envy, and the fine qualities of its men commanded respect. Every place connected with the life of Samuel, save Shiloh, and possibly Ramah, was within its borders. It bore the brunt of the long Philistine wars, and was also the centre of the national revival. As kinsmen of the haughty Ephraimites, and good neighbours to the great southern tribe of Judah, the Benjamites served to unite the most powerful members of the Hebrew confederacy. Saul was no unworthy representative of his valiant tribe. His appearance is described as "choice and goodly": "there was not," it is said, "among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he." He was undoubtedly possessed of that personal valour so necessary to a leader in a primitive age. His impetuous nature was admirably calculated to arouse enthusiasm, and to animate men in a time of danger and difficulty.

Religious
character
of kingship

The kingship, as established by Samuel, was an eminently religious institution. The ruler of Jehovah's people received a special consecration for his office, and was regarded as specially set apart from the rest of the people for the discharge of a sacred duty. In the books of Samuel and Kings, "the Book of the Kingdoms," as the LXX. styles them, Saul is distinguished as the Anointed, the Christ of Jehovah. To no other king, not even to David, is this title given in the historical books. The choice of Saul and the manner of his appointment gave his person a peculiar sanctity, and for this reason the sacred historian relates it at some length.

Saul goes in
search of
the asses

The asses of Kish, the most valued property of an Israelite landowner, had strayed, and his son Saul, accompanied by a servant, was sent in search of them. Leaving their home at Gibeah, Saul and his companion went through the hill country of Ephraim, and descending into the Maritime Plain, traversed the district of Baal-Shalisha without success. They next turned southwards to the "land of Shalim" and to the

western frontier of Benjamin, till after three days of fruitless search they came to the "land of Zuph," the home of Samuel. The servant recognised the city they were approaching as the dwelling-place of a celebrated seer (*roeh*), whom he described as "a man that is held in honour; all that he saith cometh surely to pass." He suggested that Saul should inquire of the seer as to the whereabouts of the lost asses and offer him the fourth part of a shekel of silver as a fee for his service. On approaching the city Saul found the maidens going forth to draw water, and learned that the seer having just returned, was about to hold a solemn sacrifice on the high place (1 Sam. ix. 1-14).

Samuel had previously received a Divine intimation that Jehovah was about to send to him the man who should save Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. When therefore Saul met him and inquired for the house of the seer, Samuel told him who he was, commanding him and his servant to come up to the high place; "For ye shall eat with me to-day: and in the morning I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart." As a proof of his power to divine his inmost thoughts, Samuel assured Saul that the asses he was in search of were found, but that such things were no longer of importance. "For whom," said he, "is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for thee, and for all thy father's house?" Saul replied that he was a member of an insignificant family, and of the smallest of the tribes, and asked Samuel why he used such language; but no explanation was vouchsafed. In the guest-chamber on the high place Saul and his servant found some thirty persons assembled, and were placed by Samuel in the seat of honour. To Saul's amazement, a portion of the sacrifice had been reserved for him; for the cook, in obedience to Samuel's commands, elevated the right leg of the victim before Jehovah and then set it in front of the youthful Benjamite. The honour thus conferred upon Saul was one usually paid only to men of priestly rank (1 Sam. ix. 15-24).⁶

Saul comes
to Ramah

When the feast was over Saul's bed was made on the roof of Samuel's house, and at dawn he was summoned by the seer, and escorted to the city gate. Samuel then bade the servant go on, and when he and Saul were alone, took

Saul
anointed

the vial of oil which he had prepared, and pouring the contents on Saul's head, exclaimed, "Is it not that the Lord hath anointed thee to be prince over His inheritance?"

Three signs

That Saul might be assured that he had been truly appointed to this high office, three signs were given to him, each with its own peculiar significance. As he came to the sepulchre of Rachel, the ancestress of the Benjamites, two men would come bounding (so LXX. *ἄλλομένους μεγάλα*) towards him with news that the lost asses were found. In this way his private cares would cease, that he might be able to devote himself to more important matters. By the oak of Tabor three men would meet him bearing offerings to God on their way to Bethel. They would present to Saul two loaves made from the first-fruits, in token of the honour in store for him as God's representative. The third sign was to be given near one of the garrisons of his life-long enemies, the Philistines. From the hill (Gibeah) of God a band of prophets would descend in festal array, with psaltery, timbrel, pipe and harp. Then the spirit of Jehovah would spring (so Heb., LXX. and Vulgate) upon Saul, and he would "be turned into another man" and he would prophesy like one inspired. "And," added Samuel, "it shall come to pass, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do for thee as thine hand shall find; for God is with thee." Saul was further instructed to go to Gilgal and to wait for Samuel for seven days. The signs came to him as Samuel had foretold; and when Saul was seen prophesying, the people, wondering at the change which had come over him, asked, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" But a man who was present with deeper insight exclaimed, "And who is their father?" signifying that the prophetic office was no hereditary distinction, but a call direct from God (1 Sam. x. 1-13).⁷

Saul chosen king by lot

On his return home Saul maintained a discreet silence concerning what Samuel had revealed, merely telling his uncle that the seer had told him that the asses had been found.

It is not easy to say precisely what happened after this. As the sacred narrative now stands, Samuel is said to have assembled the people at Mizpach to choose a king by lot.

The lot fell upon Saul, who was found concealed among the baggage. When he was brought forth "higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward," Samuel exclaimed, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, 'God save the King.'"

Nothing more was done. The people returned to their homes; while some evilly disposed men said mockingly, "How shall this man save us?" and brought Saul no present as a sign of respect. Shortly afterwards, however, Nahash, an Ammonite king, besieged Jabesh-Gilead. When the inhabitants asked for terms, he refused to show mercy, and threatened that when they surrendered the place he would put out their right eyes as a reproach to all Israel. The wretched elders of the city asked for a week's respite, promising to yield on the seventh day if no help appeared. On hearing of their distress Saul hewed in pieces the oxen with which he was ploughing, and sent them throughout Israel with the message, "Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen." An immense army of 300,000 Israelites and 30,000 Judæans obeyed his call, and the Ammonites were so thoroughly routed that "not two of them were left together." After this striking victory Saul refused to punish those who had not acknowledged him as king, and Samuel assembled the people together at Gilgal for the purpose of "renewing the kingdom" (1 Sam. xi.).

There are however several serious difficulties in accepting this narrative as an orderly presentation of facts. In the first place, whereas Samuel instructed Saul to go to Gilgal and wait for him there, he assembled the people at Mizpeh to choose a king. Then although Saul was appointed to deliver Israel from the Philistines, who had evidently reduced the nation to the greatest straits, his first exploit was the relief of Jabesh-Gilead in Eastern Palestine across the Jordan. Further, it seems hardly possible to conceive of Saul being able to induce the entire nation to take part in so distant an expedition and yet soon after this victory to have only 3000 troops wherewith to encounter the Philistines (1 Sam. xiii. 2).

Difficulties
in account

An attempt
to solve them

From a few scattered hints in the book of Samuel, it may perhaps be inferred that the Benjamites were actually being driven out of their territory by the Philistines, and that many were already taking refuge beyond Jordan when Samuel anointed Saul. The privacy with which the ceremony was performed may have been due to the danger of arousing the suspicions of the Philistine conquerors. Samuel may well have sent Saul to Gilgal, the ancient camp of Joshua, to rally the fugitives, and from there he may have found supporters among the Eastern Israelites. Under these circumstances an Ammonite war may have been undertaken, and the successful relief of Jabesh-Gilead may have induced the Israelites to make a fresh effort to expel the Philistines from the heights of Benjamin. Saul, like Joshua had to conquer Western Palestine from Gilgal.

Philistine war

The long war with the Philistines waged by Saul, beginning at the camp of Gilgal and ending with the battle at Ephesdammim, where David slew Goliath, is his greatest title to fame. A glance at the map will shew that whereas at the commencement of his reign Saul was fighting to conquer the passes leading from the Jordan valley to the highlands of Benjamin, he was in the course of a few years able to carry war into the Philistine country. The difficulties with which he had to contend were very great. Every important strategical position in Benjamin was garrisoned by Philistines, and the Israelites had been completely disarmed, not even a smith being allowed to ply his trade among them. If an Israelite wanted his agricultural implements sharpened it is said that he had to go into the Philistine territory and pay a very high price for the privilege (1 Sam. xiii. 19-23).⁸ Only Saul and his son Jonathan possessed complete suits of armour. Their army consisted of 3000 ill-armed peasants, but the struggle for freedom had the sanction of Samuel the prophet, and Ahijah the son of Ahitub of the priestly house of Eli.

The campaign opened disastrously. Jonathan, ever ready to perform an act of daring, successfully assaulted the Philistine garrison at Geba; but no sooner did the watchword, "The slaves are in revolt" (so LXX.), spread through their country than an immense army of Philistines appeared

in Benjamin (1 Sam. xiii. 3-5). The Israelites hid, as they had done in the days of Gideon, in caves and holes, and some even took refuge across the Jordan. Saul retreated to Gilgal, where apparently all but six hundred faithful warriors deserted him. Even Samuel's coming was delayed; and fearing that the Philistines would attack him before he had appeased Jehovah, Saul offered sacrifice without awaiting the arrival of the prophet. For this want of faith Samuel foretold that the kingdom would not remain in Saul's family. In the meantime the Philistines systematically devastated the country, sending three separate marauding bands from their camp at Michmash, northward to Ophrah, westward to Beth-horon, and southward to the valley of Zeboim (1 Sam. xiii. 5-18).

As long as the Philistines held Michmash they had the command of the pass leading from the Jordan valley to the heights of Bethel. Jonathan was in Geba on the other side of the valley, whilst Saul and six hundred men were encamped in the district of Gibeah by the pomegranate of Migron in sight of Michmash.

**The war of
Michmash**

Jonathan as he looked from Geba, discovered a point where the Philistine stronghold could be successfully stormed. Between Geba and Michmash is the Wady-es-Suweinit, in which are two conical hills known at this time as Bozez (*shining*) and Sench (*the thorn bush*); between these Jonathan proposed to pass accompanied only by his armour-bearer, to whom he disclosed the desperate nature of the undertaking. The armour-bearer was as eager for the fray as Jonathan himself: "Do all that is in thine heart," said he; "Turn thee; behold I am with thee according to thine heart." They decided between them that if the Philistines, when they discovered themselves, should dare them to come up to the garrison they should not hesitate to do so; for, as Jonathan had said, "There is no restraint (or difficulty) to the Lord to save by many or by few." When the Philistines beheld them they cried mockingly, "Behold the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves," adding, "Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing." Jonathan, interpreting this as a good omen, called upon his armour-bearer to follow, and being renowned

for activity, was able to climb up the rock, which the Philistines probably deemed inaccessible. Followed by his brave armour-bearer, who despatched the Philistines after his master had laid them low, as a ploughshare turns over the earth, Jonathan speedily slew twenty men. This gallant exploit led to the total discomfiture of the enemy. Surprised at the suddenness of the attack, and probably thinking that Jonathan and his armour-bearer were not unsupported, the Philistines were struck by a sudden terror, which was intensified by a violent earthquake. From the heights of Gibeah Saul's watchmen saw the army of the Philistines melting away, and their camp in confusion. Hastily mustering his troops, the king found that Jonathan and his armour-bearer were absent. Before attacking an enemy, it was customary to consult the Sacred Ephod, and Ahijah was summoned for this purpose. But it was no time to wait for oracles. Saul, recognising that the moment to strike had arrived, said to Ahijah, "Withdraw thine hand," and put himself at the head of his men. The Philistines had by this time become utterly demoralised, "every man's sword was against his fellow," and their army was soon routed. The whole country rose; the slaves, or Hebrews employed by the Philistines, deserted, and Mount Ephraim seemed to swarm with men who had previously concealed themselves from the enemy. The battle rolled onwards past Bethaven to Bethel, and from thence down into the valley of Ajalon. The Philistines fled before Saul, as the Canaanites had fled centuries earlier before Joshua.^{5a}

The war of Michmash, as this campaign is styled, secured the possession of the territory of Benjamin for the Israelites, and probably caused Saul to be acknowledged king by the whole nation. The battle is further remarkable for two incidents, both eminently characteristic of the age.

In the excitement of the fight Saul committed a great error. Fearing lest the pursuit might be delayed if his army stopped to refresh themselves, he pronounced a solemn adjuration, "Cursed be any man that eateth food until the evening, and I be avenged on my enemies." The pursuit of the Philistines led the wearied army of Israel through a wood, which literally flowed with honey, but not a man so

much as tasted it, for fear of the king's curse. Jonathan, however, who had now joined the army but had not heard his father's prohibition, put his staff into the comb of honey, and refreshed his parched lips. His eyes were immediately "enlightened," that is to say he felt capable of fresh exertion, and on hearing that his father had forbidden the people to take food till evening, he remarked that a far greater victory might have been gained had they been allowed to refresh themselves with the spoil, for, "See, I pray you," said he, "how mine eyes have been enlightened because I tasted a little honey."

That evening, the famishing troops, forgetful of law and custom, began to devour the cattle they had captured without first removing the blood. On hearing of this, Saul commanded a great stone to be rolled into the camp to serve as an altar, on which the victims could be slain and eaten with due formality. This is said to have been the first altar set up by Saul to Jehovah. After the people had finished their meal, Saul proposed to attack the remnant of the Philistine army at night. Ahijah tried to ascertain the Divine will, but as he could obtain no response, it was inferred that Jehovah was displeased. To discover whether the cause of offence lay with Saul and Jonathan or with the army, the king and his son were placed on one side, and the people on the other. Saul then prayed God, "If this iniquity is in me or in Jonathan, O Lord God of Israel, give *Urim*, and if it is Thy people Israel, give *Thummim*" (1 Sam. xiv. 41, LXX.). The *Urim* shewed that the guilt lay with Saul and Jonathan: lots were cast between them, and Jonathan was taken. He admitted that he had tasted the honey in ignorance of his father's oath. In those hard times no excuse was allowed: the crime had been committed, and the penalty must be paid. Saul pronounced sentence of death upon his son, but the army protested, "Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid. As the Lord liveth there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan that he died not" (1 Sam. xiv.).

When the Philistines again came into conflict with Saul, it was on the borders of their own territory in the neighbourhood of Gath. The Philistines had encamped at Ephes-

Battle of
Ephes-
dammin

dammim between Azekah and Socho, and the Israelites had entrenched themselves on the eastern side from which they could retreat with safety up the valley. The position of either army was too strong to be attacked by the other, as the assailants would have to cross a deep depression formed by a watercourse. The battles between the Israelites and Philistines belong to the heroic age, in which the exploits of individuals are more important than the movements of armies. As the war of Michmash had been decided by the personal valour of Jonathan, so the victory of Ephes-dammim was due to the courage of a new Israelite warrior. This was Saul's armour-bearer, David, a native of Bethlehem in Judah. David had been introduced to the king not only as a skilful musician, but also as "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war." He won Saul's favour by playing the harp and thereby charming away his deep fits of melancholy, and it is recorded that "Saul loved him greatly," and that David became his armour-bearer (1 Sam. xvi. 21-23).

The battle began with a scene which cannot fail to recall similar ones in classical antiquity. The Philistine champion of the day was a native of Gath, whose name Goliath as well as his gigantic stature marks him as one of the survivors of the ancient Canaanite dwellers in the Shephelah. In his panoply he stood over nine feet, but giant though he was, it was his magnificent armour which attracted most attention. His brazen helmet, his corselet of scales, weighing 5000 shekels, with the greaves protecting his legs, formed his defensive armour; whilst on his back was slung a javelin, and his great spear like a weaver's beam, with its iron head 600 shekels in weight, together with his sword, composed his weapons of offence. A shield-bearer accompanied the champion. Day by day Goliath challenged the Hebrews to send a man to decide by single combat whether Israel or Philistia should in future be the ruling nation.

One beautiful version of the story of the acceptance of Goliath's challenge relates that David the son of Jesse came from feeding his father's flock to visit his brethren, and that the boy, hearing the boastful Philistine defy the armies of the Living God, offered to fight with him. But it appears more probable that David was already a

chieftain in Saul's army, and as such was accepted by the king as Israel's champion. Such confidence had Saul in his young armour-bearer, that he offered to lend him his own arms; but David must have known that to fight the Philistine on even terms was to rush upon death. He had not proved Saul's armour, so he preferred to trust to his shepherd's staff and sling, which he had used with such effect to defend his father's sheep. Above all, he trusted in Jehovah, the God of the armies of Israel. As the two champions faced one another they indulged in mutual taunts: Goliath vowing by his gods to give David's carcass to the birds and beasts; and David replying, "Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast reproached." As the Philistine drew near, David's sling-stone smote him in the forehead, and he fell down dead. David immediately took possession of his sword, and struck off his head (1 Sam. xvii. 1-54).*

Then, if various obscure notices in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles refer to this event, a furious fight ensued. The Israelites attacked the Philistines, but the victory was not easily won. The Philistines made a stand in a field of barley and drove back their opponents till David, and his friend Eleazar, the son of Dodo or Dodai, the Ahohite, perhaps with the assistance of Shammah the son of Agee, put them to flight. Jashobeam the Hachmonite is said to have slain 300, or even 800 Philistines on that day (2 Sam. xxiii. 9-11; 1 Chron. xi. 11-14). The victory gained by Israel was as complete as possible. The Philistines took refuge in Gath and Ekron, and their camp was spoiled by the Israelites. The men who helped David were not forgotten when he became king, and were known as the first three among his warriors.⁹

The appearance of David is the turning-point in the career of Saul; but in the sacred narrative Saul's rival is not introduced, till it has been related how the king lost the favour of Samuel. Too little is known of Saul to justify any definite pronouncement as to his character, or

**Rejection
of Saul**

* The Hebrew here however implies that David was an armed warrior, and with his own sword smote off Goliath's head.

to give a satisfactory explanation why he was rejected by Jehovah. It is however impossible to read the first book of Samuel and not to feel that, despite his undoubted merits, there was something which made it impossible for Saul to further the highest development of his people, and to accomplish such a work as Samuel had expected him to perform.

Saul had a task of great difficulty before him when he became King of Israel. He was called as it were to stand at the parting of the ways. An age of barbarism was making way for one of higher civilisation, and a leader was required capable of understanding the one, and preparing for the other. The early Judges had been nothing but successful warriors: most of them fought the battles of Israel, and then retired into private life. Saul, however, was called upon to do something more than gain victories. As a king he had to rule his people, as well as to save them from their enemies. For this, other qualifications besides personal bravery and military skill were demanded. It was necessary that the King of Israel should unite with these the higher virtues which are engendered by the discipline of self-restraint. In this Saul, though the greatest military leader of Israel since Joshua, was conspicuously deficient. In the war of Michmash, his rash vow lost him the opportunity of reaping the fruits of victory. On another occasion he outraged the best feelings of his day by violating the ancient treaty made by Joshua with the Gibeonite cities of Benjamin, and by a cruel massacre of their inhabitants raised up implacable enemies to his house. Finally, his insane jealousy of David led to a civil war, which enabled the Philistines once more to subdue Israel.

But in addition to this lack of statesmanlike qualities, Saul shewed a complete misapprehension of the duties of religion. The theocratic system established by Samuel and the prophets was based on the recognition of the obligation to carry out the revealed will of Jehovah. This was a great advance on the notion prevalent among all ancient nations, that if the god received his dues in sacrifices and offerings, all was well. The contest between Saul and Samuel was not one between monarchical and sacerdotal pretensions, since it is not by any means certain that

Samuel came of even a Levitical stock. Nor was Samuel, as a prophet, jealous of Saul's royal prerogative, for as has been shewn, it had been his object to invest the royal person with peculiar sanctity. The real difference between them was that whilst Samuel was insisting on a cheerful obedience to the living voice of God, Saul could not divest himself of the idea that the essence of religion was the performance of acts of ritual observance. Thus, at Gilgal, when the king saw his army melting away, and feared that the Philistines would attack him, he dare not rely on the protection of Jehovah, unless he had first propitiated him by sacrifices; and in his own words, "forced himself and offered a burnt-offering," without awaiting the arrival of Samuel. On another occasion, his lack of appreciation of his duty to God was even more manifest.

The southern frontier of Judah was constantly exposed to attack by the marauding tribes of the desert, the most powerful of whom were the Amalekites. The feud between this people and the Israelites was of long standing. It had begun in the days of the Wandering (Ex. xvii. 8-13) and had continued throughout the time of the Judges. When Eglon King of Moab oppressed Israel, the Amalekites joined him, and in the days of Gideon they united with the Midianites in pillaging Central Palestine (Judg. iii. 13; vi. 3, 33; vii. 12; x. 12). They seem to have regarded the Israelites as interlopers for occupying the rich territory which they had in remote times called their own. Against these implacable foes Samuel proclaimed a holy war in the name of Jehovah. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I will visit that which Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him in the way, when he came up out of Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and devote (to God for destruction) all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

The
Amalekites

It was considered the height of profanity to make any profit out of a campaign of this nature, but Saul and his army converted a religious war into a mere plundering expedition. After he had warned the Kenites to separate themselves from the Amalekites, Saul defeated his enemies and destroyed "all that was vile and refuse."

All the best of the spoil was spared; the cattle and oxen were driven off, and the vineyards were left uninjured. Saul returned in state to Carmel in the south of Judah, with Agag the King of Amalek, whom he had spared to grace his triumph. From thence he went in his chariot (so LXX.) to Gilgal, where he celebrated his triumph by a splendid sacrifice. Warned by Jehovah, Samuel presented himself before Saul. The king greeted the prophet, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord." Samuel asked, in bitter irony, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" In vain did Saul endeavour to prevaricate. Samuel would listen to no excuse, when Saul tried to shift the guilt from himself to his army. At last Saul, thinking that Jehovah, if not His prophet, would be placated by the festival he was holding in His honour, reminded Samuel that the spoil of the Amalekites had been spared in honour of his God. To this excuse the prophet replied:—

"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice,
And to hearken than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
And stubbornness is as iniquity and teraphim.
Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord,
He hath also rejected thee from being king."

Saul was now full of penitence. He clung to Samuel's robe and rent it. "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee," said the stern prophet, "and hath given it to a neighbour of thine that is better than thou. And also the Glory of Israel will not lie nor repent: for He is not a man that He should repent."

Then followed a scene characteristic of this savage age. Agag was ordered into Samuel's presence. He "came unto him delicately." Does this mean that the defeated warrior came cheerfully to meet his death, confident that the worst bitterness was over, or that he came in trembling before the prophet of Israel? As a victim devoted to death by Divine

decree, Samuel slew Agag "in the presence of Jehovah" (1 Sam. xv.).¹⁰

Samuel, however, was not devoid of human feeling, for though he saw Saul no more, he mourned for him bitterly. It is said that by God's command he went to Bethlehem and anointed David, the youngest son of Jesse, as Saul's successor. As Jesse made his sons pass before him, Samuel beholding in Eliab a second Saul, said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him." But Jehovah warned His prophet, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. xvi. 1-13).

**Anointing
of David**

As has been already shewn, David was in all probability a chieftain in Saul's army before the battle of Ephesdammin. His bravery on that day made him one of the foremost warriors in Israel. As he returned from the battle-field in triumph, the women came forth from their cities to meet him, singing one to another as their ancestresses had done in the days of the Passage of the Red Sea. The subject of their song could hardly fail to excite the jealousy of the king, since the refrain was:—

**David in
Saul's army**

"Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands."

At first, however, all seemed to go well. David became the sworn brother-in-arms of the valiant Jonathan, who greeted him as he returned from his victory over the Philistines. "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David," says the sacred narrative, "and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." As a proof of his friendship, Jonathan clothed David in his garments and armed him with his weapons. Thus was inaugurated the most celebrated of all friendships between the generous son of Saul, the greatest soldier of his day, and David, the rising hope of the nation.

The narrative relating the estrangement of Saul and David is one of the most perplexing in the Bible. It abounds with contradictory and irreconcilable statements, which can only be accounted for by supposing that the

Difficulties

concluding chapters of 1 Samuel contain a number of popular accounts of David's adventures. Nothing in the ancient history of Israel aroused such interest as that romantic period in the career of the great king, when his life was in danger at the hands of Saul. There must have been countless narratives of his friendship with Jonathan, of his daring exploits and hairbreadth escapes, of his courage and generosity, of his resourcefulness and shrewd sayings. The number of Psalms ascribed to this period shews how great an interest it excited in after days.¹¹ It is therefore permissible to regard these chapters as a collection of well-known stories about David, rather than as an orderly presentation of facts. The Alexandrian translators, however, have endeavoured with some success to give a connected account of the progress of Saul's estrangement from David by omitting various passages in 1 Sam. xvii.-xix.¹²

Saul's
jealousy
of David

From the day on which the women sang the praises of David, Saul began to dread him as a possible rival, and as time went on the very sight of his servant became unendurable to the king, who appointed David captain over 1000 men, that he might not be constantly in attendance upon him.

When David was removed from the royal presence, his popularity only increased. Not only did the people love the young general, but he found favour in the eyes of Saul's daughter Michal. Saul, hoping to entrap David, sent courtiers to suggest that David should become his son-in-law, and that he should pay the dowry by slaying 100 Philistines. David disappointed Saul's hope that his rashness would lead him to his death, and provided the dowry required by the king. In this way he became Saul's son-in-law. Saul so dreaded David's growing influence that he tried to persuade Jonathan and his courtiers to slay him. Jonathan, however, interceded for his friend, and Saul was temporarily reconciled to David. In the next war David distinguished himself as usual, and Saul's jealousy revived. Whilst David was playing as was his wont before Saul, the king suddenly brandished his spear, and David only just escaped as the spear pierced the wall. He went to his house, but hearing that Saul had sent men to kill him he escaped, and Michal put

the household god into his bed, to deceive her husband's pursuers. When the fraud was discovered Michal only escaped by declaring to her father that David would have slain her, had she refused to help him (1 Sam. xviii. ; xix. 1-17).

The account of David's flight is here perhaps interrupted by the story of his visit to Samuel at Ramah, and the beautiful description of his final interview with Jonathan (1 Sam. xix. 18-xx. 42).

At Ramah David joined Samuel and his prophetic company, and the three bands of men sent to take him prophesied on beholding Samuel and his companions. When Saul came to the place, he, like his soldiers experienced the prophetic ecstasy. For a day and a night he fell down naked, and prophesied in the presence of Samuel, so that men again asked, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1 Sam. xix. 19-24).

The character of Jonathan reveals itself in the interview he had with his friend, before David finally resolved to escape from Saul. The heart of the great soldier is as simple as that of a little child. He loves his father and his friend, nor can he believe that either of them is capable of acting basely. When David assures him that Saul is resolved to kill him, Jonathan, despite all that has happened, can scarcely believe it. "Behold, my father doeth nothing either great or small, but that he discloseth it unto me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so."

Jonathan
and David

It was agreed between the two friends that on the morrow David should absent himself from the royal table, where he, Abner and Jonathan were daily accustomed to dine. If Saul should ask the reason for his non-appearance, Jonathan would say that David had requested leave to attend a family sacrifice at Bethlehem on the feast of the new moon. If Saul took this excuse in good part, it would be sufficient proof that his previous outbursts of wrath had no serious meaning. Otherwise David would have to take precautions for his safety.

Jonathan agreed to meet David in the open country three days later; and he was to remain hidden behind the cairn, where he had concealed himself on the occasion of his first rupture with Saul. In view of the danger of communicating by word of mouth, Jonathan was to go forth as though to

practise himself in archery. As he shot the arrows, and his attendant ran to pick them up, he would, if all was well, shout to him to bring them back. If, however, he told the boy that the arrows were beyond him, David would know that Saul's purpose towards him was evil.

On the first day Saul attributed David's absence to ceremonial uncleanness. On the second he asked Jonathan the reason, and, on hearing that David had requested permission to go to Bethlehem, broke forth into violent reproaches. In siding with David, Jonathan, Saul declared, was injuring himself; since as long as David lived the dynasty was in peril. Calling Jonathan "the child of a runaway slave" (1 Sam. xx. 30, LXX.), the infuriated king hurled his spear at his son, and Jonathan left his table in fierce anger, knowing full well that David's doom was sealed, should he fall into his father's hands (1 Sam. xx. 33).

Throughout these scenes the character of Jonathan is remarkable for its self-forgetfulness. He knows that Saul is right, and that David must in the end be king. He recognises the fact that his own family will one day be at the mercy of David, and yet all he asks of his friend in return for his own great services is a promise to protect them. Only once again did the two friends meet. When David was in the wilderness of Ziph Jonathan came, "and strengthened his hand in God." And he said, "Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth" (1 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17).

David made his way attended by his young men to Nob, within sight of his future capital (Isa. x. 32). Here the priests of the house of Eli had set up the Tabernacle. A colony of priests ministered there under Ahimelech the son of Abitub. The High Priest, seeing David alone and unattended, came forth to meet him trembling, possibly because he suspected that he had incurred the displeasure of the king. But David disarmed Ahimelech's suspicions, by telling him that he was on a confidential mission from Saul, and not only persuaded the priest to give him the sword of Goliath, but also the hallowed bread. Saul's chief herdsman, an Edomite named Doeg, witnessed

David at
Nob

the transaction, and reported it to his master. The king refused to listen to Ahimelech's excuses, and condemned all the priests at Nob to death. His servants refused to execute the sentence, but Doeg had no scruples in doing as he was commanded. Eighty-five priests were killed, and the city of Nob was put to the sword. Only Abiathar the son of Ahimelech escaped to David (1 Sam. xxi. 1-9; xxii. 6-20).

It is said that David either went as a suppliant, or was brought as a prisoner to Achish, King of Gath. The Philistines were about to put him to death, regarding him as the real "King of Israel," and a far more formidable enemy than Saul. David however feigned madness, beat on the door, and let his spittle run down his beard. With a true Oriental's reverence for insanity Achish let him go (1 Sam. xxi. 12-15).

David goes
to Achish

In these narratives the craftiness of David saves him, and it is possible that the versatility displayed in beguiling his enemies was admired, without any thought that some of his actions, like the deceit practised on Ahimelech, were scarcely in accordance with strict truthfulness.

David was not long without followers. At Adullam, a cave or stronghold,* he was joined by his family, and also by those who were in debt, or discontented with Saul's rule. He was soon at the head of four hundred warriors, and thus became a powerful outlaw. First he went to Mizpeh of Moab, but by the advice of the prophet Gad he returned to Judah after committing his father and mother to the care of the king of that country. David next appears in the forest of Harath. His assistance was here sought by the people of Keilah, a city in the south of Judah. Here he was joined by Abiathar, who brought the priestly ephod. David was now able to ascertain the Divine will; and encouraged by a favourable response, when he inquired of Jehovah, he rescued Keilah from the Philistines. By this time his little army was six hundred strong (1 Sam. xxii. 1-5; xxiii. 1-5).

The Cave of
Adullam

Saul now appeared in the south of Judah at the head of an army, and David, being warned by God not to trust to the fidelity of the men of Keilah, abandoned the city and took refuge in the Wilderness of Ziph, south of Hebron. Sheltered

* The Hebrew words are very similar.

by the woods which then covered the slopes of the hill of Hachilah, David would have been safe but for the treachery of the Ziphites. When these tried to betray him to Saul the fugitive escaped eastward to the wilderness of Maon, where he would have been surrounded by Saul's troops, had not the king been recalled by news of a Philistine invasion. The spot, where David had so narrowly escaped capture, was hereafter known as Sela-hammahlekoth (*the cliff of Divisions*) (1 Sam. xxiii. 28).

David spares
Saul

David was now forced to take refuge among the precipitous cliffs of En-gedi on the shores of the Dead Sea. The place is well suited to be the home of outlaws, abounding as it does in caverns, where they can remain securely hidden. Here Saul is said to have incautiously placed himself in David's power, and to have owed his life to the generous forbearance of his rival.

It is highly probable that of all the stories of this adventurous period of the life of David none would be more frequently told than the one about his sparing Saul's life. Two versions of it are preserved, bearing a certain resemblance to one another, but differing in detail.

On the first occasion Saul was pursuing David amid the crags of En-gedi with three thousand picked men. The king entered the cave, and David's men said to their leader, "Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand." David contented himself with cutting off the skirt of Saul's robe. Even this seemed to him to be a crime against the anointed of Jehovah; and when Saul left the cave David presented himself and did obeisance. He pleaded his innocence, and Saul with a return to his better nature asked, "Is this thy voice, my son David?" He admitted that David had spared his life: "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rendered me good, whereas I have rendered unto thee evil." Finally Saul petitioned David to spare his house when he should become king. "And David sware unto Saul" (1 Sam. xxiv.).

The other occasion on which David is said to have exercised a like forbearance was after the Ziphites had betrayed him to Saul. His spies had revealed where the

royal army was encamped, and David coming by night found Saul asleep in the midst of the wagons which were placed round the camp as a barricade. David and Abishai stole up to the sleeping king, but though Abishai urged him to seize the opportunity, David would not harm the Anointed of Jehovah. Accordingly they retired with Saul's spear and cruse of water. David then took up his position on a hill separated from Saul's camp by a deep water-course and reproached Abner for keeping so careless a watch over his master. Saul recognised the voice of David, and admitted that he had erred greatly in persecuting him. He dismissed David, saying, "Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt do mightily, and shalt surely prevail" (1 Sam. xxvi. 25).

Saul and David were not reconciled, and the rest of the outlaw's career is marked by his steady growth in power and influence. A remarkable episode in his career led to his becoming one of the great landowners in the south of Judah.

David supported his force of 600 men by levying what was formerly known in Scotland as "black-mail." He protected the peaceful landowners from all marauders, and received, or rather exacted, payment for his services. A certain Nabal, representing the great house of Caleb, churlishly refused to give David anything for guarding his flocks during the sheep-shearing, though he had been approached in the most courteous manner, and although the servants of Nabal testified to the irreproachable conduct of David's men. "Who is David?" asked Nabal, "and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men of whom I know not whence they be?"

David and
Nabal

David having resolved to punish this churlish behaviour, ordered his men to gird on their swords, vowing that he would not spare a man of Nabal's household. Fortunately, however, Nabal's beautiful wife Abigail heard what had happened, and went herself to meet David with an offering, which shewed how great was the wealth of her husband. She admitted to David that Nabal was rightly so named—"Fool (*Nabal*) is his name and folly (*n'bhalah*) is

with him." David accepted her present, at the same time thanking her for saving him from blood guiltiness. Nabal died on hearing what had happened, and David married his widow, by this means becoming a man of wealth and importance in Southern Palestine (1 Sam. xxv.).

David goes
again to Gath

Knowing that the breach with Saul was irreparable, David attached himself to Achish, King of Gath. He came not as a fugitive but as an important ally. He had married two wives belonging to powerful families in the district, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail; Michal the daughter of Saul, his former spouse, having been taken from him, and given to Paltiel, the son of Laish. He was also acceptable as head of a powerful force of armed men, and Achish gave him the city of Ziklag. From thence David made forays on the people of non-Israelitish origin, though he pretended to Achish that he had been harassing his own people. At Ziklag he was perfectly secure from Saul (1 Sam. xxvii.).

The Philistines at this time decided to attack Israel in the plain of Esdraelon, and assembled at Aphek.* Whilst the Israelite army lay near the fountain in Jezreel, David was present with the Philistines, but he was an object of suspicion to their princes, who perhaps, not without reason, dreaded that he would go over to Saul when the battle began. "For," said they, "wherewith should this fellow reconcile himself with his lord? should it not be with the heads of these men?" Achish, however, trusted in his fidelity, and David prayed hard to be allowed to remain with his chief. It is impossible to say how he would have acted, whether he was wilfully deceiving Achish, or whether by this time he was ready to forget his country and fight for the Philistines. But he was spared the trial, as the Philistine *serens* insisted on his being sent back to Ziklag (1 Sam. xxix.).

The tragical end of the life of Saul had now arrived. He was bereft of all guidance from Jehovah. No dream, no priest with the sacred Urim, no prophet revealed God's will to him, and he was forced to have recourse to unlawful rites to ascertain the future.

In his zeal for the worship of Jehovah, or possibly because

* This shews that Saul had cleared the whole of Mount Ephraim of the Philistines.

he feared that its professors might excite his subjects to rise against him by their predictions, Saul had made the practice of divination a capital offence.¹³ He learned on inquiry that a woman lived at Endor, who was believed to have a familiar spirit. Although the place is fully twelve miles from Mount Gilboa, and to get there it was necessary to traverse the country held by the Philistines, Saul was so oppressed by his doubts that he resolved to risk the perils of a night journey in a hostile country. Disguising himself, and taking only two companions, he came to the house of the woman and said, "Divine unto me, I pray thee, by the familiar spirit, and bring me up whomsoever I shall name unto thee." It is an indirect proof that Saul had made his power felt throughout Israel that the woman reminded her unknown visitor of the danger she ran in complying with his request. Saul assured her that she was in no danger, and commanded her to "bring up Samuel." When the woman saw the prophet she knew that her guest was Saul himself. On being asked what she saw—for it appears that Saul as yet beheld nothing—she said, "I see gods coming out of the earth." Saul inquired, "What form is he of?" And she said, "An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a robe." "And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and bowed his face to the ground and did obeisance." In this way he learned that defeat was in store for him. "Tomorrow," said the vision, "shalt thou and thy sons be with me." Saul, on hearing his doom, fell his whole length on the ground and lay there insensible for a whole day. Despite her unlawful calling, the woman seems to have been by no means without feeling. With almost motherly tenderness she told the king that as she had risked her life in obeying him, so he must obey her and take refreshment. A calf was killed and hastily prepared, and Saul having taken nourishment, returned to the camp (1 Sam. xxviii.).

The position taken by Israel on Mount Gilboa was well chosen, commanding as it did both the valley of Jezreel, the trade route to Damascus, and the passage of the Jordan. It seems that the Philistine army, which evidently outnumbered that of Israel, succeeded in carrying the hill and completely routing its defenders. Three sons of Saul were killed, the

valiant Jonathan, Aminadab and Malchishua. Saul, hard pressed by the Philistine archers, ordered his armour-bearer to slay him, and when he refused he fell upon his own sword and died, as did his companion. The ruin of Israel seemed to be complete; for the very cities were abandoned to the Philistine conquerors. The armour of Saul was borne in triumph round the cities of the Philistines, his head was placed in the temple of Dagon, and his body and those of his sons fastened to the wall of the Canaanite town of Beth-shan (1 Sam. xxxi.).

One deed of heroism relieves the surrounding darkness of the scene. The men of Jabesh-Gilead had not forgotten their deliverer; for no sooner did they hear that Saul had been defeated, than they went by night to Beth-shan and took the bodies of Saul and his sons from the city wall. These they burned, and buried the bones under a well-known tamarisk, fasting for seven days in honour of the dead (1 Sam. xxxi. 11-13).^{13a}

**Character
of Saul**

The death of Saul is one of the saddest events in all the history of Israel, and it is no easy task to account for the complete failure of his life. The material supplied by the sacred narrative is not sufficient to enable any one to come to a certain conclusion respecting the real character of the first King of Israel. Yet it is possible to recognise in him a noble nature marred by serious defects. Tried by the standard of the early Judges, Saul stands forth as a truly great man. His patriotism, his courage, his power to unite the scattered forces of ancient Israel, are worthy of all admiration. He took the crown with diffidence, and brought his people to a state of security never before experienced. Suddenly he showed himself unequal to the task before him. It was required of him to be something more than a successful warrior, to aim at a nobler standard than the kings of heathen nations. Israel in demanding a king wished to be like other peoples; but this could not be; and Samuel knew it. Though king and prophet shared the desire to make Israel great, their paths lay in different ways. Samuel joined to the wisdom of experience a strong longing to raise his people to a sense of the greatness of their call. Saul on the other hand does not appear to have become the true king of the people of the Living God.

He seems to have been lacking alike in steadfastness and in self-discipline. He could not control his strong passions, or his sudden impulses—at times they mastered him and he became a jealous and cruel tyrant. His character lacked balance, and his very virtues became useless in consequence. His noble enthusiasm, and capacity to feel the overmastering power of the prophetic spirit, gave way before an insane jealousy, and were succeeded by deep melancholy, perhaps by fits of madness. Yet even in the hour of his defeat the memory of his noble qualities moved David to join his name with that of his stainless son, and to declare that both “were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.” Darkness hides from us the last tragic scene. We know not whether Saul fell by his own hand, or by that of a man of the “devoted” race of Amalek, in sparing which the king had sinned (1 Sam. xxxi. 4; 2 Sam. i. 9, 10).* The vast but somewhat shadowy figure passes before the eyes of men, a solemn warning that no virtue can compensate for that self-discipline by which a man is qualified to become a leader of his fellows.¹⁴

But no words can do such justice to Saul’s memory as the beautiful dirge composed by David on learning the result of the fatal battle of Gilboa.

David's
lament for
Saul and
Jonathan

“ Learn the sad news, O Judah,
Mourn, O Israel !
On thy heights is he stricken.
How are the mighty fallen !

Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not as glad news in the squares of Ashkelon
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.

Ye mountains of Gilboa, let not dew descend ;
Let no rain be on you, ye treacherous fields :
For there the shield of Saul was defiled,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil,
(But) with blood of slain, with fat of warriors.

* The Amalekite was evidently on the battlefield for the purpose of stripping the slain.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant,
In life and death they were not parted :

They were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions.
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clad you in scarlet with jewels,
Who put golden ornaments on your apparel.

How are the mighty fallen
In the midst of the battle !

O Jonathan, my heart is wounded at thy death !
I am grieved for thee, my brother Jonathan !
Exceeding pleasant wast thou to me.
Thy love for me surpassed the love of women.

How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished ! " 15 *

Chapter VII

The Reign of David

It is not easy to determine the precise results of the Philistine victory over Israel upon Mount Gilboa, but it has been generally assumed that it was so decisive as to make the conquerors masters of Central as well as of Southern Palestine. For a time the Israelites are supposed to have become vassals to the uncircumcised, and to have purchased peace by the payment of tribute.

**Effects of
Battle of
Mount
Gilboa**

One fact alone in regard to this obscure period may be accepted as certain, namely, that whatever unity had existed in the days of Saul was destroyed at Gilboa, and Israel was for a time divided into two rival and even hostile monarchies.

It is a remarkable testimony to the strong hold Saul had upon the affections of his subjects, that even his disastrous defeat by the Philistines was not sufficient to alienate the affections of Israel from his house. Abner, who had escaped the slaughter on Mount Gilboa, rallied the scattered remnant of the army at Mahanaim, where he proclaimed Ishbosheth or Eshbaal, son of Saul, king over Israel.¹ In this manner Saul's monarchy was revived in the neighbourhood of his first decisive victory, by which Jabesh-Gilead had been relieved from the Ammonite Nahash and Saul established in his kingdom.

Ishbosheth seems to have inherited none of the great qualities of his unfortunate father, and only to have reigned in virtue of the support afforded by Abner. At first all went well. Whether Abner gained a series of victories over the Philistines and recovered the territory which had been lost to the house of Saul, or whether he made a treaty with the enemy in Ishbosheth's name, can never be known. The

**Ishbosheth's
kingdom**

sacred narrative merely says that Abner first made Ishbosheth king in Eastern Palestine "over Gilead, and over the Ashurites," and then crossing the Jordan, asserted his authority "over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel" (2 Sam. ii. 8, 9). It is probable, however, that Abner did not gain any substantial successes over the Philistines, as the seat of Ishbosheth's kingdom could never be transferred to the territory of his own tribe, but remained at Mahanaim.

David in
Southern
Judah

In the meantime David was steadily consolidating his power in the South. It is to be regretted that so little is known of this period of his life. Never could his peculiar abilities have had greater scope for display than in these seven years, during which he rose from being a vassal of Achish to the position of King of Israel and master of Palestine. The opening scene gives an example alike of the resourceful courage David displayed in adversity, and of his skill in dealing with men.

Sack of Ziklag
and defeat
of the
Amalekites

David had left the army of Achish in the plain of Esdraelon and returned to Ziklag. At best he had been relieved from a false position. He had expressed anxiety to assist the Philistines against his countrymen, and had he taken part in the battle, he must have either helped to defeat Israel, or have acted as a traitor to his benefactor Achish. But the Philistine lords would have none of his help and compelled him to retire from the expedition.

On reaching Ziklag David found that the town had been sacked by the Amalekites, and his own wives Abigail and Ahinoam together with the wives and children of his men, taken captive. So great was the indignation of David's soldiers at their homes having been thus devastated, that they threatened to stone him.

David's confidence in Jehovah did not fail him at this crisis. Summoning Abiathar the priest, he commanded him to consult the ephod whether a pursuit would result in the recovery of the spoils. On receiving a favourable reply, he advanced so rapidly that 200 of his men were worn out ere they reached the brook Besor. Leaving them to guard the baggage of the army, David and the 400 remaining soldiers

pressed on till they found an unfortunate Egyptian slave, whom the Amalekites had left to die in the desert.

Having ascertained from him the position of the Amalekites, David attacked them during a feast held in celebration of their success. All the spoil was recovered and much booty besides, and David returned to Ziklag with the prestige of victory. He immediately sent rich presents from the spoil to all the cities which had befriended him during the days of his adversity.

An incident is here recorded indicative of David's influence over his soldiers. The 400 warriors, who had borne the fatigue of the long march and defeated the Amalekites, were unwilling to give their 200 companions who had remained at the brook Besor any share in the booty. It was their opinion that these should be content with having their wives and children restored to them, and that the whole spoil should fall to the lot of those who had actually recovered it. But David would not permit such injustice, and made "a statute and ordinance" that "As his share is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his share be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall share alike" (1 Sam. xxx. 24).

David, now the chief man in the tribe of Judah, was able to establish himself at Hebron. Thither the elders of the tribe repaired and anointed him their king, and for seven years this city remained David's capital (2 Sam. ii. 1-4).

David at
Hebron

That the Philistines did not interfere with David's advancement seems to indicate that he had come to some agreement with them, especially as Ziklag remained in his hands. It may be that they actually encouraged him to make Judah an independent kingdom in order that they might not again have to dread the enmity of a united Israel. Ishbosheth and David could not remain at peace, as the son of Saul was bound to consider the assumption of the crown of Judah as an act of defiance; and the long civil war which followed was inevitable.

A single incident, fraught with momentous consequences, is all that is recorded of the contest between David and the house of Saul. Abner and the men of Ishbosheth went from Mahanaim to the pool of Gibeon, where they met David's men under Joab, Abishai and Asahel. These three brothers,

Strife be-
tween David
and Ishbo-
sheth's men

nephews of David, the sons of Zeruiah his sister, were renowned as warriors ; Asahel being famed, like some of the heroes of ancient Greece, for his fleetness of foot.

Abner suggested to Joab that twelve picked youths from each army should engage in a mimic contest ; but when the champions approached one another they fought so desperately that all were slain, and the place was henceforward known as Helkath-hazzurim.

This was the signal for a general engagement in which Abner and his men were put to flight. Asahel pursued Abner, but though able to overtake the veteran warrior, he was no match for him in battle. In vain did Abner beg Asahel to be content with slaying and spoiling a less formidable champion : Asahel persisted in following him and was slain by a thrust of the hinder end of Abner's spear. This, as Abner had foreseen, involved him in a blood-feud with Joab. After the pursuit had lasted some time David's men were persuaded to abandon it, but Abner knew full well that either Joab or Abishai would avenge their brother's death (2 Sam. ii. 12 *ad fin.*).

This incident throws a gleam of light on the long civil war which distracted Israel, in which the cause of David made constant progress. It was becoming more and more evident that he must reign over all Israel, when an act of folly on the part of Ishbosheth brought matters to a crisis.

Saul had left a young wife or concubine named Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, who had borne him two sons. Ishbosheth, impatient of Abner's authority, or else suspicious of his designs, accused his general of undue familiarity with Rizpah—a charge which was tantamount to one of treason ; for to take the wife of the late king was regarded as a formal claim to his inheritance. Abner's reply shewed his consciousness of power. He reminded Ishbosheth that it was only due to his forbearance that David was not already master of his person, and threatened "to translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah from Dan even to Beer-sheba." The wretched Ishbosheth shewed his helplessness by not daring to reply to this insolent boast, and by executing Abner's subsequent commands (2 Sam. iii. 6-16).

It must be remembered that David's policy had been to lay claim to the kingdom over Israel as the legitimate successor of Saul. He had executed the Amalekite, who boasted of slaying the king on Mount Gilboa (2 Sam. i. 15), and he had sent publicly to Jabesh-Gilead to thank the inhabitants for rescuing the bodies of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. ii. 5-7). In the same spirit he refused to treat with Abner till Saul's daughter Michal had been restored to him. It was evidently the purpose of David to depose Ishbosheth after providing for his maintenance, and to assume the headship over the house of Saul as the husband of Michal. By this means he doubtless hoped to have united all Israel peacefully under his sceptre.

David's policy

But this wise policy was rendered impracticable by the violent conduct of the powerful sons of Zeruah. Joab was determined to have no rival in his influence over David, and on learning that Abner had been to Hebron to confer with the king, he sought a private interview with Ishbosheth's general, and murdered him. David was unable to punish this outrage, as because the assassination of Abner was in consequence of a blood-feud, Joab was able to justify himself by saying that he had but avenged the death of his brother Asahel. At the same time David recognised that Abner's death had thwarted his schemes, and made him an object of suspicion to the adherents of the house of Saul. The king did all in his power to soothe the susceptibilities of his people by giving Abner a splendid funeral at which he acted as chief mourner, refusing to taste food or drink till the sun had set. Over Abner he pronounced a dirge, as he had done over Saul and Jonathan.

Murder of Abner

“Should Abner die as a fool (Nabal) dieth?

Thy hands were not bound nor thy feet put into fetters:

As a man falleth before the children of iniquity, so didst thou fall”

(2 Sam. iii. 33, 34).

Addressing his servants in words which have found an echo in the anthem composed in honour of England's greatest soldier, David added, “Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?” He confessed his own helplessness to stem the violence of his age: “I am this

day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the Lord reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness" (2 Sam. iii. 38, 39).

No one was now left to protect Ishbosheth. Two natives of the Gibeonite town of Beeroth, named Rechab and Baanah, resolved to avenge the injury Saul had done to their countrymen in violation of the ancient treaty between Israel and Gibeon. As the porteress who kept the door of Ishbosheth's house slept over her task of sifting the wheat, they slipped past and slew the king as he slept at midday (2 Sam. iv. 6, LXX.).² They then brought his head to David at Hebron, little suspecting that they would have to pay the penalty of their crime. But David, after reminding the murderers that the Amalekite who brought the news of the death of Saul had been slain instead of receiving the reward he expected, ordered them to be executed as "wicked men who had slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed." Nor can David's indignation be attributed solely to a politic desire to conciliate Saul's family, his whole conduct on this and similar occasions being marked by an abhorrence of crimes of treachery and violence (2 Sam. iv.).

"Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold we are thy bone and thy flesh. . . . So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and King David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: And they anointed David king over Israel" (2 Sam. v. 1-3).

Thus, after a most adventurous career, David founded a monarchy destined to become the type of Divine government upon earth. He was now without a rival in Israel, but before he could consolidate his kingdom he had to enter upon long and arduous campaigns against the enemies of the nation. As the wars of David demand careful attention, it is necessary to preface an account of them by stating what is known of the military force at his disposal.

David had first learned the art of war in the camp of Saul, but the experiences of his eventful life had taught him far more than could be acquired in regular warfare. The ancient armies of Israel seem to have had little or no discipline. They assembled at the summons of a popular leader,

Murder of
Ishbosheth

David King
of Israel

David's
followers

and dispersed as soon as the battle was won or lost. At best they were imperfectly armed; armour, iron spears and swords being confined to a few distinguished warriors. In early history there is no record of any sustained military effort on the part of Israel; a war was a raid rather than a campaign.

Necessity had made the little band of outlaws, which joined David at Adullam, into an army, and the skill with which their youthful leader had eluded all the efforts of Saul to capture them is a proof that he had trained his men to obey orders. His long vassalage under Achish must have improved David's military knowledge, for the Philistine armies were better equipped and trained than those of Israel. It seems certain that for several years David had 600 experienced warriors at his command; a force too small to make Philistines apprehensive, yet large enough to form the nucleus of a powerful army, especially in an age when individual prowess was of great importance in deciding the issue of a battle.

As long as David was king at Hebron his power was not sufficient to excite the suspicions of the Philistines, who do not seem to have raised any objection to his assuming the sovereignty over all Israel. As long as the Hebrews possessed no strongly fortified towns, whilst the Philistines had at least five large walled cities, the supremacy of the latter was assured.

But David saw an opportunity of reversing the state of affairs. One city of the ancient nation of the Jebusites remained uncaptured alike by Philistine and Hebrew. The stronghold of Zion was deemed impregnable by its occupants, who laughed at the idea of any one being able to take it by assault. When David and his little army approached the city the defenders cried, "The lame and the blind shall keep thee away." But David encouraged his men with the memorable words:—

Capture of
Zion

"Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites,
Let him get up to the watercourse
And *smite* the lame and the blind,
That are hated of David's soul."

The Chronicler records that Joab was the first to enter

Zion when it was taken by the Israelite army (2 Sam. v. 4-10; 1 Chron. xi. 4-9).³

Importance
of Jerusalem

The capture of Zion is the turning-point in the national history. With it a new era begins. The days of primitive Israel ended when the last Canaanite stronghold fell into the hands of David. Even if no consideration is to be taken of the subsequent importance of the city, and of the immense influence it has had upon the imagination of the human race, David's exploit is a remarkable one; and it may not be out of place to consider here how the possession of so strong a fortress as that of Zion affected the fortunes of Israel.

From the days of Joshua to this time there is little evidence that the Israelites ever attacked or defended a fortified place.

When Saul's forces won a victory over the Philistines they could only pursue them to the gates of their cities (1 Sam. xvii. 52); but when the Israelites suffered defeat, the Philistines were able to overrun their country, and to drive them out of their towns (1 Sam. xxxi. 7). It was not till Israel became possessed of a strong fortress that it could contend with Philistia on even terms. When David resolved at any cost to expel the Jebusites from Zion, he recognised the supreme importance of having a secure place to which he could retreat; and now that he had been successful, he felt that he could assume the offensive. His confidence in the strength of his new capital was justified by subsequent events. Jerusalem remained in the hands of his descendants when every other city of Israel had fallen; and its astonishing defence in later days against the whole strength of the Roman Empire is a conclusive proof of the military genius of the king after whom Zion was familiarly known as the City of David.

Philistine
wars

Of the subsequent wars with the Philistines hardly anything is recorded. Twice it is said that they were defeated in the valley of Rephaim. On the first occasion the place was known as Baal-Perazim, because, said David, "The Lord hath broken forth (paraz) upon mine enemies as a breach (perez) of waters." David won such a decisive victory that the Philistines abandoned their gods to the conquerors.

At the second battle in the valley of Rephaim David inquired of Jehovah, and was told to attack the Philistines in the rear when he heard "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees" (2 Sam. v. 17-25).

The only other notice of the Philistine war is contained in a single verse, which, as it now stands, is almost unintelligible. "And after this it came to pass that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them; and David took Metheg Ammah out of the hands of the Philistines" (2 Sam. viii. 1).⁴

This lack of information is the more disappointing, as the war with Philistia was the most important as well as the most decisive of those waged by David. For several generations the Philistines had been the most dangerous of Israel's foes. In vain had Samson, Samuel and Saul striven to deliver their countrymen from the oppressive yoke of the uncircumcised. It weighed on the nation till David became king, nor was the severity of the Philistine tyranny ever forgotten. But after David's reign the hated oppressors are hardly mentioned, and were never really formidable. It is possible that when David became assured of his position as King of Israel he not only conquered, but conciliated, the Philistines. It must be remembered he had been their ally, had fought in their army, and had long lived in intimate alliance with them; and as in later days Philistines are found holding high positions in his court and army, the nation may have felt but little shame in becoming his allies, or even in partially acknowledging his suzerainty.

With the cessation of the war with Philistia David took a step fraught with the most momentous consequences. There can be no doubt that throughout his perilous career he had recognised the protecting hand of Jehovah, and now that he had triumphed over his adversaries and was secure in the possession of a strong city, he resolved to make it the centre of the restored religion of Israel. To do this it was necessary to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. As long as the Philistine supremacy lasted it was impossible to celebrate the worship of Jehovah in connection with this visible symbol of His presence; for the Philistines seem to have believed that the armies of Israel, when accompanied

The Ark
brought to
Zion

by the Ark, were irresistible. But, even when all opposition on the part of his adversaries was removed, David evidently considered the transference of the Ark to Jerusalem as a hazardous experiment. The plague, which had broken out when it had been taken to the cities of the Philistines, was not forgotten, nor was the fate of the men of Bethshemesh, who had gazed on it with irreverent curiosity. Jerusalem was not at this time a city sacred to Jehovah. It had, it is true, long been a Canaanitish sanctuary, but the Israelites probably considered it a profane spot, and one unlikely to prove acceptable to their God. Such feelings alone seem sufficient to explain both the hesitation as to whether the Ark should be brought to Jerusalem, and the joy shewn when the attempt met with the Divine approval.

In removing the Ark from the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-jearim a sinister omen occurred. The Ark was placed in a new cart driven by Abinadab's sons Uzzah and Ahio. At the threshing-floor of Nachon Uzzah put his hand on the Ark to steady it, and was immediately struck dead.⁵ David dared not proceed farther, and the Ark was brought to the house of a man whose name and city declare him to have been neither of the religion nor the stock of Israel. Obed-edom of Gath must have been of Philistine origin, possibly the worshipper of a god called Edom. But whilst his house afforded shelter to the Ark it was clearly seen that Jehovah favoured Obed-edom, and after three months David was emboldened to bring it to Jerusalem.

At the ceremony of bringing the Ark into the city of David the king himself officiated as a priest. He assumed the ephod and led the sacred dances in front of the Ark as it was conveyed to the tent prepared for its reception. Sacrifices of peace-offerings were made; David blessed the people in the name of Jehovah, and dismissed them with presents. One incident alone marred the joy of the festival, and appears as an indication that David's relations with the family of Saul were not satisfactory. For the exuberant manifestation of his joy at the coming of the Ark his wife Michal "despised him in her heart." David deposed her from her position of royal consort, and "she had no more children to the day of her death" (2 Sam. vi.).

Master of his own territory, and secure in the allegiance of his people, David now commenced a career of foreign conquest. He annihilated the power of Moab, making its people tributary, and also reduced the stubborn Edomites to submission. In the war with Moab⁶ Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, who afterwards commanded David's army, particularly distinguished himself (2 Sam. viii. 2 ; 2 Sam. xxiii. 20 ; 1 Chron. xi. 22). Joab shewed his usual ferocity in the conquest of Edom. All the males were put to the sword during the six months following the rout of the Edomite army in the Valley of Salt (2 Sam. viii. 13).⁷ Moab was treated with almost equal severity. But these conquests had the merit of being complete, and both Edom and Moab remained in subjection to Israel for several generations.

Foreign wars
(a) Moab

(b) Edom

The conquest of Ammon was the most difficult of all David's undertakings. On the death of Nahash the King of Ammon, who had been his friend, David sent an embassy to his son Hanun. The new king was induced to believe that David's intentions towards him were not sincere, and treated the ambassadors with the utmost indignity. Both sides considered this to be a declaration of war. David prepared to cross the Jordan, and the Ammonites made a league with the neighbouring kings of Syria. A large army was sent to assist the Ammonites by Hadadezer the Syrian king of Zobah and his allies, but it was defeated outside the walls of Rabbah by Joab and Abishai. David then invaded Syria in person and routed the army of Hadadezer so completely that the Ammonites had no more hope of support from Syria. After this Rabbath-Ammon was invested by the Israelites, and when its fall was inevitable Joab sent for David that he might take the city himself. "Lest," said Joab, "I take the city and it be called by my name." According to the present reading the Ammonites were treated by David with savage cruelty, but a very slight modification of the text will justify the hope that the prisoners were spared and put to work at the royal buildings (2 Sam. x. and xii. 26-31).⁸

(c) Ammon
and Syria

A large portion of the book of Samuel is devoted not to the glories, but to the disasters of David's reign. As a soldier he seems to have enjoyed almost uninterrupted suc-

David's
disasters

cess ; but as a monarch, especially in his own family, David had but little happiness. Under him Israel passed from the simple life of a peasant people to the comparative civilisation and luxury of a conquering race.

David, a true type of the nation, was better able to display the virtues of a soldier in the field than those of a monarch in his palace. At the time of the conquest of Zion, and long after, so little were the Israelites acquainted with the arts of life, that it was necessary to obtain the builders of David's palace and Solomon's Temple from Tyre.

Naturally a king and people so little advanced in civilisation, suddenly enriched with the spoils of foreign conquest, were not able to adapt themselves to new conditions of life without somewhat deteriorating in character.

After his successful expedition against Syria, David began to enjoy the luxury of his capital, and to abstain from sharing in the hardships of his army in the field. This was the occasion of the great sin which marred the beauty of his character, and was the cause of all his subsequent misfortunes. He saw and loved Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, a Hittite soldier in his army. When he perceived that this criminal connection would soon be known to the world, David did all in his power to save Bathsheba from the consequences of her sin. He made a pretext to send for Uriah, but the rugged fidelity of the soldier disappointed the king's expectation that he would return during the campaign to the society of his wife. Finding that there was no hope of saving Bathsheba from the death which her husband had the right to inflict on her if she were proved to be unfaithful, David sent Uriah with a letter to Joab containing this command, "Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him that he may be smitten and die."

It was an order which an unscrupulous man like Joab was only too ready to execute. An assault was made on Rabbath-Ammon, and Uriah was slain.

There are passages in the Bible which can never be told in any other words save those of Holy Writ. One of these is the account of Nathan's parable of the rich man who took the poor man's one ewe lamb ; of David's repentance ; of the death of Bathsheba's child ; of the sorrow of the conscience-

David's sin
with Bath-
sheba

stricken father; of David's reply to his servants when they asked him why he fasted and wept when the child was sick, and desisted when death took it from him. It is necessary, however, to recollect the noble character of the king's repentance for his sin; for it is too common to ignore the circumstances of David's age and the temptations of his position, and to repeat the foolish sneer at the words that a man who could act thus basely was "a man after God's own heart" (2 Sam. xii.).

Nathan's message to David contained the profound truth that although a sin may be pardoned, its consequences must remain. God put away David's sin, but He did not revoke His sentence, "The sword shall never depart from thine house." The fatal example set by the father was followed by his eldest son Amnon. Amnon's treatment of his half-sister Tamar is a terrible example of the degraded sensuality of an Oriental court, and is unrelieved by any redeeming feature. Tamar however found an avenger in her own brother Absalom, like her the child of David's wife Maachah, the daughter of Talmai, King of Geshur.

Amnon's
crime

This attractive but unscrupulous and ambitious man allowed two years to pass without shewing that he bore any enmity to Amnon. When suspicion was thoroughly allayed, he invited the royal family to a feast on the occasion of the shearing of his sheep in Baal-Hazar. David himself refused to be present, but at Absalom's special request sent Amnon to represent him. When the feast was at its height Absalom's servants slew Amnon, and the rest of the king's sons fled. News was brought to David that the whole of the royal family had been put to the sword, and that the rumour obtained credit shews that Absalom's ambition was already known. Fearing his father's wrath, Absalom took refuge with his grandfather at Geshur (2 Sam. xiii.).

Absalom

From henceforward the court of David became the scene of constant intrigues, of plots and counterplots. Joab, for reasons which are not recorded, deemed it advisable that Absalom should return to Jerusalem; and seeing that David himself longed for this absent son, devised a means of persuading the king to sanction his recall. He persuaded a woman of Tekoa to go into the king's presence with a story

illustrative of the wild justice of the age. One of her sons had killed his brother, and the family demanded that the murderer should be given up to justice. The woman begged the king to save the guilty son, as if he were put to death she would be bereaved of both her children. The king, pitying her misfortune, promised, "As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth." Then the woman reminded the king that their cases were not dissimilar. Like her he had lost one son, and by his own act he was doubly bereaved by the punishment of the second. David at once perceived that the woman was the mouthpiece of another. "Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?" he asked, and the woman replied that she had not spoken a word to the king which Joab had not put in her mouth (2 Sam. xiv.).

Absalom returned to Jerusalem, but was forbidden to approach his father. After two years he forced Joab to bring about a reconciliation by burning his fields of barley, and David granted his son complete forgiveness.

Revolt of Absalom

Although the revolt of Absalom, which so nearly ended in the overthrow of David, is related in detail, it is not easily understood. It is evident that Absalom possessed personal attractions and those popular gifts which make the leader of an insurrection doubly formidable. David seems by this time to have lost the vigour and resolution of his youth, his whole conduct being marked by feebleness, in strong contrast to the energy and prudence displayed by him in the early days of his reign.⁹

It would appear as though he had become neglectful of his kingly duties; that justice was irregularly administered, and that he was entirely under the sway of such powerful counsellors as Joab. Throughout this troublous time David is a pathetic rather than a heroic figure; the real direction of affairs is in stronger hands than his. Neither father nor son play the leading part in the drama; for Absalom, when once he had raised the standard of revolt, ceased to initiate anything and became a puppet in the hands of his advisers.

No sooner was he restored to favour with his father than Absalom began his intrigues. Every suitor who came to Jerusalem was received by him with expressions of regret

that justice was so badly administered by David's officers that there was no hope of obtaining redress. Plain hints were given that if Absalom were but judge all would go well, and so gracious was the young prince's manner that he "stole the hearts of the men of Israel."

When all preparations had been made, and the plot was ripe, Absalom asked leave to discharge a vow at Hebron. Spies had been sent throughout Israel to arrange for a general rising directly the news should come that Absalom was king. The director of the revolution was David's adviser Ahitophel of Giloh, who had perhaps some deep cause of animosity against the king.¹⁰

The conspiracy was so sudden and so widespread that David was compelled to leave his capital. To all appearance he had not any supporters in Israel except his own relatives Joab and Abishai, the two priests Zadok and Abiathar and their Levites, and the king's "friend" Hushai the Archite. His sole military support was his body-guard and his foreign mercenaries, Cherethites, Pelethites and Gittites, commanded by the faithful Ittai, who positively declined to desert his master.

The events of the memorable day of David's flight from Jerusalem are carefully recorded. The king refused to allow the Ark to accompany him; he begged Ittai the Gittite to leave his service, for as a stranger and an exile it would be no shame if he remained and served the new king. After crossing the Kidron and ascending the Mount of Olives, Hushai met David, but was told to go back to Jerusalem to defeat if possible the counsel of Ahitophel (2 Sam. xv.).

David's fight
from Jeru-
salem

After this David came in contact with the adherents of the house of Saul, and a gleam of light is thrown on his position towards the family of the late king.

It has been already suggested that David may have divorced Michal when he found it impossible to trust to the loyalty of her family, and this appears to be confirmed by the fact that he allowed the Gibeonites to avenge the wrong Saul had inflicted on them, by putting two sons and five grandsons of Saul to death. It is true that this was in accord with the wild justice and superstition of the age,

which attributed a three years' famine to the unpunished slaughter of the Gibeonites by Saul. But it cannot be denied that David may also have been influenced by political considerations as to the expediency of leaving no heir to the claims of the family (2 Sam. xxi. 1-14).

Ziba and
Mephibosheth

The only descendant of Saul whom David had been able to discover was Jonathan's crippled son Merib-baal or Mephibosheth. He was admitted to the royal household, and the administration of his estates was entrusted to Ziba, a former servant of Saul (2 Sam. ix.; he is called Merib-baal in 1 Chron. viii. 34).

Ziba met David on his flight from Jerusalem with provisions for his men, and announced that Mephibosheth had remained in the city in hopes of profiting by the revolution, and seizing the throne. A more direct proof of the hostility of Saul's family was seen at Bahurim, where a certain Shimei cursed David and cast stones at him, vowing that Absalom's rebellion was a just punishment "for all the blood of the house of Saul"—an evident reference to the slaying of the descendants of Saul to pacify the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xvi. 1-14).

Ahitophel

As long as David was on the west of the Jordan his case was hopeless. Absalom arrived at Jerusalem, and Ahitophel asked to be put in command of 12,000 men in order that he might overtake David instantly and kill him. Had this advice been followed, there is no doubt that the rebellion would have succeeded, especially as Absalom, at Ahitophel's suggestion, had made his breach with the king irreparable by seizing the royal concubines, thereby encouraging all his adherents by the knowledge that it was now impossible for Absalom to abandon them to David's vengeance, and at the same time to obtain his father's forgiveness (2 Sam. xvi. 15-23).

Hushai

Fortunately for David, Hushai was able to play on the fear and vanity of the usurper. Supposing, he suggested, that David and his tried warriors were to surprise their pursuing force and to snatch a victory, all Israel would desert Absalom in dismay. It would be better to run no risk but to wait till the whole nation had assembled. Then Absalom could lead the army in person and gain all the

glory himself without any danger. Absalom and his friends listened to this advice, and Jonathan and Ahimaaz, the two sons of the priests Zadok and Abiathar, escaped from the city to tell David that Ahitophel's counsel was rejected, and that the king had time at least on his side. Ahitophel, seeing that Absalom's cause was lost, went to his home and hanged himself (2 Sam. xvii. 1-23).

No sooner had David crossed the Jordan and had reached Mahanaim than he found numerous adherents. The inhabitants of Gilead had given proofs of their loyalty to Saul, and now shewed themselves equally faithful to David. The great chieftains hastened to him with provisions for his men. At their head was an Ammonite from Rabbah, Shobi, the son of Nahash, whom David had probably put in the place of his adversary Hanun. Machir, the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and the venerable Barzillai the Gileadite, are also named. At Mahanaim the fugitive monarch found himself among friends, at the head of an army commanded by three tried warriors, Joab, Abishai and Ittai. David wished to command in person, but his soldiers refused to allow him to risk his life. He remained with the reserves in the city, giving strict injunctions that Absalom was not to be injured. Absalom soon came with his army under the command of Amasa, a kinsman of Joab. The issue of the battle could not be doubtful. Absalom and Amasa at the head of a large and undisciplined force were no match for David's generals. The great Israelite army was forced to retreat into a wood and was destroyed piecemeal. "The battle was then scattered over the face of all the country, and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured." It was in the forest that Absalom met his doom.

David in
Gilead

Defeat of
Absalom

A man told Joab that he had seen Absalom hanging in an oak; and in answer to the question why he had not slain him then and there, he reminded his general of the king's command. So notorious was Joab's treachery, that the soldier plainly declared that had he slain Absalom, Joab would have been the first to denounce him to the king. Without further words Joab repaired to the spot, and, assisted by his ten armour-bearers, slew Absalom.

David, in the meantime, was waiting for news at Mahanaim, more anxious about the fate of his disobedient son than that of his army. Joab had sent an Ethiopian slave to announce the defeat and death of Absalom, but Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, was so persistent in begging to be allowed to bear the tidings that he was allowed by Joab to go also. He outran the Ethiopian, proclaimed the news of victory, but to David's anxious inquiry, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" he returned an evasive answer. When the Ethiopian arrived and was asked the same question, he replied, "The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise up against thee to do thee hurt be as that young man is." "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (2 Sam. xviii.).

After the defeat of Absalom the people returned to their homes, and David, overcome by grief, remained unconscious of all that was happening. Joab roughly aroused his master from his despondency in words which reveal both the sound policy and unsympathetic nature of this great captain:—"Now, therefore, arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry a man with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that hath befallen thee from thy youth until now" (2 Sam. xix. 7).

David's
return

David sent to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, bidding them prepare the men of Judah to receive him, and promising Amasa Joab's place at the head of the royal army.

He now returned in triumph to Jerusalem after rewarding those who had assisted him, especially Barzillai, the Gileadite. The aged chief refused to accompany the king to the palace, but sent his son Chimham with David. At the fords of Jordan Shimei made his submission and was pardoned. Mephibosheth seems to have aroused the king's suspicions, but his excuses were accepted though half his property was given to Ziba. All, however, was not in harmony. The northern Israelites complained that the men of Judah had monopolised the kingdom, and in the dispute which ensued

“the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel” (2 Sam. xix.).

Another revolt under a Benjamite, Sheba the son of Bichri, broke out. Amasa was sent to suppress it, but was so dilatory that the rebellion became widespread and Abishai was despatched with the Cherethites and Pelethites. Joab went with his brother, and approaching Amasa with professions of friendship, slew him as he had slain Abner. Having removed his rival, Joab took the command and drove Sheba into Abel Beth-Maachah. A wise woman of the city made a treaty with Joab on behalf of the townsmen, and Sheba's head was thrown over the wall (2 Sam. xx.).

Sheba the son
of Bichri

At this point David's history in the book of Samuel comes to an abrupt conclusion, and in the first book of Kings the monarch is found to be almost in his dotage. In the peaceful years at the close of his reign he is supposed to have made arrangements for the building of the Temple. This step was a bold one, for whatever may have been the character of the sanctuary of Shiloh, it was certainly an unpretentious erection. David had built a palace for himself by the aid of Syrian architects, and a desire to give the Ark of Jehovah a suitable abode was the natural outcome of his generous zeal for God's service. “See now,” said the king to the prophet Nathan, “I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.”

David's
old age

But it was no small innovation to build a house for Jehovah like the temples of the Philistine or Syrian gods, and to employ heathens for the purpose. The Israelites had been accustomed to great simplicity of worship. Their sanctuaries were often the open hill-top, their altars rocks projecting from the soil. The home of their sacred Ark had been an Arab's tent, and a temple such as David contemplated was a completely new departure. Nathan seems at first to have approved of the idea, but that night he was charged with a message to David from Jehovah forbidding him to build a temple. David was reminded that his proposal was without precedent, for since the day that Jehovah brought Israel out of Egypt He had not dwelt in any house, but the Ark had been removed from tent to tent and from dwelling to dwelling. In reward for his piety, however,

The Temple

David was promised a sure inheritance for his family, and it was hinted that his successor should be allowed to build a house for Jehovah (2 Sam. vii.).

In the books of Chronicles David is said to have devoted his latter days to planning how the Temple should be built, and instructing his son Solomon how to construct it. All the great wealth the king had accumulated was set aside for this sacred purpose, and the people accepted the royal invitation to contribute to the work with the same zeal as their fathers had shewn when the tabernacle was erected at the foot of Mount Sinai. King and people rejoiced at the abundant preparation they had made, and David blessed his God for putting it into the hearts of his people to offer so willingly. "Who am I," he cried, "and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee" (1 Chron. xxix. 14).

Thus gloriously, according to the imagination of devout Jews in the fourth and fifth centuries before Christ, did the famous reign of David terminate; the great king passed away with his kingdom tranquil, the succession secured to Solomon, and all in readiness for the work of building a temple for the God of all the earth (1 Chron. xxix. 26-30).

It is not without a pang that one turns from the ideal close of David's reign to the terribly realistic picture in the first chapter of Kings.

The extraordinary hardships and perils of his youth made David an old man before his time. His growing feebleness had been manifested during the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba, and before he was seventy years of age he had sunk into his dotage. He was committed to the care of a Shunammite damsel named Abishag, whilst his sons and their partisans were busied with preparations to seize the crown. Joab as usual was in the thick of these intrigues. Supported by Abiathar the priest, who was probably jealous of the rising influence of the family of Zadok, he furthered the claims of David's eldest son Adonijah. On the other side Bathsheba had extorted from David a promise to bequeath his kingdom to her son Solomon, then a mere youth. Her cause had the powerful aid of Nathan the prophet, Zadok the priest, and

David in his
dotage

Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, who was in command of the king's body-guard. Adonijah, probably at the instigation of Joab, made the first move. He invited his adherents to a banquet in the valley of the Kidron, at which the cry "God save King Adonijah!" was raised.

Not a moment was to be lost if Solomon's pretensions to the throne were to succeed, and Nathan urged Bathsheba to convey the news of Adonijah's usurpation to David. The aged king summoned Zadok and Benaiah, and bade them take the Cherethites and Pelethites and escort Solomon, mounted on the royal mule, to the pool of Gihon, in the Valley of Hinnom, and anoint him king. The ceremony was performed with all solemnity by Zadok and Nathan. Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, brought the tidings to Adonijah's banquet. The guests dispersed, and the pretender fled in terror to the sanctuary and clung to the horns of the altar. Solomon magnanimously spared his brother's life, but warned him that he would not pardon him if he again offended (1 Kings i.).

Solomon pro-
claimed king

Hitherto there had been no bloodshed, but Solomon's position was evidently most precarious. David is said to have given three injunctions to his son on his deathbed. First, he was on no account to spare Joab; secondly, he was to be kind to the household of Barzillai; and finally, he was to devise some pretext for executing Shimei (1 Kings ii. 5-9). It is impossible not to feel shocked at such advice being given by a king like David in the hour of death. Great as were his crimes, Joab had been a faithful friend to David. He had evidently made the Judæan monarchy secure, and had saved David's throne in two great emergencies. Yet the aged king may well have felt that Solomon could have no security as long as Joab lived; and subsequent events proved the correctness of this surmise. The advice respecting Shimei seems to be even less excusable. Shimei had merited death by cursing David, but had sought and obtained pardon. David had sworn not to put him to death, and yet his last recorded words are an injunction to Solomon, "Behold, there is with thee Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite, who cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me

David's advice
to Solomon

at Jordan, and I swear to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless, for thou art a wise man ; and thou wilt know what thou oughtest to do unto him, and thou shalt bring his hoary head down to the grave with blood."

So little is known of the circumstances that it is not just to condemn the dying king. Granted, however, that the house of Saul was still a danger to the dynasty, and that David considered the promise he had made to Shimei only binding on himself, it cannot be denied that the picture of the closing days of the aged David must have been indeed dark and terrible if his last thoughts were of vengeance and politic cruelty.

No sooner was David dead than Joab commenced his intrigues. He no doubt prompted Adonijah to ask Bathsheba to persuade Solomon to allow him to espouse Abishag. Solomon saw through the request: "Why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also ; for he is my elder brother : and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah." Adonijah was immediately put to death, and the aged Joab was torn from the horns of the altar and slain. Abiathar was banished to his estate at Anathoth. Shimei was ordered never to leave Jerusalem. For going in pursuit of two fugitive slaves he was by Solomon's command executed (1 Kings ii. 12 *ad fin.*).

David's figure is unique in the history of early Israel. It stands out distinct from all others. Of no other person in the Old Testament is so much recorded. His youth, his manhood, his old age—all are depicted. The names of his friends and relatives, of his wives and children, of his counsellors and his enemies, are carefully preserved. Their characters are vividly portrayed: Jonathan, Michal, Joab, Abigail, Absalom, Bathsheba, Ithai, Ahitophel and Shimei are not mere names but living personalities. Many words and sayings of David are recorded, revealing what manner of man he was. In the books of Samuel not only his virtues but his failings and weaknesses are portrayed with astonishing fidelity. With so much material it would appear no difficult task to arrive at a just estimate of the great king's personal character.

David's
character

The obstacle in the way of giving a true portrayal of David is due to the fact that he has been so idealised by posterity that, whilst feelings of reverence cause some to shrink from treating of him historically, others, in order to counteract the notion that in him a pattern for imitation in all ages is to be found, are prone to dwell on the worst points in his character.

To judge David aright it is necessary to take into account the circumstances of his life, and of the age and country in which he lived; to recollect that he was in turn shepherd, soldier, outlaw, mercenary leader, and finally, king over a nation just emerging from barbarism. But at the same time it must be remembered that under his guidance Israel passed from the lawless confusion of the age of Saul to the peace and splendour of the days of Solomon. In this way it will be possible to understand alike his necessary limitations, and his title to be considered a great man. To maintain that in such a career as David's every virtue could find a place, is as unreasonable as to deny that any but an exceptionally gifted man could have accomplished what he did.

Fortunately, it is the object of the Sacred Record, as preserved in the books of Samuel, to give an idea of what manner of man David actually was. His faults are certainly not concealed, but it is not these which perplex the reader, but rather the difficulty of reconciling what the author or compiler considers to be David's virtues with modern standards of right and wrong.

All traditions concerning David agree in stating that he was an attractive personality. He is introduced as a youth of a "ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon," and from the first he is successful in gaining the goodwill of others. He owed his life on one occasion to the devoted fidelity of his friend Jonathan, and on another to the wifely courage of Michal. Even when he served Achish he ingratiated himself so much with his Philistine master that despite appearances his confidence in him remained unshaken. As king, he maintained a hold on Joab, who, rude and violent as he shewed himself, stood by David in every great crisis. Ittai, mercenary soldier though he was, refused to forsake him when his people were in

His beauty

revolt. The greatness of David's crime in the matter of Uriah is intensified by the attachment the injured husband evidently had for the person of his sovereign. David's recorded words and acts help to account for the fascination he exercised over men's minds.

His chivalry

He was possessed of what may be termed a chivalrous sense of honour, and it is this which gives such a romantic colouring to his life and especially to his earlier years. Twice is he recorded to have spared Saul's life, and on each occasion to have taken some token from him as a proof that he could have slain him. In both conversations between Saul and David, when the monarch learns that he has been at the mercy of his enemy, the better nature of the jealous king asserts itself, and David shews his respect for him as the Anointed of Jehovah. The same generous spirit is displayed in the matter of the distribution of the spoils after the defeat of the Amalekites, and in the graceful acknowledgment of the devotion of the three mighty men who fetched water at David's request from the pool at Bethlehem. No soldier could forget how his commander had made the cup of water obtained at such risk into a sacrifice to Jehovah more costly than the richest libation, calling it "the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives."

His affectionate disposition

This romantic aspect of the character of David was due to the markedly affectionate side of his disposition. No words ever described the intensity of friendship so well as David's lament over Jonathan. His passionate grief over the sickness of Bathsheba's first-born child, his sorrow at the death of Absalom, reveal the deep tenderness of his nature. As long as the Bible is read the words, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" will be typical of the fullest expression of paternal love and affliction. Even in the story of his sin the same warm and impulsive character is displayed. Nothing, not even the circumstances of a wild and lawless age, can condone David's crime; but in the completeness of his repentance the character of a tender-hearted and generous man is revealed.

David's craft

Another side of the character of David is disclosed in the words describing how he slew Goliath: "And it came to pass,

when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened and ran towards the army to meet the Philistine. . And David put his hand in a bag, and took thence a stone and slang it; and smote the Philistine in his forehead; and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth."

The contrast lies between the Philistine giant trusting in splendid arms and brute strength, and the agile shepherd full of faith in his God, and at the same time too quick for his clumsy antagonist. This is David's attitude to the men of his time. Throughout the age of the Judges, with the single exception of Samuel, it had been the strength of the warrior that won the confidence of Israel. Saul towering above the people was typical of the ancient spirit. David, who was possibly distinguished neither for strength nor stature but was superior to all in mental gifts, was the sign that a new era had commenced. The mind, not the body, was to rule in Israel.

Thus in the books of Samuel especial stress is laid on the wisdom and prudence of David. Saul was told that the son of Jesse was "prudent (or skilful) in speech." When he was in the court of Saul he is thrice said to have "behaved wisely." The traditions dwell upon the varied expedients by which he escaped from Saul; on the prudence with which he slowly but surely secured the kingdom over all Israel. His sagacity was to his contemporaries more wonderful than his military prowess. The widow of Tekoa tells him that his discernment was like that of "the angel of God" (2 Sam. xiv.).

But among all Orientals and in most primitive societies there is a disposition to regard dishonesty as a proof of mental superiority. This is apparent in the narratives concerning David. Many actions of his inconsistent with Christian ideas of right and wrong are related without disapproval. His treachery to Ahimelech, the way in which Achish was duped, the deathbed advice given to Solomon in regard to Joab and Shimei, furnish sufficient examples of a craft, which can find no justification save by making due allowance for the tendencies of David's age.

In one respect, however, David was far in advance of his

**His hatred
of violence**

contemporaries. Everywhere his hatred of violent and lawless acts is apparent. The point of the story of the meeting with Abigail is that David admired her for her prudence in saving him from yielding to the temptation to avenge Nabal's gross insults. "Blessed be thy wisdom, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from blood-guiltiness, and from avenging myself with mine own hand" (1 Sam. xxv.).

The same tendency is repeatedly manifested in his acts as king, and to this the belief of later ages that the rule of David was typical of a righteous government may doubtless be attributed.

In primitive ages, when all the arts of life are comparatively simple, great men often appear as prominent in everything. David is conspicuous as warrior, statesman, musician, poet. The prophet Amos seems to imply that he introduced or invented musical instruments (Amos vi. 5): and according to the ancient tradition preserved in some of the headings to the Psalms an instrument called the Gittith, named after the Philistine city of Gath, is connected with David's compositions.

It has been already shewn that David disciplined his army on the Philistine model, and employed Phœnicians to build his palace. Being himself of mixed Israelite and Moabite stock, and having lived among the Philistines, he was naturally an intermediary between his people and the outside world, an introducer of the arts of nations more civilised than his own.

But though in sympathy with foreign culture, David was a devoted worshipper of the God of Israel: during the entire period covered by the books of Samuel no hint is given that the Israelites were guilty of apostasy. From the age of Eli to that of Solomon the people often offended Jehovah, but they are scarcely ever said to have forsaken Him for other gods. David believed himself to be under the special protection of the God of Israel. He attacks the Philistines in the name of "the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel." Saul's life is sacred in David's eyes because he is "the Anointed of Jehovah." He acknowledges that Jehovah sent Abigail to save him from blood-guiltiness. He strengthens himself in Jehovah in his hour of distress

His employ-
ment of
foreigners

David's
religion

after the sack of Ziklag. He has no shame in acting the part of a religious devotee, dancing before the Ark on its entry into the new capital. The dream of his life is to erect a temple to the God of Israel. He acknowledges his sin as a sin against Jehovah. In his utterances David also shews his genuine and heartfelt piety.

"It was the Lord," he says to Michal, "which chose me above thy father, and above all his house, to appoint me prince over the people of the Lord, over Israel; therefore will I play before the Lord" (2 Sam. vi. 21). To Nathan he contrasts his splendid palace with the tent which covers the Ark: "I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains" (2 Sam. vii. 2). He cannot bear to give God that which represents no self-denial on his part: "I will verily buy it of thee at a price" (2 Sam. xxiv. 24), he says to Araunah when the Jebusite offers him his threshing-floor: "neither will I offer burnt-offerings to the Lord my God which cost me nothing." When God offers him the choice of three evils for his sin in numbering the people, David says, "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great: and let us not fall into the hand of man" (2 Sam. xxiv. 14).

But though these utterances reveal that David was imbued with principles of true religion, it cannot be denied that in the earlier records he is not represented as altogether superior to the superstitions of his age. It would perhaps be unjust to attribute the slaughter of Saul's sons at the request of the Gibeonites entirely to cold-blooded policy. Rather was David actuated by a belief that the famine would not cease till the sons of the late king had expiated their father's crime in violating the ancient treaty with Gibeon; and it was for this reason that he permitted them to be hung up before Jehovah. This single incident however shews the impossibility of judging David by a Christian or even a modern standard (2 Sam. xxi. 1-14).

It is hardly too much to say that whatever may be the ultimate verdict of the critical study of the Old Testament, David's name will always be connected with the most wonderful product of the spiritual life of Israel—the Psalter. On this subject it may here suffice to observe that the ques-

His
superstition

The Psalms
of David

tion is and must always be one of probability. It can never be *proved* that David either did or did not write some of the Psalms attributed to him. The early tradition represents him as a poet, for the primitive musician seems in all cases to have sung his own compositions. The acts and sayings recorded reveal in David a poetic temperament. His romantic career, his strong affections, the love men and women bore him, alike testify to this. Even if it could be proved that none of the psalms as they now exist were actually composed by him, it seems unreasonable to assert positively that he could not have given to the religion of Israel that poetic impulse which culminated in the book long styled "the Psalms of David."¹¹

David's
portrayal
in Samuel

Justice can best be done to such a character as David's by remembering that his reign produced such an impression on his people that succeeding generations regarded him as the embodiment of all that a king should be. It is undeniable that he was no perfect man, that his career was stained by mistakes, failures, crimes. The remarkable thing is that these should have been so fearlessly recorded in the pages of Holy Writ. He belongs to an age so different from the present, that he is not easily understood; but the permanent impression upon the whole subsequent history of Israel made by his life is of itself sufficient to shew that St Paul rightly estimated his career when he said of him that he had "served the counsel of God in his own generation" (Acts xiii. 36).

Chapter VIII

Solomon

THE accession of Solomon is the beginning of a new era in Israel. His reign was marked by great material prosperity, and by an advance in those arts of life whereof civilisation consists. It is at least conceivable that David deliberately chose one of his younger sons to be his successor with this object in view, and that the alliance between his eldest surviving son, Adonijah, and Joab and Abiathar, was due to a desire to perpetuate the ancient condition of things. David's choice
of Solomon

Joab, as representing the fierce warriors who founded David's monarchy, and Abiathar, who had shared in the wild adventures of the early career of the king, possibly viewed the prospect of peace and order with apprehension, and strove to prevent it by placing a son of David upon the throne, who had been reared amid the lawless traditions of his father's youthful days. David, on the other hand, must have learned by bitter experience that his elder sons lacked all the qualifications necessary to the carrying on of his work, and that the accession of a son of his who resembled Amnon or Absalom, would mean national disaster. Under such circumstances the aged king may well have resolved upon training Solomon to become a worthy successor to the throne of Israel.¹

Such a theory helps to explain the difference in character between David and Solomon, and the peculiarities of their respective reigns. The founder of the dynasty was a soldier shepherd, who made his way to the front in a rough age by his courage and ability. His education was that of practical experience; his genius in war, in government, in poetry displayed itself spontaneously. It was otherwise with Solomon, who must have received a careful education. His wisdom is shewn in his superiority in knowledge to all his

contemporaries. It is possible that, like Moses, he was trained by Egyptian masters, whom his father had attracted to his court, for it is specially asserted that he excelled that nation in wisdom (1 Kings iv. 29-34). His government, different as it was from anything previously witnessed in Israel, was modelled on that of other nations, with whom he maintained constant intercourse. Everything points to the fact that Solomon had in his youth been trained in the arts of peace, and that David had looked forward to the time when his successor should do as much for the advancement of Israel in culture, as he had done in military achievement. The soldier king recognised the importance of education, and gave further proof of genius in choosing the most cultivated of his sons as his successor.

The rapid transition from barbarism to a highly civilised condition is characteristic of Oriental monarchies, and it is in consequence not unnatural that the son of a victorious shepherd, like David, should have inaugurated an age of literary culture and artistic refinement in Israel. Not that Solomon was greater than his father, whose prophetic foresight had provided for the period of prosperity enjoyed by Israel under his successor. It is not too much to say that Solomon would have accomplished little of importance had not his father prepared the way. David and his son represent two types of character, the genius which inspires and the trained mind which carries out the design of another. As the spirit of David waxed fainter, the prosperity of Israel declined, and the nation, whilst ever mindful of the glories of Solomon, never forgot that in David was the ideal of true kingship.

Historical
account of
Solomon

It has been truly remarked that whereas the records of early Israel are of the nature of annals, the reign of Solomon is treated historically, the documents being so arranged in the Bible as to mark the progress of events and to indicate their causes. For this reason the troubles of Solomon's reign are related last, in order to account for the decay of his power in the later years of his life, when he forsook Jehovah (1 Kings xi. 1-25).²

Early years
of Solomon

But in the description of Solomon's adversaries there are not wanting indications to shew that they were active at an

early period of his reign, and that the young king did not establish himself on his throne without difficulty.

The suppression of Adonijah's conspiracy was the triumph of the youthful party of peace and culture. Joab and Abiathar, the warrior and the priest of ancient Israel, had succumbed in the struggle against Solomon, in whom the spirit of a humaner age seemed to be incarnate. It is not therefore to be wondered at that the nations which David had subdued made an attempt to throw off the yoke of his successor.

David's war with Edom seems to have been a fierce and sanguinary one. One incident, the victory of Israel in the Valley of Salt (2 Sam. viii. 13; 1 Chron. xviii. 11; Ps. lx. *title*), is recorded in Sacred History, but it is possible that on another occasion the Edomites rose and massacred the Israelite settlers in their country. A punitive expedition was undertaken by Joab, who with characteristic ferocity put every male he found in Edom to the sword. Only one member of the royal house escaped—Hadad, a mere child, whom a band of Edomite warriors managed to take first to Midian, and finally to Egypt. David's progress was evidently regarded with jealousy in that country; for Hadad was kindly received by the Pharaoh, who gave him a house and estate, and married him to the sister of Tahpenes, the queen. Hadad's son, named Genubath, was brought up in the palace among the royal children. When the news that David and Joab were dead reached Egypt, Hadad asked permission to return to his own country. But the political aspect of affairs had changed with Solomon's accession, and Hadad found no support from the Pharaoh who had given his daughter in marriage to the King of Israel. But, like a true patriot, the Edomite prince could not bear to live in luxury in a strange land, when his countrymen were under a foreign yoke. He returned to Edom and caused Solomon no little trouble. It appears, however, that the country was again subdued by the Israelites, as Solomon was able to carry on an important trade in the Red Sea (1 Kings xi. 14-22; ix. 26-28).

In the north an even more formidable adversary arose. Syria Rezon, a vassal of Hadadezer, King of Zobah, threw off his allegiance when his master was defeated by David (2 Sam.

viii. 3-12; x. 16-18), and became a freebooter. When Solomon succeeded his father, Rezon had become sufficiently powerful to seize Damascus and to proclaim himself king. It is said that he was in alliance with Hadad, and he was certainly never thoroughly conquered, for in the book of Kings he is described as "an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, besides the mischief that Hadad did: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria" (1 Kings xi. 23-25).

Hamath

A single verse in the late book of Chronicles relates that Solomon went in person on one warlike expedition against Hamath-Zobah, which he captured, thus fixing the northern boundary of his kingdom on the Orontes (2 Chron. viii. 3). How the dispute with this distant city arose is not known, and it is somewhat surprising when it is borne in mind that David had been a close ally of Toi, King of Hamath (2 Sam. viii. 9, 10).

It is possible that Rezon had expelled Toi or his son, and that Solomon led his forces to Hamath to avenge his allies. At any rate the effects of this obscure campaign seem to have been permanent, as, long after the division of the kingdoms Hamath is said to have belonged to Judah (2 Kings xiv. 28).³

Egypt

From the Exodus to the days of Solomon Israel seems to have had no intercourse with Egypt. The chief cause of this was that Egypt had been too distracted to interfere in the affairs of Palestine, and the Israelite people, confined to the central districts of the country, took little interest in foreign nations. Directly, however, Israel became a power in Western Asia, it was drawn into relations with Egypt, and the high place Solomon held in the estimation of the surrounding nations is shewn by the fact that he alone of all the kings of Israel was son-in-law to a Pharaoh. His wife's dowry was Gezer, a city taken by the Egyptian king in one of his expeditions in Southern Palestine, where doubtless he learned of the power and stability of Solomon's throne (1 Kings iii. 1; ix. 16).⁴

Solomon's
gift of
wisdom

Thus, in the first years of his reign Solomon seems to have proved himself worthy of the great inheritance bequeathed to him by his father. He had triumphed over faction at home and hostility abroad, and had entered into a firm alliance with the greatest monarch in the known world. Before four

years had elapsed he was able to enter upon comprehensive schemes for the benefit of his empire. How lofty were the aims of the young king is illustrated by the story of his famous choice of wisdom. Jehovah appeared to him in a dream at Gibeon, and bade him ask for a favour at His hands. Solomon in answer prayed for "an understanding heart to judge this people, that I may discern between good and evil: for who is able to judge this Thy great people?" Jehovah granted his request, and added a promise that He would give him such riches and honour "that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee in all thy days." As a proof of Solomon's power of discernment, the story of the famous judgment, which discovered the mother of the living child by ordering it to be divided between the two claimants, is next related in the book of Kings (1 Kings iii. 4-15; 2 Chron. i. 3-13; 1 Kings iii. 16-28).

It was generally believed by later ages that Jehovah had given to Israel all the territory between the Euphrates and the Brook of Egypt, as the Wady-el-Arish is styled in the Bible; and these were believed to have been the limits of Solomon's dominions. In one place his empire is said to have extended from Tiphseh or Thapsacus on the Euphrates to Gaza (1 Kings iv. 24). David had effectually subdued Moab and Ammon (2 Sam. viii., x., xii. 26-31), and, despite Hadad's efforts to shake off the yoke of Judah, Edom still remained a subject territory. The victorious armies of David's generals had subdued the Syrians of Zobah, and Solomon had taken Hamath; so that practically all Syria south of the Orontes acknowledged his sway (2 Sam. viii., x.; 2 Chr. viii. 3). His empire

But it cannot be maintained that this extensive empire possessed any elements of permanency. The Israelites were probably comparatively few in number, and had only just asserted their supremacy in Palestine. Except in the immediate neighbourhood of his own territory, Solomon had to be content with the payment of tribute by the kings of conquered or allied nations (1 Kings x. 14, 15). That, however, his power was considerable is proved by his being able to organise an extensive commerce, and to build cities for the purpose far away from his capital.

Commerce

Solomon encouraged commerce, thereby bringing his people into relations with distant nations, and familiarising them with the arts of a higher civilisation than their own. In this he was only following in the footsteps of his predecessor, for David had already entered into an alliance with the Phœnician king Hiram of Tyre (1 Kings v. 1; 2 Chron. ii. 3.) It was for the benefit of both nations: the Tyrian sailors bought the corn grown in the valleys of Northern Israel, and the Israelites needed the help of skilled Phœnician craftsmen (1 Kings v. 8-11; see also Acts xii. 20). The time of Solomon is remarkable as being the age in which the ancient Israelites began to appreciate the arts of life, and to display some of the characteristics of the modern Jews. Hitherto they had perhaps ranked lower in the scale of civilisation than most of the surrounding nations, but in the peace and prosperity they now enjoyed they developed new qualities: a love of splendour and luxury, a remarkable aptitude for commerce, and a mechanical skill, which in later days made Jerusalem famous for its craftsmen (2 Kings xxiv. 14).

With the growth of trade their horizon expanded; they learned to take an interest in other nations, and a spirit of adventure began to carry them to the distant parts of the then known world.

Solomon recognised that his territory lay in the midst of an important trade route, and resolved to make it the medium of communication between Egypt and the East. From the Philistine city of Gaza to Tiphseh on the Euphrates he controlled the caravan routes, and it is said that Tadmor or Palmyra was built by him (1 Kings ix. 18; 2 Chron. viii. 4). The principal trade at this epoch was in chariots, and in horses bred in Egypt, so Solomon acted as an intermediary between that country and the Hittite or Canaanite kings. A chariot was valued at 600 silver shekels, and a horse at the fourth of that sum (1 Kings x. 29). One remarkable result of this traffic is that, whereas in David's time the Israelites regarded horses as animals to be destroyed rather than utilised, after Solomon the war-chariot came into general use in their armies.

Navigation

In addition to the trade by land Solomon took the bold

step of extending his commerce by sea. Save in one disputed passage in the Song of Deborah (Judges v. 17), no hint is given of the early Israelites engaging in any maritime occupation. The coasts of the Mediterranean were occupied by the Philistines and the Phœnicians, so the Israelites had no opportunity of embarking on the great and wide sea they saw from their hills, even if they had desired to do so. But under Solomon not only was timber brought from Tyre on rafts to Joppa, but finally the king with the assistance of his Phœnician ally built ships to navigate the Red Sea, and to import gold from the remote land of Ophir. "A navy of Tarshish" is also mentioned (1 Kings ix. 26-28; x. 22), which returned every three years bringing the strange products of unknown lands, called by names so foreign to the Hebrew tongue, that their very meaning is uncertain: the derivation of the words rendered in the English Bible by "ivory, apes and peacocks" being sought, perhaps in vain, in the languages of ancient India. It seems to be an established fact that from the days of Solomon the kings of Judah kept open the road from Elath on the Gulf of Akabah to Hebron and Jerusalem, despite all the efforts of the turbulent Edomites: their wealth and prosperity depended on its maintenance (1 Kings xxii. 48; 2 Kings xvi. 6).

The first effect of the opening up of mercantile enterprise among a noble nation is not always a thirst for gain. The sight of the products of remote countries, the knowledge of distant peoples diverse in habits and customs from themselves, and of lands unlike anything they have seen, stimulates in men a spirit of inquiry, and renders their minds more capable of great efforts. Thus the greatest products of the human intellect have emanated from communities which a growing trade has begun to render enterprising.

As the greatest age of Athenian genius synchronised with her commercial supremacy, or as the manifestation of a spirit of adventure, which led Englishmen westward in quest of gain, coincided with the literary glories of the Elizabethan age—so may the enterprises inaugurated by Solomon have fostered the beginnings of an undying literature among the Hebrews. The peace and security enjoyed in Israel may

well have prepared the way for the rise of a generation of historians, thinkers and poets.

Solomon's
officers

The very enumeration of Solomon's officials reveals the greatness of the transition from the wild times of Saul and David to an age of culture and refinement (1 Sam. xiv. 50 ; 2 Sam. viii. 15-18).

Eleven princes are named, but as the two priests Zadok and Abiathar, and David's "recorder" Jehoshaphat are included in the catalogue, it is possible that there may be some confusion in the text. Besides the royal "priests" there were two scribes, one recorder, the "king's friend," the chiefs of the host, of the household, of the provincial governors, and of the forced levy (1 Kings iv. 1-6).

Division of
Israel into
Districts

Next in rank to the princes were the twelve rulers of the Israelites, who were assigned districts, little attention being paid to tribal distinctions. This was probably a matter of policy. Solomon recognised that the clan system prevalent among the Hebrews was not compatible with his view of national unity. The tribal jealousies had prevented concerted action in the days of the Judges (Judges v., viii., xii.), and had possibly been the cause of Samuel's failure to secure a regular government (1 Sam. viii. 1-3), and also the reason for the collapse of the house of Saul. They had certainly added to the troubles of David's declining years. By ignoring tribal boundaries Solomon evidently hoped to make his people forget their family feuds, and unite in striving after national aggrandisement. But the king was not able to carry out his policy in the far north, for Issachar, Asher and Naphtali had their own governors—nor dare he alienate the powerful tribe of Ephraim by apportioning its territory among his officers. First on the list stands the name of Mount Ephraim, and its ruler Ben-Hur. The territory of Benjamin remained intact under Shimei son of Elah, whose name suggests the possibility of his having been of the family of Saul. Several of these provincial rulers were married to princesses of the royal house (1 Kings iv. 8-20).

To each of the twelve districts Solomon assigned the duty of providing for his court month by month. The daily consumption of food as given in the book of Kings seems to indicate that the *entourage* of Solomon was as numerous as

that of the great Assyrian monarchs. The hunters must have scoured Syria to provide game for the royal household, as wild animals are mentioned as being sent for its consumption. It needed no small amount of organisation to furnish barley for the immense number of horses in the royal stalls, which one account estimates as high as 40,000 (1 Kings iv. 26).

The splendour of Solomon's court was accompanied by great national prosperity. From being a people at most able to hold its own in the centre of Palestine, and often subject to its more powerful neighbours, the Israelites became an aristocracy. From them it is said Solomon chose his rulers and warriors, whilst the ancient Canaanites were forced to labour at the royal buildings (1 Kings ix. 20-22; 2 Chron. viii. 7-9). But in the places chosen by the king for his most important fortresses, there are indications of a certain consciousness of weakness, since "Beth-horon the nether," at least, was in the immediate neighbourhood of his capital and served to guard the approach to it from the Maritime Plain (1 Kings ix. 18). His fortresses, however, were in every part of the country. Like all powerful Oriental rulers, Solomon made extensive use of forced labour to fortify Jerusalem by a wall, as well as to strengthen Hazor and Megiddo in the north, and Gezer in the south. Numerous cities were built to contain his chariots and to act as store cities (1 Kings ix. 18, 19).

The wealth of Solomon, according to the late tradition of the Chronicles, is stated to have been incredibly great, owing to the immense accumulations made by David for the erection of the Temple (1 Chron. xxviii., xxix.); but in the more sober narrative of the book of Kings his annual revenue is said to have been six hundred and sixty-six talents (1 Kings x. 14)—a number of significant import to the student of the Apocalypse. Besides this, mention is made of four hundred and twenty talents being brought from Ophir (1 Kings ix. 28). As in more recent times, wealth was believed to consist in the possession of the precious metal rather than in its purchasing power, and the gold was used either for the decoration of the Temple and palace, or stored in the form of shields made to be suspended in the house of the forest of Lebanon (1 Kings x. 16, 17). The source of

Wealth of
Solomon

Solomon's wealth was his extensive trade, and the tribute paid by the vassal kings.

Magnificence
of Solomon

Solomon had evidently a great love of magnificence; all traditions agree in this. It was this which surprised the Queen of Sheba, as well as the Shulamite maiden in the Song of Songs. This is how he appears in the latter:—

“Behold, it is the litter of Solomon ;
Threescore mighty men are about it,
Of the mighty men of Israel.
They all handle the sword, and are expert in war ;
Every man hath his sword upon his thigh,
Because of fear in the night.
King Solomon made himself a palanquin
Of the wood of Lebanon.
He made the pillars thereof of silver,
The bottom thereof of gold, the seat of it purple.

.
Go forth, ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon,
With the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the
day of his espousals,
And in the day of the gladness of his heart”

(Song of Songs iii. 7-11).

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon is made to describe his magnificence in these terms:—

“I made me great works ; I builded me houses ; I planted me vineyards ; I made me gardens and parks, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit : I made me pools of water, to water therefrom the forest where trees were reared. . . . I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces. I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men. . . . (Eccles. ii. 4-8.)

Josephus has probably this passage in mind when he relates that Solomon had magnificent gardens at Etham, about fifty furlongs from Jerusalem, whither he was accustomed to go in state in his chariot accompanied by his warriors. He had also a palace in the Lebanon.

His wives

It is a necessity for an Oriental ruler to display his wealth by expending part of it in maintaining a large harem, and policy dictates that his wives should be chosen from all parts of his dominions. David had several wives,

and it was only natural that his wealthy and luxurious son should exceed him in this respect. The ancient Hebrews were not monogamists save from poverty, and a large number of wives and concubines would be regarded as a proof of wealth and power. In the book of Kings, Solomon is said to have had 700 princesses as wives, and 300 others of inferior rank (1 Kings xi. 3). This is hardly credible, and the Song of Songs, in allusion to Solomon's harem, says, "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number": a more probable estimate (Song vi. 8). A Deuteronomic writer in the book of Kings blames Solomon for allying himself with the daughters of the surrounding nations, declaring that this was the cause of his apostasy; and in the book of Deuteronomy the King of Israel is forbidden to multiply wives—an evident allusion to Solomon (1 Kings xi. 3, 4; Deut. xvii. 17). It is not nowever perhaps just to reproach him as guilty of unbridled sensuality, as this charge is not made in the Bible.

The Israelites are said to have shared in the prosperity of their sovereign. From the days of Solomon, they became the leading race in Palestine, nor was their supremacy disputed by the other inhabitants of the country till the fall of the nation. The old Canaanites were put to forced labour, but "Judah and Israel" are described as being as "many as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry" (1 Kings iv. 20).

There is something very pathetic in these chapters of the book of Kings, in which the wealth of Solomon and the glory of his reign is set forth with so much detail. Throughout the long history of Israel there is no period of prosperity in any way resembling it. It is hardly to be wondered that the sacred historians should linger over the sole era of earthly greatness enjoyed by their nation, and should proudly recall the time when cedars were as plentiful in their land as the sycamores in the Shephelah, and record that silver itself "was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon" (1 Kings x. 21, 27; 2 Chron. i. 15, ix. 27).

Solomon is the first Israelite who has left any permanent trace of his work upon earth. David's palace was of wood (2 Sam. vii. 2), and till the age of his son there is no

record of the Hebrews using stone to construct anything considerable.

Zion

It is by no means agreed as to what was the situation of the stronghold of Zion, which David took from the Jebusites, and called the City of David. In the days of Josephus tradition placed it on the Western Hill separated from the Temple by the Tyropœan Valley. This tradition is strengthened by the fact that both the Hasmonæans and Herod had built their palaces there. Recently, however, the theory has been propounded that the City of David was on a spur of the Eastern Hill to the south of the Temple, and was subsequently known as Ophel. In this case it would overhang the valley of the Kidron and dominate the Pool of Gihon, now known as the Virgin's Spring.⁵

After David had occupied the city, the Israelites lived at peace with the Jebusites, and when the plague broke out on the occasion of David's numbering the people, the king acquired the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite on which the destroying angel was seen to rest (2 Sam. xxiv. 18; 1 Chron. xxi. 18). This became the site of the Temple and Palace of Solomon (2 Chron. iii. 1). If therefore the City of David lay on the Eastern Hill, the buildings of Solomon were an extension of those which his father had commenced.

So great are the associations connected with the name of David that it is hard to realise how small a place Jerusalem was in all probability in his day. The city never covered an extensive area, and its situation prevented it from becoming a great and populous capital.

The Jebusite town was conceivably a hill fortress of unusual strength, and capable of being held by a very small force. David captured it and made it his residence; but his subjects were not addicted to city life, and probably few save those connected with the court and army settled in Zion. When Solomon succeeded his father he set to work to erect larger buildings for himself and his court; but little is said of the growth of a great city around these. It may be therefore permissible to regard the Jerusalem of both David and Solomon as a royal residence rather than as a populous town.

On this supposition the relation of the Temple to the other royal edifices may be surmised. Owing to the statements in the book of Chronicles, and to the colouring given to that of Kings by the Deuteronomic editor, it is generally assumed that the erection of the Temple was a national undertaking (1 Kings viii. 1 ; 1 Chron. xxviii., xxix.). But it is perhaps more correct to infer from the narrative in the Kings that Solomon's Temple was only a part of a great architectural scheme, consisting of palace, judgment hall, arsenal and sanctuary. Certainly the successors of Solomon treated the Temple as private property, altering the details, and even introducing alien objects of worship according to their pleasure (1 Kings xv. 18 ; 2 Kings xvi. 15).

The Royal
Buildings

Nor was Solomon's Temple at first recognised as the national sanctuary. Even in Judah, Hebron and Beersheba were apparently regarded as spots of equal, if not greater sanctity (2 Sam. xv. 7 ; Amos viii. 14). The presence of the Ark undoubtedly made all Israel look with reverence to the new Temple, but Jerusalem had not yet the venerable associations connected with Shiloh, Bethel, Gilgal, Shechem or Dan. The day when the thoughts of every worshipper of Jehovah should turn to Jerusalem as the one spot on earth where He could be worshipped aright, was as yet far distant.

The Temple

But these considerations cannot in any way minimise the importance of the act of Solomon in erecting a Temple at Jerusalem. No building in the world has been revered like it. Its very ruins have aroused an enthusiasm such as no other sanctuary has inspired in its most flourishing condition. By this act Solomon set his seal for ever on the earth. When all seemed lost, the faith of Israel clung to the Temple built by him, and its fall seemed only to increase the reverence felt for the spot. To thousands at the present day it is still the symbol of all that is most desirable upon earth—a union of the human race in brotherly charity based upon the Fatherhood of God.

It is a noteworthy fact that the Temple was built by Phœnician craftsmen, and that both David and Solomon sought the aid of Hiram, King of Tyre, to introduce their subjects to the arts of life (1 Kings v.). The Israelites

Phœnician
influence

were never in much sympathy with Egypt, and even their long sojourn in that country seems to have had little influence on their customs or beliefs. They had gone down to the land of the Pharaohs as nomads, they had lived on its frontiers in the same manner as their ancestors had lived in Haran or Palestine, and they left it unchanged. But once settled in Canaan, they began to feel the attraction of the people among whom they dwelt and to assimilate themselves to their manner of life. When they came into contact with the adventurous and highly civilised Phœnicians of Tyre, they immediately experienced the fascination of that famous city, and sought to acquire all that it could teach. For several generations after David had allied himself with Hiram, the Israelites sought the friendship of the Phœnicians of the northern coasts, gaining on the one hand much in material civilisation, but on the other losing much of the vigour of their early faith by contact with one of the most corrupting religions of antiquity. If the Phœnicians built Solomon's Temple, they also introduced the Baal-worship into Israel.

Hiram

Besides sending skilled craftsmen and timber from Lebanon, Hiram, at Solomon's request, despatched a famous worker in bronze, the traditional architect of the Temple, Hiram-abi. This remarkable man was, on his mother's side, of the tribe of Naphtali or Dan (1 Kings vii. 13 ; 2 Chron. ii. 14, iv. 16), but his father was a Tyrian, an example of the fusion of race which was in all probability constantly going on in Northern Israel. He worked in the valley of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan, where the ground was suitable for casting metals. It was here that the two famous brazen pillars, which bore the names of Boaz and Jachin, were made to adorn the entry to the new sanctuary, and also the brazen laver resting on twelve oxen, with the ten bases on which the lavers were wheeled from place to place (1 Kings vii. 15 ff. ; 2 Chron. iii. 15—iv. 17). The conveyance of these vast objects from the Arabah to Jerusalem demanded no small engineering skill.⁶

Forced labour was largely employed by Solomon in his architectural schemes, and Adoniram was entrusted with its supervision (1 Kings iv. 6). It would appear, despite some

statements to the contrary, that the Israelites were not exempted from labouring in the royal works, though they may have had a more honourable position than the Canaanite toilers.

Everything related in the Sacred Narrative tends to shew how carefully the work was organised by Solomon, who seems to have possessed a passion for order and detail (1 Kings iv.). Perhaps because it had been commanded to employ only unhewn stones in the erection of altars to Jehovah, all the stone was prepared at a distance, and brought to Jerusalem, so that the work of building might proceed there without sound of axe or hammer (1 Kings vi. 7). To prepare the ground for the palace and the Temple was no light task, and Josephus records that in doing so Solomon "filled up valleys with earth, which a man could only look down upon with pain." The area covered by all Solomon's buildings was, however, not nearly equal to the space occupied by Herod's Temple.

The Temple itself was not a large building, and the general plan and design was borrowed from Assyria or Phœnicia. The dimensions were exactly double those of the Tabernacle; and it has been maintained that in its construction it reproduced a tent sanctuary, but in more durable materials. The proportions of its two chambers were rigidly mathematical, the Holy of Holies being a perfect cube, and the Holy Place an oblong chamber, the length being double the breadth and height. Around the Temple were chambers ranged in three storeys, the lower rooms being the smallest and the upper the largest. A winding staircase led from the middle to the upper chambers. Both the inner and the outer sanctuaries were cased with cedar and overlaid with gold.

The building was redeemed from insignificance by the lofty porch, which Josephus says was 120 cubits or 180 feet in height, and was further adorned by the brazen pillars, which were either used as altars, or stood as obelisks in front of the Temple. But the decorations were probably more worthy of admiration than the architecture. The Tyrian designers were evidently allowed to give full play to their invention, unhampered by Israelitish scruples against images. The enormous cherubim in the Holy Place were

The Porch

reproduced on the doors, on the laver, and on the bases. The pomegranate, emblem of fertility, adorned the chapters of the brazen pillars. Bulls, emblems perhaps of the great tribe of Ephraim, supported the laver; and the lion of Judah was carved on the bases, and stood by Solomon's throne. One cannot but be reminded of the early Christians, who were compelled to borrow their symbolism from pagan art, when like the Israelites they had no artistic traditions of their own (1 Kings vi. 14-38).

Dedication

The Temple was finished in seven years and was dedicated in the seventh month, which the Hebrews regarded with peculiar veneration. The Ark and the vessels of the sanctuary were brought by the priests and Levites to the new Temple, and on this occasion only the Ark was opened; and "There was nothing in the Ark, save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb." Throughout the ceremonies Solomon took the leading part, acting, to all appearances, as both priest and king. His lips pronounced alike the blessing and the prayer of Dedication. His first utterance was:—

"The Lord said He would dwell in the thick darkness.
I have surely built Thee an house of habitation,
A place for Thee to dwell in for ever."

The prayer put in the king's mouth appears to be the echo of a later and sadder age. The plagues foretold in Deuteronomy as destined to fall on rebellious Israel are anticipated—war, pestilence, famine and captivity; and Jehovah is earnestly besought to pardon His erring people. The same may be said of Jehovah's answer to Solomon, in which a warning is given, that idolatry will bring destruction upon the Temple he has built. "Israel shall become a proverb and a by-word among all people: and though this house be so high, yet shall every one that passeth by it be astonished and shall hiss, and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done this unto this land and to this house? And they shall answer: Because they forsook the Lord their God, which brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt" (1 Kings vi. 37-38; viii., ix. 1-9).

The Palace

The palace of Solomon comprised the so-called "House of the Forest of Lebanon," a magnificent hall supported by

forty-five pillars in three rows. It was approached by the porch of pillars in front of which was the royal seat of judgment. Here at the gate of his palace the king sat, in true Oriental fashion, to administer justice on a magnificent throne of ivory supported by twelve sculptured lions. The throne was the wonder of the world; "the like of it was not seen in any kingdom," and later ages delighted in traditions of its wonderful construction (1 Kings vii. 1-12; x. 18-20). The "House of the Forest of Lebanon" was used, not only as an audience chamber, but as an armoury. Here hung the shields of the purest gold, which Solomon had made, and also the arms of the great warriors of David, to be used a century later to restore his dynasty (2 Kings xi. 10). The palace itself consisted of a royal residence, and of a house specially built for the accommodation of Pharaoh's daughter. The enormous stones used in these buildings were the marvel of succeeding ages. The vast erections which made up the palace of Solomon stood on the hill south of the Temple and were thirteen years in the course of construction (1 Kings vii. 1).^{6a}

The culmination of the glory of Solomon seems to have been attained when the Queen of Sheba, probably some district in Arabia Felix, came to visit him on hearing the report of his wisdom. The purpose of this visit was to find out whether Solomon was really wise by asking him hard questions or riddles. This practice is found among many ancient nations, and Menander relates that Solomon and Hiram of Tyre had many encounters of wit and used to wager that one could not answer the other's questions. At first Solomon prevailed, but at last Hiram secured the aid of a boy named Abdermon, who was able to solve every difficulty propounded. The Queen of Sheba received an answer to every question; and when she saw the magnificence of the court of Israel, the attendance of the ministers, the gorgeous palaces and temples, "there was no more spirit in her." "It was a true report," she exclaimed, "that I heard in my own land of thine acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words till I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and behold the half was not told me." Among the gifts which this queen bestowed on Solomon were gold, precious

The Queen
of Sheba

stones, and such abundance of spices as the Israelites never received before or since (1 Kings x. 1-13).

Solomon's
extravagance

As Solomon's reign advanced he discovered that his enormous expenditure had begun to hamper his resources. The supply of corn which Israel was able to yield was insufficient to pay the Tyrians for the valuable products of their trade and country which had been lavished upon the Temple and palace at Jerusalem. The produce of twenty cities in the land of Galilee (the first time this famous name is applied to the district) was assigned by Solomon to Hiram in payment of his debts. Even this did not satisfy Hiram, and the district became known as the land of Cabul (1 Kings ix. 10-12; 2 Chron. viii. 2; Josh. xix. 27).

Unpopularity
of Solomon's
rule

From this it is evident that the prosperity of Solomon had reached its zenith, and had already begun to decline. The civilisation he had introduced was not suited to his people, who were neither sufficiently advanced to appreciate its advantages, nor willing to pay the price of their independence. The Israelites had developed no civilisation of their own. From their settlement in Canaan to the death of David the conditions of life had been of the simplest. The patriarchal system of government prevailed. Each little town was inhabited by rude farmers who tilled the land around, and managed their own affairs. There were strong tribal and family ties, but those of nationality were hardly recognised.

Orderly government was unknown; justice was, it is true, occasionally administered, but it was generally understood to be best secured by the carrying out of a blood feud by the nearest relatives.

In a community of this description, in which every tribe, every town and even every individual is impressed with the necessity of self-preservation, a spirit of independence is sure to develop, and among the ancient Israelites, a race of farmers living on the land their forefathers had wrested from the surrounding peoples, it was especially strong. The great landowners or tribal chiefs acknowledged no superior. Nabal the Calebite seems to have regarded himself as entirely independent of Saul (1 Sam. xxv. 10). Araunah, though a Jebusite dwelling near the stronghold David had taken

from his people, treats the monarch as an equal (2 Sam. xxiv. 22, 23; 1 Chron. xxi. 21-23). Barzillai the Gileadite welcomes David as a fugitive from Absalom with the dignity of one who is paramount in his own territory (2 Sam. xix. 31-32). Nothing will induce Naboth to part with his land to gratify King Ahab (1 Kings xxi. 3); and the Shunammite woman, who entertained Elisha, told the prophet when he offered to advance her interests at the king's court, that she needed nothing. "I dwell among mine own people," are her words (2 Kings iv. 13). To rule a people so independent, so proud of their ancestral inheritances, and so nobly simple in their manner of life, was no easy task.

As is often the case with a landed aristocracy, the ancient Israelites disliked trade, preferring the rude plenty they enjoyed on their estates to the refinements of life. Solomon on the other hand encouraged commerce, which could only have been done by employing foreigners to assist his schemes. The king's merchants were not likely to have been Israelites, but Tyrians, or Canaanites, and the business they conducted was alien to the habits and sentiments of the majority of the Hebrew nation.

Equally un-Hebraic was Solomon's government. The king evidently possessed a genius for organisation. His kingdom was marked out into districts to supply the royal table month by month. The levies started to the Lebanon regularly, one relieving the other in due order. They were so carefully officered, that every one in Israel, whether Hebrew or Canaanite, had his place and his work. But all this made the government almost intolerable. The Hebrews, accustomed to the utmost independence, resented being put to anything like forced labour, and saw that this elaborate organisation was detrimental to liberty. In addition to this, there was the jealousy always existing between Israel and Judah. This had partially slumbered under David, was repressed with difficulty in the days of Solomon, and burst into a flame in those of his successor (2 Sam. xix. 43 and xx.; 1 Kings xi. 26-40; xii.).

It is usual to assume that Solomon was so enervated by luxury that he allowed his authority to become weak in his later years, but this view is hardly borne out in the Sacred

Narrative. In dealing with sedition he shewed a vigour which even David failed to display.

**Revolt of
Jeroboam**

From the confused narrative of the book of Kings, it is safe to infer that the tribe of Ephraim headed an attempt to overthrow Solomon's authority (1 Kings xi., LXX.). The leader was Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, whom Solomon had employed in fortifying Jerusalem, and recognising his ability had entrusted the forced labour demanded of Ephraim to his supervision (1 Kings xi. 28). Jeroboam was doubtless supported by his tribe, and possibly by others as well, if he is correctly represented as fortifying Tirzah and assuming royal state (1 Kings xii. 25. LXX.). Among the leaders of the movement was a prophet named Ahijah of Shiloh, whose native place suggests the idea that he may have viewed with jealousy the rising sanctuary at Jerusalem. In this case the intolerable severity of the forced labour combined with a religious grievance to arouse the resentment of the whole people. Solomon, however, was sufficiently strong to repress all symptoms of disaffection. Jeroboam fled to Egypt, and it was made evident that nothing could shake the royal authority as long as Solomon lived.

**Solomon in
legend and
in Scripture**

Solomon is the most impersonal as well as one of the most secular characters in the Old Testament. Save a few hints concerning the first period of his reign, there are no data to assist in forming an estimate of him. Unlike that of his father, his fame rests on the magnificence with which he was surrounded, rather than on the attractiveness of his personality and the fervency of his zeal. It is consequently almost impossible to say what the actual Solomon was like, or to define his religious position. Of the Eastern potentates of antiquity, three have an abiding hold on the imagination—Nimrod, the mighty Hunter before the Lord, Solomon, and Alexander the Great. Of these Solomon fills perhaps the greatest space as a wonder-worker excelling mankind in his magical skill, and in his knowledge of the language of birds and beasts. The Hebrew Scriptures take a severer view, and the book of Kings depicts him as a man who forgot Jehovah in the days of his prosperity (1 Kings xi. 1-8). One of the many interpretations of the Song of Songs regards Solomon as the luxurious and splendid king, who sought in

vain the love of the fair Shulamite maiden, whilst she remained constant to her rustic lover. In the book of Ecclesiastes, the writer, assuming the rôle of Solomon, speaks as a voluptuary, tired of pleasure and weary of the world. In each case the scriptural verdict is unfavourable.

It must, however, be borne in mind that the earliest estimate of Solomon, that of the book of Kings, belongs to an age centuries after his reign, when the religious ideal was totally different. Solomon's sin was then said to have been twofold. He intermarried with the heathen, and in consequence his wives turned away his heart in his old age, and he was led by them into idolatry (1 Kings xi. 4). An abiding witness of his apostasy were the sanctuaries to Moloch and Chemosh erected on the "Mount that is before Jerusalem," which were not destroyed till the days of Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 13).⁷ In the days of his immediate descendants the Temple itself was filled with objects of idolatry (1 Kings xv. 12-15). To understand how far Solomon was guilty of religious apostasy it would be absolutely necessary to ascertain the precise character of the religion of the Israelites before his accession. This is an almost impossible task, and any statement on this subject must be made with hesitation. Israel under Solomon underwent its third great change. At first a collection of wandering tribes, driving their cattle from pasture to pasture, the Israelites were addicted to a very simple worship of Jehovah, the national God. On settling in Canaan, Israel became an agricultural nation, and adopted many of the religious beliefs and customs of the natives of Palestine. David, the Shepherd King, was devoted to Jehovah, the God of his ancestors, and shewed no disposition to worship the gods of the tillers of the soil, even when he became king. Solomon, however, represented neither the ancient Israelitish nomad, nor the more modern settler in Canaan. He was reared in an Oriental court and was devoted to foreign luxury and refinement. He honoured Jehovah by building a superb temple modelled on the shrines of other nations. Tyrians, not Israelites, designed and erected it. Under him Israel had a glimpse of civilisation greater than they had ever enjoyed, and it was but natural that they should try to emulate other nations. To

Religious
apostasy

do so was almost of necessity to tolerate and even to imitate their religious customs. The zeal Solomon shewed for foreign usages extended to their religions, and he doubtless cherished the ambition of breaking down the barriers by which Israel was separated from the rest of the world. For this reason he built the sanctuaries to foreign gods in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. But the chief glory of Israel has ever been that no worldly advantages have been sufficient to tempt the nation to assimilate with the rest of the world; and the first result of Solomon's policy was probably the disruption of his kingdom, and the second the great strife between the prophets and the House of Omri in Northern Israel, when it endeavoured to follow in his steps.

Literature of
the age of
Solomon

It is probable that some of the very best specimens of Hebrew literature are attributable to the literary movement of the age of Solomon. During his long and peaceful reign people began to take an interest in the deeds of their ancestors, and to study the early records of the nation. They may have done this in the days of David, and the passages now extant in the Old Testament may belong to a subsequent period, but it is permissible to connect them with this age. If the so-called Jehovistic document of the Pentateuch was produced at this time, what a flood of light is thrown on the inner religious life of the people over whom Solomon reigned! how fully is the intense religious enthusiasm of the prophets in the days which followed accounted for! To this unknown writer are due some of the most instructive and the most beautiful parts of the book of Genesis. He it is who first deals with the great problem of sin and evil in the world: he shews the objects of Abraham's call and the importance of faith: contrasts human sin with the faithfulness and mercy of God: recognises the universal significance of Israel in the midst of the nations of the world. It is rightly said of this author, that "the ease and grace of his narratives are unsurpassed; everything is told with precisely the amount of detail that is required; the narrative never lingers and the reader's interest is sustained to the end."

Nor were historians of contemporary events absent, if tradition is to be believed. Nathan, David's faithful adviser, is said to have written an account of his reign and to have

continued his narrative in the early days of Solomon. Gad, the seer, also wrote an account of David, whilst Ahijah the Shilonite and a certain Iddo recorded the acts of Solomon (1 Chron. xxix. 29 ; 2 Chron. ix. 29 ; 1 Kings xi. 41). The tradition is at least a proof that the age was believed to have been one of great literary activity. As David's name is inseparably connected with the lyrical and devotional poetry of the Hebrews, so Solomon is credited with the authorship of various works of "wisdom." In the Kings, Solomon's wisdom is commended in the following words:—

The Proverbs

"And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand on the sea-shore. And Solomon's wisdom exceeded all the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, and his fame was in all the nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar of Lebanon unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts and birds, of creeping things and of fishes" (1 Kings iv. 29-34).

This has been variously explained. To Solomon has been attributed a great knowledge of natural history, and even a magical control over birds and beasts. But there are some who suppose that his proverbs (or similitudes) were short pithy sayings, and that comparisons were introduced from the animal kingdom. Whether any of these are preserved in the book of Proverbs cannot be proved. The tone of the earliest collection is more homely than could be expected of a powerful king. The proverbs seem rather to express the mind of plain middle-class folk, unspoiled by luxury and living for the most part as small farmers. If it belongs to this age it is illustrative of the domestic life of Israel, and reveals the true strength of the nation in a frugal and orderly class, amongst whom family duties are fully reconciled, respect to parents and to authority inculcated, and righteousness considered to be the true glory of a people.⁸

This homely wisdom is characteristic of the Israelite. There is nothing exclusive in it: it is common to all nations. In the Proverbs there is no distinction between God's people

and the outside world, and Job and his friends are not even Israelites. It breathes no spirit of ecstatic devotion, but is severely practical and even secular in tone. "The fool" who is spoken of with contempt is often an irreligious man, and almost always a thriftless idle fellow. The Israelite has no reverence for piety in rags, nor for a religion which makes men indolent or careless. Their patriarchs are represented as honest, thrifty and prosperous. Yet this wisdom is never irreligious. It is believed to be the gift of Jehovah; its antithesis folly is utterly opposed to piety. If it is utilitarian, its ideals are not low, for they are those of a pure household and an upright life. The Proverbs are of value to the historian as revealing what manner of men the ancient Israelites were, and their moral tone makes them a valuable part of the Sacred Canon.

Effect of
Solomon's
reign

Solomon died before the great disruption of the Israelitish monarchy, but though by his extravagance and oppression he had prepared for the catastrophe, he left behind him much that was permanent. The long peace he had secured, and the way he had opened up intercourse between his own people and distant nations gave an impulse in the direction of civilisation, and from his reign it is permissible to date the rise of the imperishable literature of the Hebrews. The building of the Temple, whatever may have been its original purpose, initiated a new development in religion, which made the faith of Israel indestructible. The fortification of Jerusalem gave to Judah a strength by which that insignificant people was able to outlast every other nation. For several generations after the disruption Judah ceased to attract attention. Even the book of Kings, though written from a Judæan standpoint, has little to say concerning the southern kingdom, the chief interest being centred in the more powerful realm of Israel. Yet we must admire the immense vitality of Judah, due partly to the character of its people, but also to the permanence of the dynasty of David, the regular succession of the priesthood, and the growing reverence for the Temple. If Solomon's policy alienated the Northern tribes, it must have strengthened the loyalty of Judah to the dynasty, and that Judah was able to survive all its trials and calamities is one of the greatest facts in the history of the human race.

Chapter IX

The Disruption of the Kingdom and the Baal Worship

TWICE had Israel the opportunity of becoming a great world power, and on both occasions the nation deliberately rejected it. It may be considered fanciful to draw a comparison between Solomon and Herod, and yet, when due allowance is made for the difference of time and circumstances, the parallel is sufficiently striking. Both were men of exceptional ability; both ruled over the same territory; both made the Temple of Jerusalem a wonder of the world; both had strong sympathy with foreign ideas; both cherished great schemes for the aggrandisement of the nation, which were regarded in Israel as contrary to its true destiny. These considerations suggest the possibility of the Chosen People being more similar in character and ideas in the time of Solomon and a thousand years later than is generally supposed.

Solomon and
Herod the
Great

Herod desired to give the Jews all the advantage of the Græco-Roman civilisation of the first century B.C. He saw that if the Jews would only consent to be less rigidly attached to their ancestral customs, and more amiable to the rest of the world, they could become the leading race in the East. His knowledge of his Roman masters, and his matchless skill as a diplomatist would have been able to secure Israel this position, if only it would pay the price. The religious teachers of the Jews refused to allow this to be done, and all Herod's magnificent imaginings came to nought.

Solomon, like Herod, recognised the great possibilities of the nation. Tyre and Egypt were to him what Greece and Rome were to Herod. Had Israel only been ready to accept the civilisation of Phœnicia and the support of Egypt, nothing

could prevent its being dominant in Syria. But the prophets of Solomon's age, like the rabbis at a later date, pronounced against all schemes of national aggrandisement at the price of the independence and religious isolation of Israel. Solomon succeeded in remaining king of the whole nation till his death; but the House of Omri, which tried to imitate him, failed completely. All this seems to shew that, despite its relapses into idolatry, Israel in early days maintained a position of religious isolation. As Balaam said, "This people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numb. xxiii. 9).

**The prophets
and the
disruption**

The rising of the great tribe of Ephraim against the House of David was instigated by a prophet, Ahijah the Shilonite; and Shemaiah, a prophet of Judah, declared it to be in accordance with the will of God. The action of the prophets at this time is by no means clear: all that can be postulated with any certainty is that they supported the movement against the continuance of Solomon's policy. If the so-called Jehovistic author of primitive history belongs to this age he represents this tendency. He is throughout in favour of a simple country life, and opposed to the growth of luxury. The town is to him the home of all wickedness. Cain, the murderer, builds the first city. The erection of Babel is an act of presumptuous defiance of God. The chosen family of Terah leave Ur of the Chaldees for the freedom of pastoral life, in which God can be served without distraction. It is not impossible that the description of how Israel was oppressed in Egypt was intended as a reminder that as Israel's ancestors had been forced to labour at erecting the monuments of royal pride, but had been delivered by Jehovah, and brought back to the simpler conditions in which their forefathers had lived, so their present trials under Solomon's taskmasters were contrary to the Divine will. If such be the case, it helps to explain not only why the prophets incited Israel to throw off the yoke of Solomon, but also their motive in turning so bitterly against Jeroboam when they found that he ruled his kingdom on the same lines as his predecessor. If the prophets aimed at the return to the ideally simple life of antiquity, they were naturally disappointed in finding that Jeroboam was as powerless to restore it as he was disinclined to do so. For centuries the prophets

of Israel as well as those of the Southern Kingdom continued their strife against the worldly luxury of both kings and people, taking the side of the small farmer against the rich landlord, the country village against the city, the noble simplicity of the past against the selfish splendour of the present. The Law supports the prophetic view of an ideal state consisting of many landowners governed by a king without ostentation or ambition; and in later times the rabbis, who interpreted the Law, set themselves in opposition to all schemes of worldly aggrandisement on the part of their rulers. From the days of Saul to the close of the Jewish history, Israel lived for an ideal, and refused to sacrifice it for any worldly advantage. It must, however, be borne in mind that herein lies one of the secrets of the vitality of the Jewish race. Had Israel consented to become a great power, as any other nation under the circumstances would have done, it would have experienced the same fate, and a period of glory would have been followed by its disappearance. As it is, the empires of the ancient world have vanished, but the Jews remain.

Jeroboam¹ compares unfavourably with Saul and David, neither of whom are represented in Scripture as grasping at the crown. Like them he was appointed by a prophet, but in his haste to seize the kingdom he shewed himself to be of a different disposition. Either Ahijah or Shemaiah, for there are different versions of the transaction, met Jeroboam privately and rent his garment into twelve pieces, giving him ten as a sign that he should reign over ten of the tribes. Jeroboam forthwith assumed royal state; but Solomon was equal to the occasion, and the pretender fled to Egypt, where he bided his time. Shishak received him with honour and gave him the sister of his queen to wife.

Owing to the confused and contradictory statements in the book of Kings, it is impossible to state accurately what occurred immediately after Solomon's death. His son and successor, Rehoboam, was not able to assume the crown at Jerusalem, but had to assemble the tribes at Shechem, the capital of the haughty tribe of Ephraim, and listen to their grievances. They offered him the kingdom if he would pledge himself to abolish, or at any rate to relax, the claim to demand compulsory service from his subjects, so rigidly

enforced by Solomon. In all this the guiding hand of the prophets is clearly recognisable. The wise old counsellors of Solomon advised moderation. They said it was a case for concessions; let the king give way gracefully at this juncture and bide his time, and he would be as powerful as ever Solomon had been. But a man who has waited too long for a position of responsibility is sometimes as disqualified to exercise it as the merest youth, and Rehoboam had evidently cherished high ideas of his royal prerogative. His companions advised him to insist upon his rights, and "he forsook the counsel of the old men, that had stood before Solomon his father," and at the suggestion of his friends, who knew nothing of the practice of authority, told his petitioners bluntly, "My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (1 Kings xii. 1-15).

Jeroboam

Jeroboam's experiences in the days of Solomon had taught him caution. He returned from Egypt, but did not apparently go to Shechem, till he knew how Rehoboam would act. Throughout his career he seems to have shewn himself a clever, if unscrupulous, politician. It needed no agitator to increase the effect of Rehoboam's foolish reply to the reasonable demands of his subjects. No sooner was it made than all the tribes save Judah repudiated his authority, and the answer of the delegates at Shechem found an echo throughout the land:—

"What portion have we in David?
Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse:
To your tents, O Israel,
Now see to thine own house, David" (1 Kings xii. 16).

The Revolution

Adoniram, who was over the levy, was apparently the only victim of the revolution. He was sent by Rehoboam to quell the disturbance, and was immediately stoned to death. The king fled to Jerusalem; and Jeroboam, in obedience to the summons of the people, came to Shechem and was solemnly anointed king. The whole tribe of Judah and part of Benjamin rallied to the House of David; but the prophet Shemaiah declared the thing to be from

Jehovah, and prohibited any attempt to subjugate the disaffected tribes. The momentous division of the kingdom took place almost without bloodshed.

The House of David was supported by its own tribe of Judah and by a section of the Benjamites, but the new kingdom evidently regarded the fidelity of the South to the older dynasty as an act of national apostasy. The ten tribes assumed the name of Israel, and for a long time tried to reduce the petty kingdom of Judah to subjection. But Judah, despite its insignificance in population and territory, possessed many elements of strength. Though less pure in race than the Ephraimites, for there were many non-Israelite clans among them, the Judæans had preserved many of the simple habits of the patriarchs. Shepherds, rather than cultivators, they adhered to the ancient Jehovah worship with more fidelity than the Northern tribes, who had adopted the occupation and many of the religious practices of the Canaanites. Their fidelity to the House of David secured them from revolution and gave their government a stability unknown in Israel. As a rule their princes reigned long and virtuously, and at every crisis their people rallied to them. The strength of Jerusalem as a fortress, and the superiority of the Temple to all other sanctuaries, was of great assistance in preserving Judah intact, as was the regularity of its priesthood, which seems to have been confined to the House of Levi (2 Chron. xi. 13), and to have maintained a standard superior to that of the less regular priesthoods of the Northern sanctuaries. Insignificant as the kingdom of Judah certainly was throughout this period, for even the book of Kings, though written from a strong Judæan standpoint, has but little to relate concerning it, it displayed remarkable tenacity in adverse circumstances, and shewed itself to be better qualified to endure calamity than its more favoured neighbour.

Jeroboam was the first biblical character to display a knowledge of statecraft. He perceived that the great danger he ran was a reaction in favour of the House of David. Once let the people go to Jerusalem and worship at the Temple, and the old loyalty to David's memory would revive. To maintain political division, Jeroboam resolved

**The Southern
Kingdom**

**Jeroboam and
the "calves"
at Bethel and
Dan**

to sacrifice religious unity. His reasoning was certainly specious :

“And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the House of David : if this people go up to offer sacrifices in the House of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah ; and they shall kill me, and return to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold : and he said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem ; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin : for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made houses of high places, and made priests from among all the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he went up unto the altar ; so did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made : and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. And he went up unto the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart : and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and went up unto the altar to burn incense” (1 Kings xii. 26-33).

It must be borne in mind that this is the Judæan version of the cause of the schism, and expresses the view of those who had witnessed its fatal results.

Jeroboam's policy was a specious one. Jerusalem was not an ancient Israelitish sanctuary like Bethel or even Dan. It had no venerable traditions to link it with the past. The Temple was doubtless built at the cost of much suffering and oppression. The king now summoned his people to worship at Bethel, where Abraham had built an altar, and Jacob had seen the angels of God, and had anointed a pillar in the name of the God of Bethel.

Hither men had been wont to bring their simple offerings when Saul was a youth sent to search for his father's asses (1 Sam. x. 3). Dan possessed a hereditary priesthood

Bethel

Dan

tracing its descent to no less a person than Moses. Nor does Jeroboam's conduct seem to have been regarded as schismatical by the prophets of the Northern Kingdom. Ahijah reproaches him with idolatry: "Thou hast," he says in the name of Jehovah, "gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke Me to anger," but he says nothing of the rejection of the Temple at Jerusalem (1 Kings xiv. 9).

Neither Elijah nor Elisha exhorted the Northern kings to worship Jehovah at Jerusalem; and Amos and Hosea, whilst condemning the calf-worship at Bethel, do not accuse Israel of being in a state of schism. The account of the mission of the unnamed prophet of Judah to Jeroboam is said to be of late origin. Its author is, to all appearance, ignorant of the name alike of the prophet and of his colleague who entertained him, and further he alludes to the desecration of Bethel, which happened at the close of the seventh century B.C. It may be permissible therefore to infer that it was not the erection of schismatic temples which shocked the moral sense of the age of Jeroboam.² Nor was the appointment of a non-Levitical priesthood regarded as a serious crime at this time, for the Israelites, though they preferred the ministrations of the Levites, had long been accustomed to men of every tribe acting as priests. It is even uncertain whether the calf-worship was really abhorrent to the consciences of the best men of this period, though it is exceedingly dangerous to speak dogmatically on this intricate subject.³

The revolution, which placed Jeroboam on the throne of Israel, was evidently due to the conservatism of the Northern tribes. Politically it was a reaction against the forced labour and similar innovations, and it seems probable that its religious importance was due to Solomon's attempt to degrade the ancient sanctuaries by centralising the *cultus* at Jerusalem. The object of Jeroboam in erecting temples at Bethel and Dan, was to secure his kingdom by rendering himself popular with his subjects. It is inconceivable that so astute a politician should have deliberately provoked the entire prophetic order by wantonly introducing innovations in religion. It was to his advantage to pose as the champion

Character
of the
Revolution

of the ancient faith of Israel in contrast with the Judæan monarchs. The choice of Bethel and Dan is a sufficient proof that this was the case.

The Israelites did not therefore regard the setting up of the images of the calves as an act of apostasy, but rather as a return to the faith of their fathers. That images were employed in the Jehovah worship at this time is incontestable. Even so loyal a servant of Jehovah as David had *teraphim* in his house. Bulls, cherubim and lions adorned Solomon's Temple and throne. In Israelitish symbolism the bull was the special representative of strength and power, the attribute of Jehovah. Both Aaron and Jeroboam are represented as declaring that the image they caused to be made was the God who brought Israel out of Egypt. It must have been zeal for Jehovah which led both to erect bulls (for the word "*calf*" is somewhat misleading) in His honour.

On the other hand the bull-worship never seems to have extended to Judah. It was also opposed by the priestly tribe of Levi, which is said to have avenged the sin of Israel in the days of the Golden Calf by slaughtering its worshippers; and, according to the Chronicler, the Levites deserted the Northern tribes when Jeroboam set up the sanctuaries at Bethel and Dan (2 Chron. xi. 13). The partiality of Israel for this form of worship may therefore be traceable to the influence of the Canaanite agriculturists, whose land the Northern tribes had occupied. Judah and Levi, on the other hand, adhered to the purer traditions of remote antiquity.

When Josiah in the latter part of the seventh century B.C. was engaged in desecrating the schismatic temple at Bethel, he asked whose monument it was that he beheld in the mount. "And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel" (2 Kings xxiii. 17). The story related of the denunciation of Jeroboam by a Judæan prophet rests therefore on an old tradition, though the form of it is comparatively recent. It is, however, so characteristic, if not of the belief of the age of Jeroboam, at least of the ideas prevalent in Josiah's time, as to merit careful attention.

On the fifteenth day of the eighth month, which Jeroboam had chosen for the celebration of the feast probably observed in Judah a month earlier, Jeroboam was offering a solemn sacrifice on the altar at Bethel. Suddenly an unnamed prophet out of Judah appeared and prophesied that a day should come when a King of Judah, Josiah by name, should sacrifice the priests of the high places on this very altar. As a sign, the altar should be rent and its ashes poured out. Jeroboam tried to seize the presumptuous messenger of Jehovah, but his hand withered, so that he could not draw it back, and the altar was rent before his eyes. At the request of the prophet, the king's hand was restored. Jeroboam begged him to remain, but he refused, saying that he had been forbidden to eat bread in Bethel and ordered not to return by the way by which he had come.

An aged prophet who dwelt at Bethel, hearing of what had occurred, and that the Judæan prophet was returning to his home, rode after him and begged him to return to his house. Whether out of a desire to shew hospitality to a colleague, or out of malice, the old prophet declared that he had received a message from Jehovah's angel commanding him to invite the Judæan to his house. As they sat at the table, however, the spirit of Jehovah came upon the prophet of Bethel, and compelled him to deliver a message of doom to his guest :

“Forasmuch as thou hast been disobedient unto the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of the which He said to thee, Eat no bread and drink no water ; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.” (1 Kings xiii. 21, 22.)

On his way home the prophet was slain by a lion, and the passers-by saw that the lion had spared the ass and was standing by the man's carcase without devouring it. The old prophet of Bethel, hearing of the prodigy, rode to the spot and found that what had been reported was true. He took up the body and buried it in his own sepulchre, adjuring his sons to lay his bones beside those of his colleague : “For the saying which he cried by the word of the Lord

against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass" (1 Kings xiii. 32).

Moral diffi-
culty in story

This story presents a considerable moral difficulty to those who consider that the death of the disobedient prophet was too severe a penalty for his offence. He had been grossly deceived by the old prophet, and his disregard of the Divine command was in a sense excusable.

But such considerations would hardly appeal to an Israelite under the old dispensation. He would not attempt to measure the culpability of the prophet nor to question the justice of his doom. The man had disobeyed Jehovah's command, and that was enough. The death that overtook him was not regarded as undeserved, and further it served as a warning to the disobedient king. But the story bears so many traces of a late date, that it is hardly necessary to discuss the moral difficulty presented by the event. The object with which it is related is obviously to shew that the prophet sent to foretell the destruction of the altar of Bethel died in a startling and miraculous way, and that his tomb remained a witness to future generations that his prediction would be fulfilled.

Jeroboam
and Ahijah

How bitterly the prophets were disappointed in Jeroboam is seen in the twice-told tale of how he sent his wife to the aged Ahijah to ask if his child should recover from his sickness. The queen went in disguise, with humble offerings of cakes and raisins, designed, according to the LXX., for the prophet's children. Ahijah, though blind, recognised her at once, and foretold that the child should die, and that the whole house of Jeroboam should be utterly destroyed.

Political in-
fluence of
the prophets
in Israel

Jeroboam had done, he said, worse than all that were before him in making other gods and graven images. Even if the words put into the mouth of Ahijah bear evidence of a late date, the fact remains that Jeroboam at the end of his reign had incurred the bitter enmity of the prophets.

It cannot be more than surmised why the prophets turned against Jeroboam. The sanctuaries at Bethel and Dan appeared more sinful to the later teachers of the Southern Kingdom than they did to his Northern contemporaries, who may even have supported the king's religious policy. "Jero-

boam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin," is posterity's verdict of his reign. It seems possible that the prophets, who encouraged him to rebel against Solomon, expected him to act under their direction, and were disappointed at finding him equally worldly. At any rate, the destruction of his dynasty and family was no isolated event in the blood-stained annals of the Northern monarchy. Here the prophets exercised most dangerous political power. Three successive dynasties—those of Jeroboam, Baasha, and Omri—perished at their instigation, and in every case the family of the king was put to the sword. Such things occurred but once in Judah, where prophets, priests and people alike were loyal to the House of David. But for several generations in Israel the prophets seem, in a certain degree, to have resembled the Zealots of a later age in being so eager to secure an ideal state of things, as to be regardless of public stability. Great and good men were numbered among the prophets at this time, but the existence of the order was long a menace to regular government in Israel, and to the revolutions it provoked the ruin of the state is in part traceable.

One event occurred early in Jeroboam's reign, to which only a passing allusion is made in the books of Kings and Chronicles in connection with Jerusalem, though in reality it affected the Northern as well as the Southern Kingdom. The fact that the Sacred History makes no further mention of the invasion of Palestine by Shishak, King of Egypt, than to relate how the treasury of the Temple and palace at Jerusalem were despoiled and that Solomon's golden shields were removed, is a proof that the Sacred Authors have omitted to record many important historical facts as not bearing on their subject. From Shishak's inscription in the court of the great Temple of Amen at Karnak, it appears that not only Judah suffered from this invasion, but Israel was ravaged as far as the Plain of Esdraelon. It is noteworthy that among 133 names of places, that of Jerusalem does not occur.⁴

**Shishak
invades
Palestine**

Jeroboam continued his building operations after he had become king. It was an age of fortification, and the first recorded acts of his reign were the building of Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and of Penuel in Gilead.

The long war with Judah, which lasted during the reigns of Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha and Elah, was mainly a war of sieges. It continued without intermission during the twenty-two years Jeroboam was on the throne of Israel.

Nadab slain
by Baasha

Jeroboam was succeeded by his son Nadab, who reigned, at most, two years, and was slain, whilst besieging a place called Gibbethon, by Baasha the son of Ahijah. Baasha put to death the entire family of Jeroboam, "he left not," says the Sacred History, "one that breathed." He reigned twenty-four years, and, like Jeroboam, proved incapable of satisfying his prophetic supporters. Jehu, the son of Hanani, foretold the doom of his house, which came on his son Elah. Zimri slew Elah during a drunken orgy in Tirzah, and, during his short reign of seven days, exterminated the house of Baasha. An avenger appeared in Omri, who led the people against the tyrant. Zimri, seeing his plight to be hopeless, burned himself in his palace, and Omri entered upon a four years' struggle for the throne, with Tibni, the son of Ginath. Nothing is related of this, save its conclusion, "So Tibni died, and Omri reigned." His accession put an end to a dreary period of civil strife.

History of
Judah

The kingdom of Judah, if less distracted by domestic discord, had but little peace. It was too weak to recover what Rehoboam's folly had lost, but strong enough to resist attempts on the part of the Ten Tribes to reduce it to subjection. More fortunate than the sister kingdom, Judah was long under the rule of a monarch of high character.

Asa's
religious
reforms

Rehoboam and Abijah were succeeded by Asa, who is said to have commenced his reign by a religious purification of his kingdom. According to the Chronicler, he was incited to make reforms by the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, after the victory of his army over Zerah the Ethiopian, who had invaded Judah with a million men and three hundred chariots (2 Chron. xiv. 9-15).⁵ Nothing is said of this in the book of Kings, except that Asa drove out the vilest of the votaries of Canaanitish worship, and removed the idols his fathers had made. He also deposed Maachah, the queen-mother, for making an image and an Asherah, which he burnt at the brook Kidron. "But," adds this writer, "the high places were not taken away."

The religious state of the people is only revealed by such brief notices as these, so it is hardly possible to speak very definitely on this subject. They are the judgments of men who believed that only one place could properly exist for the sacrificial worship of Jehovah, and that all other sanctuaries were illegal. But in the tenth and ninth centuries this was not the case; the laws of worship were vague and ill defined, and differed in the various localities. So little is known, that the most opposite theories are maintained as to the nature of the Jehovah worship. All that can be said, with certainty, is that all the Israelites considered themselves to be His people. They worshipped Him as their national God in every spot considered suitable for the erection of an altar. Trees and wells were regarded as tokens of His presence, but the mountain top was thought to be especially favoured by Him. On the "high place," as it was styled, rude altars were made of unhewn stones or earth, and sacrifices offered upon them. In some cases a tree overshadowed the altar, or a sacred pole was set up beside it in the absence of palm or terebinth. This was called the Asherah. Sacred stones were highly honoured, pillars were set up, and oil was poured upon them. This worship connected with natural objects was probably copied from the Canaanite observances. It is certainly represented as sanctioned by the examples of the patriarchs of the nation. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob observed the same rites, and the most sacred spots were connected with their doings. Shechem, the mountain between Bethel and Ai, the terebinths of Mamre, near to Hebron, Beersheba, Penuel and Mahanaim, had all traditional claims to honour because of their associations with these venerable names. Perhaps the best means of discovering what was considered the proper worship of Jehovah at this age is to be found in the description of the patriarchal rites in the book of Genesis. But the less innocent side to the worship at these natural sanctuaries revealed itself when the Israelites under the kings began to assimilate themselves more and more to the surrounding nations. They did not forsake Jehovah in the sense of abandoning His worship: when the idea that a nation and its God were indissolubly united was universally prevalent, such an action would be almost inconceivable.

But when they began to imitate other nations in the arts of life, the Israelites shewed a disposition to copy them in religious practices also. It has been maintained that many innocent and salutary religious customs in Israel (like the vintage festival, and even prophetism) were of Canaanite origin, but it was impossible to come into contact with the nature worship of Palestine and not be influenced by its polytheism, its cruelty and its impurity.

Popular view
of Jehovah

The early Hebrews had no genius for theology. They accepted Jehovah as their God without indulging in many speculations as to His nature. Even if they believed that it was not lawful for them to worship any God besides Him, this did not mean that they denied the existence of other deities. On the contrary, they sometimes acknowledged that the gods of the heathen were allowed to exercise real power over the nations whose destinies were entrusted to their care. Chemosh the god of Moab had given his people their territory, just as Jehovah had given the Israelites their land (Judges xi. 24). The local Baals gave the husbandman the fruit of the soil, and taught him the art of cultivation (Hosea ii. 5; Isa. xxviii. 26.)

Every town occupied by the Israelites had its peculiar deity, who was degraded but not annihilated when Jehovah's people occupied his territory. So closely moreover were nations identified with their gods, that alliance with them implied a recognition of their presiding deities. It was natural, therefore, that the Israelites should be influenced by polytheistic ideas, and occasionally seek to propitiate the favour of other gods besides their own.

Cruelty of
Canaanite
worship

The Semites as well as the Phœnicians were all addicted to human sacrifices, nor were the ancient Hebrews entirely exempt from such practices. The devotion (*cherem*) of an enemy to Jehovah for destruction, the slaying of a conquered king "before the Lord" in the case of Agag; the hanging up of victims "before the Lord" when Saul's sons were made to atone for their father's slaughter of the Gibeonites, as well as the substitution of cattle for the first-born sons, are indications that in early days the sacrifice of men was considered acceptable in the eyes of Jehovah. Down to a very late period it required all the influence of the great prophets to

prevent the offering of children to Moloch or even to Jehovah in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and the Israelites followed the example of the neighbouring nations in this respect with far more readiness than the general excellence of their religion might lead one to suppose would be the case.⁶

The impurity of many of the religions of Canaan and Phœnicia was not less than their cruelty, as the Hebrew word employed to designate those who abandon themselves to the practice of various abominations implies. They were called "devotee" to signify that they acted in the service of their gods. The Hebrew prophets fully recognised the greatness of the national danger of yielding to the seductions of this dreadful form of superstition. **Impurity**

The foregoing observations are perhaps sufficient to explain the toleration of the "high places" by devout kings and prophets. It was not against old customs, but against the attempt to conform the worship of Jehovah to the heathen beliefs and observances, that they strove. Asa and his advisers were trying to stem the tide which from the age of Solomon had been setting in favour of foreign religious observances, and which was destined to reach its height at a later time. It is not just to say of this king that he was a mere ritual reformer, for the question of public morality was always involved in attempts to harmonise Hebrew and Canaanite ideas.⁷ The religion of Jehovah always taught a lofty if narrow morality, whilst the nature-worship of the Canaanite fostered and encouraged some of the foulest acts of brutality and vice. **Toleration of high places**

Circumstances, however, drove Asa into an act which the Chronicler rightly denounces as a serious crime. When hard pressed by Baasha, who by fortifying Ramah had prevented Judah from holding any communication with the North, Asa despatched an embassy to Ben-hadad, son of Tab-rimmon, son of Hezion, King of Damascus, and persuaded him to declare war against Baasha. Thus the Syrians were called in to interfere in the civil war between Israel and Judah, a policy fatal to the strength of both kingdoms (1 Kings xv. 19 ; 2 Chron. xvi. 1-6). Ben-hadad devastated the whole of the north-west of Israel, "Ijon and Dan and Abel-beth-Maachah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali." Baasha was com- **Syrians hired by Asa**

pelled to desist from molesting Judah, and Asa destroyed Ramah, and raising a general levy throughout his kingdom, built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpeh. So severely had Baasha oppressed Judah, that Asa (as is incidentally mentioned in the book of Jeremiah) made pits to conceal his men at the time of the Israelitish invasion of Judah (Jer. xli. 9). This partially justified his action in inviting the assistance of the Syrians, the results of which were so disastrous.

Omri

The accession of the House of Omri is an important turning-point in the history of both kingdoms. It is marked by the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Judah; the long war with Syria, with all its varying fortunes; the subjugation and revolt of the Moabites; the introduction of the worship of the Sidonian Baal, and the energetic protest of the prophets of Jehovah headed by Elijah, which culminated in the total destruction of the entire family. The four sovereigns of this dynasty were Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah and Jehoram. The verdict on these princes in that part of the book of Kings in which their reigns are summarised is extremely unfavourable; Omri is said to have "done wickedly above all that were before him"; Ahab to have done more "to provoke the Lord the God of Israel to anger" than all his predecessors. But even in the hostile narratives in the Kings it is evident that these monarchs were men of courage and ability, who did much to preserve their country in times of great difficulty, and that the overthrow of their dynasty was a national calamity.

Northern
Prophets

The partiality shewn by Omri's descendants for the worship of Baal evoked a great display of prophetic zeal, and was the cause of the grand career of Elijah, the greatest and boldest of all the prophets of Israel. Hitherto, from the scanty information given concerning the Northern prophets, it is difficult not to condemn their acts. To foretell the overthrow of a dynasty was to provoke rebellion, and to prophesy that every member of it should be exterminated was to excite the fierce passions of a wild age. The murders of Nadab and Elah brought no benefit to Israel, but only tended to increase disorder by making the crown the prize for any military adventurer to grasp at. Though the prophets were actuated by loyalty to Jehovah,

we hear nothing of any attempt to reform the people save by revolution. With the dynasty of Omri, however, prophecy entered upon a nobler career. The prophets began to contend for more definite principles. By opposing all attempts to introduce foreign deities and customs, they prepared the way for the great teachers of righteousness of the succeeding age.

Nothing is related of the reign of Omri, save that he reigned over Israel for twelve years, during six of which he made his capital at Tirzah. He then acquired a hill belonging to a certain Shemer for two talents of silver, and built a city called after the former owner of the hill, Shomeron or Samaria. The new city, which gave its name in after days to the surrounding district, lay to the north-west of Mount Ebal, a few miles distant from the ancient Shechem. It became to the Northern Kingdom what Jerusalem was to the Southern—the city on which all the hopes of the land were centred; there was, however, this important difference, that whereas with the fall of Samaria the Israelite confederation was ruined, the sacks and destruction of Jerusalem only strengthened the bond of nationality amongst the Judæans.

Samaria built

Very little is said about Omri in the Old Testament, yet he was evidently a very great monarch. For generations, even for centuries, his name was used as almost synonymous with the Northern Kingdom. Samaria is styled in Assyrian inscriptions the "House of Omri"; Jehu, though he overthrew the dynasty, is described as the "son of Omri" on the black obelisk of Shalmaneser; Micah, the Judæan prophet, in the latter part of the eighth century B.C., alludes to the sins of his House as the "statutes of Omri." It has been supposed that his reign was longer than is implied in the book of Kings, and that the reign of his predecessor, Baasha, did not really extend over twenty-four years.⁸ At any rate, Omri made a profound impression on his age and country as one of its ablest rulers. He seems to have had the sagacity to recognise the impossibility of conquering Judah, and to have stopped the fratricidal strife between the two Hebrew nations. Judah readily accepted the situation of an independent but inferior state,

Greatness of Omri

and co-operated with Israel against Moab and Syria. The family of David subsequently allied itself, by marriage, with that of Omri, and the relations of Israel and Judah seem to have been friendly as long as the dynasty of Omri lasted. This could not fail to have been politically advantageous to both kingdoms, had it not been that both were led into the guilt of most serious apostasy, by the malign influence of Omri's daughter-in-law Jezebel.

Omri evidently tried to imitate the policy of David and Solomon. The Phœnician alliance was renewed, and Omri's son Ahab married the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians. The influence of the superior civilisation of Phœnicia was again felt in Israel. Building operations were carried on once more. Samaria, Jericho and Jezreel all rose to importance under Omri and his son. The ivory palace of Ahab recalled the memory of Solomon's edifices, and the great Temple of Baal at Samaria shewed the fatal nature of the attraction of the idolatry of Israel's new allies.

War with
Moab

But perhaps Omri's greatest exploit was the subjugation of Moab. The opening words on the Moabite Stone record how successful this king was as a warrior. It seems that during the trouble which followed the disruption of the Hebrew kingdoms, Moab had managed to establish an independent monarchy. Chemosh-melech reigned for thirty years, and Omri seems to have deprived him of all the debatable land which had belonged, first to Moab, then to Sihon, and afterwards to the tribe of Reuben. Mesha, the next King of Moab, was compelled to pay a tribute consisting of sheep and their wool to the King of Israel in acknowledgment of his supremacy—a condition of things which lasted throughout the whole, or at least part, of the reign of Ahab.

War with
Syria

Omri was less successful with the Syrians. From a hint dropped in the book of Kings it appears that the King of Syria took some of his cities, and compelled Omri to give him a quarter in his new city of Samaria. But the subject of the relations of Syria to Israel in this reign is a difficult one, for Omri's undoubted fame as a soldier and as a king makes it hard to believe that he was a

vassal of the Syrians, even though he sustained a defeat at their hands. He may merely have made a disadvantageous peace, whilst retaining his independence.

Omri was succeeded by Ahab, of whom more is related in the book of Kings than any king after Solomon. He is the only King of Israel whose character is really known. He appears at one time at his best, at another at his worst. He is the exact opposite of David, being a bad man with several good qualities, whereas in David real goodness was obscured by many serious failings. But Ahab is not the leading figure in the sacred story. He falls into the background to make room for the real combatants, his wife Jezebel and the prophet Elijah.

There is evidence that two narratives are introduced into the concluding portion of 1 Kings. One of these tells the story of Elijah, and its interests are mainly religious; the other relates the reign of Ahab from a somewhat more political standpoint. In the account of Elijah the writer is evidently hostile to Ahab, whilst in the other Ahab is more favourably described. In both cases it is easy to recognise the same king. Ahab's character abounds in inconsistencies, and is for this reason eminently natural.

The story of Elijah is perhaps the finest piece of Hebrew prose writing in the Old Testament. It is thoroughly dramatic, nowhere more so than when Elijah himself first appears on the scene. Ahab had done worse than all the kings of Israel. He had married Jezebel, and had given up Jehovah for Baal. He built a temple in his honour in Samaria, and reared up an altar for Baal. He did "yet more to provoke the Lord the God of Israel, to anger, than all the kings of Israel before him." So great was the wickedness of the age, that even Joshua's curse against the rebuilder of Jericho was disregarded. Hiel, a Bethelite, presumed to refund the cursed city. But Joshua's words came true. Hiel lost his first-born son Abiram when he laid the foundations, and his youngest son Segub when he set up the gates (1 Kings xvi. 34).

After this recital of these sins of the age, Elijah appears without warning and foretells the three years' famine as a punishment for Israel's sin. The well-known story of

Ahab

Appearance
of Elijah

Elijah's contest with Ahab may be recapitulated in a few sentences, for no paraphrase can do justice to the biblical account.

Elijah came from Gilead. It is remarkable that the advocates of the pure worship of Jehovah were in almost every case those Israelites whose circumstances most resembled the nomad conditions under which the ancient Hebrews had lived. It was the civilised Israelites who were in danger of apostasy; the wild shepherds of Judah and Gilead, and the Rechabites who refused to till the soil, were the champions of Jehovah. Elijah was the representative of primitive Israel, not of the luxurious people who dwelt in the fertile valleys of Ephraim, but of the ancient wanderers of the desert. He appears and disappears with startling suddenness, and always alone. From the description given to the sick king, "an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins," Elijah is instantly recognised. Few utterances of the prophet are recorded, but these are stern and incisive, well befitting his wild appearance and uncompromising loyalty to his God. No prophet, it may almost be said no character in the Old Testament, has made such an impression upon posterity as he. To this day the Jews and Arabs believe that his spirit haunts the earth, and that he appears at times as he did when he rebuked Ahab.⁹

The first recorded words of Elijah are: "As the Lord the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." He claimed and exercised the power of withholding the rain till Israel should have repented. His words were a declaration of war against Jezebel, and the proud 'queen was ready to take up the challenge. A massacre of the prophets of Jehovah was her answer. Ahab himself was in a difficult position. As an Israelite he worshipped Jehovah, and in a way desired to serve Him. His sons bore the sacred name, Ahaziah (*Jehovah is strong*), Jehoram (*Jehovah is exalted*). His vizier was especially devoted to the national worship, as his name, Obadiah (*servant of Jehovah*), testifies. When the prophetic order was proscribed, Obadiah, without losing Ahab's favour, saved the lives of a hundred prophets. At the same time Ahab did not wish to offend his

wife, nor to lose the advantages of the Phœnician trade. Jezebel, no doubt, looked on the Israelites as a barbarous people, and could not brook opposition to the worship of the mighty Melkarth, the god of wealthy and civilised Tyre. Ahab, like many Jews in the later Greek period, seems to have thought that the service of Jehovah was not incompatible with conformity to heathen customs. He desired peace: his policy was one of "Live and let live." To him Elijah, the advocate of uncompromising principles, was a "troubler of Israel." He tried to seize the prophet, and sent to every kingdom to search for him. Elijah eluded pursuit; so mysteriously did he appear and disappear, that it was believed that the spirit of God removed him from place to place. During his wanderings he dwelt by the brook Cherith, where he was miraculously fed by ravens, or by the wandering Arabs. Then he sought refuge in the very country from which Jezebel had come, at "Zarephath which belongeth to Zidon" (1 Kings xvii. 10). His sojourn with the widow woman, who, heathen as she was, was ready to extend hospitality to the champion of Jehovah; how he caused her barrel of meal and her cruse of oil never to fail as long as the famine lasted, and raised her son from the dead, are beautiful episodes in his wild and solitary life.

Elijah escapes
from Ahab

In the third year of the famine Ahab and Obadiah seek for grass to save the horses and mules, and Elijah reveals himself to Obadiah. The faithful servant of Jehovah falls on his knees before the prophet, and begs him to excuse him from delivering his message to Ahab—"Behold, Elijah is here." He fears that the spirit of Jehovah will bear the prophet away, and that Ahab will slay him for being the bearer of false news. But Elijah reassures him: "As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to-day." Ahab and Elijah meet, and the prophet commands the king to assemble all the prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel. A great national assembly is held. Elijah exhorts the people to be more consistent. He places before them the alternative, Jehovah or Baal. "How long," he exclaims, "halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings xviii. 21). He proposes an ordeal by

The sacrifice
on Carmel

fire. Let each side erect an altar: Elijah to Jehovah, and the prophets of Baal another to their god. Let a bullock be placed on each altar, and let the God who answers by fire be accepted. The test is declared by the people to be a fair one.

Then follows the contrast between the unreasoning fanaticism of a false, and the calmness of a true faith. The prophets of Baal, from morning till noon, cry aloud to their god, "O Baal, answer," leaping in wild frenzy on the altar they had made. When Elijah taunts their fruitless labour, they make fresh efforts to attract Baal's favour by gashing themselves with swords and knives till their bodies stream with blood. At last, as the hour of the *minchah* or evening oblation drew near, Elijah calls the people to him, and with twelve stones repairs the ruined altar of Jehovah, around it a trench is made, and when the bullock has been duly divided and laid on the wood, water is poured on the altar till the trench around is full. When the time of the evening sacrifice was come, Elijah prays Jehovah to hear him:—

"O Lord, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou, Lord, art God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God!" (1 Kings xviii. 36-39).

Slaughter
of Baal's
prophets

By Elijah's command the prophets of Baal are slain on the banks of the Kishon, and he himself once more ascends Carmel with his servant, and prays. Seven times did the lad look seaward, and at last saw the little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, which proclaimed the coming of the long-wished-for rain.

Ahab hastens to Jezreel in his chariot, to avoid the impending storm, and Elijah, full of the spirit of Jehovah, runs before him to the entrance of Jezreel. Ahab tells Jezebel how the prophets of her god had been slain and she vows

vengeance against Elijah. Again he becomes a fugitive and traverses the kingdom of Judah. A day's journey from Beersheba, in the solitude of the desert, the prophet prays God to take away his life. An angel comforts him and feeds him, and for forty days and forty nights he is said to have been sustained by this food miraculously supplied. He comes to Horeb, the Mount of God, and like Moses takes refuge in a cave or cleft of the rock. There he receives a vision of God. The wind, the earthquake and the fire follow one another, but Jehovah was not in them. He comes to Elijah in "a sound of gentle stillness," and gives the prophet charge to anoint three persons who between them would punish Israel for its apostasy and restore the true worship. These were Hazael, the future King of Syria; Jehu the son of Nimshi, the destroyer of the House of Ahab; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah, the successor of Elijah.

Elijah goes
to Horeb

"And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." (1 Kings xix. 17, 18.)

Only one of these commissions was actually fulfilled by Elijah. He found Elisha at the plough, possibly in company with eleven others, for in that warlike age no man dare plough alone. As the prophet passed his future successor he cast his garment on him. Elisha recognised the call, but begged Elijah for leave to bid farewell to father and mother. But the call was too pressing to be accepted in such a spirit, and Elijah sternly told him, "Go back, for what have I done to thee?" Elisha returned, but only to sacrifice his oxen and give their flesh to the assembled people. Then he arose and followed Elijah as his minister (1 Kings xix. 19-21).

Anointing of
Elisha

In this way the great reaction against the Baal worship in Israel began. Ahab was evidently half convinced that Jehovah was indeed the God of Israel, for he consulted the prophets, and was on good terms with Jehoshaphat the pious King of Judah. The real enemy of the cause of Jehovah was Jezebel, whose daughter Athaliah was married to Jehoram, son and successor of Jehoshaphat. By this

means the Baal worship was introduced into the Southern Kingdom, and, but for the resolute conduct of the prophets, the entire nation would have become worshippers of the Tyrian god.

The extremity of the danger, in a measure, justifies the terrible acts which attended the suppression of the cultus.

Naboth's
vineyard

Elijah's last interview with Ahab was due to an act of violence on the part of Jezebel, which revealed the fact that the supremacy of her influence meant the introduction of unheard-of tyranny into Israel.

Like all peoples worthy of freedom, the Israelites were intensely attached to their ancestral properties. Their laws made it very difficult to alienate landed estates, and provided for their retention by the family of their holders. As a rule, the land was occupied by small proprietors jealously attached to their holdings. This class was strongly supported by public opinion and by the prophetic order. Any attempt to seize an estate by violence was certain to be fiercely resented, especially as the land was considered to belong to Jehovah, and to be held by its owner as a gift from Him. Ahab was aware of this when he tried to induce Naboth, a native of Jezreel, to sell him his vineyard, and, when he refused, the king felt powerless to do anything, and could only shew his vexation by refusing to partake of food.

Jezebel had none of her husband's scruples, but even she did not presume to attack Naboth directly. A charge of treason and blasphemy was preferred against him at her instigation, and the elders of the city condemned him to be stoned to death. The sentence was executed; Naboth's property became the property of the crown, and Ahab took possession of the vineyard.

Again Elijah is sent to Ahab, and appears before the king, as he goes to possess himself of Naboth's land. This time Ahab greets him with the words, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Elijah then delivers his terrible message. For this crime the family of Ahab will be utterly destroyed. His blood shall be licked up by the dogs in the very spot where they had licked that of Naboth, and the dogs shall eat Jezebel on the rampart of Jezreel. But Ahab was not utterly depraved, and his penitence was so sincere

that Elijah was assured that Jehovah would not bring the punishment on his house till after his death (1 Kings xxi.).

The destruction of the Baal worship is one of the most sanguinary incidents in the blood-stained annals of Northern Israel. The introduction of it was the inevitable outcome of the policy of Solomon. The religion of Israel at this time depended on the isolation of the nation. The simplicity of its ritual, the absence of rigidly defined rules of worship, its lack of definite teaching even concerning Jehovah, made the introduction of foreign ceremonies and beliefs easy. The very morality of the people depended upon the rude and healthy conditions under which the Israelites lived. Phœnician civilisation was bound to have a deteriorating effect upon such a people, and the worship of gods who presided over rich and flourishing cities, was certain to attract a nation of peasants as soon as they began to acquire some knowledge and appreciation of the refinements of life. Perhaps Jezebel wished to bring her adopted country into some sort of conformity with her native land. But whether she acted from fanaticism or from policy, her religion had its fascination for the Israelites. The contest was a long and bitter one. It lasted from the massacre of Jehovah's prophets, and the desecration of His altars, to the overthrow of Ahab's house by Jehu. It began with persecution, and ended in civil war. It had no small share in hastening the fall of the Northern Kingdom. It was waged with extraordinary bitterness. Jezebel encountered in the prophets of Jehovah as stern a spirit as her own. Both sides were ready to kill or be killed in defence of their respective worships. Jezebel slays the prophets of Jehovah; Elijah commands the slaughter of the prophets of Baal; Elisha sends a prophet to anoint Jehu, the most terrible avenger of apostasy in the annals of Israel. Once did the disciples of Jesus Christ remind Him of those fierce days, and it is said "He turned and rebuked them." (Luke ix. 54, 55.)

Yet if all the actions of the prophets cannot be approved, their cause was right. A Phœnicianised Israel would have been no longer a people of the living God. In saving the Northern Kingdom from apostasy, Elijah and his followers enabled it to give the world its message by the hands of his successors. The work of this age can hardly be judged by

Reasons for
the destruction of the
Baal worship

the records which have been preserved. Its results appear nearly a century later in the great prophets of the eighth century.

Because Elijah resisted Ahab, such men as Amos and Hosea were able to give Israel's message to mankind in a permanent form.

Elijah and
Ahaziah

Elijah survived Ahab, as a comparatively late tradition relates how he predicted the death of Ahab's eldest son Ahaziah, who had sent to Beelzebub, the god of Ekron, to inquire whether he would recover from an accident. Elijah asked the messengers, on their way to the oracle: "Is it because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to Beelzebub, the god of Ekron?" He foretold Ahaziah's death, and the king sent fifty men to take him. But at the word of the prophet, the fire came down from God and consumed the men and their leader. Again fifty were sent and consumed. A third fifty were despatched, and their captain besought Elijah to come with him. Jehovah allowed him to accede to this prayer, and Elijah went into the presence of Ahaziah and pronounced his doom. The whole story seems to lack the dignity and beauty of the earlier narrative (2 Kings i.).¹⁰

Ascent of
Elijah

Not so the fine description of Elijah's ascension, which properly belongs to the life of Elisha. The two prophets go to Gilgal, and Elijah orders Elisha to wait there. Elisha replies, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." At Bethel and at Jericho the same thing occurs, but at these places the sons of the prophets warn Elisha—"Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?" And he answered, "Yea I know it, hold ye your peace." They come to Jordan, and Elijah smites the waters with his mantle and they divide. Then Elijah asks his disciple to ask a favour of him, and Elisha requests that he may receive as his first-born son a double portion of the prophetic spirit. "Thou hast asked a hard thing," replies Elijah: "if thou shalt see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so." Elijah is now in the very district from which Moses saw the Promised Land. It may be he ascended the Mount Nebo as his great exemplar had done. As he talked with Elisha, a chariot of fire and horses of fire appear and he is parted from his friend and minister.

“And Elijah went up in a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters and said, Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they were divided hither and thither, and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were at Jericho over against him saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha.” (2 Kings ii. 11-15.)

Chapter X

The Syrians, Assyrians and the Fall of the Northern Kingdom

UNDER the House of Omri Israel resumed its position as the dominant power in Palestine, and pursued its course without fear of domestic foes. The Canaanites disappear from history; the Philistines were no longer formidable, and the lesser Hebrew nations, Judah, Moab and Edom, became more or less unwilling members of a confederacy of which the King of Israel was the head.

Alliance of
Israel and
Judah

The long and fratricidal war between the House of David and the successors of Jeroboam was succeeded by a period of amity lasting as long as the dynasty of Omri endured. The royal families of Israel and Judah intermarried, and Ahab's and Jehoshaphat's sons bore the same names. In victory and defeat the armies of Northern and Southern Israel fought side by side, and throughout this period no dispute between the two kingdoms is so much as hinted at in the book of Kings. Whether Judah was reduced to a state of vassalage, or entered into a voluntary alliance with Israel, is not known.

The two turbulent little nations of Moab and Edom never acknowledged the supremacy of Israel except under compulsion. At the time of the disruption, Moab had fallen to the lot of the Northern Kingdom, Edom to the Southern. Three records of the constant wars between Israel and Moab are preserved: one in the book of Kings; a second in that of Chronicles (2 Kings iii. ; 2 Chron. xx.); whilst the third, on the famous Moabite Stone, discovered in 1868, is of peculiar interest as the earliest non-Biblical notice of ancient Israel.

In the book of Kings, Mesha, King of Moab, is said to have been a sheep-master to the King of Israel and to have paid a heavy tribute from his flocks (2 Kings iii. 4; Isa. xvi. 1). After Ahab's death Mesha rebelled against Israel, and no effort was made to reduce Moab till the reign of Jehoram. The King of Israel assembled his army in Samaria; but, instead of crossing the Jordan, he marched against Moab by way of the Red Sea, taking with him the armies of Jehoshaphat of Judah and of the vassal King of Edom. Their water failed before they reached the frontier of Moab, and the whole host was threatened with destruction. Elisha, who had accompanied the army, was called upon by Jehoram to assist him in his distress, but the prophet roughly bade the king "Get thee to the prophets of thy father and the prophets of thy mother." And when Jehoram persisted, the prophet said that but for Jehoshaphat he would not so much as look on him. However, Elisha ordered a minstrel to be brought, and as the prophet listened to the music the hand of Jehovah came upon him. By divine inspiration Elisha commanded the king to dig ditches in the valley, and foretold that without rain or storm they should be filled with water. At the hour of the offering of the *minchah*, or meal-offering, streams were seen to flow into the valley from the hills of Edom. As the rising sun shone upon it, the water had all the appearance of blood; and the Moabites, thinking that the allies had fought one against the other, rushed to the spoil. The Israelites attacked them, won a decisive victory, and proceeded to lay waste the Moabite territory. The cities were destroyed, the cultivated land made desolate, and the fruit trees cut down. Mesha, with the remnant of his army, was shut up in Kir, and after a vain attempt to break through to the King of Edom, the Moabite king solemnly offered his eldest son as a burnt-offering on the city wall. "And," the Sacred Narrative concludes abruptly, "there was great indignation against Israel; and they departed from him, and returned to their own land" (2 Kings iii.).¹

War with
Mesha of
Moab

It is possible that the ferocity displayed in this Israelite invasion of Moab, as well as the strange policy of marching by way of Edom to the attack instead of boldly crossing the Jordan near Jericho, is accounted for by Mesha's monument,

The Moabite
Stone

on which he states that Moab, after being for a generation under the domination of the House of Omri, had asserted its independence so boldly as to annex all the debatable land on the north bank of the Arnon. The Gadites, who had seized this territory, were driven out of their cities, and Moabites placed in them. The whole account of Mesha's triumphs reads like a chapter of the Bible, and almost every act of Mesha has its parallel in Israelitish history. From this period the Moabites seem to have been able to hold their own, at any rate in the territory of the ancient tribe of the Reubenites.²

Judah and
Edom

Edom was a possession of the kings of Judah from its conquest to the reign of Jehoram, and the port of Elath on the Red Sea, south of Edom, but not strictly Edomite (Numb. xx. 18; xxi. 4) remained in the hands of the Judæans till the days of Ahaz. Sometimes the kings of Judah ruled Edom by an officer of their own, and at others they allowed a native prince to assume the title of king; but the antipathy between these kindred people was always bitter and seemed to become more intense as time went on (1 Kings xxii. 47; 2 Kings viii. 20.)

The Syrians

But the wars with Moab and Edom are minor episodes compared with the great struggle between Israel and the Syrians of Damascus. This powerful people were of the same stock as Israel, an elder branch of the family of Terah. The patriarchs had chosen their wives from their Aramean kindred, and Jacob's wealth was obtained by over-reaching his Syrian father-in-law Laban. It was believed that these patriarchs had fixed the boundaries of their respective nations on the east of Jordan (Gen. xxxi. 45-55). Till the time of David nothing further is recorded of Syria in connection with the Israelites; and the accounts of his campaigns against them are very obscure (*vide supra*, ch. vii.). In the days of Solomon, Rezon, the son of Eliada, a fugitive from David's enemy Hadadezer, King of Zobah, established himself as king in Damascus (1 Kings xi. 23-25); and during the wars between Baasha and Asa, the King of Judah made an alliance with Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion "king of Syria that dwelt at Damascus." This Ben-hadad laid waste the district afterwards known as

Upper Galilee, and forced Baasha to relinquish his attempts to subdue Judah (1 Kings xv. 18-20).³ Another king of the same name appears in the days of Ahab as the overlord of Israel. Ahab acknowledged his supremacy, and humbly agreed to the extravagant pretensions of the Syrian king. At last, however, Ben-hadad, by his demands to search the palace of Ahab, shewed that he would be satisfied with nothing short of entire submission, and Ahab resolved on war. His message to Ben-hadad was couched in the form of a pithy proverb, "Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast like him that putteth it off" (1 Kings xx. 11). Twice did Ben-hadad invade Israel. On the first occasion he came with his thirty-two vassal kings in all the pomp of an Oriental conqueror. Ahab, by advice of a prophet, sent his army against the Syrians under "the young men, the princes of the provinces," and utterly defeated them. Again Ben-hadad attacked Israel, but with a better organised army, commanded, not by kings of doubtful fidelity, but by tried Syrian officers. He also determined not to risk a battle among the hills of Samaria, for Jehovah the God of Israel was believed to be only powerful as a mountain deity. When the Syrians filled the valley, the army of Israel, encamped on the hillside, looked like "two little flocks of kids," but a prophet urged them to attack the Syrians and to vindicate the honour of Jehovah, whose power to fight for His people in the valley had been denied. The Syrians were utterly defeated, and Ben-hadad and the remnant of his army took refuge in a city. Trusting to the reputation for mercy which the kings of Israel enjoyed, Ben-hadad submitted to Ahab, and a treaty, advantageous to Israel, was concluded. The Syrians surrendered all their conquest and gave the Israelites a quarter in Damascus (1 Kings xx. 1-34).

But the prophets evidently regarded the peace as inauspicious. In sparing Ben-hadad's life, Ahab had, like Saul, been guilty of a serious crime: for the King of Syria was *herem* to Jehovah. An acted parable shewed the King of Israel his sin and punishment. A prophet feigned to be a soldier, who had let free a prisoner committed to his charge. The king pronounced him guilty. The prophet revealed who he was, and gave the Divine sentence against Ahab:—"Thus

Ahab rebuked

saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people" (1 Kings xx. 42).⁴

Ahab and
Assyria

A monument of Shalmaneser II., King of Assyria, shews that Ahab during his reign was a member of a confederacy presided over by Addu-idri (Hadad-ezer), King of Damascus, to which the King of Israel contributed the largest force of chariots. Its object was to stem the advance of the Assyrian army against Hamath, but the combined forces of the allies were defeated in B.C. 854 at Qarqara. This is the earliest date in the history of Israel which can be definitely fixed.⁵

Ahab and
Micaiah

How the alliance between Israel and Syria was broken is unknown, but Ahab fell in battle with Syria; and his death is related in one of the finest chapters in the historical books of the Old Testament. Ahab invites Jehoshaphat to accompany him to Ramoth-Gilead, which the Syrians have taken from Israel. The King of Judah agrees, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." The prophets are summoned before the two kings and with one voice exhort them to go up to battle. But Jehoshaphat notices that the prophets refrain from using the sacred name, and asks if there is not a prophet of Jehovah besides. Ahab says that there is one, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but he always prophesies ill. As Jehoshaphat persists, Micaiah is summoned, and as he comes the prophets led by Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah shout to Ahab, "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and prosper: for Jehovah shall deliver it into the hand of the king." Zedekiah makes horns of iron to shew how the Syrians shall be pushed to destruction. Ahab's messenger begs Micaiah not to prophesy evil, and when the king asks him, he replies in the very words of his colleagues. But when Ahab adjures him to speak the truth, he says, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep which have no shepherd." Then Micaiah proceeds to unfold his vision. He sees the host of heaven in the presence of Jehovah consulting how Ahab may be led to his destruction. A spirit promises to enter into his prophets and to deceive the king, and Jehovah sends him forth. Zedekiah smites Micaiah, who is committed to prison until Ahab returns in

peace. He goes out from the king's presence with the warning, "If thou return at all in peace Jehovah hath not spoken by me."⁶

In the battle at Ramoth-Gilead, Ahab, knowing perhaps that the King of Syria had given orders, "Fight neither with small nor great, but only with the King of Israel," disguised himself as an ordinary soldier, and was killed by a chance shot by an archer. He died a hero's death, held up in his chariot throughout the remainder of the day, so that his men should not know how seriously he was wounded. His body was brought to Samaria, and the dogs licked his blood in the pool of Samaria, where the chariot had been washed (1 Kings xxii. 1-38).⁷

Death of Ahab

Though the chapters relating to the Syrian war present Ahab in a totally different light from those which tell of his struggle with Elijah, the unity of his character is preserved.⁸ In both he is represented as a man easily influenced by his surroundings, with good impulses, but readily diverted from following them. As a soldier the best side of his character is seen; brave in adversity, bold in action, generous in victory and undaunted in defeat, the failure of his life and reign is an instructive and necessary warning.

His character

The Syrian war as it is related in the book of Kings, abounds in striking incidents. As is frequently the case, in a protracted struggle, there are examples of interchanges of courtesy between the belligerents. Throughout, the intense patriotism of the prophets, and especially of their chief, Elisha, is conspicuous, yet even he is at times sportive and even friendly in his dealings with the enemies of his country. He may almost be said to fill a larger space in the history of this age than his great predecessor, though he never appealed, as Elijah had done, to the imagination of posterity. Elisha's popularity is attested by the numerous miracles attributed to him. With one exception—the punishment of the lads who mocked him, and who were destroyed by bears—Elisha's wonders are beneficent. He heals the spring at Jericho by casting salt into the bitter waters (2 Kings ii. 19-22). He multiplies the oil of a widow of one of the prophets, to enable her to pay her debt (*ib.* iv. 1-7). When the prophets at Gilgal put some poisonous herbs in the pot by

Elisha

mistake, Elisha neutralises their effect by casting in meal (*ib.* iv. 38-41). He multiplies the loaves, and feeds a hundred men (*ib.* 42-44). He causes the prophet's axe-head to swim when it falls into the water (*ib.* vi. 1-7). One is reminded of a saintly abbot of the Middle Ages living with his monks as Elisha did with his prophets, and working wonders for their benefit. The parallel is the closer, since Elisha's bones displayed that miraculous power so often recorded of the saints of the mediæval period. When a corpse was placed in the prophet's sepulchre it was restored to life (2 Kings xiii. 20, 21). Two miracles of Elisha are recorded at length, and these are among the most beautiful of Old Testament stories. That of the raising of the Shunammite's son gives as pleasing a picture of life in ancient Israel as the book of Ruth. The "prophet's chamber," which she furnishes for Elisha with a bed, a table, a stool and a candlestick, recalls the simple arrangement of a room in an Eastern house, alluded to by our Lord. The gratitude of the prophet is shewn by his offer to speak on behalf of his hostess to the king or the captain of the host; but she has no need of royal favour, dwelling as she does "among her own people." Gehazi, the prophet's servant, reveals the desire of the Shunammite's heart, and a son is promised. The boy grows up, and his aged father takes him to see the harvest reaped. Suddenly the child cries "My head, my head!" is taken to his mother and dies on her knees. Without informing her husband of his death, she lays her child's body on the prophet's bed, and orders her ass to be saddled that she may go to Elisha. Gehazi goes forth to meet her, but she will not tell him what has happened. "Is it well with the child?" he asks; he is answered, "It is well." She throws herself at the prophet's feet, and when Gehazi comes to thrust her aside, Elisha rebukes him. "Let her alone, for her soul is vexed within her, and the Lord hath hid it from me and hath not shewn me." When he learns the news Elisha sends Gehazi with his staff, but the Shunammite insists upon his accompanying her in person. Elisha does so, and restores the child to life. At a later period Gehazi appears in a more amiable light, and defends the Shunammite, whose lands have been taken from her, by telling the King of Israel that it

is she whose son Elisha raised from the dead" (2 Kings iv. 8-37, viii. 1-6).

The story of the healing of Naaman is too well known to be told at length, but apart from its beauty, it deserves attention as illustrative of the complete absence of exclusiveness which characterises the prophets of Northern Israel. Elijah and the widow of Zarephath, Jonah and the Ninevites, Amos and the neighbouring nations, are similar instances of the way in which the prophetic mission was not considered to be restricted to Israelites. From this narrative it appears that the differences between Syria and Israel were less religious than political. The captive Israelite maiden boasts to her mistress that the great prophet of her nation could cure Naaman. Naaman is offended, not because Elisha exalts Jehovah above the gods of Syria, but because he makes the Jordan and not the rivers of Damascus the means of cleansing. He begs for two mules' burthen of earth, that he may be able henceforth to sacrifice to Jehovah, for he will have no god but the God of Israel, and his only act of worship to the gods of his country will be when he is forced officially to enter the Temple of Rimmon with the king. Elisha neither commends the zeal, nor blames the time-serving of Naaman, but bids him farewell, his words "Go in peace" having no deeper meaning. The only indication that Elisha shews that he regarded Naaman as belonging to a race hostile to Israel, is his refusal to accept any reward for healing him, and his punishment of Gehazi for deluding Naaman to supply the assumed wants of his master (2 Kings v.).

It is no easy matter to treat the life of Elisha historically. The Sacred Narrative presents a series of disconnected stories, with hardly any indication of time. His life was a long one, extending over several reigns. He was called in the days of Ahab, and ministered to Elijah till the early part of the reign of Jehoram. He survived the fall of the dynasty of Ahab and the reigns of two sovereigns of the House of Jehu, dying after Joash, the grandson of Jehu, had ascended the throne. He was evidently the animating spirit which preserved Israel throughout the bitter trials of the Syrian wars; but only glimpses of the figure of this prophet, during the long crisis, are vouchsafed.

Elisha and
the Syrians

In the first Elisha appears as acting almost playfully, though the lighter side of this narrative is relieved by one sublime incident.

The prophet continually outwits the Syrians. No plan can be made without his knowledge. Every ambushade the King of Syria makes is revealed to the King of Israel. "Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel," say the Syrian chiefs to their king, "telleth the King of Israel the word that thou speakest in thy bedchamber." The Syrians discover Elisha at Dothan, and surround the city. But Elisha is not dismayed. He tells his servant, "There be more with us than they that be with them." At the prophet's prayer the servant's eyes are opened, and he sees chariots and horses of fire protecting his master. Elisha smites the Syrians with blindness and leads them to Samaria. The King of Israel is eager to slay them, but Elisha, unlike his fierce colleagues in Ahab's time, orders the king to treat his foes with kindness and to restore them to their own land (2 Kings vi. 8-23).

Samaria is besieged by Ben-hadad, and the famine is so sore that women eat their own children. The King of Israel sends to kill Elisha. Elisha orders his house to be closed against the messengers, but tells them that on the morrow there shall be great plenty in the city. His word comes true, for lepers discover that the Syrians have left their camp in a panic, believing that the King of Israel had hired the kings of the Egyptians and the kings of the Hittites to attack them (2 Kings vi. 24—vii. 20).

Hazael

A stranger and darker tale is related of Elisha's dealing with Syria. In accordance with the terrible commission given to Elijah at Horeb, his successor became the appointed means of raising up the greatest enemy of Israel to avenge the sins of the House of Ahab. The prophet comes to Damascus; and the sick king, Ben-hadad, sends his officer, Hazael, to the prophet with the message, "Thy son Ben-hadad, King of Syria, hath sent me to thee, saying, shall I recover of this sickness?" Elisha foretells the king's death, and as he does so gazes upon Hazael and reads his inmost thoughts. At last it is said "the man of God wept." Hazael demanded the reason, and Elisha replied that he knew the evil that he

would do to Israel, and described the fierce brutality which attended the course of every Eastern conqueror. Hazael professes to be incredulous. How is he, a mere dog, to perform such glorious exploits? He goes forth from the prophet's presence resolved to do the deed, by which alone he could hope to reign. The sick Ben-hadad is murdered, and Hazael becomes king (2 Kings viii. 7-15).

Elisha was a witness of all the evil he had foretold during the reigns of Hazael and Ben-hadad; but on his deathbed he was able to predict victory. King Joash came to see Elisha, and addressed him, as this prophet had long before addressed his great master Elijah when he was received into heaven, "The chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof." The prophet commands the king to open the window that looked eastward and to draw his bow. With the dying prophet's hands upon the bow the king shot an arrow, and Elisha exclaimed, "The Lord's arrow of salvation, even the arrow of salvation over Syria." At the prophet's bidding the king smites the ground, but his zeal is not as burning as that of the aged patriot. He smites but thrice: had he smitten more often, he would have destroyed Syria. As it is Joash will only gain three victories (2 Kings xiii. 14-19).

Death of
Elisha

The part taken by Elisha in the overthrow of the family of Ahab was not great. It is said that he sent the prophet to anoint Jehu, but nothing is related of him in the subsequent account of the annihilation of the royal family, nor in that of the massacre of the Baal worshippers. It is a relief to be allowed to imagine that a prophet so beloved for his kindly actions, and so honoured for his patriotic zeal, stood aloof from the horrors of that barbarous revolution, and that the ferocious Jehu and that fiery zealot Jehonadab the son of Rechab, were the chief actors in that dreadful tragedy. Though prophecy was fulfilled and the majesty of Jehovah vindicated by Jehu, the prophet Hosea, a century after the event, speaks of it as a terrible crime meriting the vengeance of a just God (Hosea i. 4).

Jehu destroys
the House of
Ahab

Not so the author of the second book of Kings, who presents a most spirited picture of the revolution.

The ninth and tenth chapters can hardly be read without

a feeling of excitement. Scene after scene presents itself with startling vividness and rapidity.

First the captains of Israel are seen assembled at Ramoth-Gilead. A prophet rushes into their midst and summons Jehu into the house. Jehu rejoins his companions, and they inquire the message of the "mad fellow" who had come to him. Jehu prevaricates, "Ye know the man and what his talk was." Then he tells the truth, "Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel." In an instant the soldiers' garments are spread on the steps to make a temporary throne, and the shout goes up, "Jehu is king!" (2 Kings ix. 4-13).

Joram of
Israel slain

The scene shifts to Jezreel, where Joram, King of Israel, is staying to recover from his wounds, and with him his kinsman, Ahaziah, King of Judah. The watchman sees the company of Jehu. Messengers are sent, but are not allowed to return. As the usurper draws near the watchman recognises "the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi." The two kings go forth, and Jehu draws his bow to its full and kills Joram. Ahaziah turns to flee, but he also is pursued and slain. The body of the King of Israel is cast into the plot of Naboth, and Jehu reminds Bidkar, the captain of his chariots, how, "when they rode behind Ahab, Jehovah had laid this burthen upon him" (2 Kings ix. 14-26).

Death of
Jezebel

At the city gate, Jehu is greeted by Jezebel. The terrible queen, after witnessing the death of her son, stands undaunted at the window over the city gate, arrayed in royal robes. She taunts Jehu with being a "Zimri," murderer of his master.⁹ At his command the eunuchs of the palace hurl the queen from the window. Her blood is sprinkled on the wall and on the horses of Jehu, as he enters the city. During the banquet held to celebrate his success, Jehu sends to bury Jezebel, "for she is a king's daughter"; but the dogs have already eaten the body—"They found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands" (2 Kings ix. 30-37).

But the tale of blood is not yet complete. The craven rulers of Samaria remind themselves of Jehu's might, "Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?" At the command of the new king, they slay the seventy sons

of Ahab and send their heads in baskets to Jezreel. Jehu makes two mounds of them at the city gate. A general massacre of all Ahab's adherents was ordered, and was followed by the slaughter of forty relatives of Ahaziah, King of Judah (2 Kings x. 1-14).

Every act of severity towards the House of Ahab had been justified by Jehu by an appeal to the word of Jehovah spoken by Elijah, but now a new religious leader appears on the scene. This is Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, founder of an austere sect which lasted for centuries and preserved the ancient rudeness of the life of the desert.¹⁰ Him Jehu takes to Samaria in his chariot, "to see his zeal for Jehovah." The Baal worshippers are collected into the temple of their god, which is surrounded by soldiers, who slay the unarmed multitude. "Thus," says the historian, "Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel" (2 Kings x. 15-28).

The Baal
worship
destroyed

It may be assumed that the worship of Baal was not suppressed without a civil war, which sapped the strength of Israel. It is impossible to ignore the fact that the destruction of the House of Ahab was an act of unmitigated ferocity, and that the Baal worshippers in Samaria were victims of a treacherous stratagem, which reflects no credit on either Jehu or the prophets who instigated his policy. The fact is that the dreadful story has one solemn lesson. The sins of a ruler like Ahab render the appearance of a tyrant like Jehu inevitable, but the cruelties of a bloodthirsty religious or social reformer are none the less odious because they are the outcome of the crimes of a past age. Jehu's "zeal for Jehovah" is no more deserving of admiration than the love of liberty displayed by a Marat.

Jehu and his descendants reigned for a longer period than any other dynasty of Israel. Four successive monarchs, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash and Jeroboam occupied the throne of Israel for a period extending over a century. The annals of their reigns are extremely scanty, but it is plain that the Syrians reduced the Israelites to the greatest straits, and then gradually their power waned, till, under Jeroboam, the territory under the sway of Israel was almost equal to that governed by Solomon.

Dynasty
of Jehu

Under Jehu the whole of Eastern Palestine was ravaged

by Hazael, who also extended his depredations on the western side as far as Jerusalem (2 Kings xiii. 17): the army of Jehoahaz was reduced to fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand soldiers. Joash, according to the prophecy of Elisha, defeated the Syrians three times in Aphek and recovered the cities of Israel; and Jeroboam II., encouraged by the prophecies of Jonah the son of Amittai, pursued a career of victory, which ended in his conquering Damascus, and restoring "the coast of Israel from the entering in of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah" (2 Kings xiv. 23-29).

Assyria

Modern discoveries have supplied the clue to the history of the period. The sudden collapse of the Syrian kingdom of Damascus is accounted for by the appearance of Assyria as a conquering power.

The period during which the Israelites were engaged in establishing their power in Palestine was one of decline for the Assyrian empire. Its last great monarch, Tiglath-Pileser I., had lived towards the close of the twelfth century, and after him no records appear on the monuments till the days of Asshur-nazirpal (884-860), who consolidated his kingdom between the Tigris and the Euphrates, and took tribute from the Western princes as far as Phœnicia. In the days of Ahab, Shalmaneser II. (860-824), as has been shewn, defeated a confederacy of twelve kings at Qarqara in B.C. 854, and in B.C. 842 he conquered Hazael, King of Damascus, and took tribute from Jehu "the son of Omri." The Arameans, being nearer to Assyria than the Israelites, were the first to feel the presence of this formidable power, and relaxed their efforts to conquer their rivals. As a consequence of this Israel rapidly increased in strength, and under Jeroboam II. it became the leading power in Palestine. At this juncture a flood of light is thrown on the social, political and religious condition of the Israelites by the prophecy of Amos, the earliest document in the Old Testament of almost unquestioned authenticity.

The literary prophets

In perusing the historical records it is hard to determine with accuracy how much may or may not be attributed to the prejudices of the time at which they were composed, and we are constantly being perplexed by having to consider such points as these: Was the judgment passed in the book of

Kings on Solomon or Jeroboam, that of their contemporaries, or that of posterity? What views did Samuel or Elijah hold as to the nature of God? In what spirit was Jehovah worshipped at Shiloh, or even at Jerusalem, in the early days of the Judæan Monarchy? What ideas were associated with the "calves" at Bethel and Dan? At best the answers to such questions must be conjectural, and can only be accepted or rejected on the ground of their probability.

It is otherwise after the appearance of the literary prophets. With them it is possible to enter into the mind of their day and to understand the meaning of much which, without their aid, would be obscure.

Amos is sometimes considered as a pioneer in religious thought, as opening a new world of ideas to the men of his age. It is, however, equally permissible to regard him as declaring long-accepted but forgotten truths, to his contemporaries. Rarely indeed does it fall to any religious teacher to unfold new truths! His duty is, generally, to remind men of what they know to be true, but are unwilling to acknowledge.

The light the prophets shed falls backward as well as forward, making Israel's past more intelligible. From Amos and his younger contemporary Hosea the beliefs long held by the Israelites became known. To these both prophets appeal as to the foundation of their teaching.

The long war with Syria had its effects both for good and for evil on the people of Israel. It had been a bitter struggle, and at one time the nation was almost annihilated, but it emerged from the contest victorious and stronger than it had ever been. Success strengthened its confidence in Jehovah. There was no danger of a relapse into idolatry, as in the days of Solomon or Ahab. Every Israelite was an enthusiastic worshipper of Jehovah, for a great religious revival had accompanied the successes of Jeroboam II. The sanctuaries were thronged, offerings poured in, the festivals were scrupulously observed. A spirit of devotion seems to have prevailed: men eagerly entered the ranks of the prophetic order, or embraced the rigid discipline of the Nazirites. But above all things the Israelites felt that they were the chosen people of Jehovah. They gloried in the

Amos

Religious
revival

name of Israel; they spoke of their country as "the high place of Isaac," they styled themselves the House of Jacob, and the House of Joseph. The adventures of Jacob and Joseph, and the deliverance from Egypt, were apparently familiar to all.

First appear-
ance of Amos

But the religion of Israel was as hollow as its prosperity was delusive, and the warning voice was raised at the royal sanctuary at Bethel by a prophet who recognised the political danger as clearly as he saw the underlying rottenness of the religious condition of the nation. This was Amos, a man of humble birth, for his father's name is not recorded, who was a prophet neither by profession nor by training, but a herdsman of the Judæan township of Tekoa (Amos vii. 14). He was not, to all appearance, an uneducated man, for his style is singularly pure, and his knowledge of the affairs of Palestine not inconsiderable. He began his message by a survey of the condition of Israel's neighbours.

The prospect was like that of a fair day with storm clouds on the horizon. When or how the storm would burst no one knew, and the signs of its coming were not visible to every eye. Assyria had not yet begun to push her armies to the coast of the Mediterranean, but it was evident to a keen observer that she must soon do so. Amos recognised that the danger was coming, but it was as yet so far off that he does not name Assyria. He contents himself with saying that *it* (the nameless terror) is coming and that Jehovah will not turn it aside.¹¹

In his opening address, Amos shews that he recognises in Jehovah the sole dispenser of justice upon earth. He is the avenger of all crimes, and all men are responsible to Him. The prophet further shews a recognition of a natural moral law, as well as a law revealed specially to Israel. The punishment will fall on the surrounding nations, because they have sinned against the light vouchsafed them. Barbarous cruelty, perfidy and treachery are not natural, but abnormal; Israel, however, has fallen into the same condemnation as the nations, because it has had better opportunities than they, and has neglected them (Amos i. 2). It is because of the extraordinary privileges of this nation that its punishment is merited: "You only have I known of

all the families of the earth ; therefore will I punish you for your iniquities" (Amos iii. 2). Except by implication, Amos says little about idolatry. He is not severe on ritual offences, but rather dwells on the moral corruption of the nation.

According to Amos, the position of Israel is unique. The prophet invites his hearers to survey the neighbouring nations, and say if any has a fairer heritage than Israel (Amos vi. 2). Well might he speak thus in the flourishing days of Jeroboam II. ! Jehovah has specially chosen or known Israel, He has put His spirit into the people so that their sons become His prophets and His Nazirites. His will and His purposes are always revealed to "His servants the prophets." His providence is seen in the history of all nations, in bringing the Syrians from Kir and the Philistines from Caphtor, but specially in leading Israel out of Egypt (Amos ix. 7, 8). For Israel is the favoured nation. Hitherto it has always been allowed to know the word of Jehovah.

If outward service could satisfy the demands of Jehovah, Israel was certainly not behind-hand when Amos delivered his message. The new moons and sabbaths were scrupulously observed, every morning the customary sacrifice was offered, the tithes and freewill offerings were paid, the people crowded to Bethel, Gilgal, and even to distant Beersheba. Incidentally a sanctuary at Samaria is alluded to, together with those at Beersheba and Dan. Sacrifices were evidently offered with great profusion (Amos iv. 4, 5 ; v. 22).

Nor were the Israelites ignorant of the moral requirements of the Divine law. There is no *proof* that any code was in existence, but the teaching of Amos appears to be based on the laws found in the "Book of the Covenant." Nor may it be forgotten that in the time of Amos there was a continual manifestation of Jehovah's will by means of priest and prophet. To lose this contact with Jehovah was regarded as the most awful of all misfortunes, worse than famine or the failure of the supply of water. Amos threatens "a famine of hearing of the words of the Lord" as the greatest calamity that can befall the nation (Amos viii. 11).

The sins which Amos denounces are not schism, for he scarcely mentions Judah, nor perhaps even idolatry, but the

Israelite
belief in the
time of Amos

callous cruelty of the prosperous class of a nation enervated by luxury. The poor were ground to the dust, their creditors shewed no mercy. The extortioners had no shame; they appeared at the feasts as devout worshippers with the very garments they had torn from the wretched debtors (Amos ii. 8). In Samaria the palaces were stored with ill-gotten luxury; the great ladies, by their wanton extravagance, caused the poor to be more oppressed. Drunkenness was a national vice. No trouble seemed to rouse men from their careless security. Famines and droughts had afflicted the land, but they had taught no salutary lessons, and the doom of the Assyrian invasion was inevitable. There was but one remedy: "Let justice," cried Amos, "run down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos v. 24).

This preaching is not that of an innovator or an introducer of new truths. Amos evidently appealed to the conscience of the nation, and so effectually did he arouse it, that Amaziah, the priest at Bethel, declared, "The land is not able to bear his words." He was bidden to go to Judah and earn his bread by prophesying, but he declared himself "no prophet nor prophet's son," but a messenger sent by Jehovah to Israel, and warned Amaziah of the doom of his house and the captivity of his people (Amos vii. 10-17).

The words "decline and fall" can hardly be applied to the Oriental empires of antiquity. They did not gradually waste away; they vanished from sight. Jeroboam II. was evidently the sole support on which Israel's prosperity rested. He died, and anarchy ensued. His son, Zechariah, was murdered by Shallum, the son of Jabesh, who was in turn put to death by Menahem, the son of Gadi. A civil war followed, in which Menahem committed atrocities like those of which the Syrian, Hazael, had been guilty. During his reign an Assyrian king is first mentioned in the annals of Israel. Menahem, when threatened by "Pul, king of Assyria," paid a thousand talents to be confirmed in his kingdom. The money was raised by taxing the wealthy Israelites (2 Kings xv. 19-22). Menahem was succeeded by Pekahiah, who, in turn, was murdered by Pekah, the son of Remaliah.¹² Thus the history of Israel, during the closing years of the nation, is a mere record of bloodshed and crime.

Civil wars
after
Jeroboam II.

Again, light is thrown on this troubled age by an Israelite prophet, Hosea, the son of Beeri.

The life-story of Hosea may be given in the opening of his prophecy, though some regard his experiences not as real, but as a species of allegory to shew the relation between Jehovah and His people. If taken literally, the prophet's tale is that of a broken life and a ruined home. Hosea

Though the prophets Hosea and Amos were almost contemporaries, the circumstances, the tone and the character of their prophecies are very different. Amos addresses Israel when the nation was prosperous, its religion decorous, and when a tone of general complacency prevailed. In Hosea's days calamities crowded thick and fast upon Israel; religion was corrupt, and fear of Assyria had made the rulers of Samaria helpless. Amos is singularly impersonal. He does not name the approaching calamity but only hints at it; he addresses Israel as one of the guilty nations; he gives his message sternly without any expression of personal feeling. Hosea on the other hand makes no mention of any nation save the chosen race. His interests are limited to Judah and Israel, but are centred on Ephraim. His message is as stern as that of Amos, but he delivers it with an effort. His own heart is broken at the doom of his people. When Jehovah speaks through Amos it is to announce that He loves justice and is ready to sacrifice Israel to its demands. His message, by the hand of Hosea, is that He loves Ephraim, and that He suffers when He has to inflict on him the penalty of his sins.

Jehovah, in Hosea, is no embodiment of abstract righteousness, but a father chastising his people with regret, and eagerly looking for signs of amendment.

Hosea was married to Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, who bore him three children (Hos. i. 2-9). To each of these the prophet gave symbolical names. The eldest son was called Jezreel, because Jehovah was about "to avenge the blood of Jezreel on the House of Jehu." It is characteristic of the prophet's sensitive nature that he should dwell on the tragedy of the ruin of the House of Ahab with horror (Hos. i. 4, 5). A daughter was named Lo-Ruhamah because Jehovah would have no more pity for Israel, and Hosea's wife
and children

a second son, Lo-Ammi, in token of the rejection of Israel as the people of God (Hos. i. 6-9). A day, however, was at hand when the names of the younger children would be changed to Ruhamah and Ammi, as a pledge of the restoration of the nation (Hos. ii. 1). Hosea's wife deserted him for another man, and the prophet, by Divine command, took her back and made her remain in seclusion before he again lived with her (Hos. iii. 1-5).¹³ In all this he sees a parable of God's dealing with the faithless nation of Israel. The people were espoused to God, but in going after the local Baalim and foreign deities, they had become like a faithless wife estranged from her husband. On repentance restoration was promised. Israel would be secluded, "brought into the wilderness," that Jehovah "might speak to her heart," and then she would enter into a better relation to Him. No more would she call Him as a slave-concubine "Baali" (my owner); she would address Him as a freewoman by the title of Ishi (my husband) (Hos. ii. 16, 17).

Decadence
of Israel

The apostasy of Israel as described by Hosea is far more complete than that in the days of Amos. Then the national sins were those engendered by prosperity and spiritual arrogance, but after the fall of the House of Jehu despair had seized on Israel. The last signs of decency had disappeared from the sanctuaries. The priests were in league with the banditti who robbed the pilgrims on the way to Shechem. Their moral influence was gone; they are compared to "a snare at Mizpah and a net spread upon Tabor" (Hos. v. 1, 2; vi. 9). The prophets were active, but could not persuade the people that what Jehovah desired was "mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings" (Hos. vi. 6). A written law, with its ten thousand precepts, was in existence, but was completely disregarded.¹⁴ Immorality was prevalent, and drunken orgies disgraced the royal palace. Hosea is much more explicit than Amos in his denunciations of schism and idolatry, for as his prophecy now stands, Judah is contrasted favourably with Israel, and the bull worship of Samaria bitterly denounced. The "pillars," Baalim, idols and false gods, are all reprobated.

Hosea has nothing but condemnation for the politics of his time. Ephraim is compared, by him, to a timid dove fluttering helplessly first to Egypt and then to Assyria for aid. Curiously enough he dreads Egypt the most, and predicts a captivity in that country as well as in Assyria. "Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean food in Assyria. . . . Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them" (Hos. xi. 11; ix. 3-6).

Despite the immoral condition of the nation, and the semi-idolatrous state of its religion, Hosea is able to appeal with confidence to a feeling prevalent in Israel, that the state of things then prevalent denoted a sad fall from a higher ideal. The facts of the history of his people, which he assumes to be familiarly known, all point to this. Jacob, the supplanter of Esau, had escaped to Aram and become a servant to gain his bride (Hos. xii. 12). He prevailed with the angel when he strove, and found God at Bethel (Hos. xii. 4). His descendants had gone down to Egypt, and Jehovah had called them thence because He loved them. A prophet brought them forth and preserved them in the wilderness, where Jehovah found them; but Israel proved faithless and provoked their God at Baal-peor (Hos. xi. 1; ix. 10). The land and its fruits were the gift of Jehovah, who was the true King of His people, as had been proved by the love which He had displayed throughout their history,—a love which even the sins of Ephraim had not been able to destroy.

Jehovah's
love for Israel

But though the relation of Jehovah to His people had been that of tender mercy (*chesed*), though He loves the nation so fondly that He says, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim?" yet so great is the apostasy that destruction is bound to come. The doom of Jehovah is this:—

Israel's
rejection

"Shall I ransom them from the power of the grave?
Shall I redeem them from death?
Ho, Death! (come with) thy plagues!
Ho, Grave! (with) thy destructions!
Repentance shall be hid from Mine eyes"

(Hos. xiii. 14).¹⁵

Isaiah and
Israel

Isaiah and Micah, the contemporary prophets of Judah, allude to the condition of the Northern Kingdom in the days of its decline. In about B.C. 735 Isaiah uttered an elaborate prophecy against Israel. It consists of several stanzas, each either describing the calamities which have befallen the nation, or denouncing certain sins and concluding with the words, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

The oracle begins with the words, "The Lord sent a word unto Jacob and it hath lighted upon Israel." The pride and stubborn courage of the tribe of Ephraim is then portrayed. No calamity dismays them. "The bricks are fallen," say they, "but we will build with hewn stone: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars." Their pride displeases Jehovah, who sends the Syrians and Philistines to devour. Yet is not His wrath turned away (Is. ix. 8-12).

Then Jehovah cut off the guides and leaders of the people—the men who had made Israel great in Jeroboam II.'s days. Their leaders led them astray, and Jehovah would not save the nation. Yet His wrath was not turned away (Is. ix. 13-17).

Again Jehovah stretched forth His hand, and as unrighteousness burned like fire, civil war was kindled, and the brother tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, were at strife, hating one another, but ready to unite if they could humble the pride of Judah (Is. ix. 18-21).

Then the prophet pronounces "Woe" to the sinners in Israel. On the greedy landowners who "added house to house and field to field." On the revellers who delighted in gorgeous feasts accompanied by music. On the men who were only valiant as drunkards. On the unjust legislators, the venal scribes and the corrupt judges. Though these "crouch under the captives and fall under the slain," though their carcasses become as the refuse of the streets in the captured cities; yet Jehovah's hand is still stretched out for the last and greatest woe (Is. x. 1-4; v. 8-25).

The Assyrian
invasion
prophesied

In such a fashion does Isaiah lead up to the coming of the Assyrians. Jehovah, he says, "lifts up His banner to a far-off nation," and even in the words of our English

Bible has preserved the sound of the tread of an advancing army.

“And He will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss for them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly: none shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken: whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent; their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind; their roaring shall be like a lion, they shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar and lay hold of the prey, and carry it away safe, and there shall be none to deliver.” (Is. v. 26-29.)¹⁶

Israel now became fatally involved with Assyria. Hitherto no Assyrian army had appeared in the country, and kings like Jehu and Menahem had remained free from molestation by the payment of tribute. The immediate cause of the direct interference of Assyria in the politics of Israel was an attempt on the part of Pekah, King of Israel, in alliance with Rezin, King of Syria, to reduce Judah to subjection by deposing the Davidic king, Jehoahaz (commonly known as Ahaz), and to give the crown to a nominee of their own, probably a Syrian, whom Isaiah styles the son of Tabeel (Is. vii. 7).

Israel and
Syria against
Judah

From the days of Jehu the kingdom of Judah had not had a particularly eventful history. The records preserved in the book of Kings are rather those of a city or sanctuary than of a nation, and contrast strongly with the stirring events in the story of the Northern tribes. The royal house had been almost exterminated first by Jehu and then by Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, who usurped the throne, and reigned for seven years. During her reign the Baal worshippers under their priest Mattan were allowed to practise their religion, but the Temple remained under the control of Jehoiada the priest of Jehovah, a man connected by marriage with the House of David. His wife, Jehosheba, concealed her brother Ahaziah's son, Joash, the only child who survived the massacre of the seed royal by Athaliah, till he was six years of age. Jehoiada then decided to overthrow Athaliah and the Baal worship. The child-king was pro-

Sketch of
History of
Judah

claimed in the Temple, Athaliah was killed and Mattan slain on his own altar (2 Kings xi.). Joash reigned for forty-six years, but the book of Kings, during this long period, relates nothing save a restoration of the Temple buildings, and an invasion of Judah by Hazael, King of Syria. The Chronicler adds that after Jehoiada's death Joash went astray and killed Jehoiada's son Zechariah for remonstrating with him (2 Chron. xxiv. 20-22). Joash was succeeded by Amaziah, who reigned twenty-nine years, and won a notable victory over the Edomites (2 Kings xiv. 7). He presumed to challenge Jehoash, King of Israel, to battle, and the contemptuous answer of the latter shews how disdainfully the Northern monarchs looked down on their petty Jewish rivals. Amaziah was utterly defeated, and the King of Israel punished him by the destruction of the northern wall of Jerusalem (2 Kings xiv. 8-14). Of Azariah or Uzziah, his son, the book of Kings says practically nothing, but the Chronicler describes him as a valiant and prudent prince who fortified Jerusalem and encouraged husbandry. Uzziah reigned no less than fifty-two years, and his son Jotham sixteen, but part of this time he may have acted as his father's regent (2 Kings xv. 1-7; 2 Chron. xxvi., xxvii.).¹⁷ Jotham's son, the weak and unprincipled Ahaz, succeeded his father in the seventeenth year of Pekah.

Syro-
Ephraimite
war

The invasion of Judah by the allied armies of Syria and Israel is important, because for the first time since the days of Solomon, the Southern Kingdom comes into prominence. For centuries it remained in obscurity; hardly a single name of importance has been handed down to posterity as belonging to Judah. The only great prophet, Amos the herdsman of Tekoa, went into the Northern Kingdom to declare his message. The Judahites had practically no history, but in the uneventful generations which followed the glorious age of Solomon the little nation had shewn a steady loyalty to their kings, which promised well for its stability. The people, like their country, lacked the attractiveness of Northern Israel, but the strength of the Jewish character was already making itself manifest, and in this the ten tribes were inferior to the smaller nation.

Isaiah

Isaiah, the prophet of Judah at this crisis, fills a unique

place in sacred history and literature. He appears to have been equally great as a statesman, a poet, and a prophet. His wise counsel helped Judah to weather the storm before which Israel succumbed. The portions of the book attributed to him, which are generally acknowledged to be genuine, are unequalled specimens of Hebrew poetry. As a prophet he not only delivered his message from the most High, but he also gave form to the Messianic hopes which from his day, at any rate, influenced the thoughts of the Chosen People.

Isaiah was called to the prophetic office by a vision in the Temple at Jerusalem in the year that King Uzziah died, and at the time of the invasion of Judah by the Syro-Ephraimite army he was already a prophet of repute and influence, and the father of a son named Shear-jashub (Is. vii. 3). At an earlier time, perhaps in B.C. 740, Isaiah described the condition of Judah as outwardly most prosperous; but side by side with increasing trade and wealth there was wanton luxury, especially among the women, idolatry and superstition. In vivid terms does he depict Jerusalem with its streets full of traders from the east, sorcerers from Philistia, and chariots and horses (Is. ii. 6, 7). The great ladies go about with mincing gait, decked in finery (Is. iii. 16-26), the images of strange gods are everywhere to be seen, the city has the appearance of a luxurious heathen town. But all this prosperity with its attendant wickedness was, says the prophet, destined to disappear. Jehovah was about to arise and shake the earth. At the fear of Him the idol worshippers would cast their images "to the moles and to the bats," and would hide in the clefts of the rocks. A day was coming when the rulers of Judah would be like children, too feeble to control the state. The base influence of the harem would be the dominant power (Is. iii. 12). Like all the prophets of his age, Isaiah recognises that the social evil is the root of the mischief, for as in Israel so in Judah the rich men habitually ground down the poor by their selfish rapacity.

Under Ahaz the prophetic words were fulfilled, for there can be no doubt that this prince was both feeble and wicked. Like Ahab he was a supporter of foreign religions, and

apparently introduced the worship of Moloch into Jerusalem, and also erected altars on the roofs of the Temple in honour of the heavenly bodies (2 Kings xxiii. 12). Such a king was ill qualified to rule in a great emergency, and it is not surprising that when Pekah and Rezin's armies threatened Jerusalem, "The heart of Ahaz was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees in the forest are moved with the wind" (Is. vii. 2).

Invasion
of Judah

The invasion was twofold. The Syrians under Rezin went through Edom and seized the Judæan settlement of Eloth on the Red Sea, which from that time became an Edomite or Syrian port. The army of Ahaz was utterly defeated by Pekah (2 Chron. xxviii. 6), and it seemed as though nothing could prevent the deposition of Ahaz in favour of the son of Tabeel. Ahaz seems to have behaved at this juncture with craft and duplicity. He sent privately to Tiglath-pileser, King of Assyria, saying, "I am thy servant and thy son, come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me" (2 Kings xvi. 7). At the same time he sought the advice of Isaiah, who, as he well knew, would never have sanctioned the base and unpatriotic action of inviting Assyria to intervene in the affairs of Palestine. But the prophet was not deceived. His statesmanlike eye took in the whole situation. Neither Pekah nor Rezin were really formidable. He invited Ahaz to ask for a sign from Jehovah that deliverance would come. But the king, conscious, no doubt, that help was on its way from Assyria, replied, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." Isaiah rebuked him sternly, "Hear ye this, O House of David; is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also?" A sign was already given by God.

Immanuel

Already a child was conceived who was to bear the name of Immanuel (God with us). He was to eat curds and honey, the product of a pastoral country, for the crops of Judah had been destroyed by the invading army. Before, however, the infant should know good from evil the land of the invaders themselves would be desolate. Then having predicted the ruin of Israel and Syria, Isaiah goes on to tell Ahaz of the terrible evil which his cowardly policy had

brought on his people. The "razor he had hired" in Tiglath-pileser's army would shave the land of Judah till it was utterly desolate. Where vineyards had once fetched a large rental, so great would be the ruin that a man would have to go armed for fear of wild beasts (Is. vii. 18-25). A son born to Isaiah at this time received the significant name of Maher-shalal-hash-baz (haste booty, speed spoil), in token of the coming destruction of Israel and Syria (Is. viii. 1, 2).

The year B.C. 734 witnessed the first invasion of Palestine (Pilishtha as it is styled) by an Assyrian army. Tiglath-pileser reached Gaza, but neither Samaria nor Jerusalem seem to have been threatened severely.¹⁸ Northern Israel suffered, for the book of Kings says, "In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria" (2 Kings xv. 29).

Tiglath-
pileser in
Palestine

In the following year the Assyrian monarch attacked Rezin. Damascus was taken, and the inhabitants were led as captives to Kir. Ahaz presented himself before Tiglath-pileser to do homage at Damascus—a fact related by the sacred historian, because Ahaz erected an altar in the Temple on the plan of an Assyrian altar he had seen on his journey. The fall of Israel was now near. Pekah was murdered by Hoshea the son of Elah, who had been instigated to seize the crown by the Assyrians.¹⁹ Hoshea reigned nine years. Like Jehoram, the last of the dynasty of Ahab, he is said to have done less evil than his predecessors. But he lived in evil days. For six years he paid tribute to Assyria, and then, won over by the promises of Sabako or So, King of Egypt, he rebelled. Shalmaneser, the successor of Tiglath-pileser, besieged Samaria but died before it was taken. For three years the capital of Israel resisted, but in the ninth year of Hoshea (B.C. 721) it was reduced by Sargon. With Samaria the kingdom of Israel fell to rise no more.

The captivity of the Northern tribes was not a single act of any one conqueror. Only 28,000 were deported after the fall of Samaria,²⁰ but previous to this, the territory of the Northern and trans-Jordanic tribes had been depopulated

Fall of
Samaria

by Tiglath-pileser. A century later the old sanctuary at Bethel was still in existence, for it was laid waste by Josiah, and even after the captivity of Judah the remnant of the old Israelitish inhabitants of Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria used to present their offerings at the ruined Temple at Jerusalem (2 Kings xxiii. 14-20; Jer. xli. 5). Even in the days of our Lord, mention is made of "Anna a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher" (St Luke ii. 36). It seems that Israel gradually disappeared after the destruction of its political existence, but it is hard to believe that the whole population of so extensive a tract as that occupied by the Northern Kingdom, was successfully deported. It is true that the Persians had a practice of clearing an island of its inhabitants by a process of "netting" (Herodotus vi. 31), but this would be impossible in a country like Israel. At any rate, the devastation was so far successful that by the time of Esarhaddon (B.C. 681-668) the population was not sufficient to keep down the lions, and his new settlers petitioned for a priest "to teach them the manner of the God of the country" that He might protect them against the wild beasts. The bitterly hostile Jewish account of these settlers in the book of Kings represents them as half-idolators "fearing Jehovah and serving their own gods," but they themselves gloried in being the descendants of Jacob and Joseph, and at a later date certainly practised a monotheistic worship. (2 Kings xvii. 24-41; St John iv. 20).

Israel

The loss of the ten tribes can only be rightly judged by taking into account the extreme insignificance of the Southern Kingdom down to the fall of Samaria. Judah produced but one judge—Othniel, no great prophet before Isaiah, except Shemaiah and Amos, no important priest save Jehoiada. With the single exceptions of David, Joab and Solomon, it had no one to compare with Joshua, Gideon, Barak, Jephthah, Samson, Eli, Samuel, Saul, Elijah, Elisha, Hosea. Israel was the land of song and story, of stirring traditions and legends. To its people we owe the preservation of the greater part of the story of Jacob and of Joseph, the Book of the Laws of the Covenant, the prophecies of Balaam, the Blessing of the Tribes by Moses, the last words of Joshua and the Song of Deborah and Barak. Possibly the Messianic Psalm describing a royal

marriage (Ps. xlv.), the so-called Song of Solomon, and the prophecy of Jonah, are of Northern origin. The spirited stories of how Gideon defeated the Midianites, and Elijah triumphed over the Baal worship, were, no doubt, often repeated among the Israelites : and after all, these are but fragments of the rich poetry, literature and folklore produced by Israel.

Dean Stanley's excellent history of Israel, the only one written by a man with a true literary gift, has received from its author the singularly inappropriate title of the "Jewish Church," and it is not uncommon to hear the great men of Israel spoken of as "Jews." An ancient Ephraimite, Manassite, Benjamite or Gadite would have regarded such an appellation as the most grievous insult. The Josephite tribes at least were of a far purer stock than the Judahites, allied, as the latter were, to such non-Israelite clans as the Kenites and Jerahmeelites. The King of Israel was as "a cedar of Lebanon" in his own eyes, and doubtless in those of his subjects, and his brother of Judah a mere thistle compared to him (2 Chr. xxv. 18). "What inheritance have we (emphatic) with David?" was the cry of the revolted tribes. The very name of Israel was in itself a claim to be the genuine stock of the patriarch. Even the Jewish prophets felt that with the captivity the flower of the Chosen Race was gone, and longed for the restoration of Israel and reunion with the House of Joseph. True, the tribe of Judah, favoured by its barren territory, its strong capital, its more stable government, and the obstinate conservatism of its people, alone succeeded in handing down to posterity the truths confided to Jehovah's people; but to the last days of Samaria it was Israel, not Judah, which represented the Chosen Race.

So much has been said of the degradation of the worship of Jehovah at the Israelitish shrines, of its assimilation with the nature worship of Canaan, and of the adoration of a bull as symbolical of the Deity, that the possibility of the existence of a purer life among the people is frequently overlooked. The blood-stained annals preserved in the book of Kings relate mainly to the Court, nor is it fair to judge a people by the actions of zealots for righteousness like the prophets of Israel.

Perhaps the best indications of the home life of ancient **Life in Israel**

Israel are to be found in the histories of Jacob and Joseph. Jacob is the prototype of the thriving Israelitish landowner, like the husband of the rich Shunammite lady who entertained Elisha. His virtues are essentially domestic. He is a good husband and father, a skilful manager, shrewd but as a rule honourable in his dealings, hating violence in all its forms, calculating in his religion, but yet sincerely pious. It is probable that the craft of Jacob, which so repels Europeans, was considered commendable by his descendants. Joseph is a more attractive character, and a people who for generations delighted in the tale of how their ancestor became a great man by his honesty, piety and shrewd sense, had certainly a high ideal of life set before them.

The prophets are unanimous in speaking of the wealth of the Ephraimites, and indeed most of the Northern tribes seem to have been prosperous. The sins denounced are those which flourish in a rich land, that of drunkenness being most frequently alluded to. There are few traces, however, of the narrow and unamiable exclusiveness of the Jewish character. Elijah and the Phœnician widow, Elisha and Naaman, the story of Jonah and the Ninevites, are examples of a liberal spirit towards alien peoples, as is the broad toleration which characterises the whole story of Joseph.

Lesson of the
fall of Israel

The fall of the Northern Kingdom, and especially the great confederacy of Josephite tribes in Central Palestine, is one of the saddest and most impressive lessons of history. That so noble a branch of the Chosen Race should have been allowed to vanish is indeed a mystery. That in captivity all the lessons of centuries of Divine teaching should have been forgotten seems wellnigh impossible. Yet such appears to have been the case. The weakness of Israel lay in its turbulence, its impatience of restraint, its fatal compliance in accepting the customs of the older Canaanitish inhabitants of the land. Judah, a far less attractive nation, possessed sterner virtues. Its inhabitants had that saving conservatism which is the true source of national strength, that hatred of foreigners which binds a race together, that determination never to be merged in any of the surrounding peoples, which has preserved the Jewish type to this day.

But humanity's debt to Israel can never be forgotten. Eliminate the Northern tribes from the Old Testament, and the Sacred Record would be bereft of most of its interest. It is hard to say farewell to this noble portion of God's people without thinking of how persistently the Jewish prophets dwell on the hope of its restoration, and wonder whether in God's good time the dry bones of the lost tribes may not again be restored to life, and stand up "an exceeding mighty army."²¹

Chapter XI

Hezekiah

Effects of the
fall of
Samaria

THE fall of Samaria must have appeared a far less important event when it occurred than it does to us at the present day. The office of king, it is true, ceased in Northern Israel, but the monarchy had sunk so low in public estimation that the substitution of an Assyrian governor for a native tyrant may not have seemed a very momentous change. The number of captives deported to distant parts of the empire was inconsiderable, and many Israelites who dwelt in the country districts were certainly left undisturbed. There seemed no reason why the nation should not once more revive. Samaria was neither an ancient nor a sacred city. It was no symbol of national unity that its fall and the deportation of twenty-eight thousand of its inhabitants should cause Israel irreparable ruin. Yet this was the case. The Northern Kingdom, the home of so many prophets and heroes, never recovered from the blow. The religion for which Elijah and Elisha, Amos and Hosea had contended, proved to have no vital force among their countrymen. Those who were taken into captivity do not seem to have been sustained by it, nor did it prevent those who were left behind from being absorbed in the various nationalities among whom they dwelt. The traditions of the religion of Northern Israel survived, but though two centuries later the inhabitants of Samaria were able to tell the returning Jewish exiles from Babylon, "We seek your God as ye do" (Ezra iv. 2), their faith never became a living power in the world. The message of the ten tribes to mankind ceased with the fall of Samaria.

Importance
of Judah

The sole hope of the worshippers of the true God was henceforth centred in the Southern Kingdom, and during the

Assyrian period the limits of Judah were not seldom confined almost to the circuit of the walls of Jerusalem. Had Jerusalem fallen at this time, it seems to be highly probable that the national religion would have been almost as incapable of revival as that of the Northern tribes. The century that followed the retreat of Sennacherib gave it time to reform itself upon so stable a basis, that neither the destruction of the Temple, nor the deportation of the people to Babylon, was able to shake it, and its hold on the heart of the nation was strengthened, rather than diminished, by these calamities.

Three names deserved to be held in special honour as the saviours of the faith of Israel at this critical time: Hezekiah the king, and Micah and Isaiah the prophets. Micah was the representative of the inhabitants of the Sharon, on whom the weight of the Assyrian invasion fell with crushing severity, since unlike the dwellers in the highlands of Judah, they had no mountain fastnesses to flee to. The Maritime Plain is a natural battle-field on which every contest between Western Asia and Africa must be decided, and it is but natural that (during the Assyrian invasions) a prophet of Judah should first utter his voice from thence. Micah was a native of Moresheth-Gath, a village among the hills which slope (from the south-west of Judah) towards the Philistine country. As he foretold the destruction of Samaria, he must have prophesied when the Assyrians first appeared in Palestine. His lamentation over the destruction of the towns and villages around his home points to the advance of some conquering army along the Maritime Plain, but his bitterest denunciations are reserved for the oppressive conduct of the wealthy classes of Judah. The country folk evidently suffered most from the greed of their creditors, and from the insatiable lust of the rich for increasing their landed estates. The small properties, to which the rural Israelites clung so tenaciously, were seized by fraud and even by open violence; and such was the oppression of the poor, that the prophet compares the "princes of the house of Israel" to cannibals feasting upon their own people (Micah iii. 2, 3). As a punishment for such crimes Micah foretells the destruction of Jerusalem: "Zion for your sakes shall be

Micah the
prophet

ploughed as a field"; nor is he able to see any hope for the nation save in a return to the ideal life of antiquity, to the days when David the shepherd-king dwelt in the cave of Adullam, and with his heroes sallied forth to redress the grievances of the poor (Micah i. 15).

Isaiah

Very different were the circumstances of the life of Isaiah. This great prophet apparently enjoyed all the advantages of high birth and a careful education. He was a friend of the most influential of the priests, the confidant and counsellor of successive sovereigns. He understood the complicated politics of his day. He knew that Egypt could not be depended upon, and that an alliance with Babylon against Assyria could bring no profit to his country. The manner in which he speaks of the questions of the age shews him to have been possessed of insight into the character of men and nations. In his striking similes, Pekah and Rezin are compared with "smoking brands," whose light is quenched (Is. vii. 4). Egypt is described as "Pride sitting still" (Is. xxx. 7). The upstart Shebna, with his new family sepulchre, and the trustworthy Eliakim (Is. xxii. 15-25), the vain ladies of Jerusalem (Is. iii. 16-24), the greedy Syrian traders, are all vividly presented by this clear-sighted observer. One aspect of Isaiah is that of a statesman prophet: his political instinct was as true as were his spiritual impulses, and enabled him to formulate a national policy, which preserved alike the material and religious privileges of the community.

Hezekiah

Hezekiah, like his ancestor David, whose virtues are attributed to him, appears in the scriptural records under two different aspects. In the books of Kings and Chronicles he is represented as a religious reformer, who "trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among them that were before him" (2 Kings xviii. 5). He does not seem, however, to have been always in accord with Isaiah, as one at least among his advisers was diametrically opposed to the prophet. This was Shebna, governor of the royal household, whose name proclaims him to be a foreigner. It may reasonably be conjectured that at his suggestion Hezekiah embarked on that policy of constant intrigue with

other princes, to which the monuments both of Sargon and Sennacherib testify.¹ Isaiah was not blind to the futility of the king's attempts to defeat Assyria by diplomacy, and a large portion of his prophecies is devoted to pointing out the folly of such endeavours. Both prophet and king were deeply impressed with the necessity of purifying the ancestral worship of Jehovah, and recognised that, humanly speaking, the preservation of the true faith depended upon the safety of Jerusalem. But whilst Hezekiah thought that he could preserve his capital by skilfully arranged combinations of the enemies of Assyria, Isaiah saw that none of Judah's allies could be trusted, and that its true security lay in remaining quiet, assured of the Divine protection.

Under Sargon and Sennacherib the Assyrian empire was maintained solely by the unremitting activity of its kings. Every year the royal forces marched from Nineveh, either to conquer a new territory or to reduce rebellious provinces to submission. The very existence of the Assyrian supremacy depended on formidable armies, and their absence caused instant revolt in every province. It was a time of restless intrigue among the nations subject to Assyria, always ready to join together to resist their conquerors. Each of the petty kings of the single province of Palestine seems to have conspired in turn to throw off the yoke of the lords of Nineveh, and neither Sargon nor Sennacherib enjoyed any long peace during the thirty-seven years of their two reigns.

Though only once mentioned by name in the Bible (Is. xx. 1), Sargon, the successor of Shalmaneser IV., played a great part in the history of Palestine. The first act of his reign was to complete the reduction of Samaria, after which he marched into Babylonia against its king Merodach Baladan, the indefatigable foe of Assyria. In 720 an Assyrian army again made its appearance in Palestine. In that year Sargon took Hamath, the ancient ally of Judah, in the far North, and its king Yahubidhi was captured and flayed alive. After placing Assyrian colonists to the number of 4300 in Hamath, Sargon proceeding southward won the great battle of Raphia in B.C. 720, in which he defeated So, King of Egypt, and Hanum, King of

Assyria under
Sargon

Gaza. In B.C. 715 Sargon took many Arabian captives, and placed them in the cities of Samaria. In the following years he was engaged in suppressing a serious revolt in Ararat, thus giving his subjects in the West an opportunity of making one more attempt to throw off his yoke. Hezekiah seems to have taken a leading part in this rebellion, and to have openly renounced his allegiance to Assyria. "He rebelled," says the Sacred Narrative, "against the king of Assyria and served him not"; adding, "he smote the Philistines unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city" (2 Kings xviii. 8).

This victory may really have been the overthrow of the Assyrian party in Philistia, for, according to the monuments of Sargon, Hezekiah was an ally of the Ashdodites, who had deposed the nominee of the Great King in favour of a certain Javan, probably an Ionian Greek.² Hezekiah, Javan, and the kings of Moab and Edom sent an embassy to Egypt to ask for assistance against Assyria; a step deeply deplored by Isaiah, who knew too well the weakness that underlay the imposing grandeur of the Pharaoh's court (Is. xix. 1-17).

Hezekiah's
illness

It was apparently at this time that Hezekiah was seized with what had every appearance of proving a fatal illness, and received from Isaiah the message, "Thus saith the Lord: Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." The loss of the king at this juncture would have been an irreparable blow to Judah, for as yet Hezekiah had no heir, and the safety of the state depended on its having at its head a strong and capable ruler, devoted to the pure worship of Jehovah. Hezekiah prayed earnestly that he might live, and "wept sore" at the thought of death. A poem is attributed to him on this occasion, and no gloomier view of death is taken in any part of the Old Testament. "I said," are its opening words,

"In the noontide of my days I shall go into the gates of the grave:

I am deprived of the residuo of my years.

I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living:

I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world"

(Is. xxxviii. 10, 11).

Hezekiah's prayer was heard: a poultice of figs applied by the advice of Isaiah healed the tumour from which he was suffering, and the prophet could assure him that God had added fifteen years to his life. As a sign of the Divine favour the shadow went back ten steps on the sundial of his father Ahaz (2 Kings xx. 5-11; Is. xxxviii. 2-8).

The illness of so able a prince as Hezekiah produced consternation among the enemies of Assyria, and the news reached distant Babylon, where Merodach Baladan was eagerly watching the progress of the rebellion in Palestine. This Babylonian sovereign, who had held his throne for nearly ten years in defiance of Sargon, despatched an embassy to Jerusalem on the pretext of congratulating the king on his recovery, but probably with the ulterior object of arranging a simultaneous rising against the Assyrians in Palestine and Babylonia.³ An embassy from so famous and distant a sovereign as Merodach Baladan was an extremely flattering acknowledgment of Hezekiah's importance in Palestine. Everything was evidently prepared in Jerusalem for war: the treasury and armoury were alike full, and Hezekiah gratified his pride by displaying them to the Babylonians, "there was nothing in all his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not." Isaiah regarded the king's conduct with disapproval. No good could be expected from this perpetual exercise of diplomacy, for Babylon was no more able to save Jerusalem from Assyria, than was Egypt. He asked the king concerning these visitors from a far country, warning him that the days would come when his descendants would go into captivity to Babylon. Hezekiah's reply, as recorded in the books of Kings and Isaiah, was expressive of resignation. "'Good is the word of Jehovah which thou hast spoken.' Hezekiah said, moreover, 'Is it not so, if peace and truth shall be in my days?'" (Is. xxxix.).

**Merodach
Baladan**

As Isaiah had foreseen, all the schemes of Hezekiah and his ally Merodach Baladan failed. In B.C. 711 the Assyrians again appeared in Palestine. Javan was driven from his throne, and Ashdod was taken. The Egyptians gave no practical assistance to the cities which they had encouraged to revolt. Sargon does not appear to have led this expedi-

**Assyrians in
Palestine**

tion in person, but to have sent his Tartan, or Commander-in-Chief. According to his inscriptions he laid waste the "broad fields of Judah," and in the following year he attacked Babylon, and succeeded in driving Merodach Baladan from his throne. Isaiah displayed great prophetic activity at this crisis. To make his message plain to every one, he enforced it by an acted parable; going naked and barefoot for three years, in token that "So should the king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt, and the exiles of Ethiopia, young and old, naked and barefoot, and with buttocks uncovered to the shame of Egypt" (Is. xx.).

Egyptian
weakness

Isaiah's hostility to Egypt is most marked, and throughout Hezekiah's reign he denounces the policy of an alliance with that ancient power, and demonstrates its uselessness. Yet despite the prophet's warnings, and the repeated testimony of facts, the statesmen of Judah could not abandon their dream of saving Jerusalem by an alliance with the Egyptians. A glance at the history of Egypt in the eighth century will shew how abundantly justified Isaiah was in telling his countrymen that their "trust in the shadow of Egypt would prove their confusion" (Is. xxx. 3).

Such was the weakness of the Egyptian monarchy, that about B.C. 750 the country fell under the sway of the Cushite kings of Meroe. The kingdom had lost its unity; in B.C. 734, there were no less than seven native monarchs ruling in Egypt, when the Ethiopian Pianki made an expedition down the Nile, and crushed a rebellion of the Egyptian princes against his authority. The Ethiopian hegemony continued during the reign of four of Pianki's successors—Sabako or So, the ally of Hoshea, King of Israel, defeated by Sargon at Raphia; Shabatok; Tarak (the Tirhakah of Isaiah), and his son Mi-Ammon-Nut. In 668 and 672 Egypt was invaded by the Assyrians, both Memphis and Thebes were taken, and the Ethiopian sway was ended. Under it the country had steadily declined, the dominant people being far less civilised than the ancient inhabitants, whose customs they had made but imperfect efforts to adopt.⁴

Hezekiah
negotiates
with Egypt

But to Hezekiah and the petty princes of Palestine, Egypt still seemed to be a valuable ally, and everything was done to secure its assistance. Isaiah viewed these overtures with

marked disfavour, considering them to be alike incompatible with sound policy and fidelity to God. His utterances reveal how thoroughly aware he was of the impotence of the Egyptians to help his countrymen, and of the folly of relying on their support. It is not possible to date Isaiah's reference to the Egyptian negotiations with precision, but the tone of all is the same. The pride of a people whose civilisation dates from unknown antiquity, is contrasted with their weakness. To the prophet, Egypt is like one of its own colossal figures, imposing to look on and powerless to assist, "Pride sitting still" (Is. xxx. 7).⁵ The traditional wisdom of the court of Pharaoh is in the eyes of the seer but solemn trifling. "How say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where then are thy wise men?" According to the prophet "a spirit of perverseness" had seized on the Egyptians, for "the princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Memphis are deceived; they have caused Egypt to go astray" (Is. xix. 11-13). The country to which the Jews looked for assistance was, in fact, on the verge of civil war. "I will," says Jehovah in one of Isaiah's oracles, "stir up the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and everyone against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom" (xix. 2). The rule of Pianki and his successors is apparently referred to in the words that follow, "And I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them. It is an oracle of the Lord, the Lord of Hosts" (Is. xix. 4).

Twice, as we have seen, did Sargon demonstrate how helpless Egypt was to assist its allies, in B.C. 720, when he won the battle of Raphia, and again in B.C. 711, when Ashdod was taken, and the "broad fields of Judah" were devastated by the Assyrian armies. Well might Isaiah say of the allies and their infatuation for Egypt, "They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them." Yet to the last the inhabitants of Judah clung to the hope that Egypt would save their country from Assyria, and sent constant embassies with rich presents to Zoan. Not even the memory of the way in which Hoshea had ruined the Northern Kingdom by relying upon the help of So (Sabako) could make Hezekiah's subjects distrust Egypt, and Isaiah had to remind them that,

"The Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit" (Is. xxxi. 3).

Sargon died in July B.C. 705 and was succeeded by Sennacherib. As was almost invariably the case, the new King of Assyria had to prove that he possessed sufficient vigour to maintain the integrity of his empire. Revolts broke out on every side. The indefatigable Merodach Baladan, aided by the King of Elam, once more seized the throne of Babylonia. Sennacherib made his first expedition against this restless and formidable foe. Merodach Baladan was defeated at Kisu in B.C. 703, but, as he escaped with his life, the seeds of rebellion in Babylonia could not be completely eradicated. A new King of Babylon was however appointed, named Bel-ibni, and the next year was devoted by Sennacherib to the pacification of Media.

Hezekiah,
his allies
thwarted

Very dangerous signs of disaffection were in the meantime being manifested in Syria. Hezekiah as a moving spirit had persuaded Tyre, Zidon and the Philistine cities of Ashkelon and Ekron to oppose Sennacherib. The Egyptians were approached, and by their promises of assistance they encouraged the inhabitants of Palestine to throw off the Assyrian yoke. But Sennacherib proved equal to the emergency. The little city states were no match for the disciplined armies of a mighty empire. Sennacherib's appearance in Syria was the signal for a general panic. Lulia (Elulæus) fled from Zidon and took refuge in Yunan (Cyprus). The kings of Palestine hastened to make their submission, and tribute was brought by the kings of Arvad, Gebal, Ashdod, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and by a monarch bearing the Israelite name of Menahem, who reigned in Samsi-Merom. Only Hezekiah, supported by the Philistine cities of Ashkelon and Ekron, had the hardihood to oppose the invaders. But their puny resistance was utterly futile, and the Assyrian army advanced along the coast, plundering Ashkelon on its way.⁶

Defeat of the
Egyptians
at El-tekeh

By this time, however, an Egyptian force was in the Philistine country ready to support the Ekronites, who had deposed their king Padi, the nominee of Assyria, and had handed him over to the custody of Hezekiah. The Assyrians attacked the allies at Altaku (El-tekeh) a village a little to

the east of Ekron, and utterly defeated them. The collapse of the rebels was complete. Ekron opened its gates: Hezekiah surrendered Padi, and humbly sued for peace, but this was not granted till forty-six of his cities had been taken, more than two hundred thousand of his subjects led into captivity, and he himself shut in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage." It was only by abject submission and the payment of a very heavy tribute that Hezekiah saved his capital, but his dominions were apportioned by Sennacherib among the kings he had set up in Ashdod, Ekron and Gaza. The scriptural narrative is confirmed by the Taylor cylinder, on which the campaign of Sennacherib in Syria is described.⁷ In the words of the book of Kings, "Hezekiah, king of Judah, sent to Lachish, saying, I have offended, return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold." To procure the needful money the treasury was completely emptied and the very doors and posts of the Temple were stripped of the gold, with which Hezekiah, in the day of his prosperity, had overlaid them (2 Kings xviii. 14-16).

To all appearance the great calamity of Judah was unrelieved by any exhibition of national heroism. The utterances of Isaiah give us a sad picture of the behaviour of the people during the campaign of Sennacherib. His prophetic eye had from the first discerned the inevitable catastrophe. When Sargon died in B.C. 705 he had warned the Philistines that their joy was premature, and that a greater oppressor would arise in Sennacherib, or as he expressed it, "Out of the serpent's root shall come forth a basilisk" (Is. xiv. 29). This foreboding, however, was unheeded by his own countrymen, and in Jerusalem the prophet was ridiculed as a teacher fit only to instruct babes. Ribald utterances were heard on every side, comparing the prophet's words to the syllables infants were taught to pronounce. Even if the new Assyrian monarch did invade Palestine the politicians of Judah declared they were prepared. "When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, under falsehood have we hid ourselves," was their boast. Even the religious teachers, the

Rash confidence in
Jerusalem

prophets and priests, shared in this infatuation. Isaiah's words were unheeded, and it was to no purpose that he declared that "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it" (Is. xxviii. 15-18). There was in fact an organised conspiracy to ignore the truth: the words of Isaiah and other seers, who tried to expose the hollowness of the confidence in the Egyptian alliance, fell on deaf ears, and less scrupulous prophets were encouraged to support the schemes of the politicians. The popular cry to the religious teachers then, as on similar occasions, was "Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Is. xxx. 10).

panic of the
Judæans

And now that the blow had fallen, the nation was utterly unnerved. "All thy rulers fled away together," says Isaiah in his "Burthen of the Valley of the Vision," "thy slain are not slain with the sword, neither are they dead in battle. All thy rulers fled away together, they were bound by the archers; all that were found of thee were bound together; they fled afar off" (Is. xxii. 3). It was fully expected that the Assyrians would besiege the city of Jerusalem, and frantic efforts were made to put it in a state of defence. Hezekiah and his advisers had evidently trusted to defeating the plans of Sennacherib at a distance, and had let the fortifications of Jerusalem fall into bad repair, for at this time it was evident that "the breaches in the city of David were many." Preparations were, however, rapidly pushed forward; for, whilst the ambassadors of Hezekiah sought terms from Sennacherib, the houses of the city were numbered, those near the wall were pulled down, that they might not impede the defenders, and the water-supply was carefully secured by the making of a reservoir. But all was done in the same godless spirit that had prompted the Egyptian and Philistine alliances. "Ye looked not," exclaimed the indignant prophet, "unto Him that had done this, neither had ye respect unto Him that fashioned it long ago" (Is. xxii. 9-11).

The crowning day of humiliation came, when Sennacherib deigned to accept the abject submission of Hezekiah. Isaiah saw in this shameful peace a Divine call to general mourning; but no sooner had the tension of suspense ceased, and the people learned that they were not to endure the horrors of a siege, than signs of joy were manifested on every side. A riotous festival succeeded the days of panic. "Behold," cries Isaiah, "joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine: Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die" (Is. xxii. 12-14).

**Hezekiah
submits**

It is possible that this apparently hopeless collapse of Judah both morally and politically led directly to a great attempt to reform the national religion. The first chapter of Isaiah may be justly ascribed to this period. In it the prophet describes a state of affairs which scarcely finds a parallel in the earlier history of the nation. The country is desolate: the cities are burned with fire, the land is devoured by strangers. Of Jerusalem, the prophet cries, "The daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers" (Is. i. 8). But for a very small remnant the land of Judah would have been as denuded of inhabitants as was the Plain after the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. Surely to no time can this description apply more appropriately than to that of Sennacherib's triumphant return to Assyria with two hundred thousand Jewish captives, leaving forty-six cities of Judah in ruins!⁸

Isaiah I.

The crisis in the history of God's revelation to Israel had come, and all turned upon whether Jerusalem could survive the calamities that had befallen Judah and thus give the people time to return to the first principles of their religion. Doubtless the remembrance of the desert wanderings, when all the tribes worshipped at a central sanctuary, began to revive, now that the Temple of Solomon remained the one undesecrated house of God, and the ruined sanctuaries of Israel and Judah afforded a convincing proof that Jerusalem was the place "that Jehovah had chosen to place His name there." A general revival of the sacrificial worship took place, possibly inaugurated by Hezekiah's famous celebration of the Passover. According to the book of Chronicles, the king sent throughout all Israel to summon the remnant to a solemn assembly

**Hezekiah's
Passover**

at Jerusalem, in order that a general confession of sin might be made by all who had "escaped out of the hand of the king of Assyria." The dwellers of Central Palestine had not learned the lessons of adversity, and laughed to scorn the messengers of Hezekiah. Farther north the invitation met with a more favourable reception, and "divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulon humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem." The time occupied in assembling the people, and in the necessary purification of the priests, caused the celebration of the Passover to be postponed to the second month, a practice sanctioned by precedent in the days of wandering in the desert. The Chronicler, with all his zeal for exact legal observances, records a prayer of Hezekiah shewing a genuine appreciation of the spirit of true religious service. When the king was informed that the visitors to Jerusalem, who belonged to the Northern tribes, had not submitted to the due rites of purification before eating the Passover, he prayed for them, saying, "The good Lord pardon him that setteth his whole heart to seek God, the Lord, the God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary" (2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19).

Isaiah's and
Hezekiah's
reforms

Both in the late records of the Chronicler and in the contemporary utterances of Isaiah, allusion is made to sacrifices offered by Hezekiah and his people; but the attitude of the prophets was seldom entirely favourable to a revival of mere externals. They were well aware that the tendency of such accessions of religious zeal is to inspire a confidence that the favour of the Deity has been secured by the services held in His honour. To the true prophets of Jehovah ideas like these were hardly an improvement upon those of the Canaanite Baal worship. They could not tolerate the notion that the God of Israel was a capricious Being whose anger could be averted by costly sacrifices and the observance of solemn holidays, and Isaiah bitterly denounces the popular infatuation. God speaking through his mouth says, "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies." . . . The real need was a thorough moral reformation, and the people could not yet see the inconsistency of "iniquity and the solemn meeting." The idolatry of Jerusalem did not so greatly move

the wrath of God as the alliance between the princes of Judah and the thieves, the corruption of the judges, and their neglect of the oppressed. The prophet calls the people to a national repentance, manifested by a redress of wrong, assuring his countrymen of abundant pardon, if only they would repent. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is. i. 18). Hezekiah shewed his veneration for Jerusalem as the special sanctuary of Jehovah by a vigorous attack on the Canaanitish element in the religion of Israel, which he is credited with having nearly extirpated. So great was his zeal against all materialism in worship that he did not spare even that venerable relic of the desert wanderings, "the brazen serpent that Moses had made," because in process of time it had become an idol popularly known as the Nehushtan (2 Kings xviii. 4). In this he had certainly the sympathy of Isaiah, who must have rejoiced at the spectacle of a monarch abandoning his tortuous policy of Oriental intrigue, and devoting himself to the religious improvement of his people. Perhaps the prophet shews his approval in his changed attitude towards the Assyrians. Hitherto Isaiah had depicted the invaders as the instruments of Divine vengeance on the sins of Israel, though throughout his writings, denunciations of Assyria as the embodiment of brute force and haughty defiance of God are to be found. It may perhaps be permissible to ascribe these to the later years of the reign of Hezekiah, when the king had abandoned his policy of trying to defeat Assyria by such purely worldly means as alliances with Egypt and Babylon. From this time forth, however, Isaiah seems to lay emphasis upon the certainty of Assyria's overthrow, and to assure the people of the stability of the Davidic dynasty, the inviolability of Jerusalem, and the advent of the Messiah as a deliverer.

The withdrawal of Sennacherib in B.C. 701 meant no cessation of Assyrian tyranny. On the contrary, Judah, like the rest of Palestine, was still oppressed by the Assyrian officials. The tax-gatherer was an ever-present source of terror, and Isaiah depicts the days of deliverance as a time when the people shall ask one another, "Where is the scribe, where is he that weighed the tribute, where is he that counted

Change in
Isaiah's
attitude
towards
Assyria

the towers?" (Is. xxxiii. 18), because they cannot realise that these familiar tokens of their subjection have been removed. Threats of a fresh invasion in which Jerusalem would not be spared were heard on every side, and the fate of Calno, Carchemish, and Samaria was constantly brought before the minds of the inhabitants of Zion. Isaiah is probably quoting the words he had heard when he represents the King of Assyria as saying, "By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds of the peoples, and have robbed their treasures, . . . and my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the peoples, and as one gathereth eggs that are forsaken have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped" (Is. x. 13, 14). But keenly alive as Isaiah was to the faults of his countrymen, he saw in the enfeebled remnant of Judah the germs of a noble future, and was able boldly to proclaim that the boastful Assyrian Empire could have no real permanence. The Great King was after all no more than an instrument in the hands of Jehovah, and his vaunts were as absurd as those of an axe boasting itself against the man who wielded it. Isaiah compares Assyria in one place to a mighty sacrificial pyre prepared in Tophet, which "the breath of Jehovah like a stream of brimstone" would one day kindle; in another he declares Assyria to be like a forest ready to be hewn down and burned (Is. xxx. 27-33; x. 33, 34).

Messianic
hopes

With the overthrow of Assyria, Isaiah pictures the coming of a glorious age of peace and prosperity under the rule of a Davidic king. The empire which was the embodiment of brute force must give place to a kingdom, of which Zion, after meriting the name of the "Faithful City" by being redeemed with righteousness, should be the head. A king of the stock of Jesse would then be inspired by the spirit of Jehovah to rule aright, and would bear the titles of "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace." Zion could never be destroyed by the Assyrians. Even though the enemy came to its very gates Jehovah would lay him low, for He would protect the city, and "would pass over her to spare." The destruction of Assyria was inevitable "The yoke of his burthen and the staff of his shoulder,

the rod of his oppressor," should be broken, "as in the day of Midian": and a time would come when the boot of the Assyrian warrior and his war-cloak would be as fuel for the flames (Is. ix. 2-6).⁹

Isaiah's Messianic ideal is that of an Israel purified and refined by trial, entering upon a period of truth and justice under a glorified king of the House of David. He sees Zion "redeemed with righteousness," the centre of a perfect kingdom taking the place of the violent and unjust empire of Assyria. If this expectation appears to be somewhat too local and personal to satisfy an exalted view of Messianic hopes, it must be remembered that a highly spiritualised anticipation of a distant age would probably have been unintelligible to the prophet's hearers. The crisis was very serious, the temptations to despair almost overwhelming, the people needed immediate encouragement. Isaiah was allowed to believe that the great and final redemption of the remnant of Israel was near at hand, and he drew a picture of a reign of righteousness and peace in the immediate future. By it his countrymen were encouraged to continue the apparently hopeless struggle between the tiny kingdom of Judah and the vast empire of the Great King. But, if the men of Isaiah's age were in any way led to imagine that the day of peace under a Divine King was nigh at hand, they were never allowed to remain under the delusion that it would come by some sudden miracle irrespective of their own deeds. The condition of the reign of righteousness was a righteous people. It was only when the remnant of Zion had become just, that a perfect king would be given. Nor were the glories of the Messianic rule to be in any way like those of the supernatural conqueror depicted in the late Jewish apocalypses, acts of triumphant vengeance and world-subduing conquest. The "shoot of the stock of Jesse," of whom Isaiah prophesied, was to be endued with the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and might; not that he might dazzle the world by the splendour of his rule, but that he might have his delight in the fear of Jehovah, and judge with equity the poor and meek of the earth (Is. xi. 1-9). Truly, therefore, may Isaiah be called an evangelical prophet in that he saw that the Divine kingdom rests on righteousness, and depicted an ideal

ruler, in such a way that none satisfied his requirements till He who was the Christ indeed appeared upon earth.

**Sennacherib's
disaster**

Two traditions have been preserved of a terrible disaster to an Assyrian force, differing in detail but agreeing in the main facts, that Sennacherib had to retreat from Palestine with the loss of his army, and that his discomfiture was due to a Divine intervention. When Herodotus visited Egypt he was informed by the priests that there was once a King of Egypt named Sethon, who was also a priest of Hephæstus, and that he had despised and confiscated the land of the caste of warriors, leaving Egypt defenceless before the invader, Sennacherib, King of the Assyrians and Arabians. In his distress the Egyptian king sought the assistance of the gods, and received a promise of help. Gathering his people together, Sethon advanced to meet the invaders at Pelusium. The god sent mice to destroy the bowstrings of the Assyrians, who fled at the approach of the Egyptians. "There stands this day," says Herodotus, "in the temple of Hephæstus a stone statue of Sethon with a mouse in his hand, and an inscription to this effect, 'Look on me, and learn to reverence the gods'" (Herodotus ii. 141).

Though the historical character of the biblical account of the retreat of Sennacherib has been criticised, it is one of the most vividly dramatic narratives in the Old Testament. The escape of Jerusalem from destruction may justly be regarded as the crowning triumph of the religious reformation of the age of Hezekiah. The great officers of Sennacherib, the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh appeared before Jerusalem at the head of an army, to demand the surrender of the city. They came and stood "by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field." Hezekiah sent Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, with Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to meet the envoys of the Great King. The Rabshakeh, as spokesman, shewed himself to be an overbearing and insolent man, but at the same time possessed of a shrewd knowledge of the weak points of the character of the Judæans. He opened the discussion by asking what had induced Hezekiah to resist his master. Did he trust in Egypt? It was like trusting "upon the staff of a bruised

reed . . . whereon if a man lean it will go into his hand and pierce it." Did he trust in Jehovah? The Rabshakeh appealed to the disaffected party in Judah, who doubtless regarded Hezekiah as a sacrilegious fanatic for removing the ancient sanctuaries, and asked, "Is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'?"¹⁰

Ridiculous indeed did it seem to an Assyrian official that the King of Judah should rely on his material resources, and he offered scornfully to wager that, if he gave Hezekiah two thousand horses, he could not find riders for them. The ministers of Hezekiah, afraid of the forcible effect of these taunts on the people, besought the Rabshakeh to speak in the Aramean dialect, the diplomatic language of all Syria, and not to use the Jewish tongue; but the Assyrian officer was too astute to consent to this. He declared that he had been sent, not to Hezekiah, but to the people of Jerusalem, and with a loud voice offered terms to them. If they would surrender they should all be at liberty to go back to their farms, till the King of Assyria could find them a suitable territory in some other part of his dominions. At last, forgetting that he had been posing as the ally of those who supported the old Jehovah worship against the innovations of Hezekiah, the Rabshakeh reveals his contempt for the God of Israel, and asks, "Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? . . . have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" (Is. xxxvi.). These blasphemies against their God evidently exasperated the people, but, in obedience to the king's command, they listened to them in sullen silence. Hezekiah sent Eliakim and Shebna with the elders of the priests to Isaiah, who exhorted them to be of good courage, for Jehovah would put a spirit in Sennacherib and cause him to hear a rumour that he might return and fall by the sword in his own land. The Rabshakeh found his master at Libnah, awaiting the advance of Tirhakah the Ethiopian King of Egypt. Having no spare troops to detach for the

siege of Jerusalem, Sennacherib trusted to the effect of a violent letter to Hezekiah ordering him to surrender the place. In his despair the king spread the letter before Jehovah, and received from Isaiah the famous oracle against Sennacherib beginning, "The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn," and ending with the words of Jehovah concerning the King of Assyria, "He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mount against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith Jehovah." That very night the angel of Jehovah smote 185,000 of the invaders. "So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh." Some years afterwards, in 681 B.C., he was slain by his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer (Is. xxxvi., xxxvii. ; 2 Kings xviii., xix.).

**Chronological
problems**

No record of this expedition and its disastrous issue is preserved on the Assyrian monuments, and the biblical account is full of difficulties. In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, for example, or B.C. 714, Sargon, not Sennacherib, was king, and when in 701 the last-named monarch invaded Palestine, he retired laden with spoil. Again the biblical account represents Sennacherib as being murdered on his return to Nineveh, whereas he survived the campaign of B.C. 701 by nearly twenty years. Still both the Judæan and the Egyptian stories agree that an Assyrian army was destroyed by plague, and it is conceivable that both point to a later expedition of the Assyrian king, which as it ended in disaster is consequently unrecorded by him. It may well have happened that an Assyrian army perished by the plague during the last fifteen years of Sennacherib's reign, and that no monumental record preserved the memory of so great a disaster. At any rate, the way in which Jerusalem escaped destruction was the culminating triumph both of Isaiah's long prophetic career, and of the chequered reign of Hezekiah.¹¹

"The might of the Gentiles, unsmote by the sword
Had melted like snow at the glance of the LORD,"

and men might look for the promised days of rest and peace.

But in the course of human history a supreme crisis, a dramatic deliverance, never ends the contest. In this, as in other cases, the struggle only entered upon a new phase. Jerusalem was saved, but the Assyrian armies returned. Isaiah's faith in Jehovah was triumphantly justified, but no Messiah came as yet. Hezekiah put away the signs of Canaanitish superstition, but they were restored by his successor. In all probability the good king did not long survive this great deliverance, but "was gathered to his fathers," monarch, it may be, of but little more than a single city, yet regarded by his subjects as worthy of being ranked with his great ancestor David. If the records of his reign enshrined in the Scripture may be arranged as has been suggested in the above narrative, Hezekiah shewed perversity in youth, but advanced to an old age full of glory. He began, if the hints thrown out by Isaiah are rightly apprehended, as a disciple of the tortuous policy of his father Ahaz, and after some initial successes ended in B.C. 701 by bringing his country to the verge of ruin. Warned by his disasters, he finally turned to God, and submitted to the guidance of His prophet Isaiah.

Hezekiah's vigorous efforts to reform the religion of his people were rewarded by a great moral improvement in the nation, and the Rabshakeh found a very different audience from that which his previous knowledge of Judæan character might have led him to expect. But no nation can be reformed in a few years, and it was inevitable that Hezekiah's subjects should revert to their old faults when his influence could no more make itself felt. Yet the effect of what had been done was not altogether transitory. An impulse had been given towards the purifying of the religious ideas of mankind, which could never entirely cease. The semi-paganism of ancient Israel had begun to yield to a nobler creed.

Effects of
reign of
Hezekiah

Chapter XII

From Manasseh to the Captivity

Reaction
against
Hezekiah's
reforms

AT the time of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, Rabshakeh, the Great King's envoy, made an appeal to the prejudices of the Judæans and exclaimed, "But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God: is not that He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? . . . Am I now," he adds, quoting the words of Sennacherib, "come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? The Lord said unto me, Go up against this land and destroy it" (2 Kings xviii. 22-25; Is. xxxvi. 7-10). This language would have had no meaning had not a numerous party in Jerusalem seriously believed that the calamity of an Assyrian invasion was due to the impiety of Hezekiah in destroying the high places, where the national God was worshipped, and in abolishing objects of veneration like the Brazen Serpent. The king's zeal for purity of worship aroused a corresponding determination to retain the ancient ceremonies, and his disaffected subjects looked on the iconoclastic monarch as the enemy of Heaven. Nor was even the subsequent destruction of the Assyrian army sufficient to convince the partisans of the ancient cultus that Hezekiah's reforms had the approval of Jehovah. The death of the king was the signal for a counter-revolution. Manasseh, a boy of twelve, ascended the throne of David, and the party of reaction succeeded in making him its tool. For nearly sixty years, according to the author of the book of Kings, who makes no allusion to Manasseh's repentance, the advocates of the pure worship of Jehovah were subject to persecution, and for a time were completely silenced. The contest was evidently a

severe one. The reforming prophets denounced Manasseh as having done more wickedly than the ancient Amorites, and threatened Jerusalem with the fate of Samaria. They did not scruple to compare the king with the worst of the Israelitish monarchs, nor to hint that the same fate awaited his family, since their expression, "The plummet of the house of Ahab" was a significant reminder that the Northern dynasty had succumbed before a revolution instigated by the prophets. This bold language provoked persecution, and we are told that "Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another." If legend is to be believed, the aged Isaiah himself was one of the victims (2 Kings xxi. 1-18).¹

The religious reaction manifested itself in the restoration of the ancient sanctuaries in the cities of Judah. The cultus of the local Baalim was revived so fully that a prophet could say, "According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah, and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to the shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal" (Jer. xi. 13). The sanctuaries, which Solomon had built on the Mount of Corruption to the Sidonian Ashtoreth, the Moabite Chemosh, and the Ammonite Milcom, were again thronged with worshippers, and the practice of burning children in the valley of Hinnom, begun under Ahaz, was resumed. The Temple of Jehovah did not escape profanation. The sacred enclosure was filled with objects of idolatry. An Asherah was made specially for the house of Jehovah; and altars were erected for the worship of the Host of Heaven, a new cultus, which had been brought into special prominence in the days of Ahaz (2 Kings xvii. 16). Horses dedicated to the sun stood at the gate of the Temple, and a place was set apart for the women to weave hangings for the Asherah. Those wretched beings, whose presence in the sanctuaries of idolatry is the surest sign of its hopeless moral degradation, were once more to be found in the place, which the One True God had chosen, "to put His name there," and all forms of witchcraft and sorcery were encouraged in the Holy City (2 Kings xxi.). These astonishing abominations were tolerated and encouraged by men who believed themselves to be the wor-

Restoration
of corrupt
worship

shippers of the True God, and thought that by thus acting they had merited His favour. The work of the prophets was to convince the people that the things done in Jehovah's name were abhorrent to His nature. Incredible as it may seem to us, Jeremiah has to reiterate his assurance that Jehovah had never sanctioned the burning of children in sacrifice. "To burn their sons in the fire for burnt offerings unto Baal; which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind" (Jer. xix. 5). So thoroughly had the Judæans caught the infection of Canaanite idolatry, that the Jehovah-worship had to most of them become merely a variety of the national religions of Palestine. Unlike Deborah, Jeremiah is unable to say of his countrymen, "They chose new gods" (Judg. v. 8): he has to admit that "They walked after the Baalim, which their fathers taught them" (Jer. ix. 14). The *Chronicles* says that Manasseh was taken as a captive to Babylon, where he repented and was restored; but the book of Kings gives no hint of his repentance, and leaves it to be inferred that his long reign of fifty-five years was a period of unrelieved depression for those who desired a purer worship. His religious opponents, however, if silent, were not idle.

Jeremiah's acquaintance with the earlier prophets may lead us to infer that in those days of persecution the pen was busy, if the voice of the prophet was unheard. "The men of Hezekiah," who may have been the remnant of the servants of the reforming king, resolved to supply the next generation with a literature which would shew how the work begun by their pious master might be brought to perfection. It is even possible that the opening words of those proverbs of Solomon "which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah copied out," point to the youthful heir of the House of David surrounded by evil counsellors.

"Take away the dross from the silver,
And there cometh forth a vessel for the finer:
Take away the wicked from before the king,
And his throne shall be established in righteousness"

(Prov. xxv. 4, 5).

A religious literature was certainly already in existence. The utterances of two Northern prophets, Amos and Hosea,

had been published, and were eagerly read. Micah's words concerning the fate of Jerusalem were quoted by the Jewish princes only a few years later (Jer. xxvi. 18); and Amos a century before is considered by some to have based his prophecies on the Book of the Covenant in Exodus xx.-xxiv. Jeremiah's knowledge of the history of Israel appears to have been derived from writings not materially differing from the canonical records. He appears to quote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, 1 Samuel, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah and Zephaniah.²

But the great work of this period was in all probability the edition of the Law of Moses, which is known as Deuteronomy. The historical groundwork of this beautiful book is the ancient narrative of Israel's wandering in the Wilderness. The laws are those of the Book of the Covenant, enlarged and expanded so as to meet the needs of the age. The writer, perhaps it is more just to term him the editor, took the laws of Moses as a basis of a discourse addressed to his own time. It was a great crisis in the history of the true religion. The work of advance accomplished under Hezekiah had been checked. Judah, the remnant of the people of Jehovah which had escaped from Assyria, was sinking back to the old condition of semi-idolatry. Without a reaction, it was felt that the truth must perish, and the men of Hezekiah in the dark days of Manasseh, determined to prepare for the time when Jehovah's cause would once more prevail, by reinforcing the inspired utterances of the prophets by the written word.³

Deuteronomy

Not that the prophetic voice was altogether silent, if those brief but powerful chapters preserved at the conclusion of the prophecy of Micah belong to this age. It has been supposed that Micah vi., vii. is the work of an unknown seer in the evil days of Manasseh. The splendid and pathetic controversy between Jehovah and the people, commencing with the tender remonstrance, "O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against Me," is followed by a description of the desperate condition of the people, when the statutes, not of Jehovah, but of Omri, were kept, and "all the works of the house of Ahab." Very vividly are the days of an inquisitorial perse-

Micah vi., vii.

cution delineated in the words, "The son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: a man's enemies are the men of his own house" (Micah vii. 6).

Nahum To the same age perhaps belongs the very spirited prophecy of Nahum against Nineveh, which cannot be earlier than the destruction of Thebes in B.C. 661, nor later than the final overthrow of Nineveh in B.C. 607.⁴ The decline of the Assyrian power, in accordance with the predictions of Isaiah, could not fail to encourage the partisans of reformed worship, and this may account for the Chronicler's statement that Manasseh repented after his return from Babylon, whither he had been summoned by Esar-haddon, King of Assyria (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13). It is not however easy to reconcile this repentance of Manasseh with a description in the book of Kings of the prevalence of idolatry at the time of the accession of Josiah after Amon's brief reign of two years.⁵

History of Assyria Though the biblical account of this epoch does not mention any of the kings of Assyria by name, they had, nevertheless, a very powerful influence on the Judæan people. In B.C. 681 Sennacherib was murdered by two of his sons, who were defeated in battle by their brother Esar-haddon, the greatest and wisest of Assyrian kings. Esar-haddon rebuilt Babylon, which had been destroyed by Sennacherib in B.C. 689, and sought to consolidate his empire by a policy of judicious mildness. Egypt was conquered, and, after the fall of Thebes, B.C. 661, sullenly submitted to Assyria; and the conquest of Elam by Asshur-bani-pal, the successor of Esar-haddon, raised the Assyrian Empire to the zenith of its power. But its fall came with appalling suddenness. In the later years of Asshur-bani-pal signs of decay began to appear. This monarch died about B.C. 625, and under his two successors Assyria grew still weaker, till in B.C. 607 the Babylonian king Nabopolassar, assisted by Cyaxares the Mede, destroyed Nineveh so thoroughly that its very site was, till recent times, unknown. The Egyptians succeeded the Assyrians in their Palestinian dominions.

Jeremiah It was during the first stages in the decay of the Assyrian power so unmistakably predicted by Isaiah, that Jeremiah

and the prophets of his age prepared themselves for the second attempt to purify the religion of Judah. The effect of so striking a fulfilment of prophecy on the majority of the people was, on the one hand, to predispose them for a re-establishment of a cultus of Jehovah, which, so far at least as externals were concerned, was pure from idolatry, and on the other, to give them such an overweening confidence in the inviolable sanctity of Jerusalem, as to make them incapable of realising the need of righteousness on the part of the inhabitants to secure the continuance of Jehovah's favour. In this lay the peculiar difficulty of the prophet's work, nor was Jeremiah to all appearance a man naturally qualified for such an enterprise. Hardly any sacred writer reveals his personality more clearly. The long book that bears his name, a strange medley of history, autobiography and prophecy, succeeds in presenting a graphic portrait of the prophet. His acquaintance with the Hebrew literature of his age shews how carefully he prepared himself for the work of a religious teacher, whilst the history of his call reveals how his sensitive nature shrank from the heroic duties of the prophet's office. The weakness of Jeremiah's character is seen in his bitter appeals for Divine vengeance on his persecutors, as well as in the querulousness with which he bewails his lot. Jeremiah's temperament lacks the buoyant elasticity which so often helps men to bear their misfortunes with cheerfulness, nor does he seem capable of recognising any of the better qualities of his countrymen, on whose iniquities he is especially severe. He is essentially the prophet of Lamentation—a man who hungered and thirsted after righteousness, but whose despondent temperament knew little of the consolations of hope.

This is, however, but one side of the remarkable character of the prophet, who had so great an influence upon the subsequent development of Judaism. The weaknesses of Jeremiah, though more than counterbalanced by the great qualities he displayed, themselves contributed to extend his influence. No prophet, for example, was so well able to make the nation's sorrow his own. "Oh that my head were water," he cried, "and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of

my people!" (*Jer. ix. 1*); and this power of sympathy gave added force to his denunciations. He seems also to have been able to inspire his personal friends with unusual devotion to his cause, and to have retained their support at times when the most powerful factions of Jerusalem had combined against him. Moreover, it is possible to trace the development of the prophet's character in the increasing boldness with which he faced his own enemies and regarded the disasters of his country, and to recognise in him the type of a man, whose nature is strengthened, and whose best qualities are elicited, by adversity. Such then was the prophet to whom the Divine message came, "See, I have this day set thee over the nations . . . to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy and to overthrow; to build, and to plant" (*Jer. i. 10*).

mon and
osiah

Manasseh was succeeded by Amon, a partisan of the idolatrous worship, but after a reign of two years he became the victim of a conspiracy, and his son Josiah, a child of eight, was placed on the throne of Judah. His guardians evidently favoured the prophetic party, for the Chronicler tells us that the young king began "to seek the Lord" in the eighth year of his reign, and in the twelfth to suppress idolatry. In the following year "the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin" (*Jer. i. 1, 2*).

Zephaniah

To all appearance the first demands for religious reform that have been preserved to us are heard in the prophecy of Zephaniah. Early in the reign of Josiah, perhaps at the time that the news of Asshur-bani-pal's death reached Jerusalem, this prophet foretold that ruin was to fall, not only on Philistia, Moab and Edom, but also upon Assyria and Nineveh. In language which found an echo in the prophecies of Jeremiah, Zephaniah's message to Judah begins:—

"I will utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground, saith Jehovah.

I will consume man and beast;

I will consume the fowls of the heavens, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumbling-blocks with the wicked;

And I will cut off man from off the face of the ground "

(*Zeph. i. 2, 3*).

The prevailing idolatry is then clearly denounced in the following utterance:—

“ I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place,
And the name of the Chemarim with the priests ;
And them that worship the host of Heaven

Which swear to the Lord, and swear by Malcham ”

(Zeph. i. 4, 5).^{5a}

Zephaniah's opening words were in fact a warning that a calamity fraught with terror was about to overwhelm Western Asia. The ancient nations lived in constant danger of an irruption of the countless unknown hordes who dwelt beyond the northern frontiers of the civilised world. In the seventh century B.C. the campaigns of the Assyrian kings had sapped the strength of the nations which had hitherto prevented the barbarians from devastating the more settled countries. Suddenly the Scythians, a wild and fierce people, burst forth in irresistible multitudes from their home north of the Crimea into the more favoured districts of the South. This terrible irruption has been thus described : “ Pouring through the passes of the Caucasus, horde after horde of Scythians blackened the rich plains of the South. On they came like a flight of locusts, countless, irresistible, . . . finding the land before them a garden, and leaving it behind them a howling wilderness. Neither age nor sex would be spared. The crops would be consumed, the herds swept off or destroyed, the villages and homesteads burned, the whole country made a scene of desolation. Wandering from district to district, plundering everywhere, settling nowhere, the clouds of horse passed over Mesopotamia, the force of the invasion becoming weaker as it spread itself, until in Syria it reached its term by the policy of the king Psammetichus.”⁶

The Scythian
invasion

Jeremiah's earliest prophecies seem to refer to the invasion of the Scythians.

The first vision was that of the almond tree, followed by one of “ a seething caldron and its face from the North ” (Jer. i. 11-15), a figure admirably descriptive of an irruption of barbarians, driven by their own discords and calamities to leave their homes to ravage more civilised

nations. The strangeness and unforeseen character of their appearance is vividly portrayed by the prophet.

“Destruction upon destruction is cried ;
For the whole land is spoiled :
Suddenly are my tents spoiled,
And my curtains in a moment.

I beheld the earth, and lo, it was waste and void ;
The heavens, and they had no light.
I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled,
And all the hills moved to and fro.
I beheld, and lo, there was no man,
And all the birds of the heavens were fled.

The whole city fleeth for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen ;
They go into the thickets, and climb up upon the rocks ;
Every city is forsaken, and not a man dwelleth therein ”

(Jer. iv. 20-29).

The finding of
“the Law of
the Lord”

The Scythian invasion advanced to the borders of Egypt, but its course was apparently along the coast of Syria, and the Philistine plain suffered more than the narrow territory of the kings of Judah. Jerusalem was spared, and the wonderful deliverance from such great peril had no doubt a powerful effect on Josiah and his counsellors. The restoration of the Temple was decided upon; and, during the progress of the work, a discovery was made which proved one of the most important turning-points in the religious history of humanity. The high priest, Hilkiyah, announced to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the book of the law in the House of the Lord.” It is generally supposed that the book discovered was the so-called Deuteronomic law, because this describes with such accuracy the apostate condition of Judah in the days of Manasseh, and predicts the punishment that shortly overtook the nation. The effect of the newly discovered book was instantaneous. Shaphan, the scribe, read it before Josiah, who immediately instructed Hilkiyah, Shaphan, and three other persons, to take advice from a celebrated prophetess named Huldah. The form of their instructions proves that the book had excited the conscience, rather than the curiosity of the

king, "Go ye," were his words, "enquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of Jehovah, that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us" (2 Kings xxii. 13). Huldah returned answer that all the evil predicted should come upon Jerusalem, but that Josiah should be gathered to the grave in peace, and not see the calamity of his people. Part of this prophecy only was fulfilled: Josiah was mercifully spared the sight of the final ruin of Jerusalem, but his end can hardly be described as peaceful.

On receiving Huldah's response, Josiah assembled the people and made a solemn promise to observe the law of Jehovah. The "Book of the Covenant," as the newly discovered volume is termed, was read, and then the king standing on the platform pledged himself "To walk after the Lord, and to consider the words of His covenant that were written in this book. And all the people," adds the sacred writer, "stood to the covenant" (2 Kings xxiii. 3).

The reformation that ensued was a drastic one. First the Temple was cleansed from every trace of idolatry. The high places at "the entering in of the gate of Joshua" in Jerusalem were next destroyed, and the priests that ministered to them forbidden to approach the altar of Jehovah, though allowed to "eat unleavened bread among their brethren." Topheth in the valley of Hinnom was defiled, and the child-sacrifices to Moloch were suppressed, as was also the worship of the heavenly luminaries. "He burned the chariots of the sun with fire." Nor did the reformation confine itself to Jerusalem. All the sanctuaries erected by Solomon for the accommodation of his Moabite and Ammonite subjects and for the Phœnician traders were defiled; not a high place nor obelisk was left standing. From Geba to Beersheba every suggestion of a compromise between Canaanite nature-worship and the pure adoration of Jehovah was removed. The sanctuaries of the Northern Kingdom did not escape the zeal of the pious iconoclast: the altar of Jeroboam the son of Nebat was broken down, the high places together

Josiah's
reformation

with the Asherah were reduced to ashes, and human bones, buried in the neighbouring mountain, were taken from their graves, and burned on the altar to defile the spot for ever. Only the sepulchre of the man of God, who had pronounced the doom of Bethel, and the bones of "the prophet that came out of Samaria" were spared. Nor was the king's vengeance confined to stones and trees. The priests of the high places of the cities of Samaria were slain upon the altars, before Josiah returned to Jerusalem (2 Kings xxiii. 1-20).^{6a}

Effect of
Josiah's
reform

With the reformation of Josiah, and the drastic measures taken to render the repetition of ancient corruptions impossible, the long compromise between the worship of the One True God and the superstitions of the native races of Palestine practically came to an end. The destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the Judæans completed, instead of destroying, the work of Josiah; and when the people of Jehovah returned from exile, they came back with little desire to worship the gods of the surrounding nations. So far as personal religion, however, was concerned, the immediate effects of the destruction of idolatry in obedience to the Deuteronomic law were less satisfactory than might have been expected.

In the first place, a purification of the land conducted with so much haste and violence was of necessity more apparent than real. Idolatry did not disappear with the visible signs of its presence, but was long latent in the hearts of the people, and was practised in secret. Nor were those who accepted the re-discovered law with all their hearts, exempt from a more subtle form of idolatry. The Temple, and the venerable Ark of the Covenant, became objects of fanatical devotion. The cry "The Temple of the Lord!" often repeated, raised a general confidence that the city which Jehovah had chosen "to put His name there" was so assured of His protection that not even the moral wickedness of its inhabitants could bring it to destruction. The priesthood were not averse to this popular view of the impregnable sanctity of the Temple, and in support of such confidence could point to Isaiah's words at the time of the Assyrian invasion, "As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts protect Jerusalem, He will protect and passing deliver

it, He will pass over and preserve it" (Is. xxxi. 5). The prophetic party were in close alliance with the priesthood, for, as Jeremiah bitterly says, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so" (Jer. v. 31).

Nothing in fact can be more unanimous than the condemnation of the majority of the prophets by the canonical writers of this age. Jeremiah is sometimes wonderfully pathetic in the way in which he pleads to God on behalf of the people, whom the prophets had deceived. "Ah, Lord God!" he remonstrates, "behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword neither shall ye have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place" (Jer. xiv. 13). In answer to his petition Jehovah says, "The prophets prophesy lies in My name." Zephaniah is equally severe: "Her prophets," he says of Jerusalem, "are light and treacherous persons" (Zeph. iii. 4). The last three chapters of Zechariah, which probably belong to the age of Josiah, predict the utter disrepute into which the professional prophets were destined to fall. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesieth, neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground." For a prophet, in the days to come, will be punished as an impostor, and will bear the marks of his chastisements so that people shall ask, "What are these wounds between thine arms?" and he will have to answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. xiii. 4-6).⁷

The false prophets

A new class of teacher had apparently come into being in the days of Jeremiah. The law of Jehovah had become a special study and its expounders were already influential. The prophet speaks of the pen of the scribes making the law in vain, and of the arrogant boast, "We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us" (Jer. viii. 8). Before this, Zephaniah had alluded to the priesthood doing violence to the Law (Zeph. iii. 4). It appears as if that fatal habit of regarding the Law, not as a guide to spiritual progress, but as a means of satisfying the requirements of God, had already become ingrained, and that casuistical attempts to

The teachers of the Law

explain away its moral demands were being made by its authorised expounders.

Jeremiah and
external
worship

The attitude of Jeremiah towards the reformed and purified religion prevalent in the days of Josiah entitles him to a very high place among the teachers of righteousness. He is impregnated with the spirit of the book of Deuteronomy. He sees in the whole history of the desert wanderings the proof of the exceeding love of God for His people, and urges the obligation of reciprocating it by loving obedience. He goes to the people by Divine command and reminds them the main feature of their covenant with God is the command, "Hearken unto My voice." Of sacrifice and ritual, Jeremiah, priest as he was, says but little. These external acts of worship are not to him of the essence of righteousness. "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt offering and sacrifice; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Hearken unto My voice" (Jer. vii. 22). To the prophet the confidence in the sanctity of the Temple seems misplaced. God desires righteousness, and punishes wrong-doing without regard to the holiness of the place where it is committed. "But go ye now unto My place which was in Shiloh," says he to the zealots for the Temple, "where I caused My name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel." . . . "Therefore," he adds, "will I do unto the house, which is called by My name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you, and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh" (Jer. vii. 12-14).

Even the sacred Ark is not in his eyes essential to true religion, for the days are coming when it shall be no more said, "The ark of the covenant of Jehovah: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it: neither shall they visit (or miss) it" (Jer. iii. 16). In fact, the very covenant given to them when Israel came forth from Egypt is to be superseded by a New Covenant. "I will put my law in their inward parts," are God's words, "and in the heart will I write it: and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (Jer. xxxi. 33).

In his moments of greatest elevation Jeremiah is truly

the prophet not of his own age, but of one which has not yet dawned. He is the St Paul of the Old Covenant; his prophetic glance penetrates the veil of coming centuries, and reaches to the time when covenants and laws, temples and sacred symbols, priesthood and sacrifice, shall be forgotten; but the law of God will be inscribed in the hearts of all and "They shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know Me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34). Not yet is mankind ripe for the fulfilment of the prophetic ideal of the great teacher, who gave God's people those spiritual principles of religion which no ruin of their material Temple, no exile from their sacred land was able to destroy.

As St Paul's intensely spiritual view of the Gospel singled him out for a persecution from which the older apostles were exempt, so Jeremiah's preaching provoked the hatred of every class. The unwillingness he shewed in accepting the call to the prophetic office, and the bitterness of his complaints to God at the violent animosity of his countrymen, seem due to the consciousness that his message was necessarily distasteful to his generation. Not only did he meet with opposition from an idolatrous people, an interested priesthood, and a venal order of prophets, but even those who claimed to be most zealous for a pure worship were unable to understand him. A man, who sorrowfully declined to continue the work of an Isaiah in proclaiming the inviolability of Zion and the Temple, who never entertained any hopes that the reforms of the godly King Josiah could avert the evil day, who mistrusted the new zeal for sacrificial worship, to whom Ark and Temple were but shadows of good things to come, was no doubt regarded as an enemy to religion. The inhabitants of Anathoth, his native place, were the first to seek his life, and his own kinsmen proclaimed him an outlaw. This was probably in the days of Josiah, and he was warned of greater perils in store for him in the words, "If thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with the horses?" (Jer. xii. 5).

Persecution of
Jeremiah

Death of
Josiah

The vanity of the hopes raised by Josiah's purification of religion was soon to be realised. Assyria was about to vanish and her empire to become a prey to rival nations. In B.C. 608 Pharaoh-Necho traversed the plain of Esdraelon on his way to secure the important fortress of Carchemish on the Euphrates. Josiah, for some reason unknown to us, marched against him. According to the book of Chronicles the Egyptian king was inspired by God to warn the Judæan monarch to retreat, but Josiah, confident of the Divine favour, and probably urged forward by fanatical prophets, who imagined that victory must attend the King, persisted in attacking the invaders. The crushing defeat of Judah, and the death of Josiah at Megiddo was the ruin of the nation. A prophet speaks of the mourning after the battle as typical of sorrow, and the Christian seer sees in the battle-field of Megiddo a figure of the great strife that is to precede the end of the world (Zech. xii. 11 ; Rev. xvi. 16). No King of Judah received the unqualified praise bestowed by the sacred writer upon Josiah. It was not his religious reforms, but his justice, that Jeremiah commemorates when he contrasts Josiah with his unworthy son. "Did not thy father eat and drink and do judgment and justice? then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him. Was not this to know Me? saith the Lord" (Jer. xxii. 15, 16).

Jehoahaz

The people chose as their king Jehoahaz, also called Shallum, whose reign was but brief. After three months he was summoned to Riblah, deposed by Pharaoh-Necho, and carried captive to Egypt. The Egyptians raised his elder brother Eliakim to the throne, and changed the new king's name to Jehoiakim.

Jehoiakim

Jehoahaz is condemned in Kings and Chronicles as having done evil in the sight of Jehovah, but Jeremiah pities his fate too much to condemn him. "Weep ye not for the dead, (Josiah), neither bemoan him, but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country" (Jer. xxii. 10). Of Jehoiakim the prophet has no good to say. He seems to have been one of those despicable puppets, raised to a nominal sovereignty by a foreign conqueror, and seeking enjoyment at the expense of his impover-

ished people. "Woe unto him," says the indignant prophet, "that buildeth his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by injustice, that useth his neighbour's service without wages, . . . that saith, I will build me a wide house and spacious chambers. . . . Shalt thou reign," he adds, "because thou enclovest thyself like Ahab?"⁸ (Jer. xxii. 13-15). Habakkuk in almost the same words denounces this cruel passion for building palaces in the hour of his nation's ruin, and at the cost of the lives of his oppressed subjects, and concludes in generous indignation, "Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many peoples, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it" (Hab. ii. 10, 11).

To understand the course of events in Judah under Jehoiakim it is necessary to survey the great drama of Asiatic history. In B.C. 607 Assyria simply vanished. No record of the fall of Nineveh has yet been discovered. Two rivals contended for the empire of Western Asia. Egypt again aspired to rule in Syria, but was confronted with the mighty power of Babylon. This ancient city had in past times only succumbed after a desperate struggle with Assyria, and as the conqueror grew weak the strength of the conquered returned. Nabo-polassar, the viceroy of Babylon, profited by the weakness of his master first to claim independence and finally to conquer Assyria itself. His son Nabú-kudur-uzur, better known to us as Nebuchadnezzar, or Nebuchadrezzar, as Jeremiah more correctly calls him, was sent to drive the Egyptians from their post on the Euphrates. In B.C. 605 this prince succeeded in utterly defeating Pharaoh-Necho at Carchemish. The fate of Syria was decided at this battle. Egypt ceased to be a power in Asia, and her possessions passed to the Chaldæan conquerors, "That bitter and hasty nation," as Habakkuk calls them (Hab. i. 6). Nabo-polassar died soon after the battle of Carchemish, and Nebuchadrezzar became sole master of this newly founded empire, over which he reigned for upwards of forty years. The Chaldæan monarch, unlike the kings of Assyria, was no mere destroyer of nations. Though a great conqueror, his chief energies were devoted to the adornment of Babylon, and the consolidation of his empire by politic means.

Fall of Assyria
and rise of
Babylon

Like all Oriental despots, he was capable of ruthless severity, but he does not seem to have revelled in cruelty, and his inscriptions shew that he was inspired by real piety in his devotion to his god, Merodach. Such then was the monarch to whom the destinies of Western Asia were committed : a striking and commanding figure in ancient history, who inspired his contemporaries with a fear, not unmingled with respect.⁹

Parties in
Judah

Judah was now in the position of an independent frontier state between two great monarchies, and the rest of the sad history of the tiny kingdom is a miserable record of frantic hopes alternating with utter despair, of faction and intrigue, of weak kings, turbulent nobles, corrupt priests, and fanatical prophets. The chief factions in the distracted state were the partisans of Egypt, the infatuated believers in the inviolability of Jerusalem, and the wiser few, including Jeremiah, who saw no hope but in prompt submission and loyal obedience to Nebuchadrezzar. The prophet had from the first earnestly deprecated all political intrigue, asking of Judah with scornful irony, "And now what hast thou to do in the way to Egypt, to drink the waters of the Nile? or what hast thou to do in the way to Assyria, to drink the waters of the Euphrates?" (Jer. ii. 18). . . . Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? Thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt also, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria" (Jer. ii. 36). Like Isaiah, Jeremiah was a foe to the dark ways of Oriental diplomacy, his view being that Judah should submit to the inevitable, and strive to avert Divine vengeance by a thorough moral reformation.

End of
Jehoiakim

The despicable Jehoiakim served Nebuchadrezzar for three years and then rebelled. According to the Chronicler, Nebuchadrezzar "bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 6). The earlier account in the book of Kings vividly describes the disasters of his miserable reign, by saying that Jehovah sent against him "bands of the Chaldeans, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon" (2 Kings xxiv. 2). The bitterness of the neighbouring nations against Judah is attested by all the prophets, and was one of the causes of the exclusiveness of the exiles at the time of the Return. Great obscurity hangs over the ultimate fate of Jehoiakim.

The book of Kings says that he slept with his fathers (2 Kings xxiv. 6). The Chronicler, as we have seen, alludes to a capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar, and Jeremiah has two prophecies concerning his end. In one place he says of this most unworthy king, "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (Jer. xxii. 19); in another, "He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost" (Jer. xxxvi. 30).

Jeremiah's acts in the days of Jehoiakim are portrayed in four very striking chapters. On one occasion he took "the elders of the people and the elders of the priests" (Jer. xix. 1) into the polluted Valley of Hinnom, which he foretold would one day be known as the "Valley of Slaughter." In token of this, he broke in pieces an earthen vessel he had brought with him in the presence of his companions, saying, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel that cannot be made whole again, and they shall bury in Topheth, till there be no place to bury." From the valley the prophet went up into the Temple and proclaimed the city's doom to the assembled people (Jer. xix.)

Jeremiah and
Jehoiakim

A second denunciation was delivered under even more striking circumstances. Early in Jehoiakim's reign Jeremiah was commanded by God to stand in the court of the Temple and deliver His stern message to all who came from the cities of Judah. "Thus saith the Lord, If ye will not hearken to Me to walk in My law, which I have set before you, . . . then will I make this house like Shiloh" (Jer. xxvi. 4). This prophetic utterance caused a storm of indignation. The priests of the Temple, and the prophets whose watchword was its indestructible sanctity, declared Jeremiah worthy of death, and an infuriated mob assembled in the Temple courts against the unpopular prophet. This scene recalls the memory of the riot in the Temple, when St Paul was accused of having introduced Greeks into the Sanctuary, and the parallel is the closer, because both prophet and apostle were delivered by the civil power. The princes and the elders of the land supported Jeremiah against the prophets. They quoted the words of Micah, "Zion shall be plowed as a field, and

Jeremiah
foretells the
destruction of
the Temple

Jerusalem shall become heaps" (Micah iii. 12), and reminded Jeremiah's enemies that the good King Hezekiah, instead of punishing the presumption of the prophet, besought Jehovah's mercy and so averted the threatened evil. Jeremiah escaped the vengeance of the priesthood, but the extremity of his peril is shewn by the fact that another prophet, by name Uriah, the son of Shemaiah, who prophesied in the same strain, had escaped to Egypt. Even there he was not safe, for Jehoiakim, as a vassal of the Pharaoh, had influence there, and his messenger Elnathan, the son of Achbor, was able to bring Uriah back to Jerusalem, where he was slain, and his body cast into the graves of the common people. (Jer. xxvi.)

Jehoiakim
burns the roll

An opportunity for repentance was given to Jehoiakim by Jeremiah in the fourth year of his reign. The prophet was commanded to record his prophecies "in a roll of a book," for which purpose Baruch, the son of Neriah, was summoned to act as scribe. As Jeremiah for some reason was unable to enter the Temple, he charged Baruch to go there himself, and read the roll in the presence of the people. It appears probable that Jeremiah entertained a hope that even Jehoiakim might repent if he saw these terrible denunciations in writing, and that this prophecy might have the same effect that the law-book had exercised upon Josiah. To make the parallel more complete, Baruch read the roll in the chamber of Gemariah, the son of that Shaphan who had brought the law book to Josiah. Micaiah, the son of Gemariah, went to the king's house, and reported to the royal scribe Elishama and to the assembled princes what Baruch had read. They summoned Baruch into their presence, and when he had read the roll to them also they advised that he and Jeremiah should hide themselves, in case the king should regard the promulgation of the prophecy as an act of treason. The roll was then brought to Jehoiakim, who permitted a few leaves to be read, and then, despite the entreaties of three of his counselors, Elnathan, Delaiah and Gemariah, burnt it in the brazier before him. Diligent search was made for Jeremiah and Baruch, but they remained probably for some years in hiding, and occupied themselves with the composition of a longer book of prophecy than that which Jehoiakim had burned. (Jer. xxxvi.)

The only other public act of Jeremiah in the reign of Jehoiakim is recorded in the chapter preceding the account of the burning of the roll. The wicked king had provoked Nebuchadrezzar to invade the land. Among the fugitives who fled to Jerusalem from the Chaldeans, were the sons of Rechab, an ascetic tribe or sect, who lived the life of nomads, abstaining not only from wine, but from the arts of settled life. Jeremiah was bidden to take this singular people into the Temple, and offer them wine, which they refused to drink, saying, "Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your sons for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye sojourn." The fidelity of these Rechabites to the hard commands of Jonadab was contrasted with the disobedience of Israel to Jehovah, and the Divine oracle pronounced by Jeremiah's mouth a blessing on their constancy. "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he commanded you: therefore thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before Me for ever." (Jer. xxxv.)

The
Rechabites

By the end of Jehoiakim's reign all hope of succour from Egypt was at an end. "The king of Egypt," says the book of Kings, "came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the brook of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt" (2 Kings xxiv. 7). Jehoiachin or Coniah, the youthful son of Jehoiakim, reigned only for three months, and the real control of affairs seems to have been in the hands of Nehushta the queen-mother. This unfortunate prince was taken a captive to Babylon, and kept for thirty-eight years in strict confinement, during which time the Judæans never forgot that he was the head of the royal House of David. From his imprisonment the Captivity is dated. With Jehoiachin all the flower of the people were deported to Babylon; the nobility, the chief warriors, the

The captivity
of Jehoiachin

smiths, the craftsmen, together with the royal household, and the golden vessels of the Temple were taken from Jerusalem; "None remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land" (2 Kings xxiv. 14). Over this remnant the king's uncle Mattaniah was appointed to rule by Nebuchadrezzar, who gave him the name of Zedekiah. Jeremiah clearly saw that the end had come. His lamentation over Jehoiachin points to the ruin of the House of David—

"Is this man Coniah a despised broken pot?

Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure?

Wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into the land which they know not?

O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of Jehovah:

Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days;

For no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. xxii. 28-30).

The Exiles

A vision was vouchsafed to Jeremiah to indicate the difference between the Judæans who had gone into captivity and those who remained under Zedekiah. By the simple sign of a basket of good, and another of uneatable figs, he was informed that the hopes of the nation lay in its exiled members, and not in the miserable remnant which was still permitted to dwell in Jerusalem (Jer. xxiv.). The real work of regeneration was to be done in Babylonia. There the captives were to learn the folly of idolatry, to call into being an imperishable literature, to form new schemes for a purified worship of Jehovah. There they were destined to learn from strange nations new religious truths, to be developed in the purer atmosphere of a more enlightened faith. The sojourn by the rivers of Babylon was to be to Judaism a period of renewed vitality. A vigorous people, capable of sustaining their faith in the one true God in every quarter of the earth, was to result from that time of tears and sorrow. This Jeremiah recognised; and thus, the captivity, instead of intensifying his sorrow, aroused his hopes. He who had been the prophet of despair, when others sought to buoy the people up with false hopes, now began to breathe forth encourage-

ment. From the day of the Exile Jeremiah proclaims the Return.

Thus it was in Babylonia that Jeremiah's work was carried to its completion. The main theme of his prophecies is that the only indestructible religion is that which is spiritual. He truly perceived that which so few can even yet realise, that "Neither in Jerusalem nor yet in this mountain shall men worship the Father," but, that as "God is spirit," He dwelleth not in temples made with hands. The destruction of the first Temple made it possible for Judaism to become a world-wide religion, as that of the second assured the triumph of Christianity. Among the exiles many disciples of the prophet of the New Covenant bore in their hearts those principles of pure religion, which they had learned from his lips. One of them, the priest Ezekiel, carried on the work that he had begun; and the influence of Jeremiah is seen in the magnificent poetic utterances of the second Isaiah, as well as in those of many a psalmist.

But great as Jeremiah's place is among the spiritual teachers of mankind, his permanent and enduring work is not his greatest glory. It is in the rest of his career that the noblest part of his life lay, though nothing but suffering, failure, and an obscure death awaited him on earth. He could, had he chosen, have accompanied the exiled Jehoiachin to Babylon, and lived in honour under the protection of Nebuchadrezzar, but he preferred to remain to console the despised remnant of Judah under Zedekiah. But man's greatest achievements are not always those which the world recognises, and it may be that Jeremiah's example of heroic unselfishness in the wretched years that followed the Captivity, had an even greater influence than his promulgation of those sublime truths, which in his prophetic capacity he was permitted to unfold. With Zedekiah's accession Jeremiah becomes even more of a hero than a prophet.¹⁰

Chapter XIII

The Captivity

The Captivity
and Judaism

THE Captivity of Judah is one of the greatest events in the history of religion, and one of the most extraordinary in that of mankind. The results are of themselves sufficient to prove the absolutely unique character of the Jewish people. That a nation by being rooted up and deported from its own land should lose nothing of its vitality but should on the one hand prove its power to exist in any clime and under any conditions, and on the other retain an enthusiastic love of its home, is surely without parallel. The early history of Judah does not bring into relief the singularity of its people; the Captivity does. A traveller in the eighth century B.C. might have seen but little difference between the inhabitants of Judah and the surrounding nations. In the fourth century B.C. Alexander the Great was amazed at their complete dissimilarity.¹ Yet for all their adherence to their ancient customs in Babylon, the Judahites were completely transformed by their deportation. They returned to their own land, and they overspread the world as Jews. With the Captivity the history of Israel ends and the history of the Jews commences. The Captivity produced what is generally known as Judaism.

Great therefore is the disappointment that so little is known of this momentous period. It has almost no history; but fortunately a literature is not wanting from which it is possible to gain some insight into the spirit of these eventful years.

The remnant
in Judah

To understand the Captivity it is necessary to glance first at the remnant left behind after the deportation of Jehoiachin.

There are various traditions as to the number of those removed from Judah with their youthful sovereign, but it certainly included the flower of the people. The captives are

classified as princes, warriors and craftsmen; the presence of the last-named testifying to the success of the natives of Jerusalem in the arts of peace. Those who remained are described as the "poorest sort of the people of the land" (2 Kings xxiv. 14). A certain number of men of rank were left behind, doubtless for the purpose of maintaining order; among them the Chief Priest and several officials of the court and Temple.

Nebuchadrezzar was not by any means a brutal conqueror, and he shewed every disposition to give Jerusalem a fresh opportunity to prove her loyalty to his empire. He placed a scion of the house of David on the throne in the person of Mattaniah the brother of Jehoiakim, who assumed the name of Zedekiah (righteousness of Jehovah), possibly in token of the pledge he had taken to observe fidelity to his suzerain. Evidently the oath of allegiance to Nebuchadrezzar was sworn amid circumstances of no ordinary solemnity. "Behold," says Ezekiel, "the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and brought them to him to Babylon; and he took of the seed royal, and made a covenant with him; he also brought him under an oath, and took away the mighty of the land; that the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand" (Ezek. xvii. 12-14). Zedekiah

The occasion was also used to make an agreement to observe the law of Jehovah, especially as regards those Hebrews who had been held in bondage for more than six years in defiance of ancient custom.

A primitive rite was performed to give additional solemnity to this covenant. A calf was divided into pieces and the chief persons of Jerusalem passed between the portions, as a pledge that they would do as they had promised (Jer. xxxiv.). Under these auspices Jerusalem was given her last opportunity. The flower of her inhabitants had been deported to Babylon, and the Temple despoiled of its choicest vessels; but city and Temple alike remained intact, and under a native prince of the Davidic line, and a chief priest of the stock of Aaren there seemed a prospect of peace and tranquillity. Two other cities of Judah, Lachish

and Azekah, were allowed to retain their fortifications (Jer. xxxiv. 7). Jeremiah elected of his own free will to remain at Jerusalem, but he entertained no delusions. He was shewn a vision of two baskets of figs, "the good figs very good, and the bad very bad, they cannot be eaten they are so bad" (Jer. xxiv. 3). It was revealed to him that the good figs were the exiles in Babylon, and that the bad represented Zedekiah and the remnant committed to his care. Yet the prophet undertook the hopeless task of trying to save the Holy City.

There was but one course of safety. If Zedekiah and his people would abide by their agreement with Nebuchadrezzar all might be well, and this Jeremiah urged in the strongest possible terms.

But to follow this policy required more faith and strength of mind than Zedekiah possessed. The king was weak rather than wicked, and perhaps circumstances made it impossible for him to save his people. There was in Jerusalem a strong party who were in favour of an Egyptian alliance against Babylon. Despite the defeat of Pharaoh-Necho at Carchemish, Egypt was still regarded as a formidable power, and no sooner were the armies of Nebuchadrezzar withdrawn from Palestine than those of the Pharaoh made their appearance. The prophets both in Babylon and at Jerusalem espoused what appeared to be the patriotic side. The old cry as to the inviolability of Jerusalem was raised. From the beginning of Zedekiah's reign Jeremiah threw the whole weight of his influence on the side of fidelity to the covenant with Nebuchadrezzar. An embassy came to Zedekiah from the neighbouring kings of Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre and Zidon, no doubt in order to concert a rising against Babylon. Jeremiah put a yoke on his own neck as a sign, and presented each of the ambassadors with one, in token that Jehovah "had given all these lands into the hands of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon" (Jer. xxvii. 6). He warned Zedekiah earnestly to submit, and to disregard the utterances of the prophets who foretold the restoration of the vessels of the sanctuary, which had been taken to Babylon with Jehoiachin. He wrote earnestly to his countrymen in exile, urging them to

Jeremiah
remains in
Judah

Parties in
Jerusalem

settle down quietly: "Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply ye there, and be not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." At the same time he assured them that their prophets were deceiving them, and that seventy years must elapse before their restoration. (Jer. xxix. 5-20).

But the fanatical prophets scorned the wise advice of their more experienced colleague. A certain **Hananiah** appeared before Jeremiah in the court of the Temple and delivered himself of the following prophecy, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord's house, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon; and I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went to Babylon, saith the Lord; for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon." He then broke the yoke which Jeremiah bore, saying, "Thus saith the Lord; even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, within two full years from off the neck of all the nations." (Jer. xxviii. 1-11.)

About the same time Shemaiah the Nehelamite sent a letter from Babylon to the priest Zephaniah adjuring him to remember his duty as a successor of Jehoiada and to arrest Jeremiah. (Jer. xxix. 24-29.) Two prophets named Zedekiah and Ahab were burned by Nebuchadrezzar for inciting the exiles to sedition.²

Whilst Jeremiah was engaged in advocating the cause of a prudent submission to Nebuchadrezzar at Jerusalem a younger prophet was eagerly watching the course of events in Palestine from Tel-Abib, his place of exile by the river Chebar. **Ezekiel** was called to the prophetic ministry in B.C. 592, "in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity."

Like Jeremiah he was a priest, but his appearance marks the beginning of a new species of prophecy. Visions, it is true, were vouchsafed to the older prophets, but the method of teaching by them seems to have originated with Ezekiel. He is essentially an apocalyptic prophet. Called by a vision more fully described than that of any of his predecessors, Ezekiel constantly received messages in the same manner. The four living creatures, taken in Christian times to be symbolical of the Evangelists, the vision of the valley of dry bones, and of the restored Temple, are best known examples of this mode of instruction.

Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel shew that there was no lack of communication between the inhabitants of Judah and their exiled brethren, but already a feeling of rivalry had sprung up between them. The two prophets pronounce strongly in favour of the superiority of the Babylonian community, despite the fact that the remnant in Judah believed that they had been permitted to stay in their own land as a special mark of Divine favour. (Ezek. xi. 15; xxxiii. 24.)

There can, however, be no doubt that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were singularly corrupt and idolatrous, though it is but just to bear in mind that it is not Jeremiah, who lived in the city itself, but Ezekiel in remote Babylon, who paints the wickedness of Jerusalem in the most lurid colours.

In one of this prophet's visions he is brought into the inner court of the Temple "that looketh towards the north." There he sees the "image of jealousy," and is shewn a hole in the wall through which he enters and sees Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan and seventy elders engaged in the worship of idols. At the gate "towards the north" the seer beholds the women weeping for Tammuz; and in another place five and twenty men are adoring the sun with their faces turned eastward (Ezek. viii. 3-16).³ He is equally severe on the prophets of Judah: "They have seduced My people, saying, Peace, and there is no peace." They "see visions of peace" for Jerusalem when God has decreed none (Ezek. xiii. 10, 16). But a false prophet is one of God's punishments of a guilty land. "I the Lord have deceived that prophet" because those who inquire of him have set up "a stumbling-block of iniquity in their hearts" (Ezek. xiv. 7-9).

The infatuated policy of Zedekiah in making an alliance with Egypt meets with severe reprobation on the part of Ezekiel. The oaths sworn by the King of Judah to Nebuchadrezzar were so solemn, the compact was so explicit that nothing could justify the violation of it. "Shall he prosper?" says Ezekiel on hearing of Zedekiah's embassy to Egypt. "Shall he escape that doeth such things? Shall he break the covenant and yet escape? As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon shall he die. . . . As I live, surely Mine oath that he hath despised, and My covenant that he hath broken, I will even bring it upon his own head" (Ezek. xvii. 15 ff.).

**Ezekiel
condemns
Zedekiah**

As a punishment for his perfidy Nebuchadrezzar sent an army to invest Zedekiah's capital. The siege began in the ninth year of the reign of the Judæan king, in the tenth month, and lasted to the ninth day of the fourth month in the eleventh year: from January B.C. 588 to July B.C. 586. The biography of Jeremiah supplies the chief facts of the siege.

**The Siege of
Jerusalem**

At the advance of the invading army Zedekiah sent Pashhur the son of Malchiah and the priest Zephaniah to inquire of Jeremiah whether Jehovah would not once more deliver the city by a miracle, as He had done in former days. In answer Jeremiah strongly advised submission to the Babylonian army, being assured of the inevitable doom of Jerusalem. "Behold," said the prophet in Jehovah's name, "I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth out, and falleth away to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey" (Jer. xxi. 8, 9). Such advice naturally rendered Jeremiah obnoxious to the party of resistance, but he was enabled to vindicate his right to be considered a true patriot firmly convinced that Jehovah had not utterly forsaken His people.

His uncle's son Hanameel came to the prophet during the siege of Jerusalem, asking him to purchase land in Anathoth, his native place, for the right of redemption lay with him.

By God's command Jeremiah paid the full price, and received the deeds conveying the property to him with the utmost formality. The deeds were deposited in an earthen vessel for security, that they might be available when required, and were committed to the care of the prophet's friend Baruch with the assurance, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land." The return of the Jews was in fact as certain as the imminent destruction of Jerusalem. (Jer. xxxii. 6-44.)

During the long months of the siege, which was characterised by severity of both famine and pestilence, Jeremiah was exposed to the hostility of the party opposed to surrender. At one time the prospect of relief seemed near. The Egyptian army advanced and the siege was raised for a time. Jeremiah took this opportunity to leave the city; but at the gate of Benjamin he was arrested by an officer named Irijah on the charge of desertion to the enemy. He was cast into a loathsome pit in the house of Jonathan the scribe, from whence Zedekiah rescued him, and ordered him to be kept in the court of the guard and to be supplied with a regular allowance of food. Again his enemies managed to secure Jeremiah, and on this occasion they threw him into an empty cistern, from which he could only be drawn up by ropes. He was saved by an Ethiopian slave of Zedekiah's and once more brought into the royal presence (Jer. xxxvii. 11—xxxviii. 13). The prophet besought the king to surrender himself to the army of Nebuchadrezzar. Zedekiah would have done so but for his fear of the insults of the Jews who had already deserted to the enemy (Jer. xxxviii. 19). The unfortunate monarch evidently desired to do what was right, but had not the strength of mind to pursue the course Jeremiah had indicated. It is noticeable that Jeremiah never speaks harshly of him, as Ezekiel does. The last King of Judah must have possessed the power of attracting those who knew him personally.

Capture of
Zedekiah

The city was finally taken by assault, and Zedekiah and his chosen warriors sought to escape. They succeeded in making their way out of the city "by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls," and were not overtaken till they had reached the plains of Jericho. Zede-

kiah was taken to Riblah in the land of Hamath, to suffer in the presence of Nebuchadrezzar the penalty of his perfidy. His sons were slain before his eyes, and he was blinded and carried to Babylon (Jer. xxxix. 1-7). There he died in prison, and was probably allowed an honourable burial (Jer. xxxiv. 5).

Evidently Zedekiah was not considered by Nebuchadrezzar as guilty as some of his subjects, for a list is given of the princes of Judah who were put to death at Riblah. Nebuzaradan, the Babylonian commander, brought the two priests, Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest, together with all the great officers of the royal court and seventy citizens of Jerusalem, into the presence of Nebuchadrezzar, who ordered them to be slain. (Jer. lii. 24-27.) After this Nebuzaradan returned to Jerusalem to destroy the city. The Temple was burned, and its treasures taken to Babylon. The great brazen ornaments which Solomon had made, including the two pillars, the molten sea, and the twelve brazen bulls supporting the bases, were broken in pieces. The walls were levelled; and the king's palace, and all the houses of the nobles were burned. Only the poorest were left to till the soil. (Jer. lii. 12-20.)

**Destruction
of Jerusalem**

Jeremiah was treated with every consideration, by the special command of Nebuchadrezzar. He was offered the opportunity of being taken to Babylon or of remaining in Judah. He chose to stay with the wretched folk left in the almost deserted land under the care of Gedaliah, the son of his old supporter Ahikam. (Jer. xl. 6; see also Jer. xxvi. 24.)

**Jeremiah
elects to
remain**

The miserable story of this remnant of a remnant has now to be related. Adversity seems to have taught those whom Nebuchadrezzar left in their own land no lesson: they were as factious and turbulent as their forefathers had been.

Gedaliah established himself at Mizpah and was soon joined by the remains of the Judean army, and by the fugitives who had taken refuge in Moab, Ammon and Edom. At first all seemed to go well, especially as the autumn fruits were unusually abundant. But there was a traitor in the camp, sent by Baalis, King of Ammon to kill Gedaliah. Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, of the seed royal, was evidently jealous at not being himself set over the remnant, and Gedaliah, though warned to be on his

**Murder of
Gedaliah**

guard, was too simple-hearted to suspect evil. Suddenly Ishmael and ten accomplices killed Gedaliah at a banquet, and put to death all his household as well as the Babylonian guards. He then murdered a party of pilgrims from Shechem and Shiloh on their way to Jerusalem, and started with his prisoners, among whom were the king's daughters, to go to the country of the Ammonites. Johanan the son of Kareah, one of the "captains of the forces," assembled his men and overtook Ishmael at the great waters of Gibeon. All the captives were rescued, but Ishmael and eight men made their escape (Jer. xli.)

Jeremiah in
Egypt

The advice of Jeremiah was now sought, and the prophet earnestly counselled Johanan to remain in Judah, promising him that he should have no cause to fear the wrath of Nebuchadrezzar. But the people were so distrustful of Jeremiah's known adherence to the King of Babylon, and of Baruch's influence over the prophet, that they disregarded his advice and took refuge in Egypt, dragging Jeremiah and Baruch with them. They seem to have settled at Tahpanhes (Daphnæ), and there they disappear from sight. All that is known of their sojourn is Jeremiah's symbolic prophecy of the invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar, and his useless remonstrance against the Jewish women continuing to worship "the queen of heaven." At a great assembly of the exiles, the people refused to abandon this idolatry, saying, "As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly perform every word that is gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine" (Jer. xliv. 16-18.)

Of the end of the great prophet, whose eventful life has supplied details for the history of his time, nothing is known. He vanishes with those who deserted Judah to take refuge in Egypt. Whether these retained their ancient faith is doubtful, the only evidence that the community survived being that the record of Jeremiah's prophecies in Egypt has not perished.⁴

The remnant
in Judah

It has been asserted that a remnant still lurked in Judah, and that to their efforts the restoration of the Temple is due, but at

best this is a plausible hypothesis. The land had in fact been steadily depopulated since the appearance of the Assyrian armies in the eighth century. First Tiglath-pileser had devastated Northern Galilee and Gilead in 738. Then Sargon had led captive the inhabitants of Samaria, and so desolate had central Palestine become in the days of Esar-haddon that the wild beasts disputed the possession of the land with the new settlers (2 Kings xvii. 25).

In 701 Sennacherib took two hundred thousand Judæans captive, and by the time of Nebuchadrezzar there were apparently but few left to deport.⁵ One passage in the book of Jeremiah implies that he took only 4600 to Babylon in three batches in the seventh, eighteenth, and twenty-third year of his reign (Jer. lii. 28-30).

Number of the captives

But the size of this community of exiles is of little importance when compared with ideas which moulded its destiny and ultimately that of the human race.

Of the condition of the exiled Jews little is known, but their treatment does not seem to have been severe. They did not suffer as their ancestors had done in Egypt, but were transplanted settlers rather than slaves. Many dwelt in their own houses, and acquired wealth. Their numbers increased rapidly. Tradition says that Jews were soon among the king's most trusted counsellors, and later history seems to confirm the statement. Babylonia was the scene of busy commerce; its people were devoted to money-making pursuits, as the immense number of contract tablets recently discovered testifies. In such a country the Jews rapidly developed that aptitude for finance which has characterised the nation. Always a remarkably intelligent people, their minds were sharpened by adversity in a country where their talents had free scope. As subsequent history has proved, this singular race gains strength by being uprooted from its own soil, and flourishes with renewed vigour in the midst of alien and unsympathetic surroundings.⁶

The Jews in Babylon

But a further accession of strength was due to a feeling of isolation from the rest of the world which forced the exiles to rely on one another. In the early days of their history the Judæans did not maintain the purity of the Israelite stock, but freely admitted foreign elements into their tribe. In later years, however, they incurred the enmity of the surrounding nations, especially the Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites; and the fall of Jerusalem caused general rejoicing.

The writings of the prophets shew how bitterly the Jews felt the malice of their neighbours, and in Babylon the exiles brooded over the unnatural conduct of nations so near akin to themselves. Rejected by the rest of the world the Jews clung together, and refused to surrender their distinctive nationality. Everything that could foster this spirit was cherished: family registers were carefully kept, ancient customs obstinately cherished, and peculiarities which distinguished the Jews from their neighbours insisted upon. All this fostered the idea that they were a peculiar people, and to this attitude of mind the world may owe the preservation of the literature of the Old Testament. Its growth and development may be traced from the work of Ezekiel.

**Ezekiel's
methods of
teaching**

It took six months for the news of the fall of Jerusalem to reach Tel-Abib. On the fifth day of the tenth month the prophet learned the sorrowful tidings, and from that time the constructive work of his life seems to have begun.

(a) By history

Before, however, touching on this it is necessary to say a little on Ezekiel's treatment of the ancient history of Israel. It is unlike that of any of the earlier prophets. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah and Jeremiah allude to the past, but Ezekiel makes it the theme of his discourses. He recounts the story of Israel's exodus from Egypt with the object of bringing the ingratitude of the people to Jehovah into stronger relief. The gift of the Promised Land only, as he shews, resulted in the increase of idolatry (Ezek. xx. 1-18 and 27-31). In the terrible allegory of Oholah and Oholibah he recounts the infamy of the two nations Samaria and Judah (Ezek. xxiii.). He traces Jerusalem to her Amorite and Hittite founders, and dwells on Jehovah's mercy and the perfidious conduct of the chosen city (Ezek. xvi.). Throughout he makes the past story of Israel teach its lesson to his own generation.

This method of instruction is characteristic of the period following the discovery of the book of Deuteronomy; and throughout the historical books of the Old Testament the same didactic spirit is displayed. From Joshua to Kings there is constantly a disposition to moralise on the facts recorded and to make them a means of instruction. Old materials are used with the object of producing a definite impression on the reader by convincing him of the goodness of Jehovah and of the perversity of His people. The same tendency is seen in the Psalms recounting the story of the nation, which probably may be assigned

to this age, and it reappears in the speeches of St Stephen and St Paul in the New Testament.⁷

Upon the Jews this treatment of history produced an effect possibly not contemplated by their teachers. The doctrine of hereditary sufferings, of the son atoning for the father's sin, was generally accepted; and Ezekiel's contemporaries were ready enough to throw the blame on their ancestors. They quoted the old proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." They questioned the justice of the accepted view of Divine Providence. In the forcible words of Lamentations they said, "Our fathers sinned and are not, and we have borne their iniquities" (Lam. v. 7). To meet these difficulties Ezekiel disregarded the popular view of hereditary guilt in favour of a new ideal of personal responsibility.

(b) view of
hereditary
guilt

Starting with the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," Ezekiel declares that in the days to come this will be no longer quoted. God watches over the soul of each individual, "Behold, all souls are Mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die." The prophet declares that a righteous man shall live but if his son turn out a reprobate he shall die in his iniquity. In the same way the son of a sinner shall be saved if he lives a life according to the law of God. This system of ethics was evidently strange to Ezekiel's generation, and obvious as it now seems to all men, it was not so in his age. The objection, "Wherefore doth not the son bear the iniquity of his father?" was raised. And Ezekiel replied by laying down the principle, "The soul that sinneth it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son" (Ezek. xviii. 19, 20).

(c) personal
responsi-
bility

Ezekiel continues by applying those principles of penitence, which his predecessors had recommended to the nation, to each individual. He reminds the righteous that if they fall into iniquity their previous good deeds will not save them, and at the same time he encourages the wicked to amend their ways, by impressing on them the fact that past sin does not make amendment, and acceptance by God, impossible. His are the familiar words, "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive" (Ezekiel xviii. 27). An epoch-making saying in the history of religion.

(d) penitence

(e) the function of a prophet

As a consequence of this teaching Ezekiel reveals a new conception of the functions of a prophet. The earlier prophetic utterances are messages from Jehovah to the nation. The appeal was to the public conscience of Israel. Ezekiel addresses the individual, and his work is regarded as that of a pastor. He is compared to a watchman who is made responsible for the people's calamities, if he does not give warning; but not otherwise. If the wicked dies without reproof, his blood will be required of the prophet; but if he has not failed to tell the evil-doer of the fate in store for him, he is free from blame (Ezek. xxxiii. 1-9).

(f) the priestly office

Ezekiel's ministry is also marked by the growing importance of the priestly office. This may seem strange, as the functions of the priests had ceased with the destruction of the Temple. But as the Jews looked forward above all things to a religious restoration, the importance of the priests as the depositaries of the tradition of worship in the old Temple began to be felt. Ezekiel was constantly consulted by the people, who doubtless regarded him as peculiarly qualified by his position to act as a religious teacher. In this capacity he gave ceremonial Judaism its peculiar bent. After the Captivity Judaism began to be centred in the observance of its priestly law, and as a consequence the High Priest became not only the religious but the civil head of the nation.

(g) ceremonial and moral duties

The early prophets deprecated all formalism in religion in their zeal to exalt the moral law; Ezekiel, on the contrary, appears to draw no distinction between moral and ceremonial duties. This difference is, however, more apparent than real. To the prophets in the days of the monarchy, the outward expression of religion was a national act, and the violation of the moral law the sin of the people, or, at any rate, of whole classes of them. They warned Israel that a regular and lavish performance of the sacrificial worship was in vain if unaccompanied by national repentance. Ezekiel addressed himself more to individuals at a time when the abandonment of the ceremonial duties of religion was a practical renunciation of a man's faith, and naturally he does not draw the line so sharply as his predecessors between the moral and ceremonial law. In the famous eighteenth chapter the prophet enumerates the qualities of a good and bad man, and among these the neglect or observance of laws, both moral and ceremonial, stand side by side; but it is worth noticing how much the moral law predominates.

With the exception of an allusion in Jeremiah (xvii. 19-27), the prophetic books before Ezekiel say nothing about the observance of the Sabbath, except to deprecate the belief that it is a sure means of securing Divine favour. Ezekiel regards the Sabbath with great reverence. It is a sign between Jehovah and Israel (Ezek. xx. 12), and the disregard of it is one of Israel's most heinous offences (xx. 24). In the concluding section of the book of Isaiah the importance of Sabbath-keeping (Is. lvi.), which henceforth became a characteristic of Judaism, is insisted upon.

(h) the
Sabbath

After the fall of Jerusalem Ezekiel's thoughts were set on the return of his people, and his prophecies of it are among the finest passages in Holy Writ. In the thirty-fourth chapter he speaks of Israel as a flock scattered by the negligence and cruelty of their shepherds or rulers: for in prophetic imagery the shepherd is always the king. In bitter words are the actions of the kings of God's people portrayed: "Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill the fatlings; but ye feed not the sheep. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with rigour have ye ruled over them. And they were scattered, because there was no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, and were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, my sheep were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and there was none that did search or seek after them." These scattered sheep Jehovah will gather and bring into His fold, and He will make His "servant David" their shepherd. But the beauty of this thirty-fourth chapter is inferior to the incomparable vision of the valley of the dry bones, whereby the ruin and restoration of Israel are signified. It is followed by the symbolical action of the prophet, who, at God's command, took two staves for the houses of Judah and of Joseph, and made them one stick in his hand. In this way the nation was once more to be united. Again the Davidic king is promised to be the shepherd of the reunited nation. "And My servant David shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments, and observe My statutes, and do them" (Ezek. xxxvii. 24).

Ezekiel and
the restora-
tion

**The renewed
Sanctuary**

With the restoration of the people, Ezekiel planned a new sanctuary, with all the glories, and none of the corruptions, of the old Temple. The concluding chapters of his prophecy portray the ideal of a restored Israel with a purified worship and a perfected polity. It was a dream never to be realised on earth, which nevertheless exercised a most important influence on subsequent Jewish thought.

In a vision Ezekiel is brought to a very high mountain where he sees the plan of a city. His companion, a mysterious being, "a man whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand and a measuring reed," stands in the gate to shew the prophet the Temple and the city (Ezek. xl. 2, 3).

The Temple

First the Temple is measured and described, and the prophet is conducted through its courts and shewn the different "chambers" devoted to the slaying of the burnt and sin offerings, to the use of the singers, and to the priests. Next the sanctuary itself is carefully measured, together with the side chambers surrounding it, as they did the ancient Temple of Solomon. Ezekiel is now brought by his conductor to the eastern gate: "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east; and His voice was like the sound of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory." When the glory of the Lord filled the house, the prophet heard a voice saying, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne, and this is the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever" (Ezek. xliii. 1-7).

The altar is next described, and "the ordinances of the altar" whereby it is to be sanctified after a seven days' ceremonial of consecration (Ezek. xliii. 13-27).

**The Levites
deposed**

Great care is to be taken to guard the purity of the new Sanctuary. The eastern gate, by which God's glory entered, is to be for ever closed. No alien or uncircumcised person is to enter the Temple, nor may any one act as a priest in it who is not of the house of Zadok. The other Levitical priests are to be deposed, because they forsook Jehovah for their idols. They are henceforward to be relegated to a subordinate position. "They shall be ministers of My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house, and ministering in the house: they shall slay the burnt-offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and became a stumbling-block of iniquity unto the house of Israel; therefore

have I lifted up Mine hand against them, saith the Lord God ; and they shall bear their iniquity. And they shall not come near unto Me, to execute the office of priest unto Me, nor to come near to any of My holy things, unto the things that are most holy ; but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. Yet will I make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein " (Ezek. xlv. 11-14).^{7a}

A political constitution is provided for the restored nation ; at the head of it is "the prince," whose estates are to be in the neighbourhood of the Holy City. He is apparently to have no duties save those of the head of a religious people. He enters the Temple by the east gate in state, and presides at religious functions. Curiously enough the High Priest is not mentioned. The land is to be fertilised by a large river issuing from the sanctuary. All the tribes are to receive inheritance, but the Trans-Jordanic tribes are to be brought over to the western side and given their lands there. The City (never called Jerusalem) is to stand on neutral territory surrounded by the portion of the priests and that of the prince ; seven tribes, Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben and Judah, are to be on its north, and five, Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulon, Gad, on its southern side.⁸

The Prince

Such then is the vision of the restored community which occupies the last nine chapters of Ezekiel. It is that of a theocracy pure and simple, of a holy nation occupied entirely in the service of Jehovah. In some important points it differs from the arrangements prescribed in the Pentateuch, notably in the deposition of the Levites in favour, not of the house of Aaron, but of that of Zadok. Moreover they are not relegated by Ezekiel to an inferior position because they filled it when the Tabernacle was still standing, but on account of their recent apostasy. It may be that Ezekiel's vision and his strong personal influence were the causes of the degradation of the Levites to a sort of secondary priesthood ; but these chapters describe a condition of things so purely ideal, that it appears hardly safe to draw conclusions from a literal interpretation of them.

A theocracy

But this opinion, developed in the days of the Exile, had most far-reaching consequences. They are seen in the reforms of Nehemiah, and in the idealised histories of the kings of Judah in Chronicles, who more closely resemble "the princes" por-

trayed by Ezekiel than the monarchs described in the Kings. The failure of the Hasmonæans to establish a stable monarchy was due to this theocratic idea fostered by the Pharisaic party. The same spirit made Herod's schemes for the aggrandisement of his Judæan dominions impossible, and drove the Jews into rebellion against their Roman masters.

It has shewn itself in the Christian Church, as well in the noble schemes of a Gregory VII. as in the wildest dreams of fanatics ; and under whatever form it has appeared it has caused misery. For it is only when God's Spirit, of whom Ezekiel speaks so frequently, transforms the heart of man that a true theocracy can be established. The transition from the ancient to the modern view of religion at the time of the Captivity is shewn by the changed conception of the nature of Jehovah.

It may be doubted whether there was ever a time when the devout worshippers of Jehovah in Israel did not regard Him as the One True God, the Lord of all the world. But it is tolerably certain that the average worshippers looked to Him chiefly as the peculiar God of His chosen people. This national aspect of Jehovah's person is naturally prominent in the teaching of the earlier prophets. In the days of the Exile, however, the transcendent power and majesty of Israel's God filled the thoughts of His people. The prophets contrasted His might with the impotence of the gods of the heathen, and poured scorn on the Gentiles for worshipping wood and stone. They thought of their God as the Creator and Ruler of all things, as enthroned above all the world, the One Living God. In this changed attitude of the mind of Israel there was gain as well as loss. The childlike faith of the men of antiquity had no difficulty in imagining Jehovah in personal contact with His people. Their ideas may not have been very spiritual, but they at least kept them in close contact with their God. They could see His hand in every circumstance of life, they could realise that He loved Israel with a father's tenderness. In gaining a truer knowledge of the spiritual nature of Jehovah, those of a more advanced age lost the intimacy with Him enjoyed by their fathers. Jehovah became more and more the Absolute, the Unknown, the unnameable God. His actions could no longer be discussed ; they must be accepted without question. His tender love for Israel was less spoken of than formerly ; He was said to have saved His people "for the honour of His name" rather than for the love He bore them.

In Ezekiel there are the germs of a tendency which manifested themselves first when the service of God was interpreted to mean the literal fulfilment of His written law : then when the Name of Jehovah was considered too sacred to pronounce : finally when the Memra or Word became the sole means by which God communicated Himself to mankind. Neither man nor nation can exchange a childlike faith even for a sublime creed without a certain loss, and the old tender feeling which existed between Jehovah and His people in early days vanished when men began to think less of His person than of His attributes.

**Growing
consciousness
of Jehovah's
majesty**

But this change in the attitude of Israel towards Jehovah must be regarded as one of the strongest proofs that the True God revealed Himself to His people, and was not, so to speak, evolved from their inner consciousness. It is absolutely unthinkable that a mere tribal God should have been spontaneously raised to the rank of the Ruler of the Universe by a nation when it had touched the nadir of its degradation, whose Holy City had been destroyed, whose sanctuary had been ruined. Had Jehovah been regarded as nothing but Israel's tutelary deity, the nation would surely have abandoned His service for that of a more powerful being. They did the very reverse, for the disasters that befell them only made them more sure of the greatness of His might, and instead of forsaking their God, Whom they might have declared to be impotent to preserve His own, they clung to Him as they had never done in the days of their prosperity, and proclaimed Him Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth.

The weary days of exile were also marked by the growth of a new national ideal. The problem of national suffering is constantly suggested, and as a new generation grew up, it became dissatisfied with the explanation that its troubles were entirely due to ancestral guilt. In addition to this the Jews could not but perceive that they were better morally and socially than the nations by whom they were oppressed. It became imperative therefore to find a new answer to the question, Why does Jehovah sometimes allow the innocent to suffer, and the guilty to enjoy prosperity? Several replies were suggested. Jeremiah pleads passionately with God and asks Him, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they at ease that deal very treacherously?" (Jer. xii. 1). But no reply is vouchsafed. In the seventy-third Psalm, for example, wonder is

**The problem
of suffering**

expressed at the prosperity of the wicked, and the author consoles himself with the thought that it is after all only transitory. God has set them "in slippery places" in order to cast them down to destruction. Encouraged by this thought, he resolves to persist in serving God.

One book of the Bible is devoted to this subject, and, though it is impossible to determine its date, it certainly voices the perplexities of this period. In the whole of the Old Testament there is no more difficult book than that of Job, and it is almost presumptuous to attempt to theorise as to its date and origin. Its arguments belong to humanity in every age, but especially to the Jews at the time of the exile.

The patriarch, rich, prosperous, and at the same time pious, may well represent Israel in happier days. The trials which befall the highly favoured man may be equally well applied to a privileged nation. Their object is to test the fidelity of both. Sent by Divine permission, they serve to answer Satan's question, "Doth Job serve God for naught?" The nation ruined, the land desolate, the population almost exterminated, may easily be personified by the once happy patriarch, childless, stricken by poverty and disease, lying on a dunghill outside his own city.⁹ The nations may be represented by Job's three friends, though the dignified courtesy shewn by these on their visit to the afflicted patriarch hardly corresponds with the savage joy of the half-barbarous Edomites and Moabites at the fall of Jerusalem.

More fittingly perhaps may they be considered as shadowing the general opinion of mankind. It has been maintained that the first of the "friends," Eliphaz from Teman, the home of the wise, gives expression to the thoughts of those whose wisdom was supposed to be inspired. Bildad the Shuhite represents proverbial wisdom based on the experience of antiquity; whilst in Zophar the Naamathite the more superficial judgment of men finds expression.¹⁰ The solution of the difficulty is given in the words of God, "out of the whirlwind." His might in Creation is there declared, His wisdom in the government of the animal world, the terrible animals He calls into being and control. Abased at the sight of the Divine Majesty, confounded at the extent of the power and wisdom of God, Job can only humbly declare that he does not understand the

motives by which man's destiny is controlled, and says with resignation,

"I know that Thou canst do all things,
 And that no purpose of Thine can be restrained.
 Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge?
 Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not,
 Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.
 Hear, I beseech Thee, and I will speak:
 I will demand of Thee, and declare Thou unto me.
 I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear;
 But now mine eye seeth Thee,
 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"

(Job xlii. 2-6).

But a solution of far greater importance is found in the concluding chapters of the book of Isaiah. According to the prophet, Israel is a suffering nation, not only because of its past sins, but for the sake of the world. The nation is the servant of Jehovah; full of imperfections it may be, blind and deaf (Is. xlii. 19), but yet His chosen instrument to give light to the whole world. The glorification of Zion means happiness to mankind: "Nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Is. lx. 3). And the ideal mission of the nation ends by centering round an Individual. The Servant of Jehovah speaks in His own person as the representative of God's people, and in the fifty-third chapter the Nature of the Suffering Messiah is unfolded.

**The Servant
of Jehovah**

The trials of the majority of the Jewish people during the Captivity may not have been very great. The community in Babylon was wealthy and numerous, and many evinced no strong desire to return to Palestine, when the opportunity presented itself. But to devout and earnest spirits the desolation of the land, the destruction of the Temple, and the long cessation of religious offices, caused the deepest sorrow. They prayed with their faces towards Jerusalem, they cherished the memory of the Holy City. The words of the Psalm, "By the waters of Babylon," have become typical of an exile's grief. The nation personified by these sorrowful spirits as an individual addressed God as "the poor," the "afflicted," the "humble." The captivity of Zion became synonymous with sorrow. The saddest strains in the Psalter reflect the thoughts of the Captivity, and the nation frequently speaks in the name of some suffering saint.

**The Psalms of
the Captivity**

Side by side with this there was a growing hatred of Babylon expressed in burning language. Nothing can equal the dramatic

**Hatred of
Babylon**

force with which an unknown poet, in the book of Isaiah, describes how the ghosts of vanished nations greet the descent of the King of Babylon into the under world, and shout in triumph, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning? how art thou cut down to the ground which did lay low the nations!" (Is. xiv. 12).

From the days of the Captivity the name of Babylon has become associated with the haughty oppression of the righteous.

Summary

The history of the Captivity is one of the growth of ideas, and as it is almost conclusively established that the book of Daniel reflects the feelings of a very much later date, the facts known are indeed scanty. But this much is certain, the ancient religious ideas of Israel were, as it were, cast into a furnace and emerged in the essential form of Judaism. The national laws and customs, the traditional lore of the priests of Jerusalem, together with the traditions of a venerable past, took during this period the form of the Pentateuch or Hexateuch. History began to assume that moral tone which characterises the records of Israel's past in Judges, Samuel and Kings. Prophecy lost its purely national character and became more universal in its application. The Davidic king made way for the Messianic "man of sorrows." The sacrificial worship ceased for a time, and the rabbi began to take the place of the hereditary priest. New problems of life were debated, as the theories which had satisfied the men of old were abandoned. Nor can it be mere coincidence that almost simultaneously two races so separated by position and by modes of thought as the Hebrew and the Greek began to question the notions of their ancestors concerning the moral government of the world.

Chapter XIV

The Return and Settlement in Judæa

THE hopes of the Jewish exiles in Babylon were excited by the news that a new conqueror had been raised up by God for the purpose of delivering His people. The Greek historians, led by Herodotus, tell romantic stories of the career of **Cyrus**: of his youth passed in obscurity among the common people, of his triumph over his grandfather Astyages, King of Media,¹ who had sought his life, and of his final establishment of the Medo-Persian Empire. But if the history of Cyrus was attractive to the Greeks a century after his death, the actual progress of his arms must have been watched with absorbing interest by the Jews in Babylon, who perceived that their one hope of deliverance lay in his success. On the other hand, Nabu-nahid, or Nabonidus, King of Babylon, had good reason to mark with anxious apprehension the advance of one, whom a few years before, he had styled "the little servant of the Manda" (or "Nomads").

What was formerly known of Cyrus has now been supplemented by three pieces of contemporary evidence:—

- (1) The inscription of Nabu-nahid, King of Babylon;
- (2) An annalistic tablet; and
- (3) A proclamation by Cyrus justifying his seizure of the crown of Babylon, and permitting those who had been deported there to return to their homes.

According to the evidence of these monuments Cyrus was King of Anzan, a petty principality of Elam, which he had inherited from his father Cambyses. Encouraged by Nabu-nahid, he began by revolting against his over-lord, Istevagu (Astyages), King of the Manda. In his inscription, the King of Babylon says that it had been revealed him in a dream that Istevagu's destruction of the Temple of the Moon-god in Harran should be punished by Cyrus, King of Anzan, "the little servant of the Manda," and in B.C. 549 Cyrus attacked Istevagu, and took him prisoner.

Cyrus must have established the Medo-Persian Empire in the three following years, for in the year B.C. 546 the Annalistic Tablet styles him "King of Persia," and after this traces in detail the advance of his army towards Babylon. First, Cyrus crossed the Tigris near Arbela, and by degrees became master of Mesopotamia. Circumstances favoured his further progress, for by the time that he had entered Babylonia, Nabu-nahid had incurred the enmity of the powerful priesthood of Bel-Merodach. The invader was in consequence not only hailed as deliverer by the nations subject to Babylon, but was welcomed by the citizens as restorer of their ancient worship.²

Advance of
Cyrus on
Babylon

During the advance of Cyrus, Nabu-nahid remained in Babylon and reversed his previous policy by trying to conciliate the priests of Merodach. But nothing could stay the inevitable triumph of the invader. Belshazzar, son of Nabu-nahid, who had been sent with the army to hinder the advance of Cyrus, was defeated at Opis; the Accadians surrendered their city of Sippara "without fighting"; and in the autumn of B.C. 538, in the month Marchesvan, Babylon opened her gates to the invader. Nabu-nahid fled, and the inhabitants of the capital enthusiastically welcomed Cyrus as deliverer. "Peace to the city," says the Annalistic Tablet, "did Cyrus proclaim." He had, in fact, come not as a conqueror, but as a restorer of the ancient faith. The revolution by which Nabu-nahid was overthrown was a bloodless one; the contract tablets bear witness that not even the trade of the busy city had suffered any interruption.³

Isaiah II. and
Cyrus

The enthusiasm with which the Jewish exiles watched the victorious progress of Cyrus is attested by the prophecies of an unknown seer, whose utterances are preserved at the end of the book of Isaiah. In the darkest days of their despondency the exiles were aroused by the encouraging words of one of the greatest of the Hebrew prophets, who, at the very time when Babylonian idolatry was the religion of the strongest empire in the world, maintained in the language of the most glorious poetry that Jehovah, the God of Israel, was the true ruler of all the nations, and boldly declared that in His sight the proudest of mankind were "but as grasshoppers" (Is. xl. 22).

So far from forgetting His people, this unnamed prophet proclaims that it is Jehovah's purpose to show how precious Israel is in His sight. He was now about to give "Egypt for its ransom" with "Ethiopia and Seba" (Is. xliii. 3). The

message of God to Israel was fraught with comfort to the exiled nation and to its ruined capital. The prophet's charge was "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare (or appointed foe) is accomplished" (Is. xl. 2). Jehovah had not neglected His people, but Israel, blind to the signs of the time, failed to recognise His love. "Who," asks the prophet, "hath raised up one from the East, whom He calleth in righteousness to His foot? He giveth nations before him, and maketh him rule over kings; he giveth them as the dust to his sword, as the driven stubble to his bow" (Is. xli. 2). "For your sakes," he adds, as the conquering army approaches, "I have sent to Babylon, and I will bring down their nobles, even the Chaldeans, in the ships of their rejoicing" (Is. xliii. 14). At last, waxing even bolder, the prophet says that it is God's purpose to restore His people to their own land by means of the victorious Persian: "Saying of Jerusalem, She shall be inhabited; and of the cities of Judah, They shall be built, and I will raise up the waste places thereof: that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, that shall perform all my pleasure; even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and to the Temple, Thy foundation shall be laid" (Is. xlv. 26-28).

The return from captivity, in the eyes of this enthusiastic prophet, was to be a second and more glorious Exodus. "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Is. xl. 4).

Miracles like those of the departure from Egypt were to attend the restoration of God's people. "I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia tree, and the myrtle, . . . that they may see and know and consider, and understand together that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it" (Is. xli. 18-20).

Thus was the nation incited to hope for deliverance, and **Edict of Cyrus** within a year of the entry of Cyrus into Babylon an edict was issued, which is found in the books of Ezra and of Chronicles. "Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, All the kingdoms of-the

earth hath Jehovah the God of heaven given me ; and He hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whosoever there is among you of all His people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord" (Ezra i. 1-3). The king further allowed the Jews to contribute to the furtherance of the work, and restored all the spoil of the Temple taken by Nebuchadnezzar.

The language of the proclamation of Cyrus on ascending the throne of Babylon bears a distinct resemblance to the edict recorded in the Bible. In it Cyrus says that Merodach grants permission to all exiles in Babylon to return to their homes with their gods, and asks them to pray for him. As the biblical record of the proclamation makes it appear that Cyrus acknowledged the supremacy of the God of Israel, it is possible that a special edict was made for the Jews. But though the object of Cyrus in thus allowing all exiles to leave Babylon may have been partly political, the tone of his proclamation to his new subjects, as well as of that preserved in the Bible, is distinctly religious, and is in favour of the idea that the conqueror believed himself an appointed instrument in the hands of God.⁴

It is disappointing to find that an event like the Return, so anxiously anticipated by the Jewish exiles, foretold in such glowing language by a prophet, and brought about by a king of such world-wide fame as Cyrus, should be somewhat obscurely recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. No prophecies delivered actually at the time of the Return are preserved, nor is the historical account of it earlier than about the third century B.C. There is no contemporary evidence of how the Jews availed themselves of the privileges granted them by Cyrus in B.C. 538 ; all that is absolutely certain is that in B.C. 521, the second year of Darius, there was a community of Jews in Jerusalem, the chiefs of which were Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, representing the House of David, and Joshua the son of Jozadak, the High Priest, and that little or nothing had been done by them towards rebuilding the Temple.⁵

**Judah during
the Captivity**

From a few scattered notices in the Bible it is possible to form some idea of the condition of Judah and Jerusalem during the Captivity. Despite the two deportations of Jews to Babylon in the reigns of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, a few were left in the land under the charge of Gedaliah at Mizpah. Their numbers were augmented by the remnant of the Judæan army, which

had escaped when Jerusalem was destroyed, and by the Jews who had taken refuge in Moab, Ammon and Edom. Nor was the Israelitish element utterly extinct in the Northern Kingdom, since on one occasion eighty men from Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria had brought their offerings to the ruined Temple at Jerusalem (Jer. xli. 5). It is true that after the murder of Gedaliah the Jewish remnant is said to have been removed to Egypt; but this does not entirely preclude the idea that during the long years of the Captivity a certain number of Jews had crept back to their homes and were living in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, which even the semi-idolatrous Samaritans then regarded as a sacred spot. But before the edict of Cyrus this miserable remnant only existed on sufferance, and would not dare to attempt to restore either Temple or city, even if it had possessed the means of doing so. Those who had been left in Judah were considered as inferiors by the community in Babylon, which numbered in its ranks not only the priesthood and the noblest families, but the most skilful of the Jewish craftsmen. In their new home this portion of the nation had increased rapidly in numbers, wealth and intelligence; for the passionate sorrow expressed in the literature of the Captivity, and the longing for the sight of the Holy City, seem to express the feelings of those few pious and patriotic souls, who knew no happiness but in the service of their God. From these the majority of those who availed themselves of the permission to return to their own land was probably composed, the equipment for their journey being supplied by their wealthier brethren.

A list of those who returned is given in the book of Ezra, and is repeated with slight variations in that of Nehemiah. At the head stand the names of Zerubbabel, the representative of the House of David, and of Jeshua, the High Priest, who with ten others seem to have been the leaders of the Return (Ezra ii. 1-70; Neh. vii. 6-73.) **The Return**

Part of the people are enumerated by their families, the rest by the cities of Judah and Benjamin in which they established themselves. The priests, to the number of four thousand, are next mentioned; but only seventy-four Levites, a hundred and ten Levitical singers, and a hundred and thirty door-keepers joined the expedition. Three hundred and ninety-two Nethinim, or Temple slaves, were taken back to Jerusalem, and a few families, who were unable to prove their Israelitish descent, were

permitted to accompany the returning exiles. Certain descendants of the noble house of Barzillai the Gileadite, who had so courteously welcomed David when he was escaping from Absalom, claimed to belong to the priestly order, but could not establish their right to do so. The Tirshatha, or governor, on this account refused to permit them to "eat of the most holy things" until their right could be determined by a priest guided by the sacred Urim and Thummim (Ezra ii. 63).

Numerous servants accompanied the exiles on their return, and the liberality of their Babylonian countrymen had furnished them with horses, mules and camels, whilst Cyrus had given them the sacred vessels taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar when he destroyed the Temple.

Of the journey to Jerusalem from Babylon we are told nothing, nor do we know whether it was accomplished by a single caravan under the leadership of Zerubbabel, or whether the Jews came in detached parties. When, however, Zerubbabel's company arrived at their journey's end they made an offering of sixty-one thousand darics of gold and five thousand maneh of silver to the treasury of the Temple, and dispersed to their cities.

Setting up of
the altar

In the seventh month, at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, the festival on which Solomon had dedicated his Temple, the people "gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem" (Ezra iii. 1). The feast was duly observed, the altar set up on its base, and henceforward the customary sacrifices prescribed by the Law were offered. It was not till the second year of the Return that the foundations of the Temple were laid with much solemnity, the priests blowing the silver trumpets, and the Levites of the sons of Asaph clashing their cymbals, and praising Jehovah in antiphonal song, "For He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever towards Israel" (Ezra iii. 11). As the people shouted, the elders who had seen the old house wept, "so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people" (Ezra iii. 13).

Rejection
of the
Samaritans

Well might the ancient men weep for the decay of the nation. No sooner were the foundations of the Temple laid than the work ceased. The "adversaries of Judah and Benjamin," as the half-idolatrous worshippers of Jehovah who dwelt in the neighbourhood are styled, came to demand permission to join in the work, "For," said they, "we seek your God as ye do . . . since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Assyria, which brought us up

hither" (Ezra iv. 2).⁶ But the rigid exclusiveness of the Babylonian Jews would not suffer such colleagues to share in their noble work, nor is it just to cast on them the reproach of an ill-advised intolerance.

They had left Babylon and encountered the perils of a journey to Judæa with the express purpose of restoring what they believed to be the pure religion of their remote ancestors. They were convinced that the Captivity was a just punishment for the compromise their fathers had made with the religions of the Canaanites, and they were determined to avoid this error. To have held out the right hand of fellowship to the Samaritans would have been to open the door to a return to the very practices by which Israel and Judah had provoked their God in the days of old. Zerubbabel did not, however, offer this explanation of his conduct, but taking his stand on the royal decree, authorising his community to rebuild the Temple, said in reply to the request of the Samaritans, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God: but we ourselves together will build unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, as king Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us" (Ezra iv. 3). But, whatever were the motives that prompted the Jews to refuse the proffered help, the result was fatal to the progress of their work. The Samaritans left no stone unturned to hinder the erection of the Temple, and the building was completely abandoned for several years.

The first four chapters of Ezra, which were not reduced to their present form for fully two centuries after the events they relate, are the sole authority for these incidents connected with the Return.⁷ For the completion of the Temple the utterances of the contemporary prophets Haggai and Zechariah supplement the information derived from the book of Ezra.

What occurred between the laying of the foundation of the Temple and the resumption of the work can only be conjectured. The restored exiles by their exclusiveness incurred the odium of the "people of the land," and henceforth lived in the midst of a hostile population. Their acts were represented unfavourably to the Persian authorities by counsellors hired by the Samaritans, and they were no doubt subjected to all those petty annoyances which an unpopular and suspected people suffer at the hands of Oriental officials. Under such circumstances it is natural to suppose that the people became too poor and disheartened to continue the work of rebuilding the Temple. It is possible also

**The building
of the Temple
hindered**

that a series of bad seasons, combined with unskilful husbandry, further impoverished the Jews. "Ye have sown much," says Haggai, "and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough, . . . and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes" (Hagg. i. 6). Yet all were not equal sufferers, for the prophet is able to taunt some for living in their "ceiled houses, whilst the Temple of God lieth waste" (Hagg. i. 4). Nothing was done during the last years of the reign of Cyrus, or in the reign of his son Cambyses, who probably regarded with suspicion the erection of a temple fortress in a position commanding the way to Egypt.

Darius

In 521, however, Darius Hystaspes put to death the Magian usurper Gomates and became King of Persia. The new sovereign was thought to be not unfriendly to the Jews, for in his second year the prophets Haggai and Zechariah began to urge upon Zerubbabel and Jeshua the propriety of resuming the building of the Temple. Haggai attributed the scarcity that prevailed in Judah to the negligence of the Jews: "Mine house lieth waste, while ye run every man to his own house" (Hagg. i. 9). Zechariah takes a higher ground: his call is to repentance: "Return unto me, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will return unto you" (Zech. i. 3). But when the work had once begun, Haggai's prophetic eye discerned that, though the Temple was commenced in "a day of small things," it had a glorious future, and in language echoing that of Isaiah he declares that a time should come when "the desirable things of all nations shall come," and God "will fill this house with glory" (Hagg. ii. 7).

Temple to be built

But no Temple could be erected without permission from the King of Persia, and no sooner had the work been recommenced than the Satrap Tattenai asked the Jews, "Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this wall?" (Ezra v. 3). He agreed, however, to allow them to go on with their work till the pleasure of Darius should be known. A decree of Cyrus was found at Achmetha Ecbatana, granting permission to build a Temple at Jerusalem, and prescribing the dimensions of the shrine as sixty cubits in height, and sixty in breadth; exactly double the size of that built by Solomon (Ezra vi. 3). Darius confirmed the edict of his predecessor, ordering Tattenai to do all in his power to facilitate the completion of the work. By this means the Temple was finished on the third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of Darius, B.C. 516. In the

following month the Passover was celebrated with unusual solemnity (Ezra vi. 15-18.)

Thus the second Temple was finished, but it was long before anything is recorded of the Jews in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and inferences as to their condition can only be drawn from a few scattered hints in the books of Zechariah, Ezra and Nehemiah. The city itself was very sparsely inhabited, and those who lived there seem to have multiplied but slowly, for Zechariah speaks of a future very different from the present, when "There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem. . . . And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (Zech. viii. 4, 5). Perhaps it is safe to conjecture that the majority of those who had returned were men, and this may account for so many Jews at a later period intermarrying with the heathen. The cities inhabited by the first exiles lay, with the single exception of Bethlehem, north of Jerusalem, the old tribal district of Judah being perhaps occupied by the Edomites, who, as a reward for their loyalty to Nebuchadrezzar, had received the right to settle in the depopulated country. During the interval between the Return and the arrival of Nehemiah, the Jews had begun to establish themselves once more in their own cities and were found as far south of Jerusalem as Beersheba.

Silence of Jewish history, B. C. 517-458

The Jewish community was under a governor appointed either by the Great King, or by the satrap who ruled over the territory west of the Euphrates (beyond the river). The first of these, called Sheshbazzar, or Sanabassar, is perhaps the same as Zerubbabel, the leader of the Return.⁸ If he appointed Zerubbabel to this office, Cyrus shewed great regard for Jewish susceptibility, in giving them as their first ruler a member of the beloved House of David.

Zerubbabel, left undisturbed in his office by the successors of Cyrus, completed the Temple. After him the Davidic family seem to have lost its influence, owing to the governor's being no longer a Jew, but some Persian official, the burthen of whose maintenance was very heavily felt, and whose servants made themselves especially obnoxious by their exactions. The residence of the governor appears to have been a fortress commanding the Temple, called the *Birah*, on the site of the famous stronghold of Antonia, erected in after days by Herod (Neh. vii. 2.)⁹

The tribute exacted by the Persian kings pressed very heavily on the Jews, but, unlike their descendants in Roman times, they appear to have had no religious scruples about paying it. The rich increased their wealth by advancing the amount demanded by the tax-gatherer, taking the lands and persons of their debtors as security, and frequently disregarding the spirit of the Mosaic law by ruthlessly selling the insolvent debtors as slaves. As Syrians of Palestine were included in the vast army which Xerxes led against Greece in B.C. 480, no doubt the Jews were among the sufferers of that disastrous expedition.

Despite, however, the fact that like other peoples the inhabitants of Judah felt the crushing weight of the despotism of the Persian rule, they seem to have enjoyed complete religious freedom with a considerable amount of self-government. The High Priest, who had played a very secondary part in the days of the Davidic kingship, gradually became the representative of the nation. Jeshua, the son of Josadak, stands almost on a footing with Zerubbabel, and with the disappearance of the power of the royal house the High Priests became the natural heads of the Jewish community.

The Aaronic priesthood

Although only four of the twenty-four courses had returned, the priests numbered four thousand, or a tenth of the exiles who came back with Zerubbabel and Jeshua. It was evidently an honourable distinction to belong to the house of Aaron, as some important families tried to claim it without being able to give sufficient proof of their right to do so. Strange as it may appear, the Levites showed great reluctance to return to Jerusalem. They were, however, required for the proper ministration of the Temple service, and their co-operation was eagerly sought. It is a noteworthy fact, that those who consented to go to Jerusalem displayed a remarkable zeal for the very law which made them subordinate to the House of Aaron. The Levitical guild of the musicians, moreover, gave to the worship of the second Temple its most distinctive feature. At the Return the greatest care had been taken to provide for the musical services of the Temple, and an outburst of Psalmody characterised the foundation of the second house of Jehovah at Jerusalem.

Whilst, therefore, the mechanical acts of sacrificing engrossed the energies of the Aaronic priesthood, the inferior order was occupied in the work of teaching the Sacred Law and expressing the aspiration of the saints in imperishable song.

But this large body of Temple officers lacked order and cohesion, and the zeal which inspired the Return and the erection of the second Temple was very short-lived. The sacrificial system, a heavy expense to an impoverished people, rapidly fell into decay, and the beasts which would not be accepted by the governor were offered on the altar of Jehovah. The priests fell far short of the ideal excellence of Levi, of whom the prophet says, "My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him that he might fear, and he feared Me and stood in awe of My name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness and did turn many away from iniquity" (Mal. ii. 5, 6). The whole order seems to have forfeited public respect by their partial administration of the law.^{9a}

**Degeneracy
of the priests
and Levites**

A general feeling of depression was everywhere apparent. Like Haggai, Malachi attributes the bad seasons and distress to the parsimony of the people towards God, and entreats them to prove whether the just payment of the tithe due to the Temple will not bring more prosperity to the land. The Jews begin to manifest a tendency to abandon the services of Jehovah altogether, not as in old days for idolatry, but in pure weariness. "It is vain," said they, "to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?" (Mal. iii. 14).

The people were in fact ill able to endure the discouragements that surrounded them. They were encompassed by hostile nations. In the south the Edomites occupied much of their ancient territory, and pursued them with unrelenting hostility. In the north the Samaritans, who had formerly desired to make Jerusalem their holy city, had, owing to their repulse by Zerubbabel, become bent upon its destruction. The Moabites, Ammonites and Arabians had become equally hostile. Any attempt to rebuild the ruined walls was represented to the Persian Government as an act of treason. "Be it known," runs one letter to Artaxerxes, "that the Jews which came up from thee are come to us unto Jerusalem; they are building the rebellious and the bad city, and have finished the walls, and repaired the foundations. Be it known now unto the king, that if this city be builded, and the walls finished, they will not pay tribute, custom or toll, and in the end it will endamage the kings. . . . We certify the king that if this city be builded,

**Hostility to
the Jews**

and the walls finished, by this means thou shalt have no portion beyond the river" (Ezra iv. 12-13, and 16).

The danger was that the second or third generation after the Return would cease to be animated by the spirit of their ancestors, and that, tired of incessantly contending with their neighbours, they would allow themselves to be absorbed into the number of the heathen. It is not improbable that idolatrous practices were revived, and it is certain that the fashion of intermarrying with the Gentiles had become prevalent. But for the Jews in Babylon, Judaism must have perished in Palestine.

The religion of God's people in Babylon was evidently extremely vigorous. The late book of Daniel bears witness to the prevalence of a tradition that some Jews maintained their ancestral customs with a marvellous courage, which extorted the admiration both of Nebuchadnezzar and of "Darius the Mede." The book of Esther, a work of a totally different temper, relates the history of the escape of the Jews from an extraordinary peril in the reign of a king Ahasuerus (Heb. Ahashverosh), who has been identified with Xerxes, B.C. 485-465.

Ahasuerus is said to have made a feast at his palace at Shushan (Susa), the capital of Persia, and in a fit of drunken merriment to have ordered his queen, Vashti, to shew herself to the assembled revellers. As she declined to appear, the king, advised by his courtiers that her contumacious conduct would make all women rebellious, put her away from being queen, and promulgated a decree that every man in his kingdom should "bear rule in his own house" (Esther i. 22). The next queen chosen was Esther, niece of a Benjamite named Mordecai, who by her uncle's advice had kept her nationality a profound secret. Mordecai had an enemy among the great officers of the kingdom, named Haman the Agagite, to whom he refused to do reverence. His haughty independence so displeased Haman that he "thought it scorn" to punish Mordecai alone, and resolved that the whole nation should be involved in a common ruin (Esther iii. 6).

Accordingly he persuaded the king that the peculiar customs of the Jews constituted a danger to the kingdom, and offered as an additional inducement the enormous sum of 10,000 talents if he would sign a decree ordering their destruction. Eleven months were allowed for preparation, and the blow was to be struck on the 13th of Adar, the twelfth month. When

**Jews in
Babylon**

**Story of
Esther**

**Haman re-
solves to
destroy the
Jews**

Mordecai heard of it he persuaded Esther to go uninvited into the king's presence, though it was death to do so, unless he extended the end of his golden sceptre to the suppliant. Esther exhorted the Jews in Shushan to fast for her three days before she made the attempt to see the king, who had let a month elapse since he had last summoned her. On her entering the presence, Ahasuerus extended his sceptre to Esther, and granted her request that Haman should attend the banquet she had prepared.

On the night following the feast the king, finding sleep impossible, ordered the records of the kingdom to be read to him, and on hearing the story of how his life had been saved by Mordecai from a conspiracy, inquired what reward had been bestowed upon him. Haman in the meantime, secure of the royal favour, had made a gallows whereon to hang his rival.

When Haman was admitted to audience on the next day, the king inquired, "What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" (Esther vi. 6). Thinking that no one but himself could be meant, Haman described the highest honours a subject could receive, and was told to confer them on Mordecai. That night he was bidden once more to Esther's banquet, and there the queen declared herself a Jewess and denounced Haman. By the king's command he was hanged on the gallows he had made for Mordecai. At Esther's request the Jews were allowed to work vengeance upon their enemies, and the feast of Purim was henceforth observed in the month Adar in memory of the deliverance of the nation.

Though the claims of the story of Esther to rank as history, as well as the canonicity of the book itself, have been seriously questioned, it certainly contains a substratum of truth, and illustrates the peril to which the Jews were exposed in the Persian Empire under a capricious tyrant like Xerxes. It shews also that the peculiar character of the people had begun to produce bitter hostility; for the words of Haman find an echo in all succeeding ages, "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from those of every people: neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them" (Esther iii. 8).⁹⁶

The Persians were not, as a rule, ill-disposed to their Jewish subjects. The religion of Darius and his successors was not totally unlike that of the chosen race, and had no sympathy

**Haman's
overthrow**

**The Jews
under the
Persian
kings**

with the materialist idolatry of Babylon, or the gross nature-worship of Phœnicia. The doctrine of Zoroaster, with its belief in one supreme God, its hatred of evil, and its abhorrence of image-worship, was in fact one of the most spiritual and austere religions of antiquity. The Persians proved the excellence of their religion by being the first nation to appreciate the pure morality of Israel's faith, and in the reform and development of Judaism incident on the Captivity, many of the doctrines of Persia were adopted.

The Persian sovereign to whom the Jews of Palestine owed most, was Artaxerxes Longimanus (B.C. 465-425), a sagacious monarch, who became the patron of the two men Ezra and Nehemiah, who gave life to the dry bones of the Judæan community.

In B.C. 458 Ezra, at the head of a considerable body of Jews, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He had obtained permission to do so from Artaxerxes, and the fervour of his faith is shewn by the fact that he relates that he was ashamed to ask for a military escort because he had assured Artaxerxes that "The hand of our God is upon all them that seek Him, for good" (Ezra viii. 22).

The edict of Artaxerxes gave Ezra very full powers to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, and to take the offerings of the king and his seven councillors to the Temple, together with the freewill offerings of the priests and people. The decree further empowered Ezra to draw freely upon the royal treasurers "beyond the river" for money, corn, wine, oil and salt, and exempted priests, Levites, and other ministers of the Temple, from taxes. The powers given to Ezra were very extensive: he was not only allowed to appoint judges, and to teach the law of God, but as a last resource to punish disobedience by death. Unlike Zerubbabel, however, Ezra bore no Persian title, but is styled Priest and Scribe. It may be that his mission was partly political, and was due to Artaxerxes' desire to conciliate the Jews during the crisis of the Egyptian revolt.

About eighteen hundred Jews accompanied Ezra, among whom were Hattush, a member of the royal House of David, and representatives of the two priestly families of Phinehas and Ithamar. When, however, Ezra found that no Levites or Nethinim had joined the expedition, he waited by the river Ahava, and sent an embassy to Casiphia to invite the Levites living there to accompany him. Thirty-eight Levites responded,

together with two hundred and twenty Nethinim, "whom David and the princes had given for the service of the Levites" (Ezra viii. 20). After proclaiming a solemn fast, and consigning the immensely valuable offerings, which he had collected, to the care of twelve eminent priests, or Levites, Ezra and his company started on their journey. They reached Jerusalem four months after their departure from Babylon, and after a rest of three days, they duly presented their offerings to the priests of the Temple, and made a solemn sacrifice for all Israel. Some time was occupied by the exiles in presenting their credentials to the royal officers in the district, and in assisting the people of Jerusalem to decorate the Temple.

In this way some four months elapsed before Ezra was made aware of the painful truth that the Jews of Palestine were so allied by marriage with the people of the land as to be hardly distinguishable from the surrounding heathen. It was a bitter disillusion: Ezra and his companions had come from Babylon with the expectation of finding a community of saints, in place of which they discovered the inhabitants of Jerusalem on the verge of apostasy. In a transport of grief, Ezra says, "I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished" (Ezra ix. 3).

The mixed marriages

The conscience-stricken people assembled, but he remained silent till the hour of the evening sacrifice, when he poured forth an impassioned prayer to God, because He had granted His people "a little reviving in their bondage" (Ezra ix. 8), and had been again forsaken by them. This fervent confession of sin touched the hearts of the people, and Shecaniah, one of the sons of Elam, proposed that all who had taken foreign wives should dismiss them. Only four persons, one of whom was a Levite, seem to have had the courage to oppose Ezra. Proclamation was made that all the Jews should assemble at Jerusalem, under penalty of having all their property "devoted" and of being themselves excommunicated, if they did not obey the summons. On the twentieth day of the ninth month, the people sat before Ezra in the broad place before the Temple. It was the wet season; a pouring rain added to the popular dejection, and all agreed without hesitation to obey Ezra. A commission was appointed, and the foreign wives, and perhaps their children also, were put away.

Tried by even the standard of the Levitical law, the conduct of the Jews in marrying foreign wives does not appear to have

been so heinous as to justify Ezra's excessive indignation. Nor does it seem easy to acquit the commission appointed by him of unreasonable harshness in compelling the people to sever the family ties they had made, and to repudiate the sacred obligations they had contracted. A consideration of the circumstances of the age alone can justify Ezra and his colleagues. The Jews of his time were exposed to a peril as great as even that of annihilation at the hands of an invader. Forming as they did an insignificant minority of the inhabitants of Palestine, unless they rigorously maintained their exclusive nationality, they were in danger of being absorbed by their neighbours. Nothing but drastic measures could check the evil, and it was only by the vigorous action of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi, that the Jews of Palestine were preserved as a peculiar people.

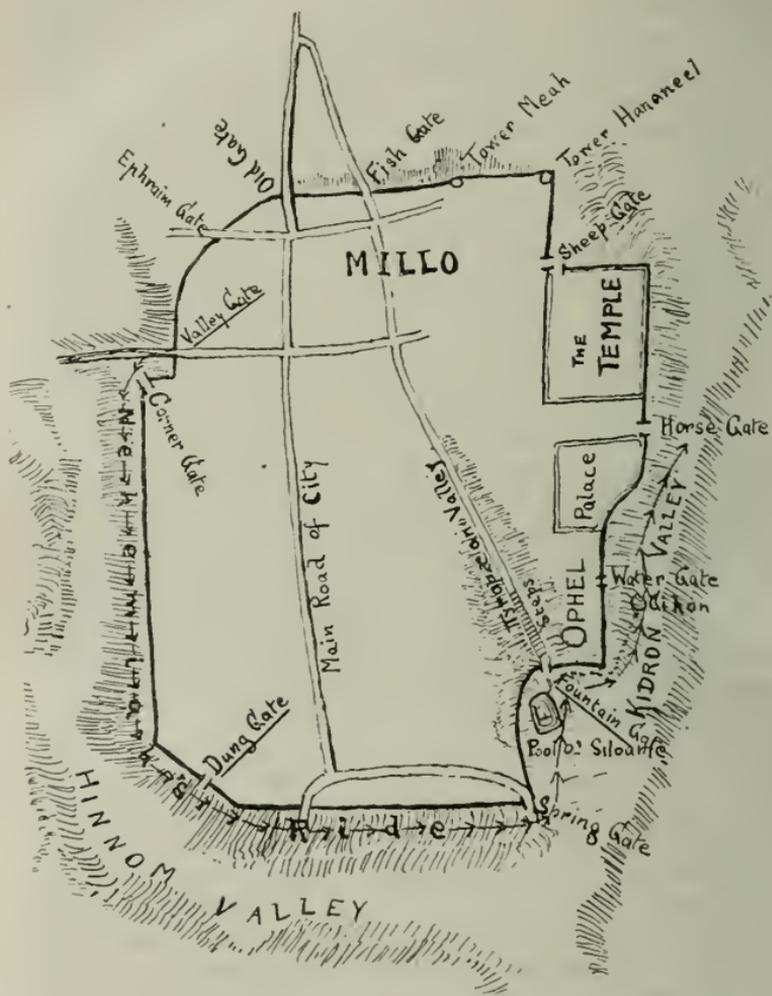
Possible attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem

It is probable that Ezra, relying on the royal favour, made an attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, but that his work was interrupted by the hostility of the surrounding peoples, irritated at the repudiation of their daughters by their Jewish husbands. A letter addressed to Artaxerxes is preserved in a different context in the book of Ezra, in which the danger of allowing the Jews to restore their walls is vividly depicted.

In reply, Artaxerxes ordered the building of the walls to be stopped; his commands were executed with all the zeal of hatred, and the enemies of the Jews "made them to cease by force and power" (Ezra iv. 23). It appears as if at this time the gates of Jerusalem were burned and the walls demolished.

Nehemiah

Thirteen years had elapsed since Ezra left Babylon, when Artaxerxes observed a sad expression on the face of his cup-bearer Nehemiah, a Jew in high favour with his master. On the king's inquiring the cause of Nehemiah's melancholy, which he saw was "nothing else but sorrow of heart," Nehemiah in great trepidation replied, "Let the king live for ever; why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" (Neh. ii. 3). The king then further encouraged his cup-bearer's confidence by allowing him to prefer his petition, and Nehemiah, after a silent prayer to the God of heaven, boldly asked to be allowed to go to Jerusalem, taking with him letters to the governors of the provinces, and to Asaph, the keeper of the royal "paradise," authorising him to give a supply of timber to restore the walls. Artaxerxes did more than Nehemiah had requested: he made him a Tirshatha, or



JERUSALEM IN THE DAYS OF NEHEMIAH.

The rough sketch is intended to illustrate Nehemiah II., III. In II. 15, Nehemiah says that 'he turned back, and entered by the valley gate, which has been interpreted to mean that he continued his ride along the north side of the city. Most of the places mentioned in the account of the rebuilding of the walls are indicated.

provincial governor, and sent him to Jerusalem with an armed escort.

From the first Nehemiah found that he must encounter strenuous opposition. It is true that he was armed with several royal decrees, but the power of a Persian king in a distant province was not what it was in the palace of Susa. The satrap was practically an independent sovereign, and, provided the tribute due from their provinces was regularly transmitted to head-quarters, his subordinates exercised uncontrolled authority. Thus the rebuilding of the walls might again be stopped by force and power, or the suspicions of the Great King might be excited against Nehemiah by false accusations. His difficulties were increased by the position of his two most prominent adversaries, Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah, called the slave, the Ammonite, able and unscrupulous men, who not only headed the Samaritans and other external enemies of the Jewish people, but also were bound by family ties to an influential party among the priests in Jerusalem. Under such circumstances Nehemiah, being by no means sure of the fidelity even of his own countrymen, was bound to proceed with great caution. His sole trust was in his friends and relatives, whom he had brought from Susa, and in the disciplined courage of his Persian guards.

Sanballat and Tobiah

Nehemiah spent three days in Jerusalem without daring to hint at his purpose, or even to arouse suspicions by being seen to examine the defences of the city. In the silence of the night he and a few companions resolved to make a circuit of the walls. Mounted on a mule, with his friends on foot, the new governor passed out of the city gate into the dark valley of Hinnom, and made his way past the "dung port" to the south-western corner. Turning eastward, he rode to the fountain gate and entered the gorge of the Kidron. Finding it impossible to ride close to the wall, he had to content himself with following the course of the stream, and taking a distant view of the defences on the top of the cliff. Passing the Temple, Nehemiah probably turned westward, and having viewed the northern walls, completed the circuit of the city, returning by the valley gate.¹⁰ By this means he matured his plans, and the next day revealed to the assembled people the authority he had received from Artaxerxes, inviting them to rebuild the walls. His words aroused the enthusiasm of his audience; with one accord the people cried, "Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for the good work" (Neh. ii. 11-18).

Nehemiah rides round the walls

The walls re-
built

Nehemiah is careful to enumerate those who took part in the building of the walls. The work was one of restoration, for though in some places the wall was completely broken down, in others only slight repairs were needed. The towers do not seem to have been destroyed, but the woodwork of the gates had all been consumed, and the masonry also had in all probability been demolished. The most wearisome part of the work was the removal of a vast amount of dust and rubbish from the fortifications. But the unanimity of the people was remarkable. The High Priest, Eliashib, a man in whom zeal and patriotism were not always conspicuous, set the example of building the gate by which the sheep for sacrifice entered the Temple. Meshullam, another opponent of Nehemiah, connected by marriage with Tobiah, joined in the work. Jericho, Zanoah, Mizpah and other villages provided workmen. Tekoa sent labourers, though its nobles stood aloof. The trade guilds of Jerusalem, goldsmiths, merchants and perfumers, were represented, as were the daughters of Shallum, who ruled half of Jerusalem. Such was the earnestness with which this great national effort was carried out, that in fifty-two days Jerusalem was once more a fortified city (Neh. vi. 15).

Opposition to
Nehemiah

It was an anxious period for Nehemiah. In the first place Sanballat and Tobiah remonstrated, and endeavoured to hinder the inception of the work by charging the people with sedition. "What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the king?" (Neh. ii. 19). When the Jews had begun to build, they tried the effect of ridicule. "What do these feeble Jews?" asked the scornful Sanballat. . . . "Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, seeing they are burnt?" (Neh. iv. 2). Tobiah, pointing to a part of the fortifications doubtless erected by unskilled builders, remarked, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up he shall break down their stone wall" (Neh. iv. 3).

By this time, however, the complete circuit of the wall was built to half its height, "For," says Nehemiah, "the people had a mind to work" (Neh. iv. 6); and Sanballat and Tobiah saw that nothing but force could stop it from being finished. They appeared accordingly before the city with a mixed army of Arabians and Ammonites and a force from the Philistine city of Ashdod. Nehemiah was equal to the occasion. His family and his household troops maintained a ceaseless guard, never so much as putting off their armour for weeks. He closed the

gates at night, and allowed none of those living outside the city to leave. He quieted the apprehensions of those who feared the vengeance of the enemy, and after arming every man engaged in the work, he exhorted them not to fear but to "Remember the Lord which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses." Seeing that the Jews were prepared, their opponents did not dare to attack them and allowed the work to proceed.

Trouble now arose from within. Scarcity of provisions and high prices caused the poor to remonstrate. They threatened that, if corn were not given them, they would break open the granaries and take it (Neh. v. 1-5.)

The distress was traceable to the avarice of the patricians of Jerusalem, who had made profit out of the needs of their poorer brethren. Nehemiah forthwith assembled the nobles and rulers, and vehemently upbraided them for their cruelty in exacting usury, and in selling insolvent debtors as slaves. The governor and his followers agreed to restore all the land they held on mortgage, and to remit the interest of 12 per cent., which it was customary to exact. Their example was followed by the nobles, who took a solemn oath to fulfil their promise. To shew the importance he attached to the performance of this pledge, Nehemiah "shook the folds of his garment," exclaiming, "So God shake out every man from his house and from his labour that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all the congregation said Amen, and praised the Lord" (Neh. v.7-13).

**Usury
prohibited**

His troubles, however, were not yet over, for Sanballat and Tobiah endeavoured to provoke sedition in Jerusalem by means of their partisans in the city. First they tried to decoy Nehemiah to a conference without the walls by an invitation to meet Sanballat and his Arabian ally Geshem in the plain of Ono. This would have necessitated Nehemiah's leaving Jerusalem for four days, as he would have had to go into the Shephelah to the neighbourhood of Lydda, and it was decided to take this opportunity to have him assassinated. To this invitation the governor sent the reply: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down" (Neh. vi. 3). Four proposals of a similar nature were sent, and at last Sanballat sent Nehemiah an open letter, with the object of letting its contents be made public in Jerusalem. "It is reported among the nations," ran the epistle, "and Gashmu (or Geshem) saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel; for

**Intrigues
against
Nehemiah**

which cause thou buildest the wall ; and thou wouldest be then king according to these words. And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah ; and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now, therefore," added the writer, assuming a tone of frankness, "and let us take counsel together." This insidious proposal had no effect on Nehemiah, but he nearly fell into the next snare. His reverence for the prophetic office was used to entrap him. A certain Shemaiah warned him that his life was in danger, and suggested that he should retire to the Temple for safety. But the proposal was distasteful to a man of courage, and the governor retorted, "Should such a man as I flee? And who is there, that being such as I, could go into the Temple, and live? I will not go in" (Neh. vi. 5-11). To enter the shrine was a sacrilege for a layman, and to do so for fear of assassins would have been fatal to Nehemiah's reputation. He saw at once that Shemaiah was a false prophet, and that Jehovah had not sent him. Others in the pay of the enemy (like Noadiah the prophetess) were sent to deceive Nehemiah.

Jerusalem repeopled

At last the gates were set up, and the defences of the city complete, but the area enclosed by them was but sparsely inhabited ; there were very few houses as yet built, and so precarious was the condition of affairs that Nehemiah's brother Hanani, and Hananiah, the governor of the Castle, had strict orders never to open the gates till long after sunrise.

To provide inhabitants for Jerusalem, it was decided that one out of every ten Jewish families in Palestine should be selected by lot to inhabit the city. A certain number voluntarily left their lands to live within the walls, and these were considered worthy of especial commendation.

Nehemiah's forbearance

Nehemiah's energies were not, however, confined to defending the Holy City, and providing it with a population. He set the people an example of brotherly forbearance in the way in which he himself lived as their governor. He was lawfully entitled to a handsome daily supply of food and wine, and he had the opportunity of acquiring large estates ; but instead of this, because he saw "that the bondage was heavy upon this people," he not only refrained from demanding "the bread of the governor" (Neh. v. 18), but daily entertained a hundred and fifty of the Jews at his private charge, and practised lavish hospitality to foreigners. His zeal for the maintenance of religion was very great. Assisted by Ezra he directed the ceremony of the dedica-

tion of the walls, and carefully provided for the due maintenance of the ministers of the Temple. He insisted on the rigid maintenance of the law of the Sabbath, on which day he closed the gates of Jerusalem, and prohibited all trade. When the merchants tried to evade the law by carrying on their business outside the city, he threatened them with condign punishment, saying, "If ye do so again, I will lay hands on you" (Neh. xiii. 21). Against mixed marriages he waged unrelenting war. His rigour provoked much opposition. In B.C. 433 he was recalled to Shushan; and, on his return, found that Eliashib the High Priest had established his old adversary Tobiah in one of the chambers of the Temple itself, and had allowed his grandson to marry Sanballat's daughter (Neh. xiii. 1-8). Full of righteous indignation, Nehemiah cast the furniture of Tobiah out of the Temple, and drove the unworthy priest from Jerusalem for having "profaned the priesthood" (Neh. xiii. 29). After this we hear no more of this great man, the second founder of Jerusalem. He sums up his long and useful career with the prayer, "Remember me, O my God, for good."

Nehemiah recalled to Shushan

Between B.C. 445 and 432 a solemn religious ceremony took place, which explains Nehemiah's zeal for the reformation of the Temple and its priesthood.

Reading of the Law

At the beginning of the seventh month, when all were assembled to celebrate the religious festivities at Jerusalem, Ezra, in obedience to the popular demand, brought forth the book of the Law of Moses, and read it to the congregation "before the broad place that was before the water gate" (Neh. viii. 1-3).

He delivered the Law from a wooden pulpit round which the Levites stood. Directly he opened the book, the whole congregation stood up, and when he blessed Jehovah all prostrated themselves in adoration. Thirteen Levites assisted Ezra by expounding the Law to the people, and caused them to understand its meaning as he read it.

The effect of the reading of the Law was the same on this occasion as it had been in the days of Josiah. The assembly were conscience-stricken, and broke into loud lamentations. These Ezra, with the approval of Nehemiah, promptly checked, pointing out that it was a day for rejoicing, because on it God's will had been revealed to His people, adding, "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. viii. 10). The rest of the day therefore was passed in festivity.

On the next day, however, Ezra was surrounded by the chiefs

of the people with their priests and Levites, who desired to know more of the Law. It was accordingly explained to them how the approaching Feast of Tabernacles ought to be observed. A proclamation was made, and the celebration of the holy week, during which the people were commanded to dwell in booths, was observed in such a way as had never been known before "since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun" (Neh. viii. 17). Every day the law was read, and the eighth day was the occasion of a solemn assembly.¹¹

Two days afterwards a fast not unlike that of the Day of Atonement, which should have preceded the Feast of Tabernacles, was observed, and the seed of Israel, having formally separated themselves from all strangers, made a humble confession of national sin. The Levites directed their devotions, in a long prayer recounting God's mercies to His people as recorded in their history, and the stubborn disobedience of Israel. The concluding words describe the condition of God's people at this time: slaves in their own fruitful land to foreign kings, who "have power over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress" (Neh. ix. 37).

Finally the whole people agreed to enter into a solemn covenant to observe the Law, to which the chiefs of the great houses affixed their seals, the first name on the list being that of Nehemiah, the Tirshatha. In this covenant the people bound themselves:—

- (1) To observe the Law of Moses.
- (2) Not to intermarry with the heathen.
- (3) Not to traffic on the Sabbath, and to observe the Sabbatical year.
- (4) To pay a poll-tax of one-third of a shekel to maintain the service of the Temple.
- (5) To bring first-fruits and tithes.

The promulgation of the Law is a fitting conclusion of the story of the Old Covenant, as with it a new period of religious history commences. Ezra's quiet work, by which the Levites had been prepared to become expounders of the Law, marks the beginning of a new era. From henceforth the law of God, instead of being the property of a priestly caste, became accessible to all who desired to know it. The Book of the Law became the final source of every rule and custom, the deepest student of the Law the judge of all actions. The term "Priestly,"

so often applied to portions of the Pentateuch, should not lead to the supposition that the Mosaic Law was promulgated by Ezra in the interests of his order. On the contrary, whilst prescribing the duties of the priests, it struck a blow fatal to their power, since it made them accountable to every man who knew the Law. Slowly but surely the sacrificing priest made way for the man of learning, the rabbi, the theologian.¹² Judaism left little room for priestcraft ; it became above all things the religion of a book. But the excessive reverence for the Law was unfortunately as unfavourable to the prophetic as to the priestly order. It made men live in the past rather than for the future. Henceforward a tendency was manifested to justify every act by appeal to precedent. The nation felt that with the settlement made by Ezra and Nehemiah the days of prophecy were over, and could only arise under some new dispensation. If some books of the Bible were reduced to their present form after B.C. 432, they were accepted as canonical only because they were either professedly the work of some ancient sage, or else related the doings of old time. Malachi, the last of the prophets, sets his seal on the old dispensation in words which foretell that the prophetic dispensation will again be revived by the sending of Elijah to prepare the nation for the coming of "the great and terrible day of the Lord" (Mal. iv. 5).

Chapter XV

Jewish History to the Christian Era

Importance of post- biblical period

THE biblical history of the Hebrews may seem to cease with Ezra or Malachi ; but the history of the Bible by no means concludes so early. For much that is contained in the Old Testament is only intelligible to those who have some knowledge of the interval between the close of its story and the opening of that of the New. It was, moreover, during this period that many of the canonical books were assuming the form in which we now possess them, and that spiritual ideas were growing up which shaped the course of the great development of the religion of the Old Testament, known as Christianity. Nor is some of the literature which must be studied entirely unbiblical. The so-called Apocrypha is reckoned as Scripture in many parts of the Christian Church, and ought still to form an integral part of the English Bible.¹ What follows therefore in this volume is by no means out of place in a history called Biblical.

Authorities

For about a century the history of the Jews is practically a blank, and for a much longer period there is nothing approaching contemporary evidence out of which to construct a consistent narrative. In fact, almost our sole authorities are—1 Maccabees, written after B.C. 100 ; 2 Maccabees, an epitome of a lost history by Jason of Cyrene ; and Josephus who wrote his *Wars* between A.D. 75 and 80, and his *Antiquities* about ten years later. The Rabbinical references to this long period of over four hundred years are almost worthless. The Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal books only throw side-lights on the subject. The two books of Chronicles, however, though they relate events of a far earlier period, are of service as illustrating the condition of religion during, or immediately after, the days of the Persian empire.

The Jews seem to have enjoyed much obscure prosperity

under the Persian kings. Ruled by their high priests, they were allowed to develop their religious polity, and, provided the taxes were forthcoming, they appear to have enjoyed comparative liberty.

It may be that the Book of Chronicles throws some light on the condition, if not on the history, of Judah during the Persian period. Even if it was written as late as B.C. 250 it may well reflect a state of things which had prevailed for upwards of a century; and, the writer, under the names of David and Solomon, may have described the Temple as he knew it. The Law as it exists in the Pentateuch was in force, and the history of antiquity was changed in order to create the impression that it had always been observed by the kings and priests of Jerusalem. From the lists in 1 Chronicles of the priests and Levites as organised by David, one is tempted to conclude that the majority of those who returned from Captivity obtained some recognition as hereditary ministers in the Sanctuary, the city being relatively so small, and those who served in the Temple so numerous. At any rate, it may be safely asserted that the chief occupation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem was the conduct of the worship of Jehovah. This was carefully elaborated and made as sumptuous, impressive, and reverent as possible.

The account of the bringing up of the Ark to Jerusalem may well be taken as typical of the ceremonial of the Second Temple. In 2 Samuel, which is obviously used, the scene is riotous and barbaric, but in Chronicles all is formal and dignified. The singers with their musical instruments and the priests with their trumpets head the procession before the Ark, borne, as was ordained in Numbers iv., by Levites. David delivers a special psalm to be sung on this occasion with a refrain, "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever." The people utter the solemn Amen, and praise the Lord (1 Chron. xvi. 4-36; cf. Pss. cv., cvi., xcv., cvii., cxviii., cxxxvi., lxxii.). The part played by this graduated hierarchy is much the same in the dedication of the house by Solomon (1 Chron. vii. 4-7); and the arrangement into courses of priests, courses of singers, divisions of porters and servants of the Sanctuary is ascribed to the care of David when he was preparing for the building of the Temple².

**The Book of
Chronicles**

**Contrasted
with
II Samuel**

**Letter of
Aristeas**

This is confirmed by other testimony like the fictitious letter of Aristeas, supposed to be a courtier of Ptolemy Philadelphus (B.C. 285-247) sent as ambassador to Jerusalem about the translation of the Law into Greek, suggested to the king by Demetrius of Phalerum. The letter contains a description of the city and Temple of Jerusalem, and the admirable order of the services is emphasised. The silence with which the sacrifices were performed struck the writer as remarkable, considering that the ministers in attendance numbered about seven hundred, yet all was done "with a manner worthy of the Great Divinity."⁸ The same idea is prevalent in the highly poetical description of the ministration of Simon the Son of Onias, the High Priest, by Jesus the son of Sirach. He appeared in the Sanctuary like the morning star, his brethren the priests encompassed him as the palm trees do a cedar in Libanus. As he poured out the drink offering the "sons of Aaron shouted and sounded their silver trumpets, the people prostrated themselves, the singers filled the House with melody" (Ecclus. 1. 6-21).

**Ecclesi-
asticus 1**

Thus the main attention of the people was devoted to public worship, the ritual of which had been carried to a high pitch of perfection, and, but for occasional troubles, the Jews of Jerusalem had no history.

Bagoas

The only hint of these between the close of the canonical history and the coming of Alexander to Jerusalem is given by Josephus in the eleventh book of the *Antiquities*. After relating the story of Esther, the historian informs us that Eliashib the High Priest, was succeeded by his son John. There was a rivalry between the new High Priest and his brother Jesus, who had the support of Bagoas, general of "another Artaxerxes." The High Priest murdered his brother in the Temple, and Bagoas insisted upon entering the Sanctuary which had been thus polluted by a corpse, saying, "Am I not purer than he that was slain in the temple?" For seven years the general is recorded to have made the murder a pretext to afflict the Jews. The incident, though obscure, is significant. Already the office of High Priest was an object of ambition; and, if we can trust the narrative, the Persians had till then respected the sanctity of the Jewish temple by never forcing themselves within its precincts. What had happened was a omen of many similar events of violence. (Joseph. *Antiq.* XI. 7.)

The obscurity of Jerusalem and the Jewish colony surrounding it is proved by the silence of the writers of Greece in regard to this extraordinary community with its peculiar religion. Nor is the silence broken when Alexander is said to have visited Jerusalem, since we have no authority for this event earlier than Josephus, who wrote about A.D. 90.⁴

Alexander comes to Jerusalem

After the capture of Tyre Alexander the Great was approached by the Persian Governor, Sanballat, whose daughter had married Manasseh the brother of the Jewish High Priest, Jaddua. In response to Sanballat's petition, the king allowed the Samaritans to build a schismatic temple on Mount Gerizim. Alexander, angry at the fidelity displayed by the Jews towards the King of Persia, marched to Jerusalem to punish them, but was met by Jaddua and his priests. To the surprise of all the king fell down before the Priest; and told Parmenio, his general, that he did so because he had seen him in a vision, and had learned that through him God would lead his army to victory over the Persians. He then gave the High Priest all he asked, and promised that he would allow the Jews of Media and Persia to follow their own laws, and that any of them who enlisted in his army should have the same privilege. When in B.C. 331 he founded Alexandria he settled many Jews there and gave them equal rights with the Macedonians. (Joseph. *Antiq.* XI. 8; XII. 1.)⁵

Although the testimony of so late a writer as Josephus is insufficient, in the absence of all evidence, to make the visit of Alexander to Jerusalem an historical fact, there is nothing intrinsically impossible about it. Alexander's anxiety to be regarded as a god-directed conqueror, and his eagerness to visit temples, is well known; and he must have recognised the value of the Jews, accustomed to travel to and fro from the East to Jerusalem, as guides to his army in the coming expedition against Darius Codomannus.

The death of Alexander in B.C. 323 was followed by the division of his vast empire among his generals. The two who concerned the Jews were Seleucus Nicator, the ruler of the East; and Ptolemy Lagus, the lord of Egypt. Speaking generally, it may be said that among the Ptolemies the nation found protectors, whilst the rule of the Seleucidae was oppressive. Jerusalem first fell to Egypt, and for many years enjoyed the benefit of their tranquil and

Judah under the Ptolemies

tolerant government, under which the community multiplied in Egypt; and Jerusalem evidently enjoyed great prosperity, under the High Priests, the recognised heads of the nation.

As the Temple became richer the priesthood tended to become a ruling aristocracy, dependent on statecraft and military prowess rather than on the practice of piety. The tale of the rise of the house of Tobias is illustrative of the age, revealing what manner of men controlled the destinies of the Chosen race.

The Tobiades

Under Ptolemy III. Euergetes B.C. 247-222, Onias, the son of Simon the Just, then High Priest, refused to pay the tax of twenty talents at which Judah was assessed, thereby provoking the royal displeasure. Joseph, the son of Tobias, on his mother's side the nephew of Onias, finding that his uncle was obstinate in refusing to pay the tribute, persuaded him to let him go to Alexandria as his representative to plead for the people. Joseph collected all the money he could get together, entertained Ptolemy's envoy sumptuously, and thus secured a favourable reception in Egypt. He was at once received by Ptolemy V. and Cleopatra, and when the time came for the farmers of taxes to bid for the privilege of collecting them for Cœle-Syria, Phœnicia, and Judaea, Joseph doubled the highest bid of eight thousand talents. On being asked to name responsible securities, he boldly nominated the king and queen. Amused at his audacity, Ptolemy granted Joseph the position, and allowed him two thousand soldiers. His appointment made him hateful to all in Syria, but he soon showed that he was not to be trifled with. Askelon and Scythopolis refused payment, only to discover that their chief men were condemned to death and their whole property confiscated. Besides the taxes he had farmed, Joseph sent valuable presents to Ptolemy and Cleopatra, and secured the goodwill of their courtiers by his munificence.

The youngest son of Joseph, named Hyrcanus, went to Egypt as a mere boy, and gained even more favour with the king than his father had done. On his return to Palestine his father and brothers attacked him and were defeated; but as Jerusalem would not receive him Hyrcanus retired to a strong fortress beyond Jordan, which he called Tyre (the Rock). Entrenched there he defended himself against

his brethren, and lived as a robber chieftain, making raids on the neighbouring Arabs. On the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes, Hyrcanus, fearing the vengeance of that king, killed himself. (Joseph. *Antiq.* XII. 4.)

This story, which Josephus tells with spirit, throws some light on a dark period. The Jews of this age were sowing the seeds of future unpopularity by the unscrupulous energy of this family as financiers and brigands. Joseph was evidently a ruthless collector of the revenue for his Egyptian masters, and Hyrcanus in his fortress near Heshbon was the terror of the countryside. The High Priesthood, which was in the family of these men, was becoming more and more of a secular office.

It is, at least, a plausible hypothesis that the foregoing narrative indicates that the tolerance of the Ptolemies for the Jews was due to a policy of letting them alone and not interfering, provided the taxes, with which they were assessed, were paid. But the fact that the approach of Antiochus Epiphanes was the signal for the suicide of Hyrcanus, seems to indicate on the part of that monarch a determination to put an end to disorder in Syria. The transference of Palestine from the rule of the Egyptian to that of the Syrian Greeks must next be considered.

Under Antiochus the Great (B.C. 223-187) Judah passed alternately under the sway of the houses of Ptolemy (Egypt) and Seleucus (Syria). In B.C. 217 Ptolemy Philopator ceded the provinces of Cœle-Syria Phœnice and Palestine to Antiochus the Great. After the death of Philopator in B.C. 205 the Egyptians under Scopas invaded Palestine, but were defeated by Antiochus at Paneas near the sources of the Jordan in B.C. 198. However, the provinces in dispute were once more ceded to Egypt on the marriage of Cleopatra, the daughter of Antiochus, to Ptolemy Euergetes II. On the death of Cleopatra, Antiochus Epiphanes reclaimed the provinces on the ground that they had only been given her by his father as a dowry. In short, as Josephus remarks, the country of the Jews was like a ship in a storm tossed by the waves on both sides (*Antiq.* XII. 3).

The house of Seleucus dominant in Judah

It was, however, an event far beyond the ken of the inhabitants of Jerusalem that was really shaping their

Battle of Magnesia

destinies. In B.C. 190 the unwieldy army of Antiochus the Great advanced into Asia Minor, and at Magnesia encountered the Roman legions commanded by Scipio Africanus and his brother Lucius. There the Romans annihilated the Asiatic force, and exacted an enormous indemnity of fifteen thousand talents from Antiochus. To pay this he and his successors made the rich temples within their dominions the victims; Antiochus himself perished in B.C. 187 when trying to rob a wealthy temple in Elymais, being slain by the fury of the people. The turn of Jerusalem was certain soon to come.

**Heliodorus
attempts to
plunder the
Temple**

Antiochus was succeeded by his son Seleucus Philopator, for whose reign, so far as the Jews are concerned, the only authority is the so-called second book of the Maccabees, ch. iii. 1—vii. 42, which is hagiology rather than history, and may be regarded as the earliest martyrology. In the days of the virtuous priest Onias, Simon, the Benjamite, governor of the Temple, informed Apollonius, the governor of Cœle-Syria and Phœnicia, of the immense wealth of the treasury, not only in money designed for worship, but in private funds. Some of these it is said were deposits of widows and orphans, and other money belonged to Hyrcanus the son of Tobias.* Heliodorus, the chancellor, was sent by Seleucus to seize these funds, but was driven out of the Temple by a horseman clothed in golden armour, and scourged by two young men of more than human strength and beauty. Heliodorus was ultimately saved by the intercession of the good Onias and returned to his master. Onias, however, was driven out of the city by the intrigues of Simon. After the death of Seleucus, who, we learn elsewhere, was murdered by Heliodorus, Antiochus Epiphanes became king, and with him the great persecution of the Jews began.

**Antiochus
Epiphanes**

Even if the account of Heliodorus be pronounced to rest upon late evidence and to be legend rather than history, it is by no means impossible that something of the kind actually occurred, as the plunder of temples had already begun under Antiochus the Great. Antiochus IV., surnamed Epiphanes (the Illustrious), and sometimes in ridicule

* According to *Antiq.* XII. 5, the sons of Tobias (enemies of their brother Hyrcanus) later supported Menelaus, the son of Simon, in his dispute with Jason about the High Priesthood.

styled Epimanes (the Maniac), was, despite the eccentricity of his character, by no means destitute of ability or policy. He had been brought up as a hostage in Rome, and like other Oriental princes educated in a Western atmosphere, had a hatred combined with a fear of the people among whom he had been brought up. It is said that at Antioch he was accustomed to make sport of the Roman institutions in his revels, but he knew too well the power of the Republic to defy it. It seemed, however, that he was on the high road to accomplish the ambition of his father in conquering Egypt. In four campaigns, B.C. 171-168, he was successful, and twice in B.C. 170 and in B.C. 168 he took Jerusalem; but just as he was about to besiege Alexandria the Roman commissioner (Popilius Lænas) told him bluntly that he must either evacuate Egypt or declare war with the Romans, drawing a circle round him on the sand and ordering him to make his decision before he passed its bounds. Epiphanes felt it prudent to consent to this imperious demand. His reign lasted eleven years, and, like his father, he perished in attempting to plunder a temple in Elymais, probably in an endeavour to get money to satisfy the demands of the Romans.

Thwarted in his ambition to be lord of Egypt, Antiochus evidently turned to the work of unifying his dominions. For some time the Hellenization of Palestine had been in process, notably by the foundation of Greek or Macedonian colonies. Nor did there seem much reason to suspect that the Jews would strenuously resist an attempt to conform themselves to Greek customs. Certainly the first move was apparently a complete success. Under the High Priest Jason a gymnasium was established in Jerusalem, and the Jewish nobles were compelled to wear the Greek hat (*petasus*). "And thus," says 2 Maccabees, "there was an extreme of Greek fashions, and an advance of an alien religion . . . so that the priests had no more any zeal for the services of the altar; but despising the Sanctuary, and neglecting the sacrifices, they hastened to take their share in the games unlawfully provided in the exercise ground (*τῆς ἐν τῇ παλαιστρῇ παρανόμου χορηγίας*)." (2 Macc. iv. 13-14.) Jason, it is true, came to a bad end, having fled to the Lacedæmonians and dying unpitied in exile (2 Macc. v. 5-10); but Menelaus, brother of Simon, who supplanted

**Hellenising
policy of
Antiochus**

him, was even worse, though Jason had actually so far apostatised from Judaism as to send three hundred drachmas to the sacrifice of Heracles, which however was diverted from its profane purpose and used to equip the galleys. (2 Macc. iv. 18-20.)

**The persecu-
ion**

The persecution, for the details of which 2 Maccabees is the sole witness, began at the instigation of an old man of Athens, whom Antiochus sent to compel the Jews as a nation to apostatise (2 Macc. vi. 1). The Temple at Jerusalem was dedicated to Zeus Olympius, its rival at Gerizim to Zeus Xenios (Protector of Strangers). The Jews were forbidden to observe the Sabbath and the feasts ordered by their Law, and to circumcise their children. Women who did so were put to death and their babes hung round their necks. On the king's birthday every Jew was ordered to partake of the sacrifices, and to observe the Dionysiac festival by wearing wreaths of ivy. (1 Macc. i. 54-64; 2 Macc. vi. 1-10.)

**Martyrdoms
(a) Eleazar**

Two martyrdoms are recorded in 2 Maccabees, and the similarity of the first with what happened to the martyrs of the Early Church is worth noticing. Eleazar, a venerable scribe, was compelled to eat swine's flesh. His friends exhorted him to bring clean flesh of his own providing, in order that he might avoid profanation, and yet escape death. But he resolutely refused to be a party to such a compromise, and preferred to die under cruel torments. (2 Macc. vi. 12-31.)

**(b) The
widow and
her seven
sons**

More fully told is the story of the death of the Seven Sons of the Widow before the eyes of their mother. Each one in turn was tortured and refused to apostatise; and at last the seventh, exhorted by his mother, refused every offer of worldly honour and died like his brethren. "And last of all after her sons the mother died." (2 Macc. vii. 1-42.)

**The revolt of
Mattathias
and his sons**

The people seem to have been awed by the severity of the persecution; and the aristocratic priests remained indifferent, if not favourable to the Syrian government. The fire of the rebellion broke out in the obscure village of Modin, headed by a hitherto unknown family of priests, called the sons of Hasmon, or Hasmonæans. The head of it was an aged man named Matthias, who had five sons, all of whom died a violent death for the national cause. Seeing an apostate Jew advancing to sacrifice, Mattathias slew him

at the heathen altar, killed the king's commissioner, and cried aloud: "Whosoever is zealous for the law, and maintaineth the covenant, let him come forth after me." This was the signal for open revolt. Mattathias was joined by those who cared for the religion of their fathers, and notably by a people called the Assidaeans, who had "offered themselves willingly for the law." Henceforth the fugitives established a reign of terror among the apostates, throwing down altars and compelling the children of Jews to be circumcised. (1 Macc. ii. 15-48.) When Mattathias died his faction were strong enough to give him a public funeral at Modin.

The leadership now fell to Judas, the son of Mattathias, known by the name of the Maccabee, after whom the whole family were sometimes called. For six years B.C. 167-161 Judas maintained a sort of guerilla war against the Syrians with varying success. His first victory was over Apollonius, whom he killed, using the sword captured on this occasion for the rest of his life. A more decisive victory followed over Seron, who, like the Canaanites in the days of Joshua, and the Roman army of Cestius Gallus in the Jewish War of A.D. 66, was driven down the pass of Beth-horon with great loss. In the following year Antiochus went on an expedition eastward leaving Lysias as regent in Antioch with instructions to settle the revolt in Judah. (1 Macc. iii. 1-37.)

Judas the Maccabee

The second year of the war, B.C. 166, opened with a formidable invasion by an army of forty thousand, commanded by Ptolemy, the son of Dorymenes, Nicanor, and Gorgias. They encamped in Emmaus, accompanied by slave merchants prepared to buy the captive Israelites on the spot. The insurgents held an assembly at Mizpeh, and the sight of the deserted city of Jerusalem kindled in their breasts a fire of enthusiasm which made their army irresistible. Gorgias was utterly defeated and in the following year Lysias himself experienced a similar reverse at Bethsura. (1 Macc. iv. 1-35.)

Battle of Emmaus

Judas and his followers were now strong enough to restore the Temple, though the citadel remained in the hands of the Hellenizing party. However, the patriots kept them in check whilst the altar was dedicated, and the sanctuary restored to the worship of the God of Israel. A feast of dedication (*τὰ ἑγκαίνια*) was kept in memory of this event

Re-dedication of the Temple

on the 25th day of the month Chisleu. Mount Sion, presumably the Temple mount, was now strongly fortified, and Bethsura was held against the Idumeans. (1 Macc. iv. 36-61.)

**Expeditions
E. of Jordan
and in
Galilee**

Considering what has been already related about Hyrcanus it is not to be wondered at that the success of the Jews was unwelcome to the surrounding nations; and Judas and his brothers Simon and Jonathan engaged in punitive expeditions beyond the Jordan and in Galilee with the object of delivering their oppressed brethren. The fifth chapter of 1 Maccabees recalls the book of Joshua and the ruthless massacre of the Canaanites. Repeatedly it is said that every male in a city was put to the sword. The brothers returned in triumph, bringing their rescued Israelites into their camp.⁶

**Events after
the death of
Antiochus
Epiphanes**

The death of Antiochus Epiphanes put an end to the policy of coercing the Jews into abandoning their religion. Lysias and his ward, the young Antiochus V., were put to death, and Demetrius the son of Seleucus, the brother of Epiphanes, became king of Syria. Doubtless with a view of ending the religious trouble in Judah, the new king sent Alcimus, one of the old high priestly stock, to Jerusalem with a governor named Bacchides. The people welcomed the new High Priest, and even the Assidaeans were ready to accept him as a son of Aaron.⁷ Judas and his brothers were in a difficult position. No longer were they fighting for their faith, but, at best, for national independence, and, possibly, for their own family glory. However, Alcimus proved thoroughly unworthy of his office; and even treacherously put sixty of the Assidaeans to death. Nicanor, the next general who was sent against Judas, according to 2 Maccabees became for a time a friend of the patriot-leader, but was at last forced into fresh enmity; and Nicanor threatened to destroy the Temple unless Judas was delivered up to him. A battle was fought, and Judas brought the head of Nicanor in triumph to Jerusalem. This was his last victory: and the day of Nicanor was kept appropriately on the thirteenth of Adar, the day before the feast of Purim, in honour of Haman's destruction. (1 Macc. vii. 1-50; 2 Macc. xiv. 1, xv. 36.) In B.C. 161 Judas was slain at the battle of Elasa, fighting against Bacchides and Alcimus.

With Judas, the heroic period of the struggle was ended, as is evidenced by the marked deterioration of the whole tone of the history in 1 Maccabees. In relating his actions there is an evident feeling on the part of the writer that the fight with Syria was profoundly religious. The rest of the record is secular in tone. It describes how, owing to the disputes about the succession to the crown at Antioch, Jonathan, the brother of Judas, and his brother and successor Simon, advanced in power by playing one pretender off against the other, obtaining first the High Priesthood which was given to Jonathan by Alexander Epiphanes, and again by Demetrius B.C. 148 (1 Macc. x. 18-45). Afterwards, in B.C. 143, Simon asserted his complete independence as "Simon the Great High Priest and Captain and Leader of the Jews" (1 Macc. xiii. 41-42). The last of the Hasmonean brethren was killed by his son-in-law, Ptolemy, who enticed him to a banquet at Dok near Jericho, slew him when he was drunken. This was in B.C. 136; and Simon was succeeded as High Priest by his son John Hyrcanus, who, without assuming the title of king, had the most successful reign of any of his house, and made the Jewish nation the strongest power in Palestine.

Simon and Jonathan

It must not be supposed that the priestly principality of Jerusalem was unique at this time. Similar institutions were to be found throughout the east. The priests of El-Gabal, the Sun god at Emesa, of Apollo at Daphne, and of Atargatis of Hierapolis, occupied positions analogous to that of the Hasmonean priests of Jehovah at Jerusalem. Hyrcanus was a dexterous statesman and an active warrior. He made peace with Antiochus Sidetes, who had laid siege to Jerusalem; and later used the disorders among the Syrian Greeks to his own advantage. He subdued the Edomites, and forced them to accept circumcision and become Jews; destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim; laid siege to Samaria; and, despite the intervention of Antiochus Cyzecenus, laid the city in ruins. Never were the Jews more prosperous than at this period, as Josephus asserts, especially in Egypt under Ptolemy X., Lathyrus.

The Hasmonean priestly-rulers
(a) **John Hyrcanus**

John Hyrcanus died in the thirty-first year of his reign,

B.C. 136-106, but not before the signs of future trouble had manifested themselves owing to the fanaticism and factious spirit of his people.

**Jewish
factions:
Hyrchanus
and the
Pharisees**

It has repeatedly appeared from the scanty records of Jewish history during the period under consideration that the nation was never free from the blighting influence of faction. The troubles in the days of the Governor Bagoses were caused by the quarrels in the high priestly family. The Samaritan temple was built to provide a home for Manasseh the rival of the High Priest Jaddua. The country was distracted by the family disputes of the Tobiadae. The Syrian intervention was invited by rivals for the priesthood of the nation. The Maccabees were first supported and then left in the lurch by the Assidaeans. Under Hyrchanus the names Pharisees and Sadducees appear for the first time. If the Pharisees were not the successors of the Assidaeans—and so little is known of the origin of either party that it is not possible to speak with certainty—they seem to have, in the instance given by Josephus, shown a similar spirit. Hyrchanus as a high priest, who was credited with being also a prophet, was naturally drawn to a sect so religious as the Pharisees, and his zeal for Israel and his treatment of idolators and Samaritans commended him to the pious in Israel. Nevertheless there were always apparently Jews who distrusted the secular aims of the ambitious Hasmonean princes.

Josephus relates that Hyrchanus invited the Pharisees to a feast and desired of the company to correct him if they found him straying from the right way. Whereupon one of them named Eleazar said that he ought to lay down the high priesthood and be content with governing the people, giving as a reason that his mother had been a captive in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The Pharisees, who were famous for their lenient punishments, did not condemn Eleazar to be worthy of more than stripes and bonds. This so displeased Hyrchanus that henceforward he allied himself with the rival party of the Sadducees.⁸ (*Antiq.* XIII. 10.)

The charge that the mother of Hyrchanus had been a captive was false, but Eleazar may have expressed the genuine feeling of his party that the high priesthood was incompatible with secular power. The priest of Jehovah was in their eyes more than a priest of El-Gabal or Atargatis,

who might be immersed in worldly affairs. But the priest of the God of Israel ought to be a true one, given up entirely to His service. If such were the feelings of the Pharisees at this time they may well have been akin, at least in sentiment, to the old Assidacans, who were prepared to fight for religious liberty but not for civic independence, and may have shared in the older prophetic spirit which saw in the splendour of the reign of Solomon, or in Jerusalem in the days of its wealth, something alien to true religion.

Hyrcaus had raised the Jewish nation to a position of power and influence ; but, though his name was held in high honour it is not easy to ascertain from the scanty records of his reign anything about the religious condition of Jerusalem. He was, however, reckoned by Josephus as deemed by God worthy of three special privileges: The government of the nation, the priesthood, and the gift of prophecy.

He was succeeded by his son Aristobulus, who was the first of his line to assume the title of king. Josephus speaks of him with some commendation, and says that he was known as Philhellen (a lover of the Greeks). From what the historian relates, the reign of Aristobulus was that of an ordinary Oriental despot, signalised by the imprisonment of his mother and brothers and the murder of the only brother, for whom he had previously shewn any sign of affection. (*Antiq.* XIII. 11.)

(b)
Aristobulus

The second king, Alexander Jannæus, was the brother of his predecessor, and seems to have been a ferocious tyrant, but by no means devoid of ability. His wars were characterised by the same religious fanaticism as those of his father: the conquered people being offered the alternative of circumcision or the sword. Josephus gives the extent of his dominions, mentioning the cities which they had taken from the Idumæans and Syrians⁹; and probably under Alexander the Jews attained to a prosperity unequalled since the somewhat legendary days of Solomon. The king, however, could not conciliate the Pharisees, who doubtless did not appreciate the rule of one who was a warrior rather than a high priest. Alexander, however, saw his error in not keeping on good terms with the powerful sect, and on his death-bed he advised his wife Alexandra to make friends with them. He even ordered her to allow his former enemies to dispose of his body as they willed,

(c)
Alexander
Jannæus

clearly seeing that he would thereby win them over to his wife, and probably, by appealing to their generosity, secure himself an honourable burial. He reigned twenty-seven years, and his wife Alexandra continued on the throne for nine more, administering the kingdom with great success, but not being able to provide against the calamities which overtook the nation at her death.

Rivalry of sons of Jannæus

Alexandra's two sons, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, were at bitter enmity, and the kingdom of Judah was the scene of constant civil war. Aristobulus was, like his ancestors, a man of ambition and enterprise; Hyrcanus was naturally inoffensive and retiring, but his actions were guided by the hand of one whose descendants were destined to rise upon the ruin of the Hasmoneans. Under Alexander Jannæus and Alexandra the commander of the army of Idumæa was Antipater, also called Antipas, the son of a man of the same name. Whether he was, as Nicolaus, of Damascus, of Jewish origin, or, as his enemies declared, an Edomite, is uncertain. At the end of Alexandra's reign he was clearly at the head of a very powerful faction of the inhabitants of Gaza, Ascalon, and of the Arabs. Seeing that Aristobulus was likely to be a masterful ruler Antipater espoused the cause of Hyrcanus, whom he hoped to use for the furtherance of his ambitions.

The Romans

The prosperous reigns of the first Hasmoneans had been due to the weakness of the Greek-Syrian monarchy. It had not been difficult for the Jews to extend their dominions when Syria was in disorder, and they had an army ably led and inspired by fierce fanaticism. But the victories of Hyrcanus and Jannæus had imposed on the surrounding nations the iron tyranny of a proselytising religion, and the kingdom of Judah was bound to suffer speedily from decay. The effete Syrian monarchy was now the subject of dispute between two powerful nations, the Roman and the Parthian, who became the arbiters of the destiny of the small Judean kingdom. Antipater and his family chose the side of Rome, and, through good report and ill, adhered faithfully to the cause of the great Republic. The faction of Aristobulus later relied on the Parthians for support.

Pompey

For some years the history of the East depended on that of Pompey, whose policy even after his fall continued to mould the destinies of Asia Minor, Syria, and the

neighbouring countries. His first great command in the East was in B.C. 66, when, after a famous political contest at Rome he was given a free hand against the pirates in Cilicia. In a few months he freed the Mediterranean from all danger of their depredations.

Then followed a series of brilliant campaigns against Mithradates and his allies, culminating in Pompey's triumph at Rome on September 30, B.C. 61. On his visit to Syria he had been called upon to interfere in Jewish affairs by deciding the rival claims of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus. Hitherto the Romans had made treaties with the Jews, but had never been in much contact with them. Henceforward all was to depend on the attitude of Rome. Pompey had decided against Aristobulus, who submitted, but when Pompey's lieutenant approached the city the gates were shut in his face, and it became necessary to make the assault. When the city was taken Pompey entered the Holy of Holies, but he carefully abstained from plundering the Sanctuary. His policy towards the Jewish state was more severe. He abolished the royal dignity, confirmed Hyrcanus in the High Priesthood, and took away all the cities the Jews had conquered from the Syrians. He also made them pay ten thousand talents to the Roman treasury. The Jews were now placed by their new masters under five councils: at Jerusalem, Gadara, Amathus, Jericho, and Sepphoris in Galilee. (*Antiq.* XIV. 5.)

Henceforward the kingdom of Judah had shrunk to the dimensions of a small principality over which the ambitious and energetic Aristobulus and his sons were fighting with the feeble Hyrcanus, supported by Antipater, and later by his still more famous son Herod. The whole of Syria had become a stage on which the various Roman parties contended for the mastery of the East. Crassus the triumvir arrived in B.C. 54, and, according to Josephus, plundered the Temple. He certainly did take immense spoils from the Temple of Atargatis at Hierapolis; but Jerusalem lay far out of his line of march, and no one but Josephus mentions the fact of Crassus being there. It was certainly the object of the Jewish historian to show that all who injured the nation came to a bad end, as Crassus did when he was defeated at Carrhae in the following year; and it may be he

Judah reduced to a small principality

has transferred the spoliation at Hierapolis to Jerusalem ; but there is nothing to render a robbery of the treasury at this time improbable, either by Crassus or his equally rapacious lieutenant C. Longinus Cassius.

**Antipater
and Herod
the Great**

The history of the Jews for the next half century centres around the family of Antipater. Strange and bizarre as is the story of Herod the Great, which Josephus relates in detail, it can be paralleled by the career of his more powerful contemporary Deiotarus of Galatia¹⁰. Both had the sagacity to recognise that the power of the Romans was irresistible, and that their one hope lay in conciliating the real masters of the East. Both pursued the policy of fidelity to Rome, but to no party in Rome. Thus, though Syria was successively in the power of Cassius, the representative of the republican party, then ; after Pharsalia, B.C. 48, of Cæsar ; again after Cæsar's assassination, B.C. 42 ; again under Cassius, his murderer ; and, after Philippi, B.C. 42, under Antony ; till by the battle of Actium, B.C. 31, it came under the sway of Octavian (Augustus), Herod was always a friend of the Romans and a supporter of the faction in the ascendant.

The character of Herod is a deeply interesting but by no means unique study. It is that of a ferocious and cruel tyrant of great natural ability, with his native savagery concealed under a veneer of culture sufficiently to convince his masters, the Romans, and even posterity, that he was a man of enlightened ideas.

The bare facts of his life are briefly as follows : At the age of fifteen his father made him governor of Galilee, where he signalled his administration by the vigour with which he put down brigandage and executed the robber chief Hezekiah. For this he was accused by the Sanhedrin, and openly defied his judges by appearing armed and surrounded by his followers. Herod next obtained the protection of Sextus Cæsar, governor of Syria ; but after his murder by Bassus, he took active part in the war against the opponents of the Cæsarean party in the East. By the murder of Cæsar, Cassius obtained that province, and Herod succeeded in obtaining the favour of the leader of the republican aristocrats till their defeat at Philippi in A.D. 42, when he transferred his allegiance to Mark Antony. In A.D. 40 he obtained the barren title of king. During

Antony's administration of the East, Herod was his faithful friend. In B.C. 37, with the aid of Sosius, a legate of Antony, Herod captured Jerusalem, putting to death all the Sanhedrin but two. Herod was opposed throughout by Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, the rival and brother of Hyrcanus, who, by the aid of the Parthians, had in B.C. 40 been installed on the throne of his ancestors. At the request of Herod, the last of the Hasmonean rulers was put to death by Antony. Herod, however, by his marriage with Mariamne, the granddaughter of Hyrcanus, sought to be recognised as representing the royal family of Judah.

The battle of Actium was the great crisis of Herod's life; but even with the downfall of Antony, his friend and patron, he once more rose to power and influence. Presenting himself before Octavian, he boldly declared that as he had served the defeated triumvir, so he would be faithful to his conqueror. His boldness was appreciated, Herod was confirmed in his titles, and ruled over Judah till his death in B.C. 5. Into the terrible domestic history of his reign it is not necessary to enter. His dearly-loved wife Mariamne fell a victim to his jealousy, as did her brother and two sons. Yet whilst reigning as a tyrant in his blood-stained palace, Herod was posing as the best and wisest statesman in the East, the confidant of Augustus and Agrippa, as a builder of cities and an encourager of western art; and it was his ambition also to play the part of a devout and munificent patron of his ancestral religion. His magnificent bid for popularity was a temple surpassing in beauty all previous ones on the site of the ancient Sanctuary at Jerusalem. But his efforts to conciliate the Jews were in vain. The nation was unwilling to pay for earthly glory even at the price of only partial apostasy, and the very name of the great prince who had made their temple the glory of the world was regarded with abhorrence.

It is a remarkable fact that the Rabbinical writers hardly mention even the Maccabees; and that but for books which have survived only in Greek, the whole period from Ezra to the New Testament would have been unknown. Nor, save for the first few years of the revolt of Mattathias and his sons, is it an inspiring one. Except for the record of the heroic martyrs in B.C. 168, and the courage of the half

**Concluding
remarks**

armed peasants under Judas and his brethren, there are few signs of any religious spirit in Maccabees or Josephus. There is indeed a painful similarity in what was happening in Jerusalem, whatever page be unfolded. There is the same story of rival priests, whether it be Bagozes, or Alexander the Great, or Antiochus Epiphanes, or Pompey, or Mark Antony, who appears on the scene. There are the same kind of family feuds among the Tobiadæ, the Hasmoneans and the Herods. The intrigues with the Ptolemies, Seleucidæ, Parthians and Romans, only differ in detail. Nor does there appear to be the slightest evidence to warrant that the rulers of the nations displayed any finer feelings than those of other small and tiresome nationalities under similar circumstances. Yet the Jews were not as other people. Beneath the surface very strong forces were at work. There was much fierce fanaticism, but also much true religion. Whilst priests and priest-kings were plotting and conspiring for their own advantage, there were many pious souls working at the development of a purer religion than had yet been known. What these did and thought will be the subject of the concluding chapter.

Chapter XVI

Jewish Literature and Life

IN order rightly to appreciate Jewish thought at this epoch it is necessary first to examine those parts of the Old Testament which are generally regarded as later in origin than the time of the promulgation of the written Law by Ezra. It is not, however, necessary here to discuss every passage pronounced by critics as of late date, or every allusion which seems to point to an event belonging to this long and obscure period of Jewish history. A certain discrimination is perhaps permissible in the selection of subjects from the later writings of the Old Testament which characterise Jewish belief and practice after the assumed close of the canon. These will here be classified under the following heads: (a) Extreme deference to the written Law (*Torah*) as expressing of the mind and will of God; (b) A bitter feeling of hostility to all outside the Covenant with Israel; (c) Attempts to solve the problem why the righteous suffer in this life; (d) Discussions as to a resurrection of the just, or a life beyond the grave; (e) Apocalyptic, or revelations of heaven and a final judgment; (f) The idea of a righteous remnant of poor and pious Israelites; (g) Influences of Greek thought.

The history of the word law (*torah*) in the Old Testament is interesting. Derived from a word meaning "to shoot," it originally meant "direction." When a man was in doubt he consulted the priest or prophet and received "guidance." Then the word began to signify "custom" or "law." After the captivity "the Law" was pre-eminently that of Moses in written form, which was regarded as the final exposition of God's will. Once this view was definitely accepted, the lawyer or teacher of the Law supplanted the prophet; for no new revelation beyond the exposition of the revealed will of God was necessary.

(a) The
written Law

Judaism therefore became the religion of a book, and in that respect it differed materially from that of ancient Israel. In the canonical Scriptures the post-biblical reverence for the Law is seen in (1) the respect for the reformed ritual of the Temple which pervades the book of Chronicles, dating from the fourth or third centuries B.C. ; (2) the delight in the study of the Law so constantly expressed in the Psalter ; (3) the intense and growing respect for the sanctity of the weekly Sabbath, as is shown in the later chapters of 2 Isaiah, in Ezekiel, and especially in the drastic action of Nehemiah in suppressing the desecration of the holy day. (Is. lvi. 2, 6 ; lviii. 13 ; Ez. xx. *passim* xlv. 24 ; Neh. xiii. *passim*.) By the time of the Maccabees, long before the New Testament, Sabbatarianism had become one of the most marked features of Judaism.¹

**(b) Hostility
to surround-
ing nations**

Despite the many injunctions to massacre the Canaanites, which the Israelites were notoriously negligent in obeying, there are few signs of intolerant exclusiveness in the Old Testament. Moses is friendly to the Kenites, Samuel makes peace with the Canaanites, David is faithfully served by his foreign soldiers, Elisha heals Naaman, Isaiah and the prophets foretell the conversion of the heathen, Jonah preaches to Nineveh, and God reproves him for being disappointed that its repentance was accepted. But what Israel endured from their Macedonian masters engendered a bitter hatred of all heathen ; and the Maccabees actually did what it was assumed their forefathers ought to have done to the Gentiles subdued by their arms. This spirit is revealed in the book of Esther, a truly terrible revelation of Jewish intolerance, and in the institution of the more than half-pagan feast of Purim.² In this book there is hardly even the pretence of religion to justify the ferocious joy of the writer in the hanging of Haman and his sons, and the retaliatory massacre of their enemies by the Jews. It is true that the Greek version tries to soften this by the frequent mention of the name of God in the interpolated passages, but the tone of the book is not improved thereby, and one appreciates better the reticence of the Hebrew version, which excludes God from the entire transaction.

**(c) The
sufferings of
the righteous**

In ancient Israel divine justice was explained with a childlike directness. The good prospered and the wicked came to a bad end. The moral was " Be virtuous and you

will be happy." This was especially true of the teaching of the book of Judges. Because Israel served Baalim and Ashtaroth, God sent Moabites, Midianites, or Ammonites to afflict them; when they repented, He raised up deliverers. Later experience proved that this simple theory of Divine justice would not hold. The Jews, under the Greeks, found themselves afflicted, not because they had forsaken the Lord, but because they were faithful to His service. This experience is reflected in the book of Job, which, whatever may be its date, admirably expresses the condition of righteous Israel. The ancient sage of Uz typifies the good man who does all he can to secure the favour of God. He has even that pious dread of prosperity, so characteristic of the Greeks, and offers sacrifices lest his children should inadvertently have provoked their Creator. (Job i. 5.) Yet every sort of evil falls upon him. His comforters resort to the old argument that Job must have deserved his misfortunes, and, for all his apparent virtues, have been a sinner in secret. But the patriarch will not accept the argument, and holds fast his integrity. In the end God answers Job out of the whirlwind, and reveals Himself in all His power. Job acknowledges his weakness, and repents in dust and ashes. The friends are reproved; and Job rewarded with great worldly prosperity.

The prosperity of the wicked is a frequent subject for doubt in the Psalms. "How long shall the wicked triumph?" asks the 94th Psalm. The 73rd Psalm complains that it is the ungodly who prosper in the world, and finds consolation in the fact that in the end they suddenly consume and perish. The 79th is sometimes supposed to refer to the persecution of the Assidaeans (*Chasidim* v. 2) in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The 74th describes the sufferings of the people when the temple was laid waste. "How long shall the adversary reproach, shall the enemy blaspheme?" Even more to the point is the 44th. Israel is become a byword among the heathen yet "We have not forgotten Thee, neither have we dealt falsely in Thy covenant." Whatever may be the date of these psalms, they reflect the feelings of the Jews after the Captivity who could not comprehend why their sufferings for righteousness failed to draw down upon the people a recompense from heaven.

(d) **Recom-
pense after
death**

Whilst it is very difficult to prove that the Old Testament contains any passage which indicates that a belief in a future life existed in primitive Israel, it is undoubted that the experiences of the persecuted Jews led them to set a high value on any proof of a resurrection or a life to come. Any verse in the Old Testament like Job xix. 25, "I know that my redeemer liveth," though it could only be forced into an assurance of a life hereafter, would be welcomed as a consolation of the martyrs.

(e) **Apoca-
lyptic heaven
and a final
judgment**

The book which by most general consent has been relegated from Old Testament times to the Maccabean age is Daniel. This is perhaps the earliest work in apocalyptic literature, although several parts of the Old Testament may be placed in this category. Amos and Isaiah both had visions of Jehovah in the Temple (Amos ix. 1; Isaiah vi.); Zechariah witnesses the apocalyptic triumph before Jerusalem (Zech. xiv. 4-11); Joel had seen the heathen assembled for judgment in the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel iii. 9-22). To Ezekiel a more wonderful vision of the Lord coming with the living creatures and the fiery wheels had been vouchsafed (Ez. i. 1 ff.). But Daniel is more specific than any of the foregoing. In the seventh chapter the thrones are set, and the Ancient of Days takes His seat with His innumerable ministers, the judgment is set, and the books are opened. The beast is slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. One, like a son of man, (*i.e.* in human form) appears, and comes to the Ancient of Days, and to Him is given an everlasting dominion. In the twelfth chapter, those that sleep in the dust arise to everlasting life or everlasting shame. Throughout the apocalyptic part of the book (vii.-xii.) the beasts, representing the nations of the world, strive with one another, and their fate in heaven is a counterpart with their destinies on earth. The reader is transported into a celestial sphere, where he sees the things in store for Israel.

(f) **The
righteous
poor**

The history so far as is known of Israel from the middle of the fifth century before the Christian era, as has been shown, was mainly a record of self-seeking intrigue on the part of ambitious rulers of a small nation. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the Chosen People after the Captivity were fairly represented by such men as Jason,

Menelaus, Alcimus, the Tobiades, Alexander Jannaeus, and the house of Antipater. The Law was carefully studied with the other Scriptures, and the reverent Temple worship stimulated many to devotion. Undoubtedly many were waiting for the Consolation of Israel. These godly folk were however powerless to influence the course of politics, and lived in obscurity, often oppressed by the secularised priests and rulers of the community. Their voices are heard in the Psalms as the "saints," the poor, the meek, who groan under the tyranny of the rich, the ungodly and the foolish. Without doubt these felt that they were the "remnant" of whom Isaiah speaks. Their poverty was not so much economic as voluntary, in that they deliberately refused the good things of this world rather than prove unfaithful to a religion, the strict observance of which withdrew them from competing in the race for wealth and power in which less scrupulous men were engaged. Their existence explains a portion of the literature which has found its way into the Hebrew Canon; and silent as history is in regard to them, they were a main factor in shaping the thoughts of their countrymen and in forming Jewish character.

One book received into the Canon of the Old Testament, and only one, is distinctly Greek rather than Hebrew in its outlook: Ecclesiastes (*Qoheleth*—"she that proclaimeth"). Despite the fact that the book is decidedly poetical in parts, its tone is pessimistic, and its wisdom is heathen rather than pious. The world is bad, life is full of injustice, and mankind is wretched, nothing really matters, for all things are as breath and emptiness. But it is possible for a sensible man, by exercising a wise moderation, to pass his time in comparative comfort; but, even in righteousness, excess must be avoided.

Thus from the Old Testament may be gathered much to illustrate the tendency of the thought of this age. The idea of a Canon of Scripture is foreshadowed in the preface to Ecclesiasticus; but except for the Law there is little evidence for the existence of the Hebrew Bible in its present form. Daniel, at any rate, seems to have been unknown or ignored by Jesus, the son of Sirach. But a great step had been taken in making the literature of the Hebrews known to the world at large by the translation first of the Law, and then of other books, into the Greek language.

(g) Greek
thought

The Septuagint

The story of the way in which the Hebrew Scripture was translated into Greek is founded on a series of legends, the earliest of which is the so-called letter of Aristæas to Philocrates, supposed to be a courtier of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, B.C. 285-247. The date of the letter is much disputed, some placing it as early as B.C. 200, when Jerusalem was under the Egyptian Ptolemies, before it passed under the kings of Antioch. Some have placed it as late as in the days of the Roman Empire. The letter is a long one, and tells how Demetrius of Phalerum persuaded Ptolemy Philadelphus to procure for his library at Alexandria a version of the Hebrew Scriptures. To conciliate the Jews the king ransomed their countrymen who were slaves in Egypt, having been made captive by his father Ptolemy Lagus. It was then decided by the advice of Demetrius to send to Eleazar, the High Priest, asking him to nominate six men from each of the twelve tribes as translators. The request was accompanied by splendid presents, and Eleazar sent seventy-two men as desired. Aristæas was the ambassador to Jerusalem, and gives a careful description of the Temple and the city, and also of the ingenious way in which the Sanctuary was supplied with water. Eleazar explained the merits of the Jewish law at great length, and despatched the envoys, who were sumptuously entertained by Ptolemy at Alexandria. At the banquet the king asked questions of his guests, and was highly gratified by their answers. When the feasting was over the Jewish delegates were conveyed to the house where they were to make the translation. Their work was read to the Jewish people, and an imprecation was pronounced on anyone who should dare to alter or add to the version. The king also heard and approved the translation; and those who had made it were sent home richly rewarded for their labours.

That the letter is of value as an historical document is generally denied; for though the writer may be accurate in his description of the court of the Ptolemies, he is guilty of such anachronisms as to make Demetrius of Phalerum librarian to Ptolemy Philadelphus, though died in disgrace not long after the accession of that monarch. The letter is in fact one of the many forgeries in the interests of Jewish propaganda, made in the third, second and first centuries

B.C., in which Gentiles are made to testify to the greatness of Israel.

There is nothing, however, in *Aristeas* which in any way suggests supernatural intervention. The earliest Jewish writer who shows himself acquainted with the *Aristeas* letter is Philo, who died about the middle of the first century. In his *Life of Moses* he gives the story of the assembly of the translators on the island of Pharos, and declares "that as men possessed they produced not divers interpretations, but all alike used the same words and phrases, as though some invisible prompter whispered in the ears of each." Later, Josephus paraphrases the letter, but does not dilate on the excellence or inspiration of the translation.

Justin Martyr (c. A.D. 138), in his first *Apology*, alludes to the translation, but he makes Ptolemy send to Herod for translators! The first Christian who mentions that the translators were kept apart in cells and produced each an identical version is pseudo-Justin in the *Exhortation to the Greeks*. The Christian fathers, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Anatolius, and Eusebius of Cæsarea, all quote or allude to *Aristeas*; but only the first two add the story of each of the Seventy making the same version.

The story of the inspired translation in all its absurdity appears in Epiphanius (†A.D. 403), an erudite and voluminous episcopal author who combined monastic sanctity with a credulity unusual even in hagiology. The translators were shut up in pairs in thirty-six cells on the island of Pharos, each with servants and stenographers, and they produced thirty-six identical versions of the whole Hebrew Bible.

Jerome, the translator of the Latin Bible from the Hebrew (†A.D. 422), though an admirer of Epiphanius, will not hear of an inspired translation. "It is one thing," he says, "to be a prophet, and another to be an interpreter." He also declares with perfect truth that the Seventy (as the seventy-two translators are generally called) only translated the five books of the Law.

Philo says that a feast was kept in honour of the translation, but the Rabbinical Jews say that when the Law was written in Greek "Darkness came upon the world for three days." "The day," it is said elsewhere, "was a

Supernatural
aid claimed
for the LXX

hard day for Israel, like as when Israel made the (golden) calf." It is in the Talmud that the story is told that the word *arnebeth*—hair was translated *dasupous* (hairy foot) instead of the classical *lagos*, out of respect for Ptolemy Lagos, the father of Philadelphus.

Such is the story of the origin of the translation of the Seventy, a momentous episode in the history of religion. Perhaps the rabbis of Palestine and Babylon in the fourth and fifth centuries of our era were right in regarding it as a calamity to their religion, as it opened up the Bible to the Greek world and thus facilitated the diffusion of Christianity. As a translation it has defects, and is obviously the work of many different hands, but it has become, with additions, the Old Testament of a great part of the Christian world, and some of the doctrines most prized in the Church are defended by quotation of passages in the Septuagint which bear but little resemblance to the Hebrew original.³

The Apocrypha

The Old Testament has been expanded and partly enriched by books, most of which probably belong to this period, but have been considered by Protestant Christians as uncanonical because they have not been preserved in Hebrew. The most important of these as illustrative of Jewish life are Tobit, the Wisdom of Solomon, and Ecclesiasticus.

Tobit

In Tobit, there is an ideal portrait of the virtuous Israelite and his family. Tobit is supposed to be a native of Northern Israel who refuses to have any dealing with the "calf" worship of his neighbours, and offers his sacrifices and pays his tithes in Jerusalem (Tobit i. 5-6). When he was carried away captive to Nineveh he became rich as the king's purveyor, and always invited the poor to dine with him; and at the risk of his life gave burial to an Israelite who was found dead (ii. 2-7). When he became blind and was reduced to poverty, and his wife Anna was forced to go out and work for him, the neighbours remembered his good deeds and gave her presents (ii. 14). The old man exhorts Tobias his son not to scorn his brethren, not to withhold his workman's wages, "And what thou thyself hatest, do to no man" (iv. 15). The whole book is permeated with a tone of healthy domestic piety.

The Wisdom of Solomon

If Tobit is representative of Hebrew piety, the Wisdom of Solomon exemplifies the spirit of Jewish Hellenism,

probably in Alexandria. The righteous Israelite is exposed to temptations very different from those which encountered his ancestors in the days of the Old Testament. The wicked lure him not to idolatry but to an Epicurean philosophy. "Short and sorrowful is our life," say they, "none ever returned from Hades. We were born by mere chance, and we shall be as though we had never been. . . . The body shall be turned to ashes, and the spirit shall be dispersed as thin air. . . . Our names shall be forgotten . . . our life shall pass away as the traces of a cloud. . . . Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things that now are . . . let us crown ourselves with rosebuds before they are withered. . . . Let us not spare the widow, nor reverence the gray hairs of the old man. But let our strength be to us a law of righteousness, for that which is weak is found to be of no service." (Wisdom ii. 1-11.) This cynical disavowal of all morality, and assertion that might makes right, provokes the enemies of goodness, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, to hate the righteous man. "Let us lie in wait for the righteous man; because he is of disservice to us . . . he professes to have knowledge of God, and nameth himself the servant (*παῖς*) of the Lord. . . . We are accounted of him as base metal. . . . The latter end of the righteous is called happy, and he vaunteth that God is his father. Let us see if his words be true. For if the righteous man is God's son, he will uphold him. . . . With the outrage and torture let us put him to the test," &c. (Wisdom ii. 12-20.)

The answer which the pious author finds to this blasphemy is that God created man for incorruption, and that the souls of the righteous are in His hands. Their hope is full of immortality, and in the day of visitation they shall shine (iii. 1-9).

In the description of Wisdom is seen the transition from Hebrew to Greek thought. The morality is Jewish, but such philosophy as there is is intensely Hellenic. Witness the following: "For there is in her (wisdom) a spirit quick of understanding, holy, alone in kind (*μονογενής*), manifold, freely moving, clear in utterance, unpolluted, distinct, unharmed . . . all powerful, all surveying, and penetrating through all spirits that are quick of understanding, pure, most subtil: For wisdom is more mobile

**Greek
influence**

than any motion ; Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by reason of her pureness. . . . For she is the effulgence from everlasting light, and an unspotted mirror of the working of God, and the image of his goodness. (vii. 22-26.) The language here is a preparation for that adopted by the Christians to define the relation of the *Logos* to the Father. The description of the terrors of the superstition of the heathen, "Who supposed they held the holy nation in their power," is surprisingly vivid, but its language is not that of the Old Testament. "In terror they deemed the things which they saw to be worse than the sight on which they could not gaze. And they lay helpless, made the sport of magic art (R.V., xvii. 7 ; but see margin). . . . Whether there were a whistling wind, or a melodious voice of the birds among the spreading branches, or a measured fall of water running violently . . . over them alone was spread a heavy night, an image of the darkness that should afterwards receive them" (xvii. *passim*). It is indeed impossible even to turn over the pages of Wisdom and not to recognise how much the Greek Testament owes to the influence of the book.

Ecclesiasticus
The Wisdom
of Jesus the
son of Sirach

Ecclesiasticus has a preface by the translator, who was the author's grandson, and is most interesting and quite modern in its general tone. He says that as the Law the Prophets and the Other Books have given Israel good instruction, those who read them must also desire to teach. Therefore his grandfather Jesus, after study of Law, Prophets, and the rest of the Books, was drawn to write to help those who wished to obey the Law. The readers of this book are asked to be patient with the translator if he fails to interpret certain phrases. For all know that Hebrew is a difficult language to translate so as to give each saying its exact force. Nevertheless he has rendered the book to the best of his ability for the sake of those who living in a strange land desire to fashion their manners in accordance with the Law.

Like Proverbs, the book is cast in poetical form, and as the Hebrew version has been discovered of a great part of it, it is possible to have a more correct knowledge of the text and meaning than formerly. Ecclesiasticus may be described as a wise and sensible book. It does not represent the poetry of Israel's hope, but the sober prose of Jewish

family life. Nor is its value less for this reason to the historian who desires to discover what manner of men ordinary Jewish citizens were in the post-biblical age, and in one respect at least the author has a real poet's love of nature. He certainly appreciates the beauty of the snow.

As birds flying down he sprinkleth the snow ;
 As the lighting of the locust is the falling down thereof ;
 The eye will marvel at the beauty of its whiteness,
 And the heart will be astonished at the raining of it,
 The hoar frost also he poureth on the earth as salt ;
 And when it is congealed, it is as points of thorns.

(Eccles. xliii. 17-19.)

The dignity of the priesthood also moves the son of Sirach to eloquence, as is seen in his description of Aaron and Phinehas in the forty-fifth chapter ; but above all he is impressed by the Temple service as performed by the great priest Simon the son of Onias (Heb. Jonathan), who appeared in the sanctuary.

As the morning star shining forth of thick clouds ;
 And as the full moon in the days of the solemn feast,
 As the sun dawning upon the temple of the king,
 As the lotus at the waterspring.

(l. 7-8, Hebrew.)

And so metaphor is piled on metaphor as the High Priest is described going up to the altar. But most of the teaching of the sage is practical ; and as one reads his precepts it is easy to understand why the Jew claimed kindred with the Spartan children who were not pampered. To play with the boys would only make them impudent. The son must be taught by the rod.

Beat his shoulder while it is yet tender,
 Bruise his loins while he is yet a youth,
 Bow down his head in his youth ;
 And smite through his loins while he is a little one.

(xxx. 11-12, Hebrew.)

Yet are children most precious, for the father lives again in them. But the master of the house must rule, and wife, children and slaves must be taught their place. Daughters should not be treated too favourably, and the sooner they are married the better.

Give away a daughter—and away with trouble,
 But join her to a man of understanding.

(vii. 25, Hebrew.)

But the poor are to be relieved, one should weep with those who mourn, and visit the sick. (vii. 32-36.) Friendship is a precious thing, and old friends are best. (ix. 10.) The book is full of pithy aphorisms, "Jest not with a rude man, lest thine ancestors be dishonoured." (viii. 4.) "He that is glorified in poverty, how much more in riches." (x. 30.) "In a man's prosperity even an enemy is a friend; and in his adversity even a friend separateth himself." (xii. 9, Heb.) "He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled." (xiii. 1.) "Wherefore have fellowship with one that is richer than thou? What fellowship shall an earthen pot have with a kettle, when if this smiteth that it shall be dashed in pieces?" (xiii. 2.) The last quotations show how considerable was the influence of Ecclesiasticus on common speech, when the Apocrypha was more generally read. The wisdom of the book, however, may be summed up in the words which Bunyan sought in vain to find in the Bible:

Look at the generations of old, and see:
Who did ever put his trust in the Lord, and was ashamed.
(ii. 10.)

The tendency throughout is Rabbinic. From the concluding chapter one gathers that Jesus the son of Sisach kept a school, a *beth-midrash* or house of instruction. (li. 23.) The Hebrew is described as intermediate between the Old Testament and that of the Mishna, or earliest written tradition of the Jews.⁴

Rabbinical teaching

Before the Christian era arose those schools which at later time had so powerful an influence on the development of later Judaism; indeed we have suggestions of the rabbinic methods even in Old Testament times. Some of the Psalms and the Proverbs have much the same rabbinic flavour as the writings of Jesus, the son of Sirach. The tradition however left the prophetic stage with Ezra; and by him, it is said, was committed to the men of the Great Synagogue. It was then that inspiration made way for instruction.

The sayings of the Fathers

In the Mishna, or earliest written traditional law (*circa* A.D. 300), which was destined to expand with the Talmud, there is a treatise known as "Sayings of the Fathers" (*Pirque Aboth*). These are not judicial decisions belonging to the class called *halachah* (*halach*, to walk), but moral precepts

not unlike Proverbs, but more rabbinical in form. The opening words are :

“Moses received the Law (*Torah*) from Sinai, and he delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the Elders, and the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets delivered it to the men of the Great Synagogue. They said three things : ‘Be deliberate in judgment ; and raise up many disciples ; and make a fence to the Law.’”

The first “father” quoted is Simon the Just, one of the remnants of the Great Synagogue. Next is Antigonus of Socho, who said : “Be not slaves that minister to the Lord with a view to receive recompense ; but be as slaves that minister to the Lord without a view to receive recompense ; and let the fear of heaven be upon you.” This is followed by the sayings of the fathers of each generation down to the first century arranged in pairs, the last pair being Hillel and Shammai, the founders of the two great legal schools, the “house of Hillel” and “the house of Shammai” : these are followed by Gamaliel.

The aphorisms preserved in the treatise are not as a rule particularly striking. They are, however, of some interest as illustrative of the teaching of the Rabbis.

Hillel said : “Be of the disciples of Aaron ; loving peace, and pursuing peace ; loving mankind and bringing them near to the Law.”

Rabban Shimeon ben Gamliel said : “On three things the world stands : on judgment, and on truth, and on peace.”

Rabban Gamliel, son of R. Judah ha-Nasi, said : “Do His will as if it were thy will, that He may do thy will as if it were His will. Annul thy will before His will, that He may annul the will of others before thy will.”

R. Tarphon said : “The day is short and the task is great, and the workmen are sluggish, and the reward is much, and the Master of the House is urgent.” He said : “It is not for thee to finish thy work, nor art thou free to desist therefrom ; if thou has learned much Law, they give thee much reward ; and faithful is the Master of thy work, and know that the recompense of the reward of the righteous is for the time to come.”

R. Simeon said : “There are three crowns : the crown of the Law, and the crown of Priesthood, and the crown of

Royalty ; but the crown of a good name mounts above them."

Literature
under false
names

The unwillingness of the Jewish teachers to convey moral or prophetic truths under their own names is very marked. They almost invariably preferred to conceal their identity under some venerable sage of antiquity. The famous Christian hymn says that the *Dies Irae* will come as David and the Sibyl witness (*Teste David cum Sibylla*). This is in accordance with the Jewish idea that the seers of Israel and those renowned among the Gentiles agree in bearing witness to the consummation of the age and to the glory of Israel. A literature attributed to the Sibyls arose among the Jews, and was continued among the Christians, consisting of oracles supposed to represent the wisdom of the remotest Gentile antiquity. The Sibyls write in the metre and dialect of the Homeric poems, but of course claim to antedate them. (III. 419-25.)

The Sibylline
Oracles

The only part of the "Oracles" which is generally admitted to be both Jewish and pre-Christian is Bk. III. 97-294 and 489-828. These verses probably belong to the second century before Christ. In them there is an interesting description of the Jews as a righteous nation, which may be paraphrased :

To their nation virtue is the only care. Theirs is not the base avarice which brings war. They divide their fields justly, nor do they remove their neighbour's landmark. Among them the rich do not strive to oppress the poor nor to defraud the orphan and widow. A man is only judged rich for what he gives away. It is their custom to allow the poor to glean during the reaping : for God made His world common to all.

(III. 234-247.)

This is interesting in showing how the Jews at this period acknowledged that they professed and practised a better morality than other men, and that their religion breathed the spirit of the prophet rather than the formality of the legislator.

In III. 740-797 there is a description of what will be when men obey the Law :

Honour God, and the earth shall be full of good things and yield abundant fruit. The towns shall be filled with plenty, and war shall cease : for king will keep faith with king. And God will raise up a king for ever. From all lands men will go to

the Temple to make their offerings. On the mountains the lambs will skip among the wolves and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, &c.

In the fourth book, perhaps post-Christian, the Gentiles are called to repent :

Wretched mortals ! repent ! throw away your spears and swords. Raise your hands to the heavenly Temples and pray for pardon for your sins, washing your bodies in ever-flowing streams. (IV. 162-170.)

They are not invited to become Jews by submitting to circumcision.⁵

In early Christian literature there is mention of prophecies by Enoch the famous patriarch, who was "translated" that he should not see death. The first allusion is found in the New Testament, "Enoch, seventh from Adam, prophesied" (Jude 14). The Jewish writers of the period now under consideration either quote directly or are influenced by this literature, for the popular title, "the Book of Enoch," is incorrect, it being a number of writings belonging to different periods, and including extracts from a book of Noah. The different portions of "Enoch" have been separated and dated with a precision which implies a marvellous intuition in reconstructing the story of the Assidaeans and of the early Pharisees, despite of the scantiness of material available. "Enoch" however exercised much influence on Jewish thought, and appealed more strongly to Christian imagination. By the fourth century of our era Synagogue and Church alike agreed to reject it, and it was lost to the majority of Christians till Bruce the traveller discovered that it existed in Ethiopic in the Abyssinian Church. This was in 1773. In 1821 it was translated by Laurence, afterwards Archbishop of Cashel, from a MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. In 1838 the Ethiopic version was published by the same scholar.

Enoch

The subjects treated of in Enoch are those which are beyond the human ken, and in the first place relate to the interviews of Enoch as God's messenger with the angels "who kept not their first estate," but fell, being seduced by the beauty of the daughters of men. This is the theme of the Noah fragment vi.-xi. Shemjâzâ, the leader of the "Watchers," induces them to enter into a conspiracy with

him, whereupon two hundred descend into the world. The daughters of men bear children to them, great giants, three thousand ells high. The fallen angels teach men unlawful arts. Finally Michael will be sent to bind Shemjazzâ. A blissful age will follow, the earth will yield fruit a thousand fold, and men will live till they beget thousands of children. Enoch then has visions of heaven and hell: "I looked and I saw therein a lofty throne: its appearance was as crystal, and the wheels thereof as the shining sun, and there was a vision of cherubim. And from underneath the throne came streams of flaming fire. . . . And the Great Glory sat thereon, and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and was whiter than any snow" (Enoch xiv. 18-20). Beyond the abyss there was a place with no firmament above or solid earth below, "it was a waste and horrible place." Here the disobedient angels would be punished for ten thousand years (xviii. 14-16). A great day of judgment is to come, and God, "One who had a head of days," will appear, and with Him a "Son of Man," who hath righteousness. He has been chosen by the Lord of Spirits: and He is also called the Elect One. Under Him heaven and earth will be transformed and made a blessing.

And I will cause mine elect ones to dwell upon it:
 But the sinners and evil doers shall not set foot thereon.
 (Enoch xlv. 3 ff.)

In the days of this Elect One there shall be a resurrection of Israel, but not of the Gentiles.

The earth shall give back that which is entrusted to it,
 And Sheol also shall give back that which it received.
 (li. 1.)

And so the book continues with visions of heaven, hell, and judgment, and of the fate of the disobedient angels. Much is said about the countless host of heaven, and its orders and ranks, the secrets of the luminaries, and their heavenly courses. But the chief interest of Enoch lies in the fact that there are so many passages which seem to have influenced the visions of judgment and of the return of Christ in glory found in the New Testament. The book itself seems to be most important as indicating the possibility of the existence of a larger Jewish literature on heaven, hell, judgment, and hosts of angels and demons than was once suspected.

How far the influence of Persia is to be seen in the books of Enoch is a very open question ; and it seems, to say the least, a perilous experiment to dogmatise on the subject of the date of its component parts and their meaning, considering our ignorance of the history of Israel between Old and New Testament times.⁶

Another apocalyptic book which is included in the Apocrypha of our Bible is the so-called Fourth Book of Esdras, the visionary part of which, iv.-xiv., is known to modern scholars as iv. Ezra. It is probably a post-Christian Jewish work of the first century A.D., and therefore can hardly be used as evidence for earlier opinions and views. The questions which Ezra propounds and the angel answers are pertinent to any time. Why do the righteous suffer ? Why are so few saved ? Why does God destroy His own work ? and the answers are well worth attention. The apocalyptic part is very curious : " My son [Jesus] shall be revealed," and He shall reign with elect four hundred years. After this " My son Christ shall die and all that have the breath of life." The world shall return to its old silence for seven days. Then there will be a resurrection, " compassion and long suffering shall pass away, and only truth shall stand and good deeds shall awake." (2 Esdras vii. 26-35.)⁷

The second
book of
Esdras

As it would be impossible to form any idea of what primitive Christian thought was if heresy were to be completely ignored, so would it be with Judaism if nothing were known of the sects and parties into which it was divided. For every opinion, however extreme or even grotesque, which has distracted a religious community, in a certain degree indicates the trend of thought at the time. The Gnostics, for example, played a most important part in the development of Christian thought, and their speculations were attempts to give a solution to the problems of the age. As long as these difficulties were to the front Gnosticism was formidable, but with their disappearance other heresies took their place as fresh perplexities arose. But it must be remembered that in Judaism opinion was not, as in Christianity, the important matter. The crucial point was whether a man observed the Law, and not what view he held even on matters of paramount interest. As the opinions attributed to the

Sects in
Judaism

Pharisees and Sadducees respectively attest, the question of immortality was an open one. The Jews were therefore divided rather by matters relating to practice than by theology; and all were agreed that the Law was binding, though there were differences as to how it should be interpreted. One thing, however, must be borne in mind, namely, that Jewish sectarianism is a matter on which it is generally assumed more is known than it is actually possible to know, as the materials are very scanty.

Ascetic sects

The principles of Judaism are not primarily ascetic; but it could no more escape the influence which leads to withdrawal from the world than any other religion. Traces of these are found in the Old Testament in such teachers as Elijah, who seems to have been a prophet of the desert; and in Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, whose followers rejected all the amenities of settled life in Canaan. It is possible that the Assidaeans of the Maccabean age were an ascetic sect, but too little is known of them to assert anything about their views or practices. But all strict observance of the Law at this period partook of the nature of asceticism, inasmuch as it isolated its faithful observers not only from intercourse with Gentiles, but from all Jews who were less scrupulous than themselves, thus entailing a constant discipline of isolation. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that there were waves of asceticism, especially in days when many were displaying great laxity in observing the Law, and even showing tendencies to apostatise altogether from the worship of God.

The Essenes

The most interesting of these ascetics are the so-called Essenes, whose very name has been a cause of constant perplexity. In dealing with them it is best to state first what is actually known about them before indulging in any theories as to their origin and beliefs. So much has been said about them in regard to their influence on Christianity, the possibility that Jesus Christ was trained by them, and their importance generally, that it is well to bear in mind that our only early authorities are Philo (*fl.* A.D. 37), Josephus (A.D. 37-100c.) and Pliny the Elder (†A.D. 79).

Philo on the Essenes

In his treatise on the "Contemplative Life," Philo says he has already written about the Essenes, and evidently this treatise has been lost. He regards them as an "active" rather than a "contemplative" sect; and in his book, *That*

every honest man is free, he remarks that the Essenes abstain from animal sacrifices. He also speaks of their secret books and allegorical methods.

Josephus says that there are three philosophical sects among the Jews—Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. It must be recollected that he is writing for a Gentile public, and therefore that he probably uses language more vague than he would have employed in accounts designed for his own countrymen. The earliest description is in the *Wars of the Jews*. The Essenes are the strictest sect, they practice continence, regard pleasure as an evil, do not marry, but train children for their Order. They have all their goods in common; there is, so to speak, one patrimony among all. They appoint stewards to look after the property of the community. They abjure the use of oil, and wear white garments. They have communities in many cities; and an Essene is so sure of a welcome that he need take no baggage on a journey. They have a common meal, and their daily labours are assigned to them by their overseers. They practice bathing in cold water to promote chastity of body. The Order is entered by several stages of initiation. The postulant is given a white robe, a girdle and a hatchet, and lives as they do for a year on probation. Having proved himself worthy, the candidate is then allowed to partake of "the water of purification." He is further tested for two years, and then admitted to full communion and the common meal, after binding himself by fearful oaths to observe piety to God, justice to men, fidelity to those in authority, love of truth. He has also to pledge himself to conceal nothing from his sect, and to guard its doctrines, preserve its books as secrets, as also the names of the angels. Guilty persons are cast out, but are at times allowed a death-bed repentance.

The initiated are divided into four classes, and the seniors remain rigidly separated by their holiness from the juniors. The asceticism they practice is so wholesome that many live to be a hundred. In persecution they bear torture with joy, and will endure anything rather than curse Moses or eat unlawful meats. They believe when the soul is set free from the flesh, if good, it goes to a joyous place, like the islands of the blessed; and, if bad, to punishment. They therefore hold the doctrine of the immortality of the soul,

Testimony of
Josephus

but not of the resurrection of the body, for the soul is imprisoned in the body. There is a second order of Essenes who allow marriage, but not for pleasure, only in order to have descendants.

Josephus says that in the early morning the Essenes say nothing which is not holy before sunrise, when they offer certain ancestral prayers, as though they were supplicating the sun to rise. This statement may imply that there was a certain sun-worship in Essenism, but the language of Josephus is ambiguous.

There are two briefer notices of the Essenes in the *Antiquities*. In the thirteenth book they are said to be determinists, and the Pharisees to hold a modified, and the Sadducees a positive doctrine of free-will. In the eighteenth book the statement of the Wars is virtually repeated, with the additional information that the Essenes either do not offer sacrifices in the Temple, or if they do (for the reading is doubtful) do so apart from the rest of the people, and that their sole occupation is agriculture. It is from the *Natural History* of Pliny that one knows that this astonishing sect (*gens praeter ceteros mira*) lived by the Dead Sea. He dwells on the fact that the nation persists, though no children are born in it. There is not a hint about the Essenes in the New Testament, nor are they directly alluded to in the rabbinical literature. Josephus says that Herod honoured the Essenes because one of them, by name Menaham, met him when he was on his way to school and foretold that he would one day be a king. So, when he was forcing the Jews to take an oath of fidelity to him, he specially exempted the disciples of Pollio and Sameas and the Essenes. (*Antiq.* XV, 10, 4.) An Essene acted as a general in the Jewish war. (*Wars* III. 2, 1.)

What Josephus tells us of the Essenes certainly provokes interest, if it does not satisfy curiosity. The analogies between them and some of the early Christians, their forms of gradual initiation, their possible affinities with Persian and Oriental habits of thought, create a desire to know more of them; but by the days of the Church Fathers in the third century they had evidently disappeared.⁸

**The
Therapeutae**

There is a treatise attributed to Philo called *On the Life of Contemplation*, which describes certain Jewish ascetic communities near Alexandria in the neighbourhood of

Lake Mareotis. Some have supposed the work to be a Christian romance of the fourth century written to prove that the monasticism of the age was more ancient than was supposed, and was traceable to spiritual Judaism. On the whole it seems satisfactorily established as the work of Philo, but whether he is romancing or describing a real state of things is another question. The settlement by Lake Mareotis consisted of men and women who lived each in his separate cell, like the later monks, with an oratory attached. They met on Sabbaths, and their great festival was on the seventh Sabbath. On this day there was a common meal. The service lasted throughout the night. There were solemn hymns and religious dances. Like the Essenes, these Therapeutae (servants, or healers) renounced all private property and apparently disapproved of slavery. Philo hints that this sort of asceticism was not confined to Judaism, but was also practised by the Greeks.⁹

What has been related in the previous chapter is evidence that, if there was a strong religious spirit in Judaism, there was much to repel in the corruptions of the priestly rulers in Jerusalem. It is quite possible that the degeneracy of the leaders of the people may have produced such movements as have been described, but now a fragment has been discovered in Cairo which relates how a strict party of religionists left Jerusalem and organized a separate community in the neighbourhood of Damascus. The very obscurity of the record adds to its interest, as it is improbable that it was manufactured with any ulterior object. "In the period of wrath, 390 years after God had given them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar," is the date. It is not so easy to fix this as might appear, but it was probably about the middle of the third century B.C. or possibly a little later. God is said to have raised up a Teacher of Righteousness, and an Anointed One (Messiah) was expected to arise from the House of Aaron. Certain people bound themselves by a covenant and they seem to have tried to reproduce the conditions of life in the Wilderness. The community was classified as Priests, Levites, Israelites, and Proselytes. A Priest presided over every group. They interpreted the Law very strictly, and would not even allow a man to rescue an ox or ass which had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath. They seem to have had divisions

**The
Covenanters**

among themselves, and to have been troubled by a "Man of Scoffing." No one knows more of them, but the fact of such a community existing is significant. From its interest in the house of Zadok and its priestly character the document has been called Zadokite.¹⁰

John the Baptist and Bannus

The appearance of the Baptist "clothed in camel's hair with a leathern girdle about his loins," and "eating locusts and wild honey," is less surprising in view of the ascetic tendencies revealed in the Judaism of the period; and it is natural that such a teacher should have had disciples. Josephus says that about A.D. 55 "he was informed that one whose name was Bannus lived in the desert, who used no other clothing than grew upon trees, and had no other food than what grew of its own accord, and bathed himself in cold water frequently both by day and night, in order to preserve his chastity." Josephus says he copied him, and remained in his company for three years.

Legalistic sects

The differences in religion among the Jews were mainly on points of Law. The Law being regarded as the revelation by which the will and purpose of God is made known. As obedience could only be paid by those who were thorough experts in how to handle the Law, the different schools of interpretation had their adherents, and debated keenly with one another. It will often be found that the strangest differences were on what now seem trifling legal points, which were far from unimportant when the exact performance of every detail was necessary to the adequate fulfilment of a law.

The Sadducees

The New Testament and Josephus are in agreement that the two leading parties in Judaism were Sadducees and Pharisees; but, considering how well known these names are, it is remarkable how little can definitely be asserted about either sect. The two appear suddenly in the story of John Hyrcanus, who, when provoked by the boldness of the Pharisee Eleazar, transferred his favour to the Sadducees. From that time till the death of Alexander Jannæus the House of Hasmon was supported by that party. From this it may be inferred that the Sadducees upheld the priestly kingdom of the Maccabees, which seemed too worldly in its aims to the more scrupulous faction of the Pharisees. It is generally assumed that the Sadducees were on the side of the Priesthood, and an attempt has been

made to derive their name from Zadok, the High Priest under Solomon and the ancestor of the Jerusalem hierarchy. The rabbinical legend is that Antigonus of Socho was misunderstood to deny the resurrection when he warned his disciples against serving with hope of reward. Accordingly they decided that it was best to live in luxury. But this is a late tradition, and may be due to the use of the word Sadducee to denote an irreligious person. What we know definitely about them is partly from Josephus and partly from the New Testament. The historian says of them that they rejected tradition and were only bound by the written Word, that they were rich and attracted persons of rank, and were not popular like the Pharisees, that they denied the immortality of the soul and rewards and punishments after death, and that they were very strong maintainers of the Freedom of the Will. They could not put their principles into practice as magistrates, but had to defer to the Pharisees, who were favoured by the people. The New Testament gives little further information, but it connects them more definitely with the priesthood, and says that they did not believe in angels or spirit. Josephus dwells on the fact that the Sadducees were much more severe in their judgments than the Pharisees, and were more anxious to demand the life of the criminal.

The attempts to explain the name Pharisee have, as a rule, reference to their peculiar tenets. Either the word is connected with *separation*, in allusion to the way in which the Pharisee separated himself from other people; or *Persian*, from the beliefs held by the sect in regard to angels and spirits being of Persian origin. Josephus says that they were habitually lenient as judges, in contradistinction to the Sadducees, who exercised great severity in exacting the utmost penalty prescribed by the Law. This is confirmed in the New Testament, where the Pharisees oppose Jesus as Teacher, but take no part in His condemnation, and afterwards range themselves on the side of the disciples, for whom Gamaliel is said to have pleaded that the Sanhedrin should let them alone (Acts v.) The sect, according to Josephus, was very popular, being highly regarded for piety, not the less so because they were a lay rather than a priestly party. But it is remarkable how little definite information is

**The
Pharisees**

obtainable concerning the Pharisees before the Christian era. Except for the allusions to them in Josephus in connection with John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannæus and Alexandria, and an occasional mention of a Pharisee in the days of Herod, nothing definite is known. In after times they seem to have been the one party to survive the ruin of the Temple; and, strange to say, in the rabbinical sources, in their contests with their Sadducean rivals, they seem to have been inclined to interpret the Law in a spirit of greater liberality, their "tradition" often enabling them not to insist on its literal fulfilment.

Samaritans

The Samaritans, who still exist as a small remnant in Palestine and practice their religious rites on Mount Gerizim, must have been somewhat formidable rivals of Judaism, to judge from the notices of them by Josephus and in the New Testament. According to 2 Kings xvii., they were not Israelites at all, but a mixed race of people, imported from the East by Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, whose religion, taught by a priest of Bethel, was a mixture of the worship of Jehovah and idolatry (2 Kings xvii. 24ff.). But nowhere else is it suggested that the Samaritans were idolators even by those most hostile to their claims. In Ezra iv. 2 they tell the Jews "we seek your God as ye do." Josephus relates that the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim was built in the days of Alexander the Great, just before his conquest of Persia by Sanballat, whose daughter had married Manasseh, the brother of the high priest at Jerusalem. Sanballat persuaded Alexander to sanction his temple on the ground that it was advisable to divide the Jews into two sects (*Antiq.* IX. 8, 4). The temple on Gerizim was destroyed by John Hyrcanus after it had stood for two centuries (*Antiq.* XIII. 9, 1), but the worship continued; and Josephus says that when Jews were discontented with the worship and discipline of Jerusalem they went over to the Samaritans. According to the Fourth Gospel the Samaritans claimed to represent ancient Israel, and spoke of "our father Jacob." (John iv. 12; see also Joseph. *Antiq.* XI. 8, 6). Bitterly as the Jews were opposed to the Samaritans, they were compelled to acknowledge that they often obeyed the Law which they preserved in the ancient Hebrew character. They are said not to have received the rest of the Scripture. Strangely,

however, they had a Messianic belief, apparently independent of that of the Jews. The Sadducees seem more in sympathy with them than the Pharisees.¹¹

The Jews had more than one Temple during the period under consideration. The papyri prove that from a very early time, before Cambyses invaded Egypt, there was one at Teb (Assouan, at the first cataract of the Nile); and Josephus relates that Onias, the son of Onias, obtained leave from Ptolemy and Cleopatra to build a temple at Leontopolis, saying that such a sanctuary had been prophesied by Isaiah xx. 18. As Onias came of the legitimate stock of the High Priests, the ministers of his temple were more legally entitled to serve than those of Jerusalem. It actually survived the ancient sanctuary, and was closed by Paulinus, governor of Alexandria, at the end of the Jewish war, after, according to Josephus, having stood for three hundred and forty-three years.

The most difficult question to answer is the one of the greatest interest, namely, what was the expectation among the Jews as to the coming of Messiah between the days of the Old and New Testament? The evidence is so scanty that it is most difficult to give a definite answer. The Apocalypses, notably Daniel and Enoch, foretell the setting up of a divine and indestructible kingdom or sovereignty of God and the ultimate triumph of His kingdom. But in 1 and 2 Maccabees and in Josephus, which are almost the sole historical authorities, there is little hint as to the expectation of the Jewish people. That Messianic hope was strong is evident from the gospels, and most of the New Testament, and also that Jesus did not satisfy the expectation of many Jews is evident from their refusal to accept His message. The rabbinical authorities are too late to throw much light on the subject. All that can be said positively is that in the heavy trials of the nation, both from its enemies outside, and from those who were untrue to its best traditions within, there were pious souls who looked anxiously for the consolation of Israel.¹¹

The Messianic hope, however, appears in the so-called Psalms of Solomon, or Psalms of the Pharisees, as they have been termed, from the fact that they are supposed to express the feelings of that party after the desecration of the Temple by Pompey in B.C. 63. The seventeenth Psalm is

**The temples
in Egypt**

**Messianic
expectations**

a prayer for a righteous king of the house of David, that Jerusalem may be purged from the heathen. This king will rebuke sinners and gather a holy people. He will have mercy upon the nations who come to serve him. None will be able to resist Him, &c., &c. All shall be holy as their king, the Lord Messiah.

But in the so-called *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* the just and perfect ruler is to come not from Judah, but from Levi. It is the same in the *Book of Jubilees* or "Little Genesis," and in the document about the "Covenanters of Damascus." The word "Messiah" is not found in any of these, as it is in the Pharisaic Psalms. The idea of a Levitical deliverer was natural under the priestly rule of the Maccabees, and of a Messiah from Judah taken from the older Scriptures to their opponents of the Pharisaic sect.

NOTES ON CHAPTERS.

NOTES

Chapter I

1. The stele was discovered 1896, and contains an account of an invasion of Palestine by Menephtah II., the successor of Rameses II., who died in B.C. 1281 (so Mahler in Sayce, *Early Israel*, p. 277). Prof. Petrie says: 'It is the earliest certain allusion to any historical connection with them (the Israelites) on any monument or record outside the Old Testament.' Ball, *Light from the East*, p. 130. For a fairly recent list of the bibliography on the subject see Paton, *Syria and Palestine*, p. xxxiii. (1902). (p. 1)

2. The first eleven chapters of Genesis are mainly taken from the so-called 'Jehovistic' document, a work evidently composed in the Southern Kingdom. The earliest date allowed is B.C. 850. Hardly any critic places it much later than B.C. 750, though some divide it into the work of J¹, circa 850, and J², 650 B.C. Driver, *Introd. to the Literature of the Old Test.*, ch. i., p. 7. The existence of documentary elements, however, must not lead us to forget the unity of plan pervading the book of Genesis. (p. 1)

3. The so-called 'Priestly Code' (P) compiled after the Captivity, circa B.C. 440. The sections belonging to this Code recur at intervals throughout the Pentateuch and Joshua. As Driver says, 'If read consecutively, apart from the rest of the narrative, it will be found to form nearly a complete whole, containing a systematic account of the origins of Israel, treating with particular fulness the various ceremonial institutions of the Hebrews (Sabbath, Circumcision, Passover, Tabernacles, Sacrifices, Feasts, etc.), and displaying a consistent regard for chronological and other statistical data. . . . On account of the predominance in it of priestly interests, and of the priestly point of view, it is commonly called the *Priestly Narrative*, and denoted, for brevity, by the letter P.' *The Book of Genesis*, Introd., p. iv. (p. 1)

4. Wellhausen (*History of Israel*, p. 304, Eng. Tr.) says of the Priestly Narrative of the Creation as contrasted with that of J: 'In the first account (Gen. i.—ii. 3) we stand before the first beginnings of sober reflection about nature, in the second we are on the ground of marvel and myth.'

How orderly the Creation-story in Gen. i. is, may be seen by the way in which the 'days' are grouped in pairs.

1st day	} Division.	{ Light from Darkness (see Job
2nd ,,		
3rd day	} Inanimate Nature.	{ The dry Land, and Plants.
4th ,,		
5th day	} Animate Nature.	{ Birds and Fishes.
6th ,,		

The two narratives are brought into clear contrast by the Rev. F. H. Woods, B.D., in his article *Hexateuch*, Hastings' *Dict. Bible*, vol. ii., p. 364b: 'Notice the very remarkable difference in the whole tone and character of the Creation-stories, Gen. i.—ii. 4a, and ii. 4b, etc. The first describes Creation as taking place in a systematic order, reaching its climax in man, created *male* and *female*, everything being made out of nothing by the separate *fiat* of Almighty God. In the second, all other things belonging to the earth (the heavenly bodies are not mentioned) are made after the creation of the first man, in the order best suited to his wants, ending in the creation of woman.'

Ch. i., says Dr. Driver, 'displays clear marks of study and deliberate systematization: ii. 4b ff. is fresh, spontaneous, and, at least in a relative sense, primitive.' *Genesis*, p. 35. (p. 2)

5. Ball (*Light from the East*, p. 2) assigns the origin of the Creation tablets to the third millennium B.C. Sayce (*Higher Criticism and Monuments*, p. 62) thinks that in their present form they belong to a later date. 'The attempt' he remarks, 'breathes so thoroughly the air of a later philosophy which has reduced the deities of earlier belief to mere abstractions and forces of nature, that I much doubt whether it can be assigned to an earlier date than the seventh century B.C.' Gunkel (*Schöpfung und Chaos*) thinks that the Creation-story was current among the Hebrews long before it was incorporated in Gen. i. In the main points there is a far-reaching coincidence between the Babylonian and Hebrew Creations. (1) Both stories place water and darkness alone at the beginning of things. (2) They personify the Deep by the same name *Tehom = Tiamat*. (3) In both, the appearance of light is the beginning of a new order. (4) In both, the creation of heaven is effected by the division of the waters of the primeval flood into those above and those below the firmament. (5) The six creative acts are similar and in almost the same order.—*Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Creation*, § 3. 'The inscriptions preserved in these tablets . . . form in reality a kind of epic poem, the theme of which is the glory of the god Marduk, the supreme god of Babylon, declaring how, after a severe conflict, he had overcome the powers of chaos and darkness, and so had been able to create a world of light and order.' Driver, *Genesis*, p. 27.

For the struggle between Jehovah and Tehom, Leviathan and Rahab personifying the forces of Chaos, see Oesterley, the *Evolution of the Messianic Idea*, and Zimmern, *Babylonian and Hebrew Genesis*.

The superiority of the Hebrew account lies in (1) the absence of mythological details; (2) the insistence that God existed before all things, and was not (as the gods in the Babylon myth) called into being to give order and harmony to matter; (3) the clear perception that God is above all and distinct from every created thing. (p. 2)

6. The employment of the divine names in Genesis gave a French physician by name Astruc the clue to the documentary theory. These views were embodied in his *Conjectures sur les mémoires originaux dont il paroît que Moïse s'est servi pour composer le livre de la Genèse*, Brussels, 1753. Bennett, *Biblical Introduction*, p. 20.

Jehovah was not employed to designate the Sacred Name till A.D. 1520, and the form is an impossible one. Probably the Name was pronounced Jahveh. As however this is by no means certain, I have retained the more familiar 'Jehovah.' I should prefer to copy the reverence of the Hebrews and of the Versions in speaking of 'the LORD,' were it not for the importance of reminding my readers that the tetragrammaton JH V H is a proper name.

For a discussion of the Sacred Names see the *Hibbert Journal*, July 1909, where Professor Eerdmans denies that they are necessarily by different writers or indicate separate sources. Three proper names compounded of the Sacred Name Jahveh have been discovered, dating from the period of Hammurabi (B.C. 2600 *circa*). It is not, however, certain that the Divine Name was known to the Babylonians. See Delitzsch, *Babel und Bibel*, p. 46 (Eng. Tr.), p. 71, and esp. 133-141; Dr. C. W. Johns, *Expositor*, Oct. 1903, and *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, p. 47 sq.; Driver, *Genesis*, p. xlix.

In Gen. ii. 4b ff. we find the combination of the two names, Jahveh-Elohim, which is not found elsewhere in the Hexateuch except in Ex. ix. 30. This expansion of the Sacred Name is probably due to the last reviser or editor. Dillmann, *Genesis*, p. 97, Eng. Tr. (p. 3)

7. This was discovered by Mr. Rassam at Sippara, and mostly relates the building of the sacred cities and their temples. The second line reminds us of Gen. ii. 5, 'No reed had come forth, no tree been created.' In other places there are echoes of Gen. i. Ball, *Light from the East*, p. 18. (p. 3)

8. Sacred trees are common in Babylonian literature. The serpent was the embodiment of evil. The third Creation tablet contains a passage about sinning by eating forbidden fruit. There is also a charm against demons, who are said 'to have taken woman from the thigh of man.' But this last has been explained to mean, 'such is the power of demons that they can draw away a woman from her husband's side.' When interpretations are so diverse caution is needed. See Sayce, *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 101. Hastings' *Dict. of Bible*, Arts. *Eve* and *Fall*.

Regarding the numerous attempts to 'locate' Paradise or to shew that the Biblical idea of the Garden of Eden and the Fall are adaptations of the Babylonian Paradise legend, such as is found in Frederic Delitzsch's *Wo lag das Paradies?* Dillmann (*Genesis*, p. 110, Eng. Tr.) remarks: 'Anything precisely corresponding to the Biblical Paradise is not, up to this time, demonstrable among any other people.' 'As to the much-discussed seal-cylinder, in which two well-dressed figures, the one with two horns on the head, the other with a serpent standing direct behind it, sit on chairs opposite the tree of life, while each stretches out a hand towards it, a relation of this to the Fall is no more than a romance about it created by certain scholars.'

For valuable remarks on the spiritual meaning of the Fall see Driver, *Genesis*, p. 56, where he discusses the difficult question of Man's condition before he fell. Dr. Tennant's Hulsean Lectures on *The Origin and Propagation of Sin* should be carefully studied. (p. 4)

9. Josephus (*Antiq.* I. i. 3) says that the river that went out of Eden ran round the whole earth, as the ancients believed the streams of Oceanus did, and that the four rivers were the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Ganges, and the Nile. The most ancient opinion is that Pison = Ganges, and Gihon = Nile. The belief that these four rivers rose in one part of the world indicates the vaguest ideas of geography. Sayce (*Higher Crit. etc.*, p. 104) says that by 'the river' the Persian Gulf is meant, and that the Tigris and Euphrates entered it by different channels. Ball (*Light from the East*, p. 32) gives a map of the world with Babylon and the Euphrates and a few cities marked, supplying as he remarks 'an excellent illustration of the state of geographical knowledge at the time.' (p. 4)

10. Three Flood-narratives have been discovered besides the story preserved by Berosus, the historian. The important one is the Babylonian story of the Deluge related to the hero Gilgamesh by his ancestor Xisuthrus (*Hasisadra*), discovered by G. Smith in 1872 in the Library of Asshur-bani-pal at Kouyunjik. The visit to Xisuthrus is the eleventh exploit of Gilgamesh, and is recorded in the month when the Sun is in Aquarius. For the Creation and Flood in Babylonian mythology see L. W. King, *Babylonian Religion*, chs. iii. and iv.

Driver, *Genesis*, p. 101ff. : 'The principal countries in which these Flood-stories are found are Greece (Deucalion's Deluge), Lithuania, Australia, Hawaii, Cashmir, Thibet, Kamschatka, different parts of India and America (where such stories are particularly numerous).' Flood-stories are absent in Egypt, China, and Japan, and are 'almost absent in other parts of Africa (except where they are due to Christian influence).' For the latter see Hollis, *The Masai*, especially the Preface, p. xiii. For Flood-legends see Dillmann, *Genesis*, pp. 254ff. (p. 5)

11. The measurements of the ship of Xisuthrus are given in the Gilgamesh Epic. Budde thinks that the description of the ark belongs to J² and not to P, to which most critics assign it. *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Deluge*, p. 10.

The dates in P are particularly interesting. The Flood (Gen. vii. 11) begins on the 17th day of the second month : the waters increase for 150 days (vii. 24) : the ark goes aground on the 17th day of the seventh month (viii. 4) : on the 1st of the tenth month the tops of the mountains are seen (viii. 5) : on the 1st of the first month in the next year the Flood has disappeared (viii. 13) : on the 27th of the second month the earth is dry (viii. 14). Thus the Flood lasts 1 year and 11 days, or reckoning by lunar months, 354 + 11 days, *i.e.* 365 days, a solar year.

In J, the waters increase for forty days, and disappear (viii. 8, 10, 12) after 21 days. The duration of the Flood is therefore 61 days. Each of the two accounts is complete in itself. Driver, *Genesis*. Dillmann, *Genesis*. (p. 6)

12. The whole story of Cain bristles with difficulties. (1) His name : Gen. iv. 1, Eve called him Cain, saying, 'I have gotten a man from (or by the help of) Jehovah.' According to these obscure words Cain is derived from the Hebrew verb *qanah* = to get. The name

means also a lance; Cheyne renders it 'a smith,' the Cainites being famous workers in metal. *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Cain*. It is suggested that Cain represents the tribe of the Kenites (Numb. xxiv. 22). (2) The cause of the rejection of Cain's offering and the meaning of Jehovah's words in iv. 7: the LXX. by a slight change of vowel-points make the offence a ritual one. 'Didst not thou sin, if, though thou didst offer aright, thou didst not rightly divide (the sacrifice)? (διέλλης). (3) The Hebrew text is evidently corrupt; iv. 8, 'And Cain said to Abel,' where the Hebrew does not give his words, the LXX. and the Samaritan Pentateuch add 'Let us go into the field.' (4) Cain's fear that he will be slain, implying that there were other men to avenge Abel. (5) The marks set on Cain, which some consider was a sign appointed by God to reassure him. What did this signify? Was it the *totem* mark? (6) Cain builds a city; a strange thing if he was only the third inhabitant of the Earth!

On the whole it appears reasonable to infer—(1) That the story of Cain and Abel is not originally connected with the preceding narrative, but that its origin is Palestinian; (2) That it was intended to describe the hostility between the nomads and the people leading settled lives and at the same time tending cattle; (3) That the 'mark' was the protection of the nomads, who lived without law, being a sign that their relatives would avenge their death (Robertson-Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 252); (4) That Cain the city builder was not the same as Cain the murderer, but was identical with the Cainan in the pedigree of Adam in Gen. v. (*Encycl. Bibl.*, Arts. *Eve*, *Cain*, *Cainites*; Mitchell, *The World before Abraham*, p. 163; Ryle, *Early Narratives of Genesis*, p. 70; Dillmann's and also Delitzsch's Commentaries on Genesis; Ball, *Genesis*, etc.) Dr. Driver in his *Genesis*, Addenda, p. xvi., refers to this note of mine; but he remarks that the LXX. rendering here quoted 'is anything but probable.' 'The text' he remarks in his comments on Gen. iv. 7 'is open to suspicion, but as understood it teaches a profound psychological truth, viz. the danger of harbouring a sullen and unreasoning discontent: it is a temper which is only too likely to lead to fatal consequences, and which, therefore, should at all costs be checked.' (p. 7)

13. 'What remains unaffected by criticism (in the story of Cain) is the prophetic inspiration manifested in the representation of God's holiness and long-suffering, in the analyses of the guilty heart, and in the knowledge of the rapid diffusion of the principle of sin, and its tendency to steadily increasing heinousness as manifested in outward act.' W. P. Paterson in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Cain*.

The following letter was sent to me by the much-lamented Greek scholar Dr. Walter Headlam, bearing on the subject of Cain:—

Dec. 19, 1905.

DEAR FOAKES-JACKSON,—Thank you very much for the Biblical History—not only for being kind enough to send it me, but because it's the very book that I've been wanting, and didn't know existed, I'm ashamed to say. I haven't had time to read it yet, but I found myself turning down almost every page I looked at. It will be extremely useful in a region where I'm nearly as much an amateur as a retired sea-captain, and I hope will save me from making some very

ignorant suggestion. I should be sorry to step in with unwashed feet where angels fear to tread, and I haven't broached any suggestion about the Mark of Cain; but it seemed clear enough that those early chapters were a chronicle of inventions and institutions, and it occurred to me that possibly Cain was the first man banished for bloodshed and sacrosanct as a *suppliant under God's protection—as Ixion was in Greece*. But then there's the trouble of ignorance; I don't know whether there's any evidence of the Hebrews having had that institution; if they never had, my guess of course would be rubbish.

Yours ever,

WALTER HEADLAM.

14. This is the popularly accepted view, but it is denied by Wellhausen and certainly it is not so much as hinted at in the Biblical narrative. The Jewish legend is that Lamech accidentally slew Cain. Much turns on the interpretation of 'I have slain.' The perfect in Hebrew may also mean 'I would or could have slain,' cf. Numb. xxii. 29, where Balaam says, 'I would there were a sword in mine hand, for then had I killed thee' (ἤδη ἂν ἐξεκέντησάσε, LXX.). Prof. Kennett furnishes me with the following explanation: Lamech, a tribal chieftain, has received from some boy a cut. He has avenged the insult by slaying the aggressor, deprecating the blood-guiltiness which would attach to him in consequence by an appeal to the precedent of Cain. We find a similar deprecation of blood-guiltiness in the case of David. (2 Sam. i. 16; 2 Sam. iii. 28, 29.) Both Driver and Dillmann are of opinion that the 'Song' of Lamech is meant to exult over his foes, and that he means to say that with the new weapons he will slay men and boys for a slight injury like a blow. In comparison with Lamech, Cain was only a beginner. Dillmann, *Genesis*, p. 207, Eng. Tr. (p. 8)

15. Ryle, *Early Narratives of Genesis*, p. 79.

(p. 8)

16. This is a difficult passage. 'The sons of the *Elohim* saw the daughters of the *Adam*.' Who were the former? Some say men of a superior race to the Adamites; others, as the LXX. in some MSS., 'angels.' The latter view is the most plausible: for (1) it is the general meaning of 'Sons of God' in the O.T. (Job. i. 6, ii. 1, xxxviii. 7); (2) it is the N.T. explanation of this passage (2 Pet. ii. 4, Jude 6), and the patristic view (Tertullian, *adv. Marc.* v. 8; Augustine, *De Civ. Dei* xv. 23); so also Josephus, *Antiq.* i. iii. 1. Mitchell, *The World before Abraham*; Wude, *Old Test. History*. It is interesting to notice that Origen, following Philo, rejects the view of the angels having connection with the daughters of men, and says the passage must be taken allegorically. He denies that the Book of Enoch, which Celsus quotes, is authoritative (*Contra Celsum* v. 54, 55). For the Book of Enoch see Charles' edition, and also J. B. Mayor, *Epistles of St. Jude and II. Peter*, ch. x. (The Story of the Fallen Angels). (p. 8)

17. Professor Margoliouth (Arts. *Ham* and *Japhet* in *Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*) thinks that originally the three sons of Noah may

merely have signified the divisions of the inhabitants of Palestine : but by whom Japheth was represented is not yet certain. (p. 8)

18. This seems to be the general opinion ; and though Dillmann (*Genesis*, p. 302) expressly denies the possibility of Canaan the name of a people being one of a triad of brothers, two of whom, Shem and Japheth, do not bear gentile names, Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible* and Cheyne in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* (Art. *Ham*) both support it. Mitchell (*The World before Abraham*, p. 230) points out that in Noah's curse Jehovah's name is mentioned in connection with Shem, the ancestor of the Hebrews, but 'God' is to 'enlarge Japheth.' Dr. Driver says that it is *God* not *Jehovah* (who is reserved for Shem), there being no knowledge of the God of revelation in Japheth. Dr. Cheyne thinks that the words concerning Japheth are a later addition. In his *Traditions and Beliefs of Ancient Israel*, the 'dwelling in the tents of Shem' refers to the occupation of Shem (especially Israel) by 'Pelishtim in the time of Saul,' p. 154. (p. 8)

19. Josephus attributes the building of the tower of Babel to Nimrod (LXX. Νεβρωδ), *Antiq.* I. iv. 2. In Jewish and Mahomedan tradition he was the persecutor of Abraham. Every writer seems to take a different view of him : for example Pinches in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible* identifies him with the god Merodach. Sayce (*Higher Crit. and Monuments*) says he was not a son of Cush, but the founder of a Kassite dynasty and a Semite ; whilst Cheyne transports him from Babylonia and settles him among the Jerahmeelites in Southern Palestine ! (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Nimrod* ; *Traditions and Beliefs*, p. 180.) Micah (v. 6) calls Assyria 'the land of Nimrod.' Driver (*Genesis*, p. 120) calls Gen. x. 8-12 'a digression. Origin of the Empires of Babylon and Assyria.' (p. 9)

20. Babel is the regular Hebrew word for Babylon, and the author of *Genesis* xi. derives it from *babel*, to confound. The real meaning of the word is 'Gate of God,' *bab-ila*. The tower of Babel is either that of Birs Nimrud at Borsippa, S.W. of Babylon, or the Great Temple of Merodach in Babylon itself. For *identifications* of the 'Tower of Babel' see Driver and Dillmann, *in loco*. Dr. Driver thinks that the story of the building of Babel is not Babylonian. 'As Gunkel has remarked, the narrative reflects the impression which Babylon would make upon a foreigner, rather than that which it would make upon a native.' *Genesis*, p. 137. (p. 9)

21. Ball, *Light from the East*, p. 86. (p. 9)

22. Sargon of Accad, whose date according to the inscription of Nabonidus (B.C. 550) was B.C. 3800, but who has been placed by some as late as B.C. 2770, certainly conquered the land of Martu (Syria), and his son Naram Sin was possibly worshipped as a god in Cyprus. Ball, *Light from the East*, p. 53. Paton, *Syria and Palestine*, ch. ii. (p. 10)

23. This title was first assumed by a king of the city of Larsa about B.C. 1850. Hommel in *Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Babylonia*.

(p. 10)

24. This appears to be certain. Sargon and Naram-Sin were Semites, so that the inroad of this element into Babylonia may be as early as about 4000 B.C. But the Sumerian language found on the inscriptions is distinct from that of the Babylonian Semites. *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, Art. *Babylonia*, sec. 43, col. 440. Paton, *Syria and Palestine*, p. 8.

(p. 10)

25. It would hardly be right to style the religion of Israel at the time of the writing down of the stories in Genesis as monotheistic. A monotheist denies the existence of any god but One. This the Israelites did not apparently do; they worshipped one God only, but denied neither the existence nor the power of the gods of the heathen. See my article 'Israel and Babylon' in *The Interpreter*, Jan. 1907.

(p. 11)

26. 'Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (*i.e.* the Euphrates) in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods,' Josh. xxiv. 2. Robertson-Smith (*Prophets of Israel*) considers this chapter a very ancient document.

(p. 11)

27. How obscure and fragmentary for example is the account of Lamech and his sons, and of Nimrod! both of which would have been of the greatest interest to us.

(p. 11)

28. About the portions of Genesis i.—xi. belonging to P there is hardly any dispute. They are i. 1—ii. 4b; all v. except ver. 29; vi. 9-22; vii. 6, 11, 13-16b, 18b-21, 24; viii. 1-5; ix. 1-17, 20, 29; x. 1-7, 20, 22-23, 31, 32; xi. 10-27, 31-32.

(p. 13)

29. In the N.T. Enoch is mentioned in Heb. xi. 5, where the LXX. is followed, 'he pleased God,' for Hebrew 'he walked with God,' and in Jude 14 the apocryphal 'Book of Enoch' is quoted. Dr. Driver identifies Enoch with the seventh of the antediluvian kings of Babylon, Enmiduranki, whom the sun-god Shamash instructed in all the arts of divination. In the 'Book of Enoch,' Enoch, 'seventh from Adam' (Jude 14), is given visions of judgement by angels and unfolds the secrets of the heavens. Driver, *Genesis*, p. 78.

(p. 13)

30. For discussions on the subject of the Chronology here and in ch. v., see Articles on 'Chronology' in Bible Dictionaries, and the commentaries of Dillmann, Delitzsch and others. The Hebrew, Samaritan and LXX. systems all differ; that according to the LXX. being 606 years longer than the Hebrew. According to Berosus there were ten generations from Alorus to Xisuthrus, the same number as from Adam to Noah. Notice how, as historical persons are approached, the limits of life shrink. The antediluvian kings of Babylon were given reigns of tens of thousands of years.

(p. 14)

31. Sayce, *Higher Criticism and Monuments*, p. 130. Wade, *Old Testament History*, ch. ii. LXX. : Ἐλισά και Θαρσίς (a.l. Θαρσεΐς) —Κήριοι (a.l. Κίριοι)—Ῥόδιοι. (p. 14)

32. The Cush who begat Nimrod is not connected with Ham in the pedigree, and Genesis x. 8-12, belongs to J, and not to P, who is our main authority. (See Note 19 *supra*.) (p. 14)

33. Arphachshad probably represents Babylonia, the latter half of the name being practically identical with the word Chesed (see Genesis xxii. 22), from which comes the plural Chasdim, the usual Hebrew appellation for the Babylonians. Wade, *Old Test. Hist.*, p. 72. (p. 14)

Chapter II

1. See Dr. Cheyne's article in the *XIXth Century and After* for January 1902, in which he maintains that Abraham and Jacob are lunar myths, and that Joseph signifies the sun.

Prof. Kennett writes to me :—

'I personally believe that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob only became the ancestors of Israel after the conquest of Canaan ; e.g. Abraham was the "father" of Hebron, and when Hebron became Judæan (as it did after the reign of Saul), Abraham became the father of Judah, and after the fall of Samaria of North Israel also.'

But, ingenious as these hypotheses may be, they are not demonstrable ; and it seems advisable to accept in the main the Biblical account unless it is proved to be inconsistent with known facts.

It appears that the only solution of this difficult question is that the patriarchs are sometimes described as individuals and sometimes as tribes. When, for example, Keturah, whom Abraham apparently married in extreme old age, is said to have borne him Midian (Gen. xxv. 2), or when Jacob and Laban make a frontier treaty between Israelites and Aramæans (Gen. xxxi. 51), it seems certain that 'tribes' and not persons are indicated. On the other hand, Abraham, a wealthy immigrant moving from place to place in Palestine and making peaceful arrangements with the local sheikhs, is historically more easily conceived than as the leader of a horde roaming about unmolested in Palestine. I pass over his personal qualities, his faith, and even his exhibitions of weakness. Driver, *Genesis*, pp. liv. ff. There is no evidence that Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob were ever worshipped as local gods or even as heroes in the classical sense of the word. Dillmann, *Genesis*, vol. ii., p. 3, Eng. Tr. See also Mr. A. L. Williams's article on *Abraham* in Murray's *Illust. Bible Dict.* (p. 18)

2. Driver, *Introduction to Old Testament*, pp. 110-118. Dillmann, Kittel and Riehm place E about 900-850 B.C., and J between 830 and 750 B.C. Wellhausen, Kuenen and Stade assign priority to J (850-800 B.C.) over E (c. 750 B.C.). Both belong to the golden period of Hebrew literature. (p. 18)

3. See especially the history of Joseph, Gen. xxxvii. 22-24, 28a, 29-30, 36 (E), 1b, 12-21, 25-27, 31-35 (J). Cf. Gen. xlii. 37 and xliii. 3. (p. 18)

4. In Hosea and Amos the sacred places are Shechem (Gen. xii. 6, xxxiii. 18, Hos. vi. 9), Bethel (Gen. xii. 8, xxviii. 19, xxxv. 1, Amos iv. 4), Beersheba (Gen. xxi. 32, xxvi. 33, Amos viii. 14). (p. 18)

5. The date of Gen. xiv. is very much questioned. All are agreed that it is from a source different from all the rest of Genesis; but whether this source is of venerable antiquity or of the post-captivity age is still undecided. Dr. Hommel, who remarks that in it 'we obtain a glimpse of the general history in the twentieth century B.C., such as is nowhere else vouchsafed to us in the Bible' (*Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, p. 148), allows that it shews signs of having been re-edited. Driver says: 'The general style and literary character of the narrative suggest that it is not of an earlier date than the age of Ezekiel.' Of the kings mentioned, Amraphel is said to have been the great Babylonian king, Khammurabi, who afterwards overthrew the supremacy of the Elamite Chedorlaomer. This name is genuinely Elamite, and a native goddess was called Lagamar or Lagamal; it has not, however, been discovered. Arioch of Elassar has been identified with Eriaku of Larsa. The name of Tidal has also been found (Hommel, *op. cit.*, pp. 149 and 185). See also Sayce, *Higher Criticism, etc.*, p. 164; Godspeed, *History of the Babylonians and Assyrians*. The great Elamite invasion took place in the middle of the third millennium B.C. Paton, *Syria and Palestine*, p. 29. (p. 19)

6. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. Abraham, p. 15a. 'The writer,' Bishop Ryle remarks (*ib.* Art. *Biblical Chronology*) 'does not suggest an interval of nearly a thousand years between Abraham and the Exodus.' (p. 19)

7. The fact that Abraham pursued the invaders to Dan is considered by Dr. Cheyne an indication that in the original story the patriarch dwelt in Galilee, and not at Hebron. *XIXth Century and After* for January 1902. He has, I believe, now located this Dan in N. Arabia. *Trad. and Beliefs*, p. 249. (p. 19)

8. The Philistines, like the Israelites, are said to have been immigrants into Canaan (Amos ix. 7). They have been identified with the Parusati of the monuments of Rameses III. They are supposed to have made their appearance about 1200 B.C. The title 'king of the Philistines,' applied to Abinelech in Gen. xxvi., is probably an anachronism. *Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Philistines*, §§ 3 and 7. (p. 20)

9. The southern Hittites, mentioned also in Gen. xxvi. 34, xxxvi. 2, and probably Gen. x. 15, see also 2 Sam. xii. (Uriah the Hittite) and Ez. xvi. 3 (where the prophet says that the 'mother' of Jerusalem was a Hittite), are said to be different from the northern

Hittites of the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments. See *Encyclopædia Biblica* and Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Hittites*.

(p. 20)

10. The date of Sargon is based on a statement on a clay cylinder of Nabonidus the last King of Babylon, recording the fact that when restoring the temple of the sun god he came upon the foundation-stone of Naram-Sin, which no one had seen for 3200 years. The date of the cylinder is B.C. 550, which would make Sargon the father of Naram-Sin reign about 3800 B.C. Dr. Hommel reduces this date by four centuries. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Babylonia*, p. 244a. Paton (*Syria and Palestine*, Chronological Table I.) places this Sargon (Sarganisharali) 2770 B.C.

(p. 20)

11. Hommel, *Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, p. 34. Godspeed, *History of the Babylonians*, p. 60. Dr. Godspeed notes the absence of any royal titles in Gudêa's inscriptions, and suggests that his state formed part of the domains of a broad empire, like that which Sargon founded and his successors ruled. See Mr. S. A. Cook's article in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Jan. 1907, 'Ancient Palestine, I. Earliest Period.'

(p. 21)

12. The Tel-el-Amarna tablets, written in the cuneiform characters of Babylonia (*vide* p. 58) to the Egyptian court (B.C. c. 1400), shew how deeply the foreign culture of Babylonia had penetrated into the heart of the populations of the ancient Orient. Sayce, *Higher Criticism*, etc., p. 49. For the influence of Babylonian religion see Smythe-Palmer, *Jacob at Bethel*; Paton, *Syria and Palestine*, p. 63.

(p. 21)

13. Ashteroth-Karnaim in the days of the Maccabees (1 Mac. v. 26 (*Καρνείν*), 2 Mac. xii. 21) was called Carnion; see also Amos vi. 13. The Vatican LXX. has Ἀστάρωθ καὶ Καρνάιν. Astaroth was one of the cities of Og (Deut. i. 4). Dillmann, *Genesis*, vol. ii., p. 40, Eng. Tr. Judas Maccabæus destroyed the temple of Atargatis there (1 Mac. v. 44).

(p. 21)

14. The Elamite Kudur-Mabug is described (B.C. 2100) as 'father of the land of the Amorites,' Sayce, *Higher Criticism*, etc., p. 164. Their country was known as the 'land of Martu.' Hommel, *Ancient Hebrew Traditions*, p. 58.

(p. 21)

15. Generally speaking the term Amorite is applied to the inhabitants of the land dispossessed by Israel in the E documents of the Hexateuch, whilst J adopts the term Canaanite. But this is not of universal application. McCurdy, *History, Prophecy and the Monuments*, pp. 406 ff. Amorites are mentioned on the east of Jordan, Canaanites never. The Tel-el-Amarna tablets distinguish between the *Amurru* and the *Kinahhi*. The former inhabit the mountains, the latter the sea coast. *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Amorite*, § 10.

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16. Vide *supra*, notes 8 and 9.

(p. 22)

17. Melchizedek is a Canaanite name reminding us of Adonizedek, King of Jerusalem (Josh. x. 1). Sayce (*Higher Criticism etc.*, p. 175) shews that Melchizedek may have been a real Canaanitish king like Ebed-tob (or Abdi-Hiba) of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, who claims to have become King of Jerusalem not by descent but by the appointment of 'The Mighty King.' 'He had not inherited his dignity; he was the priest of the god' (*sc.* of Jerusalem). See Westcott on Heb. vii. 1, 'The Significance of Melchizedek,' *Hebrews*, p. 199. Dillmann quotes Jerome: 'Salem non, ut Josephus et nostri omnes arbitrantur, est Jerusalem, sed oppidum juxta Scythopolim, quae usque hodie appellatur Salem et ostenditur ibi palatium Melchizedech.' Dillmann decides, however, that even though Salem is only once used of Jerusalem in the Bible, and that in a very late Psalm (lxxvi. 2), Melchizedek is here meant to be King of Jerusalem, in view of the words in Ps. cx. 4. The other Salem where John baptized (John iii. 23) and the αὐλῶν Σαλήμ of Judith iv. 4 would be on the natural line of Abraham's march on his return from Dan. *Comment. in loco.*

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18. The great tradition of Abraham being the son of a maker of idols and being delivered from the furnace is found in the Koran (*Sura xxi.*, The Prophets). It is derived directly from the Jews. See also Stanley, *Jewish Church*, Lecture i., and Ewald, *History of Israel*, vol. i., pp. 334ff. In Judith v. 6-9, Achior the Ammonite tells Holophernes that the Jews left Chaldæa because they would not worship the gods of the country.

(p. 22)

19. For an interesting attempt to explain the sacrifice of Isaac, see Smythe-Palmer, *Jacob at Bethel*, p. 144; Mozley, *Lectures on the Old Testament*, Lecture ii. Dillmann remarks: 'The memory that in the matter of child sacrifice the Hebrews once stood on a level with the other Semites and Canaanites distinctly shines through the narrative. But it is equally clear that a higher faith must long have been common property to the Israelite community before it could reflect itself in such a story in the legends affecting Abraham.' *Genesis*, vol. iii., p. 139, Eng. Tr. The sacrifice of Isaac is alluded to in the N.T. as the crowning example of Abraham's faith, Heb. xi. 17-19, and James ii. 21 f.

(p. 24)

20. Nothing seems to give more pain to many devout students of Scripture than the suggestion that the patriarchs are not individuals but tribes. It appears, however, impossible to understand Gen. xxv. 1-6 otherwise. In Gen. xv. 3 Abraham has no child at all; according to Gen. xvii. 24-25 he was 77 years of age when Ishmael was born; and (*v.* 17) he declared himself too old to imagine himself the father of another son. Abraham was a hundred years old when Isaac was miraculously born (xxi. 5), and his marriage with Keturah is certainly implied to have taken place after this event, and possibly after Sarah's death. The patriarch is therefore credited with being

the father of five sons in extreme old age. This does not seem the meaning of the narrative. The sons by Keturah and his descendants are surely tribes. Whilst believing myself in the personal existence of the three patriarchs, I cannot but think that much recorded of them relates to the tribes believed to be sprung from them. The word 'father' cannot always be taken literally. (See note 1 to this chapter.) (p. 25)

21. Robertson-Smith (*Prophets of Israel*, p. 118) gives an early date to Joshua xxiv. See also Driver, *Introduction to Lit. of Old Testament, in loco*.

In the post-exilic literature of the Old Testament little is said of the patriarch. In 2 Chr. xx. 7, Is. xli. 8 he is spoken of as God's 'friend' or 'lover.' In Neh. ix. 7, his being brought out of Ur is alluded to. Ezekiel (xxxiii. 24) speaks of Abraham being given the land. Sarah is mentioned, Is. li. 2. The name of Abraham only occurs in two Psalms, xlvii. and cv. (p. 26)

22. 'It is true that Abraham hardly appears before us as a prophet or teacher of any new religion. As the Scripture represents him, it is rather as if he was possessed of the truth itself, than as if he had any call to proclaim it to others. His life is his creed; his migration is his mission. . . . He was in practice the Friend of God, in the noblest of all senses of the word; the Friend who stood fast when others fell away.'—Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. i., p. 13. (p. 26)

23. Yet though the dull eye of the critic may perceive nothing distinctive in the life of Isaac, the true historian recognises the individuality of this patriarch. In a single sentence the late Dean Stanley throws a flood of light on the character of Isaac. 'Look' he says 'on the story of the other son, the child of laughter and joy, the gentle Isaac.' *History of the Jewish Church*, vol. i., p. 31.

'As Isaac is never mentioned but under one name he appears to us under the same simple character:—a good true-hearted father, a contented, inoffensive pious man, called to no special career of ambition or duty, but attaining all the more surely to quiet domestic happiness.'—Ewald, *Hist. Israel*, vol. i., p. 341, Eng. Tr. (p. 27)

24. The names Jacob, Isaac, Joseph, are all forms of the third singular imperfect (or future) of the Hebrew verb. On the analogy of such names as Ishmael, Israel, and Jezreel, they would seem to have been originally compounded of the word El = God; Jacob-el, etc. Hommel, *Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, pp. 112, 119.

Driver, *Genesis*, p. 11: 'Among the names of places in Palestine conquered by Thothmes III. of the eighteenth dynasty (15th or 16th century, B.C.) which are inscribed on the pylons of the great Temple of Karnak, there occur (Nos. 78 and 102) the names *y-k-b-a-r-u* and *y-sh-p-a-r-u*; as the Egyptian *r* stands for *l*, these would represent a Canaanitish or Hebrew *yakob-el* or *yoseph-el*.' (p. 27)

25. It is hard to distinguish between birthright (*b'khorah*) and blessing (*b'rakhah*) in the story of Jacob and Esau. The birthright properly means the inheritance; but Jacob never attempted to claim this. Here they seem to be identical. The Jewish tradition is that the *birthright* was the priestly office. So St. Jerome. Delitzsch on Gen. xxv. 31-33. (p. 28)

26. See Delitzsch on Genesis xxvii. 35-38. Josephus says of Edom that it was 'a tumultuous and disorderly nation, always prone to disturbance and delighting in revolutions.' (*B. J.* IV. iv. 1.) *Speaker's Commentary* on Gen. xxvii. 40. Delitzsch's remarks on prophecy (*op. cit.*, p. 157) are particularly worth attention.

Professor Nöldeke (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Edom*, § 5) comments on the fertility of some of the valleys of Seir, and thinks that Jacob promised his son a fertile territory. Driver (*Genesis*, p. 260) quotes Palmer (*Desert of the Exodus*, p. 430 f.) as to the former fertility of the Edomite Arabah. Still the meaning of Isaac's prophecy must be that Edom was destined to live in a desert land and to live by war and plunder rather than by cultivating the soil. (p. 28)

27. Among the sons of Edom are found Gentile names like Kenaz and Amalek, which seems to shew that the Edomites partially absorbed some of the earlier races inhabiting their territory. Deuteronomy ii. 22 says that the sons of Esau destroyed the Horites; but in Gen. xxxvi. 22, a certain Hori is mentioned, and Esau's wife Oholibamah (xxxvi. 2) is perhaps wrongly described as a Hivite, and should be really a Horite. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Horites*. (p. 29)

28. Jacob's vision is fully discussed by Dr. A. Smythe-Palmer, *Jacob at Bethel*. The Hebrew word *sullam*, 'a ladder,' he thinks (p. 11) was really more like a Babylonian temple-tower or Ziggurat, itself often erected on some lofty artificial mound (Heb. *m'sillah*, see 2 Chr. ix. 11). See also Flinders Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, ch. v. (p. 29)

29. The tribes are arranged according to their mothers, and fall into groups. (1) The sons of Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah. (2) The sons of the handmaids: Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher. (3) The two youngest sons of Leah: Issachar and Zebulun. (4) The two sons of Rachel. Even the E documents, though naturally interested in the Rachel tribes, make Leah's son Reuben the first-born of Jacob. (p. 30)

30. The Hebrew word translated Mandrake is *duda'im*, connected with the root *dvd*, beloved, from whence David. Strange superstitions were connected with the plant; see Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Mandrake*. (p. 30)

31. The names given by Jacob's wives to their children are based, according to Professor Driver, upon 'assonances, and must not, therefore, be understood as expressing the real meaning of the names.'

In the case of several of the names, a double explanation is given or alluded to—an indication of the composite character of the narrative. (Gen. xxx. *vv.* 16 and 18 ; *vv.* 20*a* and 20*b* ; *v.* 23 and *v.* 24.) Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Jacob*. (p. 31)

32. The *teraphim* were the tutelary gods of the house, derived from the root *try* to be opulent, to live well, and so the dispensers of prosperity (Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*). They were used in Israelite households down to the fall of Samaria. (Hos. iii. 4.) (p. 31)

33. The story of Jacob's treaty with Laban is a good illustration of Ewald's remark as to the difficulty of distinguishing between personal and tribal records. It is assigned to J. and E. The former (J) in Gen. xxxi., *vv.* 46, 48-50, relates how Jacob and his brethren made a treaty with Laban ; whereas according to E (*vv.* 44, 45, 47, and 51 ff.) it is rather a personal agreement. Yet even in E (*v.* 52) the heap is regarded as a boundary between the Israelites and the Aramæans. See Ewald, *History of Israel*, vol. i., p. 359. (p. 31)

34. The sinew that shrank (R.V., the sinew of the hip) is explained by Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*, p. 207. See also Driver, *Genesis*, p. 296, who describes it as the 'sciatic muscle' (*nervus ischidiacus*). (p. 32)

35. There are two narratives of the affair of Jacob and the Shechemites. (Gen. xxxiv.) According to J, Shechem the son of Hamor humbles Dinah, and Simeon and Levi avenge the injury. According to P, Jacob and his sons make a treaty with Hamor, the father of Shechem, on condition of the Shechemites submitting to circumcision. But though the second narrative bears traces of emanating from the 'Priestly' source, there are signs of an older substratum of fact underlying the story. See Carpenter and Harford *Composition of the Hexateuch*, p. 288 note.

J	P
Shechem asks for Dinah.	Hamor the father asks for her.
Shechem only is circumcised.	The condition is insisted upon for all the Shechemites.
Simeon and Levi slay Hamor and his son Shechem and rescue Dinah.	All the sons of Jacob attack the city and slay all the males, etc.

In J, it is a personal matter ; in P, a national affair between the Israelites and Shechemites. Driver, *Genesis*, p. 302. (p. 33)

36. For this strange mention of Deborah the nurse of Rebekah, see Ewald, *History of Israel*, p. 293 : ' In other nations an elevated position was given to the nurse of heroes, and the memory of Deborah is lost by the traditions of Israel having been greatly curtailed. In Gen. xxiv. 59 she is meant though not named. The fact that Deborah (who was also a kind of hero-nurse) is mentioned in Judges as having had her seat under the same tree in Bethel is a proof of the ancient tradition respecting her.' (p. 33)

37. The identification of Ephrath and Bethlehem is apparently due to a gloss in the text of Genesis, an inference from Micah iv. 8. Rachel's grave, according to 1 Sam. x. 2 and Jer. xxxi. 15, was in the territory of Benjamin, though tradition still places it near Bethlehem.

(p. 33)

38. This occurs here as a continuation from P. Isaac was represented as on his death-bed when he blessed his sons.

(p. 34)

39. Joseph's coat. Heb. *Kithóneth, passim*, rendered 'a coat with sleeves.' According to 2 Sam. xiii. 18, the same garment was worn by the unmarried daughters of David. Delitzsch on Gen. xxxvii.

4-7.

(p. 34)

Chapter III.

1. The story of Joseph has its parallel in an Egyptian romance called 'The Two Brothers,' written for the benefit of Seti II. the son of Menephtah II., whom some consider to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Brugsch, *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, vol. i., pp. 266-268; vol. ii., p. 133. The whole is translated by Renouf, *Records of the Past*, vol. i., p. 137; Petrie, *Egyptian Tales*, ii., p. 36.

'The outline of the story is as follows:—"Two brothers, Anpu and Bata, lived together in one house; the elder, Anpu, sent Bata back from the fields into the house to fetch some seed. Anpu's wife there made advances to him which he repelled; when Anpu returned home in the evening, his wife accused Bata to him falsely. Anpu, enraged, at first sought to slay his brother, but in the end he was convinced that he was innocent, . . . and he thereupon slew his unfaithful wife."—Driver, *Genesis*, p. 336.

(p. 39)

2. A fifth of the produce was the proportion expected by the government of Egypt from the cultivators of the soil until recent times.

(p. 40)

3. The word *Abrech* is one which cannot be explained. The LXX. has *κῆρυνξ ἐκῆρυνξεν*. The Vulgate, *clamante preconē ut omnes coram eo genu flecterent*; the Targum, 'father of the King'; St. Jerome, 'tender father' (*Quaest. in Gen.*). Luther says, 'As to the meaning of *Abrech* let people wrangle over it till the last day.' Dr. Cheyne says it may be neither Egyptian nor Hebrew, but a Babylonian word = *vizier*. (*Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Abrech*.) He has since amended it into Yarhamite Arabia, which apparently fell prostrate before Joseph. (*Traditions and Beliefs*, p. 467.) The English 'bow the knee' is from the Hiphil of the Hebrew root *brk*, to kneel = to make to kneel down.

(p. 40)

4. Joseph's name or title in the LXX. is rendered *ψορθομφανήχ* = Coptic, 'revealer of secrets.' Brugsch considers that Joseph was appointed governor (*za*) of the Sethroite nome of which Pithom was the capital. Pithom was also called the habitation of *ʾankh* = 'the

god who lives.' The title Zaphnath-Paaneach would consequently mean 'Governor of the district of the nome of the living God.' 'Father of Pharaoh' (Heb. of Gen. xlv. 8, *ab-le-pharao*) should be the Egyptian '*ab-en-parao*,' a high officer of the Court. (*L'Exode et les Monuments égyptiens.*) Driver (*Genesis*, p. 344) remarks: 'Egyptologists . . . are now generally agreed that this name means God (or the God) spake and he (the bearer of the name) came into life.' It is, however, remarkable that inscription names of this kind do not appear earlier than the twentieth dynasty. (p. 40)

5. In the J narratives Judah, in the E documents Reuben, takes the lead. (p. 41)

6. Goshen is always correctly called Γεσέμ in the LXX., and in Gen. xlv. 10, ἐν γῆ Γεσέμ Ἀραβίας. Γεσέμ has been identified with the Egyptian *Kosem*, the Phacusa of classical geography. It was in the Arabian nome, through which the railway from Zagazig to Ismailia now passes. Goshen was not cultivated till after the Exodus. Sayce, *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, chapter v., pp. 234-237. Gen. xlvii. 11 (P) calls Goshen 'the land of Rameses,' see Ex. i. 11. McNeile, *Exodus*, p. xcii. ('The Geography of Exodus'). Cheyne, *Traditions and Beliefs*, p. 447. (p. 42)

7. The one portion is in Hebrew 'One Shechem'; in LXX. σίκκιμα ἐξάιπερον. The word means 'shoulder' or mountain ridge. Perhaps Jacob deliberately plays on the word. St. Jerome thinks he alludes to Shechem and remarks '*pulchre allusit ad nomen.*' Kuenen proposes to add the word 'not' before 'sword'; 'Which I took from the hand of the Amorite (but) not with my sword,' *i.e.* I acquired not by force but by honourable purchase. Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*, vol. ii., p. 263, Eng. Tr. Driver (*Genesis*, p. 379, note) refers to Jubilees xxxiv. 1-9, where there is an allusion to a tradition that Jacob was attacked by seven Amorite kings. (p. 42)

8. Gen. xlix. 10 is one of the most obscure verses in the whole Bible.

The word rendered in the A.V. 'lawgiver' may mean 'one who directs,' or 'a staff' the sign of a lawgiver.

The word Shiloh is very variously explained:

- (1) A proper name of a person:
 - (a) One sent.
 - (b) The peaceful one.
- (2) A relative pronoun and a preposition:
 - (a) He whose it is.
 - (b) He who is Judah's.
- (3) The name of a place: Until Judah come to Shiloh, *i.e.* till the end of the wanderings during which Judah led the tribes.

There are objections to all these renderings. Delitzsch (*New Commentary on Genesis*) sums up his discussion as follows: 'Thus the prophecy has Christ as the goal of its fulfilment; it is Messianic without having to understand *shiloh* personally.' (See note 18 on

Chapter V.) Driver (*Genesis*, p. 386) points out that the rendering 'until Shiloh come' does not appear before 1534. It was introduced into the 'Great Bible' 1539-1541, and is repeated in other English versions. See also below, Chapter V. note 18. For the different renderings see *Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Shiloh*, col. 4470. Dr. Cheyne in this article renders the verse, 'A champion shall not depart from Judah, nor a marshal from between his bands, until he tramples upon Laishah, and the Jerahmeelites are obedient unto him.' This was in 1903. In 1907 (*Traditions and Beliefs*, p. 408) he retains Shiloh and renders the last line in the traditional way. (p. 42)

9. Here we have an example of a derivation due to assonance rather than to the meaning of the word. Abel-Mizraim = 'the meadow of Egypt,' but as the root 'bl means to mourn, the narrator thinks of the mourning of the funeral cortège of Jacob. (p. 43)

10. The reforming king Amen-hotep IV. had a minister, bearing the Semitic name of Dudu, derived from the same root as David. In the nineteenth dynasty the Semitic races became once more unpopular in Egypt. Sayce, *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 237. Driver, *Genesis*, pp. xlvi. ff. and 344. (p. 45)

11. The identification of Rameses II. as the Pharaoh of the oppression is largely due to the statement of P that the Israelites built the treasure cities Pithom and Raamses (Ex. i. 11 [J]). (p. 46)

12. It is curious to notice the double narrative of the oppression. In the two early sources throughout, J describes Israel as a nation living apart from the Egyptians in Goshen (Ex. viii. 22, ix. 26); according to E they live in a royal city (i. 15), and are not numerous, as two midwives are sufficient. (p. 46)

13. The Hebrew derivation does not really explain the name of Moses. As McNeile remarks, the Hebrew *Mosheh*, an active participle in the masculine gender, 'could not possibly give the required meaning.' (*Exodus*, p. 3.) The Greek Μωϋσῆς is said to be derived from the Coptic 'Saved from Water.' Josephus, *Antiq.* II. ix. 6. If the word is the Egyptian *mesu*, it means son. Cf. Rameses. (p. 46)

14. The traditional history of Moses is given by Josephus and by Artapanus in Eusebius's *Praeparatio Evangelica*, ix. 27. See also Philo's *Vita Mosis*. He was originally named Joachim. He refused to be suckled by an Egyptian nurse. He was adopted by the princess, whose name was Thermuthis. He was so beautiful as a child that all turned aside to gaze on him. He led an expedition against the Ethiopians. He invented boats and engines for building, etc. He married the daughter of the king of the Ethiopians. Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Moses*. Some of these traditions seem to be alluded to in Acts vii. 22. (p. 46)

15. The situation of Midian must depend on that of the Mountain of the Lawgiving. The Midianites were a roving tribe, and it is by

no means impossible that they were in the Sinaitic peninsula. On the other hand, the territory of Midian is generally placed by the Gulf of Akabah in N. Arabia. See Mr. Chapman's article *Midian* in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*. McNeile (*Exodus*, pp. civ. ff.) thinks that Horeb is east of the Gulf of Akabah. (p. 47)

16. The two accounts of the revelation of God to Moses by this name are in chapters iii. and vi. respectively. I AM THAT I AM, Greek ἐγὼ εἶμι ὁ ὄν, should be rendered, I will become what I will become. The Sacred Name J H V H is formed of the same root-letters as the Hebrew word I AM. The form Jehovah is due to the practice in the Hebrew text of giving the tetragrammaton the vowels of the word *Adonāy* or 'Lord.' Hence the κύριος of the LXX. and the 'Dominus' of the Vulgate. It should always be remembered that the word printed LORD in our Bible is a proper name. See Chap. I. note 6. (p. 48)

17. See Budde, *Religion of Israel before the Exile*, p. 30. For an explanation of El-Shaddai, see McNeile, *Exodus*, p. 40. (p. 48)

18. The sharp stone used by Zipporah was probably the instrument originally used for this purpose. (Josh. v. 2, 3.) To this day the children of Jews, who die before the eighth day, are circumcised with a flint. (Kalisch, *Exodus*.) The rest of the verse is ambiguous. It may be rendered 'And she touched his feet, and said, Truly thou art a bridegroom of blood to me.' Who is meant? Moses or the child? The Jews' commentators seem to think that Zipporah is addressing her son. Ibn Ezra says that a child on the day of his circumcision is called 'A bridegroom of blood.' Of course Moses may be meant, and in this case Zipporah means that having saved her husband's life by her child's blood she has entered into a closer relationship with him. It may be that Moses was punished for not having circumcised his child on the eighth day (Gen. xvii.); but the circumcision of children was not in all probability a primitive custom among the Israelites (Josh. v. 2). It was not lawful for women to perform the rite; and Zipporah was only justified by necessity. McNeile (*Exodus*, p. 29) says: 'In most case the ceremony (of circumcision) was performed when a youth reached the age of manhood. It brought him into full possession of tribal privileges, and in particular it gave him the right to marry. At this point the story of Moses becomes clearer. Moses had apparently not been circumcised previously to his marriage; and his sudden illness is ascribed to Yahveh's anger at the omission. By circumcising the infant instead of Moses, and touching Moses with the blood, Zipporah symbolically brought her husband into the state which Yahveh was supposed to require; 'he became a bridegroom of blood.' In a note Dr. McNeile calls attention to the unique plural, circumcisions, Heb. *mulōth*, which may imply that the child was circumcised actually and Moses symbolically. Dr. Chcyne in his *Traditions and Beliefs*, p. 352, gives some interesting theories of Baentsch, Geiger, and Prof. H. P. Smith; but as he justly remarks, if such super-

stitutions had existed in Israel they would not adequately account for the appearance of the story. He believes it refers to a victory over the Arabians and an act of heroism by Zipporah. (p. 49)

19. 'Stubble instead of straw.' Straw, especially when chopped, is food for cattle in Egypt. It was only therefore by indulgence that the Hebrews were allowed to use it. Professor Flinders Petrie says: 'To restrict the use of straw for brick-making and to require waste material, such as stubble, to be found, was quite customary; and many more bricks are to be seen made from waste than those containing good food.' McNeile refers to the words of the Israelites, Numb. xi. 5, to shew that their slavery was not altogether intolerable. He also gives a description of brick-making in Egypt, *Exodus*, p. 31. (p. 50)

20. The great moral difficulty in regard to the plagues is the 'hardening of Pharaoh's heart.' Did God lead the king into sin in order that He might punish him? The solution may be found in a careful examination of the words translated by 'harden.' There are three: (1) Ex. vii. 3, 'to make stubborn'; (2) 'to make heavy'—used of Jehovah hardening Pharaoh's heart, x. 1, and of Pharaoh hardening his own heart, viii. 15; (3) 'to make stubborn or firm,' iv. 21. It is noticeable that God twice predicted that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, using in one case No. 1 and in the other No. 3. The latter is a neutral word used sometimes in a good sense. God did not *harden* Pharaoh's heart till after the sixth plague; even then He did not make it callous, but strengthened it in opposition. Pharaoh is never treated other than as a free agent. (p. 52)

21. *Recent theories concerning Israel in Egypt.* The extreme importance the Israelites attached to the fact that they had been delivered from Egypt renders it somewhat startling to the ordinary reader that it should be possible for men of learning to maintain that the Israelites never were in that country at all. Yet this theory has been from time to time advanced by students of Old Testament history. Stade, for example, is of opinion that the Hebrew tribes had sought a pasture for their flocks to the south of the Wady Tumulât and that therefore part of them had come under the power of the Egyptian kings, who may well have exacted forced labour. The free Hebrews probably wandered to the east of the Elamitic Gulf, the eastern branch of the Red Sea, and were joined by their fugitive brethren at Kadesh. Winckler is much bolder, he says that Egypt (Mizraim) is a mistaken rendering for Musur, a N. Arabian tribe, among whom the Israelites sojourned, and consequently they were never in Egypt at all. Cheyne seems to think that only the Rachel-tribes were in Egypt. (*Encycl. Biblica*, Art. *Exodus*, col. 1434.) The advocates of these extreme views seem to be in the condition which Budde describes as the 'second stage' in regard to tradition: 'In all fields of historical tradition three stages have succeeded one another in regular order. In the first, tradition is regarded as equivalent to history. . . . In the second, this test (of possibility) is applied; and having convinced themselves that things cannot really have happened as they are reported, men reject

tradition as pure fiction. . . . In the third stage only do they take the pains to bring out by skilful questioning the secrets of tradition . . . and thus to recover from it its historical nucleus.' (*Religion of Israel before the Exile*, Eng. Tr., p. 2, note.) (p. 53)

22. The place where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea is a matter of dispute. The present form of the narrative in Exodus gives the following stations, Rameses to Succoth (Ex. xii. 37), Etham (xiii. 20), before Pi-hahiroth between Migdol and the sea, before Baal-Zephon (Ex. xiv. 2). Here they were in such a position as to be at Pharaoh's mercy, so that he could say 'They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.' At this point they marched forward into the Red Sea. It is not however quite certain what is meant by the Red Sea; the Hebrew is *Yam-suph*, 'the sea of reeds.' There are three main views of the passage:

- (1) That the Israelites crossed the Gulf of Suez opposite Moses Wells, and that they were shut in by the Jebel Ataka, the mountain south-west of Suez.
- (2) That they went by the Wady-et-Tumîlât and crossed the Bitter Lakes through which the canal now passes.
- (3) That Baal-Zephon is Mount Casius on the Mediterranean and that the Israelites made their way thither and that Pharaoh's army was swallowed up in the Red Sea (*Yam-suph*) east of Mt. Casius. (Brugsch, *L'Exode et les Monuments*.)

McNeile points out that the word 'sea' does not exclude the possibility of a lake, and that *Yam-suph* seems to point to a marshy spot covered with reeds or flags.

If Goshen is, as has been suggested above, in the Arabian nome, route No. 2 would naturally be chosen by the Israelites. For the explanation of the southward movement (Ex. xiv. 2) see McNeile, *Exodus*, p. xcvi. (p. 54)

23. The isthmus of Suez is intersected by a line of lakes, and in the days of the Exodus all the exits from Egypt were protected by fortresses. Migdol—a Semitic name (Ex. xiv. 2)—and Etham (Khetam) (Ex. xiii. 20) mean 'tower' and 'entrenchment' respectively; see also Numb. xxxiii. 7. All the regular roads out of the country were consequently barred. To take the caravan route to Syria was to court a battle between the disciplined Egyptian troops and the ill-armed and ill-disciplined fugitives. Consequently, as we are told, God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, though that was near. (Ex. xiii. 17.) The obvious route therefore from Goshen was by the Wady Tumîlât along the Fresh-water Canal and the railway from Zakâzîk to Ism'âiliya. Here however they were barred by Lake Timsah and the Old Bitter Lakes, either of which they might have crossed. Or, as Josephus suggests (*Antiq.* II. xv. 1), they may have gone as far south as Cairo and journeyed to Suez by the *Derb el Hajj* the pilgrim road to Mecca, or by the old overland route of the Anglo-Indian Mails. This leads to the traditional scene of the passage and satisfies the description of the desperate situation of the Israelites 'entangled in the land' and

'shut in by the wilderness' (Ex. xiv. 3). The pursuing armies of Egypt blocked all retreat by the road and the mountain of Ataka cut off all hope of retreat. Nothing remained but for the fugitives to trust themselves to the sands, which are dry at low tide for some two miles south of the present town of Suez. The difficulty is that the east wind (xiv. 21) would not have driven back the tide so as to help the Israelites; but on this see McNeile, *Exodus* pp. xevii-xeviii. The Israelites always dreaded chariots and did all they could to lure their enemies into marshy places where they could not be used effectively. Cf. the defeat of Sisera, where the flood of the Kishon impeded his chariots, Judg. v. 21-22, with Ex. xiv. 25, 'And he bound their chariot wheels and made them to drive heavily.' See the maps in Baedeker's *Guide to Lower Egypt*, pp. 196, 210. (p. 56)

Chapter IV.

1. An interesting illustration of 'meekness' being the greatest qualification for a leader is found in Lord Rosebery's *Life of Pitt*: 'A truer light is thrown by the conversation which is recorded to have taken place as to the quality most required in a Prime Minister. While one said Eloquence, another Knowledge, and another Toil, Pitt said Patience.'

The word *anav*, used in Numb. xii. 3 of Moses, is frequently employed in the Psalms to designate the 'humble' or 'afflicted' in Israel. (p. 70)

2. The Sinaitic peninsula was occupied by the Egyptian kings of the 4th dynasty, circa B.C. 4000, and almost all the kings of this and the 5th and 6th dynasties have left memorials of themselves there, especially in the Wady Maghara. Flinders Petrie, *Hist. of Egypt*, vol. i., pp. 35, 43, 71, 78 and *passim*. The Egyptians also seem to have worked the mines at most every *alternate* year, and much less frequently at the time of the Exodus, so that it is not impossible that the Israelites should have gone there unmolested if their sanctuary were not there. McNeile, *Exodus*, p. cii. After Rameses IV. little trace of Egyptian occupation appears in the peninsula. Sayce, *Higher Criticism etc.*, p. 266.

The name Sinai is from Sin, the moon-god of Babylonia, and the sanctity of the mountain (wherever it was) was probably very ancient 'Not only' says Mr. Rendel Harris 'are there within the limits of the so-called Sinaitic Peninsula the marks of an astonishingly early stage of civilisation, but there is also the indication of the existence of early forms of religion, far removed from the semi-fetichism of wandering Arab tribes.' Hastings' *Dict. of Bible*, Art. *Sinai*. See also Flinders Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, ch. xvii. (p. 71)

3. There appears however to be some reason to suppose that in Biblical times Sinai was placed in Edom. This is implied in Judg. v. 4, 5, Deut. xxxiii. 2, Hab. iii. 3; see also Galatians iv. 25, 'Mount

Sinai in Arabia.' The land of Midian, whither Moses fled from Pharaoh, is generally said to lie to the west of the Gulf of Akabah; and Jethro visited the Israelites at Sinai. Horeb, where Moses saw the vision in the Bush, is the same as Sinai; Horeb being used by E and D, whilst J and P always speak of Sinai as the scene of the Lawgiving. In the 4th century A.D. the traditional Jebel Musa was identified as the mountain of the Law, as appears in the *Pilgrimage* of Silvia (now known as Etheria), 385-388. The natural road for a people fleeing from Egypt would not have been to the Sinaitic peninsula, though, if a late date for the Exodus be assumed, this territory may have been abandoned by the Egyptians. See Rendel Harris in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Exodus*, where he accepts the traditional view: and *Sinai*, where he does justice to the theory of the scene of lawgiving being in Midian; Sayce, *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 263 (in favour of abandoning the traditional Sinai for a more eastern mountain); Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 42, and Palmer, *Desert of the Exodus*, give descriptions of the Jebel Musa. The map facing p. 72 will, it is hoped, illustrate the different views of the wanderings. Amalek (Ex. xvii.) and Midian (Ex. xviii.) can hardly be expected to be in the Sinaitic peninsula. (p. 71)

4. The passages relating to the gift of the manna are Ex. xvi. and Numb. xi. 6-9. See also Deut. viii. 3, 16. The latter is undoubtedly pre-exilic. The chapter in Exodus belongs mainly to P, but it is extremely hard to analyse; *vv.* 1-3, 6-24, 31-36, are mainly from P, the rest is J E. (Bennett.) Driver agrees with this, but considers that *vv.* 6-8 ought to follow *v.* 12. Cook (*Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Manna*, § 3) suggests that the question in *v.* 15, 'What is it?' (R.V.), belongs to some ancient tradition. See McNeile, *Exodus*, p. xxi.

In the peninsula of Sinai the tamarisk yields a sort of gum in the nights of June and July owing to the twigs being punctured by an insect, and this is now called *manna*. There is also a species of lichen, used for food in years of famine, which is found in the deserts of Arabia. As, however, Professor Macalister shews in his article on this subject in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, the Biblical narrative clearly implies that the gift of manna was miraculous. The name is probably Egyptian: the derivation in p. 71, *man hu*, What is this? or, It is a gift (from an Aramean word), is one of the many attempts to account for strange names in Scripture. (p. 72)

5. Jethro or Jether, Reuel and Hobab are all styled Moses' father-in-law. In Ex. ii. 18 the priest of Midian is called Reuel; iii. 1, Jethro, also in iv. 18 and xviii. *passim*. In Numb. x. 29 we read of 'Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law.' In Judges i. 16, the brother- (or father-) in-law of Moses is called a Kenite. In the J documents (Ex. ii. 18 and Numb. x. 29) we have Reuel; in the E, Jethro. The question is, was Reuel Zipporah's grandfather and Hobab and Jethro brothers? All difficulty is removed if we regard Reuel of Ex. ii. 18 as a gloss, due to a misconception of Numb. x. 29. Driver, *Lit. of Old Test.*, 6th ed., pp. 22 f. See Mr. Solbie's Art. in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*. (p. 73)

6. See 1 Peter ii. 9; Heb. xii. 20.

(p. 73)

7. The Ten Commandments are also given in Deuteronomy v. The fourth commandment varies considerably from that in Exodus. The motive for the Sabbath rest is 'that thy manservant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.' And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant,' etc. Dr. Driver considers that the Commandments were 'derived by E from a pre-existing source, the substance at least being engraven on the tables in the Ark.' He thinks the hortatory parts in the 4th and 5th are of later date, and that the original commandments were bare prohibitions or laws.

'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,' etc.

Introduction to Old Testament, p. 30. See also Carpenter and Harford, *Composition of the Hexateuch*, p. 233.

The Commandments are differently divided.

- (1) The Jews make the preface 'I am the Lord', etc., the first commandment, and make the second and first into a single command.
- (2) The Roman Catholics and Lutherans make the first and second as we have them into a single commandment, and our tenth into two.
- (3) Our arrangement is that of Philo, Josephus, and Origen, and of the venerable Greek Church.

There are two separate Ten Commandments: those which God delivered on Mount Sinai (Ex. xx.), which are preserved in E, and those in Ex. xxxiv. 14-26, written by Moses on the tables of stone. The latter are in J, and are summarised as follows:—(1) Thou shalt worship no other divinity (*el*). (2) Thou shalt make for thyself no molten gods. (3) Every first-born is mine. (4) Six days shalt thou work, and on the seventh thou shalt rest. (5) In ploughing time and in harvest shalt thou rest. (6) Thou shalt observe the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Ingatherings. (7) Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven. (8) The fat of my feast shall not remain till the morning. (9) The best of thy first-fruits shalt thou bring to the house of Jehovah. (10) Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk. (Also Ex. xxiii. 14-19.)

It requires, however, a little ingenuity to make the passage contain ten words. I have combined Wellhausen's and Cheyne's arrangement. As to 5 I am at loss. Wellhausen makes 6 two commands. Cheyne thinks 5 must be amended into a command to observe the Passover; 10 he alters into 'thou shalt not put on the garment of a Yerahme'-elite woman' (see Deut. xxii. 5: the Hebrew *bshl* = to seethe; *lshb* = to put on). *Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah*, p. 102.

(p. 73)

8. The original altar was a natural rock, Judg. vi. 11 ff. Single stones also served as altars, 1 Sam. xiv. 32-35. *Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Altar*. It is here evidently contemplated that altars are common, and that there is no idea of only one altar being legal in accordance with the law of Deut. xii. 13-14, cf. Josh. xxii. 11-34. Altars were built by Gideon (Judg. vi. 26), Manoah (Judg. xiii. 16-20, a rock was used as one), Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 35), David (2 Sam. xxiv. 18, 25),

Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 32). Ezekiel's altar (xliiii. 13-17) was reached by three steps, and was evidently made of prepared stones. Solomon's altar (1 Kings viii. 64) was of brass, and the Tabernacle altar (Ex. xxvii. 1-8) of acacia wood overlaid with brass. Evidently the prohibition to employ tools in making altars was disregarded. McNeile, *Exodus*, p. 125. (p. 74)

9. The Laws of Slavery, etc., are illustrated by the newly discovered code of Khammurabi, King of Babylon, *circa* B.C. 2285. Some of the laws are almost identical with those of the 'Book of the Covenant', as a few instances may shew.

- (a) Ex. xx. 24. 'Eye for eye, tooth for tooth.' *Code*, Laws 196, 200.
- (b) Ex. xxi. 28-36. Laws concerning injuries done by oxen. *Code*, Laws 250-252.
- (c) Ex. xxii. 1-4. Multiple restitution for injuries. *Code*, Laws 5, 8, 106, 107, 112.
- (d) Ex. xxi. 21. Slave regarded as a chattel. *Code*, Laws 219, 231.

The cases of Sarah and Hagar, and Rachel and her maid Bilhah, are exactly provided for by the laws of the Code, 141, 145.

Johns, *The Oldest Code of Law*, and *Journal of Theological Studies* for Jan. 1903. McNeile, *Exodus*, Introduction, pp. xxxix ff. Kent, *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*, pp. 61-65. (p. 76)

10. *Elohim* may be God, the judges, or the local sanctuary. The Code of Khammurabi recognises the Ordeal, as do the laws in Numbers v. 11 to end. *Code*, Laws 2, 132. For other explanations see McNeile, *Exodus*, p. 127. (p. 76)

11. On the Bull-worship, see pp. 223-224. It is remarkable that both in the Wilderness and in the days of Jeroboam the Levites are represented as hostile to the cultus. (2 Chr. xi. 13.) Mr. S. A. Cook however thinks that Jehovah was not the god who was worshipped in the golden calf:—'When the Levites took up their stand on the side of Yahveh (Ex. xxxii. 26), the original conflict was hardly between higher and lower forms of Yahveh-worship, but between Yahveh and a rival deity.'—*American Journal of Theology*. (p. 77)

12. The mention of this 'Tent' before the Tabernacle was made, is a striking example of the composite nature of the Hexateuch, a striking example of the composite nature of the H. Ex. xxxiii. 7-11 belongs to E. The 'Tent' was pitched outside the camp, and Moses and Joshua had charge of it. As the home of the Ark in later days was in Ephraim, it appears that that tribe, whose representative (Numb. xiii. 8) was Joshua, had the custody of Israel's *sacra*. (p. 79)

13. The Name of Jehovah is used as a succinct expression of the revealed character of God. Wherever Jehovah 'records His Name,'

according to the early law book, there men are to build an altar to Him. (Ex. xx. 24.) What is meant by this 'recording of His Name' may be seen by examining the various narratives of the building of altars. Gen. xii. 7, xxii. 9; Judges vi. 24, etc. Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Name*. Tertullian explains the passage in Ex. xxxiii. 13-23 by saying that Moses seeing God's 'back parts' means the Glory of God as revealed in the latter days ('*posterioribus temporibus*'), *Adv. Marcionem*, iv. 22. (p. 79)

14. The history of the Tabernacle is somewhat obscure. It is mentioned in Deut. xxxi. 14, 15, but here it is apparently not the structure of the Priestly Code, but the Tent which Moses and Joshua had set up *without* the camp. (See note 12.) In Josh. xviii. 1, the Israelites are said to have set it up in Shiloh. In Josh. xix. 51, the lots for the tribes are said to have been cast there. (Both these passages are from P.) It is never mentioned in Judges. This sanctuary was very unlike the Tabernacle as described in Exodus. (See Chapter VI.) In the account of the capture of the Ark and its restoration by David, nothing is said of the Tabernacle; and it is not till we come to the late book of Chronicles (2 Chr. i. 3) that there is an allusion to the Tabernacle at Gibeon in Solomon's days. We know the story of the Ark, and hints are not wanting concerning the tent sanctuary of Moses and Joshua, but of the more elaborate Tabernacle nothing is known. Flinders Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, p. 106. (p. 80)

15. The Kenites are said to have been the tribesmen of Moses' father-in-law. (Judges i. 16.) For the permanency of the alliance, see Judges iv. 17, 1 Sam. xv. 6. The Kenites of the Rechabite sect were most zealous for the honour of Jehovah. (2 Kings x. 15 ff., Jer. xxxv.) See my article in the *Interpreter* (Oct. 1906), 'Israel and the Surrounding Nations.' (p. 81)

16. It is remarkable that Taberah is not mentioned in the itinerary of Numb. xxxiii. (p. 81)

17. The late Professor Palmer, in his *Desert of the Wanderings*, says that the Arabs have a tradition of a number of pilgrims being destroyed in the peninsula of Sinai. As this is out of the pilgrim route to Mecca, it may be a survival of the story of the destruction of the Israelites at Kibroth-Hattaavah. (p. 82)

18. There are two distinct narratives of the mission of the spies. In the earlier (E) (Numb. xiii. 17b-20, 22-24, 26b-31, 32b-33) the spies are sent to the southern district in the neighbourhood of Hebron, and bring a cluster of grapes from the valley of Esheol. They bring a good report of the land, but say that its inhabitants are too formidable to attack.

The remaining verses of chapter xiii., viz., 1-17a, 21, 25-26a, and 32a, make the spies search out the whole Land of Promise as far as Hamath in the far north. Not being able to see the land with eyes

of faith, they bring 'an evil report' of it (v. 31). In the next chapter, xiv., the P narrative says there were two faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb; whereas in that of JE, there was only one, Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who actually inherited the district he spied out. (Josh. xiv. 6-15.) (p. 83)

19. Meribah, according to Exodus xvii. 7, was the scene of a gift of water from a rock at a very early stage of the wanderings. Here and in Ps. xcv. 8 it is mentioned together with Massah. In Numb. xx. 13, Meribah is connected with Kadesh, as it is elsewhere. See also Numb. xxvii. 14, Deut. xxxiii. 2 (the reading Meribath-Kadesh for 'ten thousand of His holy ones'), Ez. xlvi. 28 and xlvii. 19. In Deut. vi. 16, ix. 22, Massah and Meribah are distinct places.

Many difficulties are involved in the present confusion—(1) Where did the fetching water from the rock occur? Probably early in the wanderings, though the passage in Ex. xvii. may be a conflation. (2) Are Massah and Meribah distinct from one another? (3) Where-in did the sin of Moses and Aaron, for which they were forbidden to enter the Land, consist? The account in Numbers (P) suggests that they shewed presumption in striking the rock: 'Shall we fetch you water?' In Deuteronomy there is no allusion to the cause of Jehovah's anger with Moses (nothing is said of Aaron), Deut. i. 37. It has been suggested that Meribah, not the golden calf, was the occasion of the separation of the Levites alluded to, Deut. xxxiii. 8. See Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Arts. *Meribah* and *Moses*. *Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Massah and Meribah*. (p. 84)

20. Numbers xvi., the account of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, seems to contain three narratives:—

- (1) Dathan and Abiram, sons of Reuben, rebel against the *civil* authority of Moses, who wishes (as they allege) to make himself a prince. For this they and their households are swallowed up. (JE.)
- (2) Korah and two hundred and fifty princes rebel against Moses and Aaron in the interests of the people at large as opposed to the monopoly of the tribe of Levi. (P.)
- (3) An independent Priestly account relates how two hundred and fifty Levites rebelled against Aaron's priestly authority.

In Numb. xxvi. 11, alluding to the death of Dathan and Abiram in company with Korah, there is the statement 'Notwithstanding the sons of Korah died not.' They became in fact an influential guild of musicians in the second Temple. (p. 86)

21. According to Judges i. 17, Judah and Simeon together destroyed Zephath and called it Hormah. Possibly the Israelites did not attack Arad during the wanderings, but vowed to devote the land to destruction if they should conquer it later. (p. 87)

22. See Bishop Westcott's note on St. John iii. 14. The Brazen Serpent was preserved as an object of veneration till the time of

Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 4. Dr. G. B. Gray (*Numbers*, Internat. Crit. Comm.) gives three suggestions as to the origin of the 'Serpent' Nehushtan in Hezekiah's time. (1) W. R. Smith's: that it was a totem symbol; (2) Cheyne's: connected with the Babylonian dragon myth; (3) Frazer's: pests destroyed by having images made of them. See Cheyne, *Traditions and Beliefs of Ancient Israel*, and *Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah*, p. 85. (p. 87)

23. The fragments in Numb. xxi. are thought to be of early date, especially the book of the Wars of Jehovah, which, like the book of Jashar, is attributed to the early days of the monarchy, or to the ninth century, B.C. Dr. Sayce, in the *Academy* of October 22, 1902, proposed to render Numb. xxi. 14, 'Wherefore it is said in a book "the Wars of Jehovah were at Wahab in Suph," etc.' Carpenter and Harford, *Composition of the Hexateuch*, pp. 30 and 218. Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Wars of the Lord*, *Book of*. (p. 87)

24. The conquest of Og was evidently regarded as a famous exploit of Moses. The Gibeonites allude to it in Josh. ix. 10. But the exploits of Jair seem to belong to a post-Mosaic period and to have been an invasion of Gilead from the west. According to the book of Judges, Jair lived long after Moses. See Driver on Deuteronomy iii. 14. (p. 88)

25. There is a double narrative of Balaam. Numb. xxii. 1-12 and 36-41 is from E: Balaam is first told by God not to go, and then is ordered to go but only to speak what has been put into his mouth; he goes with the princes of Moab. Numb. xxii. 22-35 is from J: Balaam on his way alone is stopped on the road by Jehovah, who disapproves of his going. Chapter xxiii. is apparently from E, but the first blessing in xxiv. is J. Driver, *Introduction to Old Testament*, p. 62. Hastings' *Dict. of Bible*, Art. *Balaam*, by Mr. Woods. See *The Soothsayer Balaam*, by the Rev. Seraphim, Bishop of Ostrojsk; but above all Butler's great sermon on Balaam, the value of which, as Mr. Woods shews in Hastings, is not really impaired by new views of criticism.

For the importance of a curse pronounced by a duly qualified person see Gray, *Numbers* (Internat. Crit. Commentary), p. 328.

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26. Notice how completely different is the representation of the Midianites from that found in the early chapters of Exodus. The massacre of the Midianites was no part of the early Hebrew tradition. The account of Balaam and the sin of Baal-Peor is manifestly a composite one. (p. 92)

Chapter V.

1. The Hebrew here gives the name in the form Jehoshua. The more familiar Joshua is found in Neh. viii. 17. Professor Margoliouth thinks that the longer form of Jehoshua, which he says must mean 'Jehovah is a rock,' was inserted by the Jews for polemical purposes 'because Christian controversialists based an argument on Moses

having altered his follower's name from Hoshea to Jeshua or Jesus.' But whatever be the meaning of Jehoshua, it is clear that the writer of Numbers, or the scribe who inserted the form, connected it with Hoshea (= deliverance). Jehoshua and Joshua were understood in practically the same sense. Professor Margoliouth also adduces a comment from the wisdom of Ben-Sira which is worth quoting:— 'A mighty hero was Jesus, son of Nun, . . . who became, in accordance with his name, powerful for the salvation of his elect.'—*Ecclus. xlvi. 1.* See Margoliouth, *Lines of Defence of the Biblical Revelation*, p. 235. The facts of Joshua's life before the entry into Canaan are as follows:—(1) Ex. xvii. 8-14, fighting Amalek at Rephidim; curse against Amalek 'recited' to him (E). (2) Ex. xxxiii. 11, in the sacred Tent of Moses 'a young man' (E). (3) Numb. xi. 28, jealous for Moses' sake when Eldad and Medad prophesy (E). (4) Numb. xiii. 8, xiv. 6, 30, faithful with Caleb as one of the spies (P). (5) Numb. xiii. 16, Oshea the son of Nun called Jehoshua by Moses (P); according to P the Name JHVH had not been revealed till after Joshua's birth, so that he could not have been called Jehoshua from the first (Gray, *International Critical Commentary in loco*). (6) Numb. xxvii. 18-23, appointed successor of Moses by Divine command, 'consecrated by Eleazar the Priest' (P). In Deuteronomy Joshua appears i. 37-38 (Moses' successor: appointed after the return of the spies, not as in Numb. xxvii. at the end of Moses' life); iii. 28 (Moses when told to ascend Pisgah is ordered to encourage Joshua); xxxi. 7, 14 (encouraged by Moses and summoned for consecration to the Tent); xxxii. 44 (Moses and Hoshea the son of Nun recite the Song). It will be noticed that Joshua's name is absent from J in all these early notices. His appearance in E shews that he was an Ephraimite leader and the representative of the long supremacy of the tribe. But in Joshua xvii. 14-18 he appears in J as the arbiter of all Israel. G. A. Smith in *Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Joshua*. (p. 95)

2. The narrative embodies two accounts of the passage of the Jordan. In the one, the twelve stones are set up in the midst of Jordan (Josh. iv. 9), and in the other the monument is erected at Gilgal, 'the place where they passed the night' (iv. 8 and 20). Similarly the priests pass over twice (*cf.* iv. 11 with iv. 18). Prof. W. H. Bennett, *Joshua*. (p. 95)

3. All the campaigns described in Joshua are wars of extermination. The Canaanites and their cities were placed under the *herem* or ban, *i.e.* were devoted to the Lord. The word *herem* is connected with a verb that means 'to shut up from common use.' Thus, the *haram* is the portion of an Eastern dwelling set apart for women. Anything placed under the ban and set apart in this way could not be bought or sold, and any person so devoted must be put to death. (Levit. xxvii. 28, 29.) The sin of Achan consisted in preserving to his own use something that had been devoted to Jehovah. The sin of Saul in keeping Agag alive was similar in character. An interesting instance of the complete destruction of a town in fulfilment of a vow devoting it to the national deity may be adduced from the

Moabite Stone. King Mesha made the following inscription : ' And Chemosh said to me, " Take Nebo against Israel," and I went by night and fought against it from break of dawn till noon, and I took it and put them all to death, 7,000 men and boys and women and girls and female slaves, for I had made it *herem* to Chemosh.' A similar custom prevailed among the Gauls : ' When they have resolved to fight, they usually devote to Mars all the spoils of war : of the surviving booty, the living things are sacrificed, while the rest of the property is brought into one place. In many districts you may see mounds built up of these things in consecrated spots. Rarely did it happen that any one disregarded the sacred vow and dared either to hide in his house the things he had taken or to take away from the heap the things that had been placed there. To this crime a very heavy penalty involving the torture of crucifixion was affixed.' Caesar, *De Bell. Gall.*, vi. 17. (p. 96)

4. The Jewish historian Josephus suggests the reading ' Rahab the hostess, or innkeeper,' instead of ' Rahab the harlot.' This suggestion naturally explains the reasons why the spies went to Rahab's house and why her premises should first be searched. But there does not seem sufficient ground for altering the rendering of the Hebrew word, which is uniformly translated ' harlot ' elsewhere. Nor should we save the character of Rahab by adopting this interpretation : *παργοκευτρία* in Aristophanes, *Ranae* 144 ff., is used in a bad sense, and we must remember that even among the peoples of Canaan harlots were recognised as religious votaries. Recent excavations at Jericho have been carried out by Dr. Sellin (1907), and perhaps even the house of Rahab has been discovered. (p. 97)

5. The names Achan and Achor are connected with a root meaning ' to trouble.' Achan appears in the form Achar (' troubler ') in 1 Chr. ii. 7. The meaning of Achor is doubtful. It may be ' desolation,' or ' causing trouble.' The valley was on the northern boundary of Judah, but cannot with certainty be identified. Hosea and Isaiah prophesy the close of its desolation (Hosea ii. 15, Is. lxxv. 10). See W. H. Bennett, *Joshua*. The reading of the LXX. in Josh. vii. 25 and 26 deserves notice : ' And Joshua said to Achor, Why hast thou destroyed us ? The Lord shall destroy thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and they set up over him a great heap of stones ; and the Lord ceased from the anger of his wrath.' The LXX. gives us the form Achar (as in 1 Chr. ii. 7) and omits the stoning of the family of Achan, which to us seems an inexplicable severity. But we must remember that this visiting the sins of the father on the children is characteristic of the stage of moral development at which Israel had arrived at the time of the conquest. The children of Israel were just beginning to understand sin and God's horror of it. They had not yet learnt to distinguish between the sinner and the sin, nor to separate the individual sinner from the family to which he belonged. The whole family was responsible for the sin of its individual members ; the whole family had to bear the guilt and share the punishment. It is not till the time of Ezekiel that the Jews began to see that the individual must take the

whole responsibility of his sins. 'The soul that sinneth, it (*i.e.* and no one else) shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.' (Ezek. xviii. 20.) This lesson had yet to be grasped. In the story of Achan we see Israel learning the exceeding sinfulness of sin, thus preparing the way for the teaching of the Prophets and the still fuller revelation of the New Testament. (p. 97)

6. As in the narrative of the crossing of the Jordan, so in describing the capture of Ai, our author seems to have combined two accounts. In the one, the ambush consists of 30,000 men (Josh. viii. v. 3), the flight is feigned (*vv.* 5-7), the ambush fire the city (*vv.* 8, 20, 21). In the other, the number of men in ambush is 5,000 (*v.* 12), the flight is real (*v.* 15), Joshua burns Ai (*v.* 28). See further, W. H. Bennett, *Joshua*. (p. 98)

7. Hanging among the Hebrews was a form of punishment rather than execution. It was the dead body that was hung upon a tree till eventide. This punishment was viewed with peculiar abhorrence because any indignity to the body was supposed to affect the soul in Sheol. The Philistines treated Saul as Joshua treated the King of Ai, and hung up his body on the wall of Bethshan. Study in this connection Deut. xxi. 22, 23; 1 Sam. xxxi. 8-13; 2 Sam. xxi. 12; 1s. xiv. 18-20. (R. H. Kennett.) (p. 98)

8. In writing the Law, Joshua did not use the unhewn stones of the altar, but other stones prepared in the manner referred to in Deut. xxvii. 1-4: the surface of the stone was coated with lime or gypsum, and thus rendered capable of receiving and retaining inscriptions made with some suitable pigment. The practice was Egyptian. See Driver, *Deuteronomy*, *in loc.* (p. 98)

9. The book of Jashar, or the book of the upright, was a collection of songs and ballads about national heroes. It included David's lament over Saul and Jonathan. Possibly the song of Deborah and Barak belongs to this collection. Solomon, according to the LXX. of 1 Kings viii. 53, contributed to a 'book of Song' which may be 'Jashar' (Heb. *Hashshir*). The poetical account of Joshua's defeat of the five kings has been taken literally by the narrator. But we have no need to suppose that the day was miraculously lengthened. The poetic imagery may be paralleled from the Song of Deborah, which tells us that 'the stars in their courses fought against Sisera' (Judg. v. 20), or from Agamemnon's prayer to Zeus, 'O Zeus, all-glorious and all-powerful, thou that dwellest in heaven amid black clouds, let not the sun go down, let not the night come on, till I have brought Priam's glittering hall in headlong ruin to the ground.' (*Iliad* ii. 214.) W. H. Bennett, *Joshua*. (p. 100)

10. The history of the conquest and of Joshua's part in it is beset with great difficulties. Indeed, Stade is led to deny the historical character of the book of Joshua altogether. He thinks Israel crossed

the Jordan at Jabbok, not Jericho, clan following clan, and securing territory by the peaceful methods of purchase or treaty. Joshua he regards as a legendary personage, an Ephraimite hero. The baseness of this theory has been exposed by Dr. G. A. Smith (*Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, Appendix II.). There is absolutely no reason for setting aside the Biblical tradition which tells us the nation crossed over the river as a whole, under one leader. Jericho is the natural crossing-point, for the place was easily taken—it never stood a siege—and an invader, starting from Jericho, could strike either north or south at will. Joshua's first campaign probably took place in the north, and led to the conquest of the hill-country of Ephraim. His second campaign, summarised in Josh. x. 28-43, gave Judah a secure footing in the south. A comparison of Judges, ch. i., with the account of the conquest in Joshua, clearly proves that the success of Joshua's campaigns has been much exaggerated. It will suffice here to point out that after Joshua's death, according to Judges i., King Adonibezek has again to be fought and conquered (Josh. x.; Judges i.); Debir has once more to be taken (Josh. x. 39; Judges i. 11-15); Bethel needs to be sacked a second time (Josh. xii. 16; Judges i. 22-26). Taanach, Dor, Megiddo, and Gezer are among the cities which Joshua subdued, but which were still unconquered after his death. (Josh. xii. 12, 21-23; Judges i. 27-29.) It is not unlikely that Joshua's real conquests in the main embraced the hill-country of Ephraim and Judah. The fact that his own inheritance lay in the former, points in this direction. (Josh. xix. 49-50.)

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11. Caleb belonged to an Edomite tribe, the Kenezites or Kenizites, who reckoned their descent from Kenaz, the grandson of Esau. This tribe seems to have been incorporated in Judah. See Gen. xxxvi. 15. In J, Caleb the son of Jephunneh is a Kenezite (Numb. xxxii. 12, Josh. xiv. 6); in P, he is a member of the tribe of Judah (Numb. xiii. 6), the son of Jephunneh. In Josh. xv. 13, however, P may suggest that Caleb was a Judahite by incorporation. In 1 Chronicles ii. Caleb is a son of Hezron, and brother of Jerahmeel, and among his descendants are Ephrath, Kirjath-jearim and Bethlehem! In 1 Sam. xxv. 3, xxx. 14, the Calebites are a people bordering on the tribe of Judah. The 'adoption' of these alien clans by Judah and the importance of the Negeb in early Hebrew tradition are among the chief factors in Dr. Cheyne's important 'Jerahmeel' theory which connects the entire history of Israel with the tribes of N. Arabia.

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12. The LXX. gives Shiloh instead of Shechem as the scene of this assembly, the alteration being perhaps intended to bring ch. xxiv. into line with ch. xviii. The fact that in the days of Abimelech, Shechem is still largely inhabited by Canaanites, if not under Canaanitish rule, lends support to the LXX. reading. At any rate, Shiloh was a more important national centre than Shechem until the time of Samuel. We must notice, however, that Shechem is mentioned in E, the Ephraimite source of Joshua, while references to Shiloh are most frequent in the later P.

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13. For a fuller discussion of idolatry in Israel, see pp. 239-242. We may here briefly distinguish the two kinds of Baal-worship which at one time or another influenced the Jewish people. 'Baal' is a general title for a supernatural being who is supposed to own a particular district and fertilises it by springs and other natural irrigation. The Baal is entitled to receive certain dues, first-fruits, and rites of worship, from his human tenants. The Israelites, when they were settled in Canaan, seem to have identified Jehovah with the Baal of the land. At any rate, they supposed that the sacrifices and festivals that pleased the local Baals would likewise please Jehovah. These local practices, many of them innocent enough, they therefore adopted. They came to speak of Jehovah as Baal, and to worship Him as such (Hosea ii. 16). The result was that the idea and the worship of Jehovah were alike degraded. There was great danger of Jehovah being regarded as a mere agricultural deity, representing the productive powers of nature. At first this danger was probably not understood. Names like Ish-baal (=Baal's man; cf. Hannibal =favour of Baal) shew that the people saw no harm in this local Baal-worship. But the substitution of the word 'bosheth' (=the shameful thing) for 'baal' in these names, e.g. Ish-bosheth, Mephibosheth, shews at once the strength and the necessity of the reaction.

Very different from this identification of Jehovah with an agricultural deity was the Baal-worship instituted by Ahab. Here we have a foreign cult introduced for political reasons. Another god, the god of the Phœnicians, is to be worshipped alongside or instead of Jehovah. The idolatries of Solomon, dictated by his wives, are similar in character. This second kind of Baal-worship much more directly contravenes the command 'Thou shalt have no other gods beside Me,' than does the first. For the whole subject, see the article *Baal*, in the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, and W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, pp. 93-113. (p. 105)

14. The name of the altar is not found either in the Hebrew text or in the LXX. It is supplied in the Syriac Bible. W. H. Bennett says that 'probably here, as in Gen. xxxi. 47 f., we have an etymology of Gilead, omitted by some editor to avoid a clear contradiction of v. 10.' See Bennett, *in loc.* (p. 106)

15. The attempt to explain away the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter by supposing she was condemned to perpetual virginity is a failure. There can be no doubt that we are intended by the narrative to understand that Jephthah vowed a human sacrifice to Jehovah and carried out his vow. See G. F. Moore, *Judges*. (p. 108)

16. The phrase translated 'unstable as water' may be more accurately rendered 'bubbling up as water.' Two meanings are then possible: (1) the phrase may refer to the wanton boastfulness of Reuben, a meaning supported by the LXX.; (2) it may have reference to the ardent activity of the tribe in war, an interpretation favoured by so great an authority as W. Robertson-Smith. 'Though Reuben is the first-born, though he is an ardent warrior, yet Israel

will have none of him.' (R. H. Kennett.) The general idea is that of recklessness. The term is used to describe the worthless fellows hired by Abimelech to slay the sons of Gideon (Judges ix. 4).

(p. 108)

17. The Levites mentioned in Judges are all closely connected with Judah. Judah seems to have been the head and representative of the great Leah tribes. Simeon is merged in Judah; and Levi, apparently losing its separate tribal existence, becomes a priestly caste. Micah's priest is at once a Levite and a member of the clan of Judah. The adoption of the Levites as a sacred order may have been due to the fact that Moses belonged to the tribe of Levi. See further, G. F. Moore, *Judges*, note on xvii. 7. There are, however, traces of a tradition that Levi was once a bold adventurous secular tribe closely connected with Simeon. (Gen. xxxiv., xlix. 5-7.)

(p. 110)

18. The meaning of this passage in the blessing of Judah cannot be at present determined. The English versions render 'Until Shiloh comes,' Shiloh being interpreted as a Messianic title = peace-bringer. This use of the word 'Shiloh' cannot be paralleled from the Old Testament, and it is very doubtful whether the word can mean 'peace-bringer.' This interpretation is not supported by antiquity, and must be abandoned. If Shiloh be a proper name, it must refer to the place, and we must translate 'until he come to Shiloh,' or 'so long as people come to Shiloh.' Judah's supremacy will last, in the first case, till Shiloh is won, and in the second, so long as there is a sanctuary in Shiloh. This is not satisfactory, as 'the sceptre' implies royalty, and the kingship of Judah was not historically determined by the conquest of Shiloh, or the continuance of its sanctuary. We have fallen back on the rendering of the LXX. and Old Latin versions, 'Till He come, whose it is,' i.e. 'until the Messiah appear.' For a further discussion, see Driver's article in *Cambridge Journal of Philology*, xiv. (*vide supra*, Note 8, Ch. III.), and his *Genesis*, Excursus II. Ezek. xxi. 27 (32 Heb.) perhaps refers to this passage, 'until he come whose right it is.' Redpath, *Ezekiel*, *in loc.*

(p. 110)

19. The name Cushan-rishathaim means 'Cushan (? the Nubian) of double-dyed villainy.' The historicity of the narrative has been called in question, because it seems improbable that Syria interfered in the affairs of Israel in these early times. The incident may have been introduced to give a Judge to Judah. Moore, *Judges*. The 'tents of Cushan' are mentioned by Habakkuk (iii. 7). This looks as if some Arabian oppressor of Southern Palestine was originally meant.

(p. 111)

20. The prose narrative of ch. iv. and the poem in ch. v. give somewhat different accounts of Jael's deed. From ch. iv. we learn that Sisera went into the tent, and that Jael slew him as he lay asleep by driving a tent-pin through his temple. From the 'Song' it appears that she smote him a crushing blow on the head with some heavy

instrument as he stood at the door of the tent with his face buried in a mighty bowl of curds. The difference is interesting and immaterial. (p. 114)

21. We may follow Wellhausen in taking the narrative as it stands, and in regarding it as descriptive of primitive sacrifice. From the narrative, it is clear that the sacrifice consisted of the eatables that made a simple meal; the meat was boiled—the sons of Eli made the revolutionary demand that the portion of the sacrifice given to the priests should be given raw and not boiled (1 Sam. ii. 15). The sacrifice could be offered on any natural rock, and the specially-built altar was not essential in primitive times. G. F. Moore is inclined to think that Gideon did not intend to make a sacrifice, but hospitably prepared a meal which the Angel of Jehovah turned into a sacrifice, thus revealing His identity. (p. 116)

22. Jerub-baal, 'Let Baal plead.' This etymology is now regarded as fanciful, and some scholars think the whole story of Gideon's second sacrifice, and the preceding destruction of Baal's altar, has been introduced to explain the name. But Jerubbaal may easily be written Jerubaal (cf. Jeruel, 2 Chron. xx. 16), and then it would mean 'Baal founds or establishes,' and as names compounded with Baal (cf. Ishbaal, Meribbaal) are not uncommon in Israel, we need no elaborate explanation of the way in which Gideon came to possess this title. (p. 116)

23. Wellhausen thinks that in viii. 4-28 we have part of an entirely different narrative of Gideon's exploits. The princes of Midian have yet to be taken; 'Gideon's aim is to get hold of the two kings, and the reason is that they have slain his brothers at Tabor.' Gideon is acting not in obedience to the divine call, but in accordance with the duty of blood-revenge. His 300 men are the members of his small clan of Abiezer. The fighting takes place on the east, and not on the west side of Jordan. 'The motive, the actors, the scene of the action, are different. But the discrepancies have been needlessly exaggerated. Men are not compelled to act from single motives, and it is possible to respond at one and the same time to the call of patriotism and the promptings of personal resentment. Moreover, in chap. viii. it is clear that Gideon sets out in pursuit of the Midianites, while still ignorant of his brothers' fate. Wellhausen's hypothesis is unnecessary. See further G. F. Moore, *Judges*, p. 176 (Internat. Crit. Comm.). (p. 118)

24. The story of Gaal, and Zebul, and the Shechemite revolt is somewhat obscure. Was Gaal the leader of the Israelitish section of the inhabitants, or did he put himself at the head of the Canaanitish element? What was Zebul's position? Was he Abimelech's lieutenant, attempting to ruin the revolt by pretending to support it? This seems to be his policy, and, as Kittel suggests, the Shechemites probably killed him, when they discovered his duplicity. We are inclined to follow Mr. Moore in regarding Gaal as the

Canaanite leader. Abimelech seems to have become king as a result of a coalition of Canaanites and Israelites. The dissension of these two factions led to Gaal's revolt, and at the same time enabled Abimelech to crush the rising without difficulty. See further, Moore, *Judges*, in loc. G. F. Moore distinguishes two narratives, and his treatment of the chapter removes many of its difficulties. He assigns Judges ix. 22-25, 42-45, 56 f. to E and 26-41 to J. Selbie in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Abimelech*; see also Kittel, *Hist. Heb.*, Eng. Tr., vol. ii.

The real interest in the history of Abimelech lies in the revelation which it gives of the relations between the Israelites and the Canaanites after the death of Gideon. Abimelech, half Canaanite and half Israelite, endeavoured to unite the two races probably under an Israelite supremacy. Hence the revolt and destruction of Shechem by him. See H. P. Smith, *Old Testament Hist.*, p. 99. (p. 119)

25. Dan and Asher are classed together in Judges v. 17 as maritime tribes, and the exploits of Samson, the Danite, take place on the frontiers of Judah and the Philistines. Josephus (*Antiq.* i. 22) gives Southern Dan a very extensive territory from Dan to Ashdod; but it receives but little attention in the Biblical traditions. In Joshua (xix. 40 ff.) it is the last tribe to have an inheritance, and the Dan fragment is the last of those collected in Judges. (i. 34 ff.) It stands also last on the list in I Chron. xxvii. 16-22. *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Dan*. (p. 119)

26. The Philistines according to Amos ix. 7 came from Caphtor (Deut. ii. 23). Rameses III. (B.C. 1200) records his triumphs over a people called the Purusati, who invaded Palestine. It is thought that they came from Asia Minor. See Maspero, *Struggle of the Nations*; Paton, *Syria and Palestine*; and the article in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. For a very novel view of the obscure origin of this people, see Cheyne, *Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah*, p. xxi. (p. 120)

27. It is difficult to find a good English translation for this simple couplet. Mr. Moore renders as follows:—

‘If with my heifer ye did not plough,
Ye had not found out my riddle, I trow.’

This brings out the rhyme of the words ‘*eglathî*,’ my heifer, and ‘*chidathî*,’ my riddle, but the English is not above reproach, as we require ‘ye had not ploughed,’ instead of ‘ye did not plough.’

(p. 122)

28. Mr. Moore thinks the name En-Hakkoro originally meant Partridge-spring, that bird being known as ‘the caller’ in Hebrew. See Cheyne, *Traditions and Beliefs of Ancient Israel*. (p. 122)

29. By the insertion of an ‘n’ the Jews made this priest trace his lineage from Manasses instead of Moses. But it is clear that the priests of Dan boasted descent from Moses. See Moore, *Judges*, in loc. (p. 124)

30. The word 'Zidonians' is used in two senses in the Old Testament. It may refer (1) to the inhabitants of the city Zidon, or (2) to the Phœnician race, as here, in all probability. The men of Laish were an unwarlike trading people, and in this they resembled the Phœnicians. They were also politically isolated, and their subjugation was thus quite easy. See Moore, *Judges, in loc.* (p. 124)

Chapter VI

1. Shiloh, the modern Seilun (LXX. cod. B. Σηλών, lies, according to Judges xxi. 19, 'on the north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up to from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah.' It stood on a secluded hill about a mile from the main road, about 2300 ft. above the sea level.

It was a sanctuary from early times. The Ark and Tabernacle were placed thereafter the Israelites had left Gilgal. There Joshua is said to have divided the land by lot between the tribes. (Josh. xviii. 8-10, JE², and xviii., xix., etc., P.) The Danite sanctuary, according to E², continued to exist 'all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.' (Judges xviii. 31.) A festival to Jehovah was held there annually. (Judges xxi. 19.)

If any part of the ancient Tabernacle survived at Shiloh, it must have been not the 'Priestly' Tabernacle of Ex. xxv. ff., but the Mosaic Tabernacle of Ex. xxxiii. 7, also mentioned Num. xi. 24-26 and xii. 5. This Tabernacle was placed outside the camp, and was kept by Joshua, who departed not out of it. (Ex. xxxiii. 11.) Joshua, like Samuel, was an Ephraimite (1 Sam. i. 1), though 1 Chr. vi. 22-28 makes the latter a Levite of the house of Kohath, and Josh. xxi. 20 says that the Kohathites had settlements in Ephraim. It is, however, clear that Eli's sanctuary was not the Tabernacle described in the P portions of the Hexateuch. The mention of women ministering at the door of the Tabernacle (1 Sam. ii. 23), which Budde considers a late addition, *cf.* also Ex. xxxviii. 8 (P), is remarkable. The only other allusions to this are found in 2 Kings xxiii. 7, Jer. vii. 18, Ez. viii. 14, in connection with idolatrous worship. The boiling of the sacrificial meat (1 Sam. ii. 13) is a proof of the antiquity of Judges vi. 19, Gideon's sacrifice, which Wellhausen considers very primitive. That Eli was a descendant of Ithamar is inferred from 1 Chr. xxiv. 3: Ahimelech, Eli's great-grandson, is said to be 'of the sons of Ithamar.' Josephus and the rabbis try to account for the fact that the House of Eleazar were temporarily excluded from the high-priesthood. Josephus, *Antiq.* viii. 193. Dr. Cheyne says that 1 Sam. ii. 28 implies that Eli belonged to the original priestly family. *Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Eli.* (p. 129)

2. It is scarcely possible that Hannah can have uttered this Song. It assumes, for example, that there was a king in Israel, v. 10. A translation of the Targum version of the Song is given by Kirkpatrick *Samuel* (Cambridge Bible for Schools), in which Hannah is

made to speak in a spirit of prophecy, and to foretell the destruction of Sennacherib, Javan (Greece), Haman, and other enemies of the Jews. (p. 131)

3. The 'coat' worn by Samuel was the same garment as that which the High Priest wore (Ex. xxviii. 4 [P]). The same word is used of the robe of Jonathan (1 Sam. xviii. 4), and Saul (1 Sam. xxiv. 4), and the garment worn by the daughters of David (2 Sam. xiii. 18). The Ephod (the word is elsewhere used in a different sense) was the regular priestly garment, e.g. at Nob (1 Sam. xxii. 18) all the priests are described as wearing it. Samuel's exercise of the priestly office is described in the *Speaker's Commentary* as 'extraordinary and irregular.'

It may be noticed that there are two independent accounts of Samuel. In the earlier, the choice of Saul, he is represented as a seer (*roeh*) living at Ramah; in the latter as a priestly-prophet. Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Samuel*. (p. 132)

4. This is a very obscure passage, and indeed the whole story of the adventures of the Ark in Philistine territory is difficult to understand. The LXX. of ch. v. 6 says that mice were multiplied in Philistia at the time of the plague, and in this way accounts for the somewhat abrupt mention of the mice in vi. 5. In vi. 19, the LXX. reads, 'And the sons of Jechoniah rejoiced not among the men of Bethshemesh, when they looked upon the ark,' in place of the words, 'And he smote of the men of Bethshemesh.' The number of those smitten, 50,070, is incredible, and in the Hebrew the numeral is given in a most unusual way, 'seventy men and fifty thousand men,' so the reading is probably corrupt. The words 'looked on' the Ark cannot be rendered with the A.V. 'looked into.' The Hebrew means 'to gaze upon.' 'If the expression be used here in a bad sense, it will signify to gaze at, i.e. with unbecoming interest.' Driver (*in loc.*), following Weir, Kirkpatrick and Stade. Possibly, however, the words are an addition of a later editor. H. P. Smith on 1 Sam. xi. 19 (*Internat. Crit. Comm.*). (p. 134)

4a. The Israelite conception of a king was that of a hereditary monarch, as is seen from Judges viii. 22 when the crown was offered to Gideon by the elders of Israel with the words 'Rule thou over us, thou and thy son and thy son's son.' The theocratic idea which underlay the national consciousness regarded the king as the viceroy of Jehovah. The idea of kingship was, says Davidson (*The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 9), 'that of a representative of God sitting on the throne. . . . Such an idea of the kingship led to the most brilliant idealising of the king and his office. Being king for God and in God's kingdom, he had attribute after attribute assigned to him, till at length he was even styled the "mighty God," in whom God Himself would be wholly present. In fact the Messianic idea was inherent in the Israelitish conception of the kingly office, and, as no human being could adequately fulfil all its demands, it led up to the explanation of a superhuman Messiah. It seemed therefore an

act of presumption on the part of the people to ask for a king instead of awaiting God's good pleasure to raise up such a leader for His people.'

It is well to compare the Deuteronomic law of the kingdom (Deut. xvii. 14-20) with Samuel's prediction of royal tyranny (1 Sam. viii. 11-17). (p. 139)

5. The earliest narrative of Saul's election is found in 1 Sam. ix. 1—x. 8, x. 9-16, xi. 1-11, xiii. 1-7. Saul is described as a man in the prime of life who is seeking his father's asses, and is anointed by Samuel, a local *seer*. Signs are given him and come to pass in due course. About a month later (LXX. of xi. 1) Jabesh-Gilead is threatened by the Ammonites and delivered by Saul, who then takes the field against the Philistines. Some of the contradictory statements occur in this narrative. How could Saul be ignorant of Samuel, the great Judge who had delivered Israel at Ebenezer? Dr. Kirkpatrick suggests that Samuel was old and living in retirement, and, 'up to this point, Saul had only been the shy and retiring youth of the family, . . . knowing little of the political or religious movements of the time.' But Ramah is only a few miles from Gibeah, and a man like Saul, who belonged to a distinguished family, must have heard about Samuel's exploits. The explanation seems to be that the early chapters which tell of Samuel's greatness are parts of another tradition. (p. 140)

6. In the Priestly Code the 'right shoulder' was reserved for the priests (Lev. vii. 32), and it is evident that 1 Sam. ix. 24 means that Saul was treated as the most honoured guest. It is suggested that the correct rendering of this verse is 'And the cook lifted up (a sacrificial term) the shoulder and the fat tail.' (See Ex. xxix. 22.) The last named, the tail of the so-called 'Cape sheep,' is esteemed a great delicacy in the East. Driver, *Samuel*; Budde, *Polychr. Bible, in loc.* H. P. Smith on 1 Sam. ix. 24, in *Internat. Crit. Comm.* (p. 141)

7. Saul's journey homewards presents several difficulties. 'Rachel's Sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah' (1 Sam. x. 2), is contradicted by Gen. xxxv. 19, where it is said that Rachel was buried near 'Ephratah, which is Bethlehem,' the traditional tomb being a little to the north of that town. That Samuel should have purposely directed Saul to go home by a circuitous route (Kirkpatrick) seems improbable; and the view that Rachel's tomb was in Benjamin and not in Judah seems to be confirmed by Jeremiah xxxi. 15 (see also xl. 1). Zelzah is not mentioned elsewhere, and neither LXX. nor Vulgate regard it as a proper name. It has been suggested that the 'oak of Tabor' (v. 3) should be the oak of Deborah, Rachel's nurse who was buried near Bethel (Gen. xxxv. 8). Ewald points out that the 'signs' are obviously arranged with exquisite skill. 'At the sepulchre of Rachel he is met by two men in great haste, bringing the joyful intelligence that the asses are found. . . Thus happily vanishes the burthen of cares belonging to his former humble life.' The second sign is the offering of gifts designed for the sanctuary to the actual though yet unrecognised king. Lastly, the

spiritual transformation which had begun within him at his parting from Samuel was manifested openly, when Saul, who was before a simple citizen, became the equal of the prophets in spiritual strength and greatness. *Hist. of Israel*, vol. ii., p. 21, Eng. Tr. (p. 142)

8. The passage is hopelessly corrupt and all that can be made of it is that the Philistines would not allow the Israelites the use of arms, and compelled the farmers to go to their country to get their agricultural implements sharpened. LXX. has: 'And when the vintage was ready to be gathered in, tools cost three shekels apiece to sharpen, and for the axe and the sickle there was the same rate of payment.' The *file* mentioned in the A.V. of 1 Sam. xiii. 21 comes from the Targum. (p. 144)

8a. H. P. Smith (*Old Test. History*, p. 110) says of the War of Michmash: 'The vividness with which the narrative brings before us the conditions of ancient Palestinian warfare must be my excuse for reproducing it at such a length. No other of the battles of Israel is so fully described for us.' (p. 146)

9. The account of the victory of David over Goliath as it stands in the Hebrew Bible is most perplexing. In 1 Sam. xvi. 11, 12 David is a mere lad, who keeps his father's sheep. In xvi. 18-23 he is a mighty man, prudent in speech and a skilled musician; he becomes Saul's armour-bearer. In xvii. 28 David's brother Eliab calls him a mere boy come to see the battle in the naughtiness of his heart. In xvii. 51, David, though he is represented as going unarmed against Goliath, has a sword—'his sword' is not Goliath's sword but David's; and in xvii. 54 David has also his own tent.* xvii. 55, 56 implies that Saul has never heard of David, nor has Abner. In 2 Sam. xxi. 19 we have the remarkable statement that Goliath was slain by Elhanan: in 1 Chr. xx. 5, the discrepancy is avoided by making the giant slain by Elhanan, Goliath's brother. Professor Barnes (*in loc.*) suggests that Goliath the Gittite 'may not be a personal name but a descriptive title of some kind,' *i.e.* 'The Gittite Champion.'

The Vatican MS. of the LXX. omits xvii. 12-16, 41, 48 (partly), 50, 55-58, and thus we have a consistent narrative of how David, Saul's armour-bearer, slew Goliath.

Dr. Cheyne (*Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Goliath*) explains v. 48 as follows:—'Whenever Goliath tried to come to close quarters with David, David would run quickly to the front rank of the Israelites to meet the foe under this friendly cover, and when the giant halted for a moment David would run upon him from another side in order to aim at him before he could be protected by the great shield. At last David's opportunity came; Goliath's face was exposed. Then David,' etc.

It seems useless to try to harmonise the accounts. From 2 Sam. xxi. 18-22 it is seen that there were many stories of encounters between Israelite warriors and descendants of the Rephaim in

* Dr. Cheyne thinks the 'tent' was the 'Tent of Yahveh.'

Philistia. One of the most popular of these tales ascribed to David the victory over Goliath, a famous champion, though according to others, as we have seen, Elhanan slew him. (p. 149)

10. The story of Agag's death is early; and most critics (Budde, etc.) assign 1 Sam. xv. to the most ancient Ephraimite document E. Ewald says it is not Deuteronomic but earlier. Some, however, consider that Samuel's noble declaration that Jehovah prefers obedience to sacrifice belongs to a late age. They are, I think, influenced in their judgment by the difficulty of reconciling such a sentiment of pure religion with the extraordinary barbarism of the 'hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord,' *i.e.* as a human sacrifice. It was the custom of the Arabs to tear a victim in pieces after a successful foray. *Encycl. Biblica*, Art. *Agag*.

The existence of elevated ideas of duty and savage cruelty prompted by superstition are not unnatural. Samuel may well have believed it to be his duty to exterminate the Amalekites and to hew Agag in pieces, and yet have had a true notion of God's desire for obedience rather than sacrifice. He may have hated the superstition of his age, though even David was not above having *teraphim* in his house (1 Sam. xix. 13).

The meaning of Agag coming 'delicately' to Saul is obscure. The LXX. says he came 'trembling,' the Vulgate has the delightful rendering 'pinguissimus et tremens.' Probably Agag came 'joyfully.' For a victim to go to the altar of sacrifice with joy was considered a good omen. (Ewald, *Hist. Israel*, vol. iii., p. 30, Eng. Tr.) According to Levit. xxvii. 28, 29, no *herem* (devoted thing), whether man or beast, could be redeemed, but must be put to death. (p. 153)

11. The Psalms attributed by their headings to David when in peril of Saul are Pss. vii., lii., liv., lvi., lvii., lix., lxiii. They are, perhaps, none of them Davidic, and some are hardly appropriate to the occasion; but the headings are evidences of the impression made by this period of David's life on Jewish imagination. (p. 154)

12. In the LXX. (B) the following passages are omitted: xviii. 8 (last clause), 10, 11, 12 (last clause), 17-19, the promise of Merab to David, 28 (part), 29, 30. Robertson-Smith, *Old Testament and the Jewish Church*, ch. v. (p. 154)

13. In the reign of the Roman Emperor Valens, about A.D. 371, an attempt was made to discover the name of the Emperor's successor by magic. Several prominent men were put to death. (Ammianus xxix. 1.) Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, vol. i., p. 238.) Saul may have feared the power of those who dealt in magic. Of course witchcraft was forbidden by the later law of Israel, Ex. xxii. 18, Deut. xviii. 9-14. Josephus (*Ant.* VI. xiv. 4) delivers almost a panegyric on the kindness which the witch of Endor shewed to Saul. This is, if I mistake not, alluded to in one of Card. Newman's Sermons. (p. 161)

13a. The order of events in the reign of Saul is discussed by Mr. S. A. Cook, *Notes on the Old Testament*, sec. II. He connects Jephthah. (Judges x., xi.) with Saul, and thinks that the attack of the Ammonites on Jabesh-Gilead was in revenge for Jephthah's victories. (p. 162)

14. It is very difficult to give a just estimate of Saul's character. He unquestionably did great service to Israel and consolidated the nation. It is true that the Hebrews looked upon the failure of a man to leave heirs to continue the glory of his house as a proof of Divine displeasure, and for this reason may have done less than justice to Saul's good qualities. It is possible that the condemnation of Saul may be that of a later age, who judged him by the calamities which fell upon his family. Still, the Biblical narrative does condemn Saul, and it is permissible to look below the surface and try to discern the cause of his failure. Ewald (*Hist.*, vol. iii., Eng. Tr.) gives a very impartial verdict regarding the merits of Saul and the reasons for the failure of his life.

The real difficulty about Saul is that the writers or editors of I. Samuel are so interested in Samuel as the prototype of the prophetic office and David as the ideal king, that there is little room left for the first king of Israel to play his part. Cook, *Notes on Old Testament History*, p. 31. (p. 163)

15. This is Budde's version as the text is emended in the *Polychrome Bible*. It is open to criticism. Professor R. H. Kennett has allowed me to use his version. It differs from the R.V. in the following particulars:—

v. 20, "exult" for "triumph."

v. 21, "Let there be no rain on you ye highland fields" and "the shield of Saul was spurned."

v. 22, "vitals of the heroes" for "fat of the mighty."

v. 23, "Saul and Jonathan—the lovable and gracious, In their life and in their death they were not divided." "Vultures" for "eagles."

v. 24, "in addition to your jewels" for "delicately."

v. 25, "Jonathan how lieth he slain on the height!"

The other corrections are merely verbal, *i.e.* "heroes" for "mighty," etc. (p. 164)

Chapter VII

1. Ishbosheth is called (1 Chr. viii. 33, ix. 39) Ieshbnaal. *Bosheth*, shame, was the name in later days applied to Baal. So Gideon's other name is Jerubbaal or Jerubbesheth (2 Sam. xi. 21). To have called his son Iesh-baal does not necessarily imply that Saul had been unfaithful to Jehovah; for the God of Israel was in early days called the Baal of the nation. The word in fact had originally the meaning of *owner*. The *baal* of an ox = the owner of the beast.

Abnor is said by Ewald (*Hist. Israel*, vol. iii., p. 112) to have been a great conqueror, and indeed there is apparent warrant for this in the passage before us. Kamphausen, however, shews in the German

Journal of Old Testament Knowledge that both David and Ishbosheth were vassals of the Philistines, who hoped to maintain their ascendancy by keeping Israel and Judah divided, if not hostile to one another. (p. 165)

2. The Hebrew of 2 Sam. iv. 6 is very ambiguous. The Revised Version is, 'And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat the margin has, There came . . . men fetching wheat); and they smote him in the belly: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. Now when they came into the house (v. 7), as he lay on his bed in his bedchamber they smote him.' The LXX. is much simpler. The portress had gone to sleep as she sifted the wheat (a task common in Palestine), and Rechab and Baanah were able to slip in unnoticed (*διέλαθον*). For portresses in the N.T. cf. John xviii. 16, and Acts xii. 13. (p. 170)

3. Jerusalem was a very ancient city. It is mentioned in the Tel-el-Amarna tablets as *Uru-salim*, and it appears to have been a sacred city. In 2 Sam. v., however, it is not said that David captured a city, but (v. 7) a *stronghold* (the word being generally used of a hill-fort). According to 2 Sam. xxiv. the Jebusites lived with the Israelites after the capture of the city by the latter. Whether it was ever called Jebus is very doubtful. The authority for this having been the old name rests on 1 Chr. xi. 4, Judges xix., and the 'Priestly' parts of Joshua. The evidence therefore is somewhat late, and conflicts with the statement in the Tel-el-Amarna tablets. The whereabouts of 'the city of David' is much disputed. In Josephus' day it was considered to be on the Western Hill, where the royal palaces of the Hasmoneans and of Herod were. *Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Jerusalem*, §§ 16-20; see also the additional note in Kickpatrick, *II. Samuel*.

David's words exhorting the Israelites to capture Jerusalem are so obscure that the text must be corrupt. Dr. Driver suggests two renderings: (a) 'Let him get up to the water-course,' and (β) 'let him hurl down the water-course,' and shews how impossible both are. (On 2 Sam. v. 8.) The LXX. has quite a different reading. The Chronicler, who puts into David's mouth a promise of the command of the army to the man who should first scale the cliff, has forgotten that Joab already held that post. (1 Chron. xi. 6.) (p. 172)

4. The facts concerning David's Philistine wars are briefly these. The Philistines seem to have left David in peace as long as Ishbosheth reigned. But as he was their vassal, and his acceptance of the throne of all Israel was regarded as an act of rebellion, the Philistines suddenly invaded the land. Instead of, as was their wont, attacking Israel by way of the Maritime Plain, they penetrated into the heart of the hills of Judah to the valley of Rephaim south of Jerusalem. Apparently David was nearly captured, and retreated to 'the hold' (2 Sam. v. 17), probably not to Zion (Cheyne), for no one could be described as 'going down' thither; but to some place in the wilderness of Judah (Driver). When the Philistines were

encamped in the valley of Rephaim David attacked them there and utterly routed them, perhaps on two occasions, 2 Sam. v. 17-21 and 22-25. The battle of Baal-perazim was evidently a decisive victory, and may be considered the turning-point of David's career, see Isa. xxviii. 21. Baal in this connection 'does not denote the Phœnician god of that name but is a title of Jehovah, such as we know to have been in use in the families of Saul and David.' (Driver on 2 Sam. v. 20.) The Philistine war probably lasted a long time. Budde prints 2 Sam. xxi. 15-22 and xxiii. 8-39 between v. 25 (the victory of Perazim) and the capture of Jerusalem, v. 6, which he places after the Philistine war. (p. 173)

5. Uzzah (2 Sam. vi. 6) apparently did not protect the Ark from falling, for the word translated 'shook it' means rather let it down, and is used in the account of Jezebel being 'thrown out' of the window (2 Kings ix. 33); it also means 'to leave alone,' 'to release from a debt.' The substantive is applied to the 'seventh year' of release. It is inferred that here it means that the oxen slipped (H. P. Smith, *Samuel*, in loc.).

We are informed in 1 Chronicles xv. 18 that Obed-Edom was a Levite of the house of Merari. The accounts in Samuel and Chronicles should be compared. The former states what happened, the latter what would have happened had the Priestly Code been in force.

It has been suggested to me by Prof. R. H. Kennett that one reason for the hesitation on David's part to bring the Ark to Jerusalem is that it was originally in the custody of the tribe of Ephraim, whose jealousy David feared to provoke. (p. 174)

6. When we remember that David through Ruth had Moabite blood in his veins, and that he had committed his parents to the care of the King of Moab (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4), his severity to that country seems hard to account for. Ewald suggests that Ishbosheth may, during his reign at Mahanaim, have made terms with the Moabites which David could not accept. The Moabites were treated with great severity (2 Sam. viii. 2): two-thirds of the prisoners being put to death. Stanley (*Jewish Church*, vol. ii., p. 83) says there is a Jewish tradition that the King of Moab had put David's parents to death. (p. 175)

7. The Hebrew of 2 Sam. viii. 13 reads Syria; but the words for Syria and Edom are very like in Hebrew, and it is best to read with the LXX. Ἰδουμαία. In 1 Chronicles xviii. 12, the victory over the Edomites is ascribed to Abishai, in the heading of Psalm lx. to Joab. In 1 Kings xi. 15 the subjugation of Edom is said to have been carried out by Joab with great ferocity. Neither Moab nor Edom were subdued sufficiently to prevent rebellions. Moab, for instance, had to be reconquered by Omri, and revolted under his son, as the Moabite Stone informs us. But they never really threatened the supremacy of Israel. (p. 175)

8. II. Sam. xii. 31 is far too obscure to found a charge of brutal cruelty against David. 'He made them pass through the brick-kiln' is most doubtful. (1) The Hebrew has an alternative reading. (2) None of the Versions support this rendering. LXX. περιήγαγεν αὐτοὺς διὰ τοῦ πλινθίου: Vulgate, traduxit in typo laterum-Targum, 'He dragged them through the streets.' (3) The change of a single letter would make David only reduce the Ammonites to slavery: 'He made them work in the brick-kiln,' but *malben* (*Qrî* reading) does not mean a kiln but the wooden form for shaping the clay into bricks. H. P. Smith, *Samuel*, in *loc. Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *David*, § 11 (c). Budde, *Polychrome Bible*. Driver, in *loc.* Other-critics, orthodox and advanced, apologise for or exult over David's cruelty. For the employment of prisoners in public works of utility see the Moabite Stone, line 25, 'And I cut out the cutting for QRH with the help of prisoners.' (p. 175)

9. One cause of David's feebleness at this time may have been that the tribes remained at peace only so long as they had enemies to contend with. There are repeated instances of fierce tribal jealousies throughout the early history of Israel.

On the order of events in the reign of David see S. A. Cook, *Notes on Old Testament History*, pp. 3-17, who suggests that the revolt of Absalom and the victory at Mahanaim over Northern Israel may have taken place before David's great wars made him a powerful monarch. (p. 178)

10. In 2 Samuel xxiii. 34 Eliam is said to be the son of Ahitophel: in xi. 3 Bathsheba is described as the daughter of Eliam. Blunt, *Scripture Coincidences*, p. 145. (p. 179)

11. Whether there are any psalms of David in the Psalter is a question which can never be satisfactorily decided. The general opinion of advanced modern scholars is that the Book of Psalms contains only post-exilic compositions. Wellhausen's dictum is often quoted: "The question is not whether the Psalter contains any post-exilic, but whether it contains any prae-exilic psalms." But with the complete absence of any evidence on the subject except occasional Aramaisms and similar indications of a late date it is impossible to *prove* anything with regard to the-date of a psalm. The facts in favour of there being genuine Davidic psalms in the Psalter are:—

(1) According to I. Samuel, David was recognised as a poet, and the lament over Saul and Jonathan justifies this claim. 2 Sam. xxii. (Ps. xviii.) and 2 Sam. xxiii. 2-7 (the "last words of David") may be later additions, but they testify to the tradition that David was a poet.

(2) The Chronicler (B.C. 300-200) makes David the founder of psalmody. (1 Chron. xv. 16-25, xvi. 4-7; cf. Ezra iii. 10, Neh. xii. 36.)

(3) The headings of nearly half the Psalms, 73 out of 150, are 'to David.'

(4) *Ecclus.* xlvii. 8 celebrates David as a psalmist.

(5) *Hebrews* iv. 7 quotes the Psalter as 'In David,' and psalms, *e.g.* ex., are repeatedly ascribed to him in the N.T.

On the other hand, many psalms ascribed to David in the headings cannot possibly be his. It seems we must be satisfied with Dr. Driver's judgment: "On the whole a *non liquet* must be our verdict; it is possible that Ewald's list of Davidic psalms is too large, but it is not clear that none of the psalms contained in it are David's compositions." (*Introd.*, p. 358.) (p. 192)

Chapter VIII

1. Even if Solomon was not the legitimate heir—though in an Oriental monarchy a younger son is often nominated as his father's successor—it is hardly fair to impute nothing but evil motives to Nathan and Bathsheba, who secured his succession. Adonijah certainly claimed the throne without his father's knowledge, and perhaps may have intended to force David to resign. His whole conduct when Solomon was proclaimed shews consciousness of guilt. Many competent critics (*e.g.* Kittel and Stade) take a harsh view of the conduct of Nathan and Bathsheba, but the patent unfairness of reading motives into the actors of the Biblical story, of whom we know so little, is shewn when the subject is handled by Mr. Moncure Conway:—

"When David was in his dotage and near his end this eldest son, Adonijah, began to consult the leading men about his accession, but unfortunately for himself did not summon Nathan. The slighted 'prophet' proposed to Bathsheba and told her the falsehood that he (David) had once sworn before Jahveh that her son Solomon should reign; and 'while you are talking,' says Nathan, 'I will enter and fulfil (that was his significant word) your declaration.' The royal dotard could not gainsay two seemingly independent witnesses, and helplessly kept his alleged oath." *Solomon*, p. 7.

It is, as Mr. Addis remarks (*Encycl. Bibl.*, Art. *Bathsheba*), interesting to observe that Nathan, if he took the part assigned to him in—2 Sam. xii. 1-15, afterwards became the chief supporter of Bathsheba. (p. 193)

2. It must be remembered that the religious standpoint of the book of Kings is that of Deuteronomy. The moral aim of the editor is manifest throughout, and he, doubtless, arranged his material in such a way as to emphasise it. It is consequently permissible to rearrange the records. *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Kings*, vol. ii., p. 857. (p. 194)

3. In 2 Kings xiv. 28 Jeroboam II. is said to have "recovered Hamath, which had belonged to Judah." Amos (vi. 2) calls it "Hamath the Great," and the city on the Orontes is perhaps to be distinguished from the Hamath-Zobah conquered by Solomon. (p. 196)

4. Gezer was an important place, commanding as it did the descent to the Philistine plain and the road to Joppa. The site was discovered by M. Clermont Ganneau in 1873 and is known as Tell Jezer. There are four if not five buried cities which have recently been excavated by the Palestine Exploration Fund. The Judæan town is erected on the ruins of a more magnificent one burnt by fire. Egyptian remains as early as the twelfth dynasty have been found in the ruins.

It may be here noted that according to Winckler's theory, strongly supported by Dr. Cheyne, it was not the Egyptians (Mizrim), but the Muzri, an Arabian tribe, with which Solomon and the Israelites of his age had intercourse. The excavations at Gezer do not confirm this view.

Gezer was an important strategic position. In Maccabæan times it was considered valuable as commanding the road to the port of Joppa. "Judas Maccabæus was strategist enough to gird himself early to the capture of Gezer, and Simon fortified it to cover the way to the harbour of Joppa." G. Adam Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, p. 216; 1 Macc. xiii. 43, xv. 28. (p. 196)

5. Josephus *Wars* v. 4 implies that the 'city of David' was on the Western Hill of Jerusalem, the Temple being on the Eastern, overhanging the valley of the Kidron. On the Western Hill the palaces of the Hasmonæans and the Herods stood. To this was given the name of Zion. But in the Old Testament the Temple is generally described as being on Zion. Stade in his plan of Solomon's buildings makes the Temple a part of an extensive series of edifices extending down to Ophel on the eastern side; see his *History of Israel* (German).

The name Zion is in itself a great difficulty. The popular rendering is 'dry place,' but it probably means 'citadel.' "The antiquity of Jerusalem," says Colonel Conder, "seems to be indicated by the fact that certain names connected with the city cannot be explained as ordinary Hebrew words—Jebus, Zion, Hinnom, and Topheth are terms not traced to any Hebrew roots, and have always puzzled scholars as much as the name Jerusalem itself. . . ." (*The City of Jerusalem* (1909), p. 27.) The elevations on a plan of the city are as follows:—The Western Hill has a flat plateau of considerable extent, over 2,500 feet above sea level. The Temple Hill overhanging the Kedron valley is 100 feet lower. The district of Ophel was on the southern spur of the Temple Hill and about 200 feet below the Upper City on the Western Hill. From the mention of *bringing up* the Ark out of the city of David, which is Zion, to the Temple (1 Kings viii. 1), Dr. G. A. Smith infers that the 'Fort' David captured was just above Gihon on the eastern ridge. (*Jerusalem from the Earliest Times*, vol. i., p. 147.) Conder, however, notices that the Ophel spur is not suitable for a fortress. (*Jerusalem*, p. 39.) From the 8th century B.C. onwards Zion became a poetical name for the whole city, especially the Temple Hill: so the common phrase 'the daughters of Zion,' is equivalent to 'the daughters of Jerusalem.' (p. 204)

6. 1 Kings vii. 13; 2 Chr. ii. 13. In the latter passage Hiram is called 'Hiram, my father.' The name is spelt Hiram, Hiram, and

Hiram. Some suppose that the Chronicler gives his real name Hiram-abi or Hiram-abiw. *Encycl. Biblica*, Arts. *Hiram* and *Hiram*. See Robertson-Smith's remarks on the two pillars Jachin and Boaz, which he considers to have been a sort of altar candlesticks such as are figured on Assyrian engraved stones. (*Religion of the Semites*, add. note 'The Altar of Jerusalem.')

G. A. Smith (*Jerusalem*, p. 63) says: "At the entrance, either within or before the Porch, stood two bronze columns . . . probably representations of the *Masseboth* or sacred pillars usual in Semitic sanctuaries, and once legal, but afterwards condemned in the worship of Israel." The article 'Temple' in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* refers to Herodotus II. 44, where it is said that the Temple of Melkarth at Tyre had two costly pillars on which Melkarth was worshipped. As Solomon's Temple was built by Tyrians this is significant.

The first of the royal buildings which would be entered from the south was 'the house of the forest of Lebanon,' a large hall supported by cedar pillars, used as the royal armoury (1 Kings x. 17; Is. xxii. 8). Then came 'the hall of pillars' or (if we read *omedhîm* for *ammûdhîm*) standers, so called because the royal guards were posted there or because those desiring an audience waited there, a sort of *salle des pas perdus*. After this was the judgment hall, where Solomon seated on his throne, heard the complaints and decided the causes of his subjects; and through this was access to the King's house and the harem, part of which was for Pharaoh's daughter. Above the palace was the court of the Temple, and the *vaôs* itself entered from the east, the Holy of Holies being at the western end.

Encyclop. Bibl., Arts. *Jerusalem*, *Temple and Palace*; Hastings' *Dict. Bible*, Art. *Temple*; Murray's *Illus. Bible Dict.*, Art. *Temple* (Sir Charles Warren); Conder, *City of Jerusalem*, pp. 53 ff.; G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem from the Earliest Times to A.D. 70*, vol. II., ch. iii.; Josephus, *Antiq.* VIII., ch. iii., *Wars* v., ch. v. (p. 206)

6a. Solomon's buildings, besides the Temple, are enumerated in I. Kings as (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vii. 1-5); (2) the house or porch of pillars (vii. 6); (3) the hall of judgment (vii. 7); (4) the palace, and (5) the harem, 'an house for Pharaoh's daughter' (vii. 8).

There is no dispute whatever that the Temple at Jerusalem stood on the Eastern Hill, but three views are held as to its exact position. (1) Robertson-Smith (*Encycl. Bibl.* § 19) considers that it was built not on the high plateau now called the Haram, but to the south-west of the present enclosure. (2) The general opinion, however, is that it was built over or near the 'Dome of the Rock,' now, outside Mecca, the most sacred spot in Islam. But the question arises, (a) was the Dome of the Rock included in the Temple proper? or (b) did it serve as the altar? On the whole it is most probable, considering its size and the fact that there is a channel beneath as though to carry off blood and refuse, that the Dome of the Rock was the threshing-floor of Araunah, the scene of the vision of the angel standing between earth and heaven (1 Chr. xxi. 16), where David was commanded to build an altar, and that on it stood the altar of burnt sacrifice, and westward of this was the site of the actual

Temple. The Temple evidently stood above the other buildings of Solomon (see 2 Kings xi. 19, Jer. xxii. 1, *down* to the palace from the Temple; 1 Kings viii. 1, ix. 24, Jer. xxvi. 10, *up* from the palace); and Stade, whose arrangement is generally followed, places the royal buildings south of the Temple towards Ophel. All are connected and surrounded by a wall forming what was known as the 'great court' (1 Kings vii. 9-12), perhaps a 'second court' or 'inner court' (1 Kings vii. 12) enclosing the palace, and the third the Temple. It must never be forgotten that, like all ancient temples, that of Solomon consisted of a large open court for the worshippers in which stood the altar, and a small shrine (*ναός*) designed for the presence of the God worshipped. The actual Temple of Solomon, even with the rooms around it, was a very small building, though the courts etc. may have been extremely magnificent. Ezekiel's description of the ideal Temple (chs. xl.—xliii.) should be read in connection with 1. Kings, as the prophet was a priest who may well have ministered in Solomon's courts. (p. 209)

7. The subject of Solomon's alleged apostasy is most perplexing. Ewald thinks that the erection of the sanctuaries to the gods of Moab etc. at Jerusalem was due to an enlightened policy of toleration alien to the narrower views of the prophets. "Under the wise Solomon a legal toleration of different religions had a tendency to spring up." Professor Flint in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* considers Solomon to have advanced on the religious views of David. It is important to remember that in the book of Kings the estimate of Solomon is that of a much later age. G. A. Smith (*Jerusalem*, vol. ii., p. 77) considers that the erection of the shrines was inevitable with Solomon's trade and matrimonial alliances, but acquits him of all responsibility for the foul rites which the prophets denounce as being practised in Jerusalem and even in the Temple in their time. See also T. F. Smith, *Old Test. Hist.*, p. 169. (p. 213)

8. For the character of Solomon's 'wisdom,' see Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, p. 566a; Cheyne, *Job and Solomon*. (p. 215)

Chapter IX

1. In the LXX. (cod. B) the order of events in Jeroboam's life is as follows: A long section is added after 1 Kings xii. 24. Solomon dies and Rehoboam succeeds him. An explanation is given, like the one in ch. xi., of Jeroboam being set over the forced labour of the Ephraimites. Jeroboam is said to have built Sarira in Mount Ephraim and to have had three hundred chariots. Solomon strives to slay him, and he escapes to Shishak. At Solomon's death Jeroboam returns to Sarira, and entrenches himself (*ὑποδόμησεν ἐκεί χάρακα*). Jeroboam's child falls ill, and he sends Ano his wife to Ahijah. The child's death is foretold; and Jeroboam goes to Shechem and assembles the tribes, and Rehoboam arrives. Shemaiah

then rends a new garment and gives ten portions to Jeroboam. Then the people ask Rehoboam to lighten the yoke of Solomon. Rehoboam refuses and the rebellion begins. (p. 219)

2. Jeroboam did no more than Gideon, or Samuel, or Saul, or even Solomon had done in setting up sanctuaries and sacrificing in person. As an Ephraimite he had a sort of right to protest against Jerusalem being made the national sanctuary, and his prophet Ahijah belonged to the old holy place of Shiloh. The Moabite Stone may be read as implying that there was a sanctuary of Jehovah at Nebo east of the Jordan. Renan, *Hist. People of Israel*, II., p. 158, note. The 'calves' or bulls were probably not considered offensive by the men of the tenth century B.C., but suitable emblems of Jehovah. The verdict of Jeroboam is that of a later age (viz. long after the fall of Samaria). But it is not right on this account to disparage it. As Mr. G. A. Cooke in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Jeroboam*, admirably remarks: "There can be no doubt that the sacred writer, who, whatever his merits as an historian may be, possessed a keen religious insight into the events of the past, was fully justified in his unsparring verdict upon Jeroboam as the man 'who made Israel to sin.'" (p. 223)

3. The Levites seem to have disapproved of the 'bull-worship.' It was they who at Moses' command punished the Israelites for their sin in the matter of the Golden Calf (Ex. xxxii. 26 ff.), which curiously enough is assigned to E. Kennett, 'Aaronite Priesthood,' *Journal Theol. Studies* (Jan. 1905); *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, p. 102. (p. 223)

4. Shishak, or Sheshonk, belonged to the twenty-second dynasty. His expedition into Palestine was a notable event in Egyptian history, but not to be compared with the great one undertaken some five centuries or more earlier by Thothmes III. Rawlinson (*History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 423) thinks that Shishak helped Jeroboam by conquering the Levitical cities, which, according to the Chronicles, refused to acknowledge his authority. (2 Chron. xi. 14.)

But Sheshonk's inscriptions in Karnak shew that he invaded Israel, though he took several Judaean towns also; and it seems improbable that he was an ally of Jeroboam. Cheyne (*Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah*, p. 87) declines to identify Shishak with the Egyptian king and makes Rehoboam's enemy come from N. Arabia. He thinks that the redactor of the book of Kings may have heard of Sheshonk's invasion and identified him with the N. Arabian Shishak (a corruption for Ashhur). (p. 227)

5. Our authority for Zerah or Zerach (Heb.) is the late book of the Chronicles; and both Wellhausen and Stade reject the account as unhistorical. This is, however, an extreme measure. There were two kings of Egypt in the twenty-second dynasty called Osorkon, which name may appear in Hebrew tradition as Zerach. But why is he called an Ethiopian? Rawlinson (*History of Ancient Egypt*, vol. II., p. 424) conjectures that his mother was an Ethiopian

princess; Sayce (*Higher Criticism and the Monuments*), that the Chronicler is thinking rather of the age of Hezekiah than of that of Asa, when Egypt was under Ethiopian kings. It has been suggested that Zerah was king of an Arabian tribe. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Zerah*. The LXX. of 2 Chron. xiv. 15 calls Zerah's followers Ἀμαζονεῖς. (p. 228)

6. Professor Nairne remarks in a letter to me: "I am not convinced about human sacrifice. 'Before the Lord' seems to me a general expression. The slaying of Agag, like the hanging of Saul's descendants, seems to be described as an act of awful justice—allowable, like capital punishment in our own times, only as being done 'before the Lord,' the opposite of which is lynching. Still, Jeremiah does seem to me to imply that children were offered sacrificially to Jehovah (Jer. vii. 31)." (p. 231)

7. Renan (*History of the People of Israel*, vol. ii., p. 198) says that Asa's and Jehoshaphat's reforms were a complete reversal of the policy of Solomon, and that they had a far-reaching effect: "The Temple assumed a significance which had never belonged to it originally. From the private chapel of the palace it rose to be the one 'holy place'. . . . The prophets and puritans who once regarded it unfavourably, now become reconciled to it. Time brought respect, each day added to the prestige which the Temple of Solomon now acquired, and which had been unheard of before." (p. 231)

8. According to 1 Kings xvi., Zimri reigned in the twenty-seventh year of Asa; Omri began to reign in the thirty-first year, and reigned twelve years; Ahab succeeded his father in the thirty-eighth year of Asa, and reigned twenty-two years. The Moabite Stone says that Omri conquered Moab, and after forty years, 'in the days of his son,' i.e. Ahab, Mesha, recovered the cities he had lost. Omri's and Ahab's joint reigns only lasted thirty-four years, whereas Mesha says that the supremacy of Israel lasted during Omri's reign, and half the years of his son. Schrader (*Cuneiform Inscr. and Old Testament*) thinks Omri reigned twenty-five years, B.C. 900-875. (p. 233)

9. For the Jewish, Christian, and Mahomedan traditions of Elijah, see Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. ii., p. 272, and Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, Art. *Elijah*. (p. 236)

10. II. Kings i. 2-17 is out of a different source from the preceding Elijah narratives. This fact is marked by the form of the name of the prophet in Hebrew peculiar to this section, and generally by the inferior literary merit of the composition. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Kings*, p. 868a. (p. 242)

Chapter X

1. Dean Stanley (*Jewish Church*, vol. ii., p. 330) gives a fine description of this Moabite war: "We see the arid country through which the allied forces have to pass . . . the merciless devastation of the conquered territory, apparently at the instigation of the rival

Edomite chief—the deadly hatred between him and the King of Moab—the terrible siege of the royal fortress of Kir-harasheth, closing with the sacrifice of the heir to the throne, and the shudder of indignation which it caused. We see in the triumphant thanksgiving of Mesha, preserved, through all vicissitudes, for more than two thousand years, the gratitude for a retreat which, however caused, was to him a deliverance and a victory, and which he celebrated by public works, alike stately and beneficent.” In 2 Chronicles xx., Jehoshaphat is said to have been attacked by the Moabites, Edomites, and Ammonites; but this is considered by some to be a later version of the war against Moab, in which he actually took part. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Moab*. (p. 245)

2. The inscription of Mesha is written in a language so like Hebrew that it is practically the same as that of the book of Kings, except in a few unimportant particulars. It abounds in Biblical phrases, *e.g.*:

1. 4. He made me see my desire upon all that hated me.
- „ 5. for Chemosh was angry with his land.
- „ 7. Israel perished with everlasting destruction.
- „ 8. His days and half the days of his son—forty years.
- „ 11. And I fought against the city and took it.
- „ 14. And Chemosh said to me, Go up, take Nebo.
- „ 17. And handmaidens (Judges v. 30), for to Astar Chemosh had I devoted them.
- „ 18. And the King of Israel built (*i.e.* fortified) Jahaz.

Most of the names mentioned occur in the Bible: Dibon, Medebah, Baal-meon, Kiriathaim, Ataroth, Nebo, Jahaz, etc.

Professor Driver enumerates seven points of historical interest in this inscription: (1) Reconquest of Moab by Omri. (2) Mesha's revolt in Ahab's lifetime. (3) Particulars of the war. (4) Extent of country occupied by Mesha. (5) Chemosh recognised as the national deity. (6) Sanctuary of Jehovah in Nebo. (7) Civilisation of Moab. (p. 246)

3. Asa's conduct is severely blamed in the Chronicles, though mentioned without censure in the book of Kings. Hanani the seer was sent to rebuke him. (2 Chr. xvi. 7-9.) (p. 247)

4. Renan (*History of the People of Israel*, vol. ii., p. 246, Eng. Tr.) says that this section (1 Kings xx. 35-43) is very ancient. It certainly savours of the fierce morality of antiquity and reminds us of Samuel and Agag, 1 Sam. xv. The sparing of Ben-hadad was a violation of the *herem*. Kittel suggests that Ahab's object in sparing Ben-hadad was to enlist his help against Assyria. *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Ahab*, by Dr. Cheyne. (p. 248)

5. We are able to date the events of Assyrian history with accuracy because of the chronological system adopted. The Assyrians called the year after a certain officer, like the consul of Rome or the eponymous archon at Athens. A list of these officers is preserved for the ninth, eighth and seventh centuries B.C. The year of one can be accurately determined by the fact of an eclipse having taken

place at Nineveh, and from this all the dates are derivable. The Assyrian system is naturally more reliable than that of the Israelites, who reckoned by generations, or by periods of forty years. The obelisk of Shalmaneser II. in the British Museum records the campaign. Ahab is called Akhabbu of 'Sir'alâ. He had more chariots than any of his allies—2000. The Bible hardly gives us an adequate idea of his power. (p. 248)

6. This vision of Micaiah may be compared with the Prologue of Job (i. 6—ii. 6) and to the vision in Zechariah iii. of a heavenly assembly. We must enter into the theological conceptions of the age to understand it. Jehovah is regarded as doing what He pleases, good or evil. How later Jewish opinion modified this is seen by comparing 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 with 1 Chr. xxi. 1. In the former God in the latter Satan, tempts David. Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Micaiah*; see also Stanley's *Jewish Church*, ii., p. 270. (p. 249)

7. I. Kings xxii. 38. A.V., "And they washed his armour"; Vulgate, "et habenas laverunt"; LXX. καὶ αἱ πόρνοι ἐλούσαντο ἐν τῷ αἵματι. The latter is probably right, the Hebrew words for 'a harlot' and 'reins' or 'fastenings' are similar. (p. 249)

8. In the LXX. 1 Kings xxii. follows on xx. and both chapters are derived from a separate source, in which Elijah is not mentioned, but which has several mentions of unnamed prophets. Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Micaiah*; Kittel, *Hist. Heb.*, vol. ii., p. 275, Eng. Tr. (p. 249)

9. The LXX. of 2 Kings ix. 30-32 has "And Jehu came to Jezreel, and Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her eyebrows with antimony and tired her head, and looked out of a window. And Jehu entered into the city, and she said 'Is it peace, Zambri, the slayer of his master?' And he lifted up his eyes to the window, and he saw her, and he said, 'Who art thou? Come down to me,' etc."

Stanley (*Jewish Church*, vol. ii., p. 283) quotes Racine's *Athalie*, where Jezebel is made to defy Jehu. The idea that she tried to captivate him by her elderly charms (Ewald) is absurd. The poet is a better judge than the critic. There is nothing ignoble in Jezebel; she is at least a queenly criminal, the Clytemnestra of Israel. (p. 254)

10. Jer. xxxv. gives a description of the Kenite sect of the Rechabites. They evidently preserved the most ancient traditions of the Jehovah-worship, living as shepherds and condemning the practice of agriculture and the growth of the vine. According to 1 Chron. ii. 55 they belonged to the family of Caleb. See my article in the *Interpreter* for October 1906. (p. 255)

11. The *it* is a transparent *aposiopesis*, for the picture of she terrible Assyrian is constantly before the prophet's eyes. Robertson-Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, Lecture III. For an estimate of Amos see Gautier, *Introduction*, vol. i., p. 597. (p. 258)

12. Robertson-Smith (*The Prophets of Israel*, Lecture v., and notes) decides against the Biblical chronology of the later kings of Israel and comes to this conclusion: "The practical result of this inquiry is that the decline of Israel after the death of Jeroboam was much more rapid than appears from the usual chronology, and instead of occupying sixty years to the fall of Samaria was really complete in half that time. The rapid descent from the prosperity of the days of Jeroboam throws a fresh light on the prophecies of a speedy destruction given by Amos and Hosea." (p. 260)

13. It has from early days been a matter of dispute whether the story of the marriage of Hosea with Gomer was a fact or merely an allegory to illustrate Jehovah's relations to Israel. The words in i. 2, "The Lord said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredom," need not necessarily mean that Gomer was a woman of bad character before marriage. (p. 262)

14. Hosea viii. 12. The text is very obscure and can hardly be regarded as proving the existence of a written law. (p. 262)

15. The whole context seems to demand this rendering. There is no expression of hope in what follows. The Versions, however, like St. Paul, see in Hosea xiii. 14 the promise of a future life: 1 Cor. xv. 54. (p. 263)

16. This rearrangement of the passages in Isaiah v., ix., and x. was suggested by Ewald and is now generally adopted. (p. 265)

17. The chronology of the kings of Judah is perplexing, because the total length of their reigns so far exceeds that of the contemporary kings of Israel. Jotham may have only survived his father a very short time and yet have been credited with a sixteen years reign. (p. 266)

18. Tiglath-pileser IV. first advanced into Syria in 738 B.C. At this time Menahem (Minikhimmi of Samirina) and other kings came to do him homage. He attacked Hanno, King of Gaza, in 734 B.C. Damascus was besieged and taken in 733-2. (p. 269)

19. Hoshea is called Ausi'i on the monuments. He was apparently prompted to murder Pekah by the Assyrians, who confirmed him in his kingdom B.C. 731. (p. 269)

20. At the beginning of his reign, Sargon says he deported from Samaria 27,290 men. (p. 269)

21. The kings of Assyria mentioned in the Bible are: Pul (2 Kings xv. 19), Tiglath-Pileser, who is probably the same (2 Kings xv. 29, xvi. 7, 10), Shalmaneser (2 Kings xvii. 3). Sargon is not named except in Isaiah xx. 1 after the siege of Samaria.

The history of the Assyrian monarchs in connection with Israel is briefly as follows. The kingdom began to develop in the reign of Assur-nazir-pal, B.C. 884-860, under whom the Assyrians advanced

as far as the Lebanon, and Tyre, Sidon, and other towns had to pay tribute to induce them to depart. Under his son Shalmaneser II., B.C. 869-825, Ahab and a confederacy of Syrian kings were defeated at Karkar. Twelve years later (B.C. 842) Jehu appears on the 'Black Obelisk' as paying tribute. Ramman-nizari III. (B.C. 811-783) made expeditions against Damascus and Philistia, and he is probably the 'saviour' (2 Kings xiii. 5) who delivered Israel from the power of Syria in the days of Jehoahaz. A period of depression followed till Pulu or Tiglath-pileser IV. usurped the Assyrian throne (B.C. 745-727). He first advanced into Syria in B.C. 738. Damascus was taken in B.C. 733, and Naphtali was devastated, 2 Kings xv. 29. In 731 Pekah was murdered by Hoshea (Ausi'i). Apparently Pekah (despite 2 Kings xv. 27) only reigned two years. Shalmaneser IV., probably a son of Tiglath-pileser, invested Samaria B.C. 724, and it was taken in 722, Hommel says by this king, though his successor, Sargon, took credit for the capture of the city.—Hommel in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Assyria*. (p. 273)

Chapter XI

1. Hezekiah receives the highest praise from the author of the book of Kings: "He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among them that were before him." (2 Kings xviii. 5) The Chronicler is diffuse on the subject of Hezekiah's devotion to the Levitical worship. (2 Chron. xxix.) Isaiah, however, does not seem to have been always in accord with him, though the prophet never mentions the king's name. His minister Shebna is furiously denounced. (Isaiah xxii. 15-19), and so are the intrigues with Egypt (Isaiah xxx.—xxxi.). The monuments confirm what is implied in Isaiah, that Hezekiah was rather a politician than a pietist, especially the Taylor Cylinder describing the campaign of Sennacherib. (p. 277)

2. The chief campaigns of Sargon were:—

B.C. 722. Accession. Fall of Samaria.

721. Indecisive war with Merodach Baladan.

720. Campaign against Egypt. Victory at Raphia (south-west of Gaza). Ashdod taken (Is. xx.).

719-716. Wars in the East.

715-712. Campaigns in Arabia.

711. Invasion of Palestine (Judah possibly devastated).

710. War in Babylonia—Merodach Baladan defeated.

709. Sargon receives tribute from Cyprus.

705. Sargon is assassinated.

M'Curdy, *History and the Monuments*, pp. 352 and 620 ff. *Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Assyria*. (p. 278)

3. Merodach Baladan's long and adventurous life was one of continual rebellion against Assyria. He was a Chaldean from Bit-Yakin, a native of the marshes north of the Persian Gulf. His object was to seize Babylon. He was expelled by Tiglath-pileser; but returned under Sargon and ruled in Babylon from 721-710. In the

latter year he was defeated; but he again made his appearance in Babylonia in B.C. 702, after Sargon's death. He was once more overthrown by Sennacherib, and took refuge in a city of Elam. He was dead before B.C. 695.

The date of his embassy to Hezekiah is disputed. It was either in 711 or 704. In the latter year he was not 'King of Babylon,' as he is described in 2 Kings xx. See the articles by Dr. Sayce and Dr. Johns respectively in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible* and the *Encyclopædia Biblica*; Robertson-Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, Lect. VIII.; and M'Curdy, *History and the Monuments*, § 678. (p. 279)

4. Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt*, vol. ii., ch. xxv. Bocchoris, of the twenty-fourth dynasty, succeeded Pianki and was defeated by Sabako of the twenty-fifth dynasty, when the power of Egypt temporarily revived sufficiently to make Hezekiah and his allies trust to its support against Assyria. (p. 280)

5. Dr. Cheyne's note on Is. xxx. 7 is as follows:—"Rahab was a name for Egypt in Hebrew poetry (Is. li. 9, Job xxvi. 12, Ps. lxxxvii. 4, lxxxix. 10), derived from mythology and expressing the characteristic and the immense arrogance of the Egyptians. . . . Isaiah's point is that the name Rahab had better be exchanged for *Shebeth*, i.e. inaction." (p. 281)

6. The advance of Sennacherib into Palestine is given on the Taylor Cylinder (col. ii. 34 ff.). A translation is given by M'Curdy, *History and Monuments*, 675; see below, Appendix, XIII. (p. 282)

7. The words on the Taylor Cylinder are: "And Hezekiah, the Judahite, who had not submitted to my yoke—forty-six of his fenced cities, and fortresses, and small towns in their vicinity without number . . . I besieged and took, 200,150 persons, small and great, etc., etc., I brought forth and allotted as spoil. As for himself, like a caged bird in his capital city I shut him up." He then goes on to speak of Hezekiah's submission. Well may Dr. M'Curdy say that there then fell upon Judah "the heaviest blow which it had ever suffered since it became a nation." *History and Monuments*, § 686. (p. 283)

8. The order of events in Hezekiah's reign in the Bible is somewhat different from that which I have here ventured to adopt.

According to II. Kings, Sennacherib's invasion preceded Hezekiah's sickness, after which the King of Judah reigned for fifteen years. But it is now certain that Sennacherib did not invade Judah till 701 B.C., instead of 714, as was formerly supposed. Merodach Baladan's embassy must have happened earlier, though whether in 711 or 704 is disputed.

The Bible Chronology is as follows:—	B.C.
Hezekiah's accession, aged twenty-five . . .	727
Samaria taken, sixth year . . .	722
Sennacherib's invasion, fourteenth year . . .	714
Hezekiah's sickness . . .	713
Hezekiah's death . . .	698

The Assyrian Chronology is—

Accession of Sargon	Dec. 722
Capture of Samaria	721
Sargon's first invasion	720
Sargon's second invasion	711
Defeat of Merodach Baladan	710
Death of Sargon	705
Invasion of Sennacherib	701
Sennacherib murdered	681

(p. 285)

9. Is. ix, 1 ff., the First Lesson for Christmas Day, is almost unintelligible in the Authorised Version. What sense can verse 3 convey to the people, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy," etc.? A slight emendation makes the whole simple :

Thou hast multiplied exultation,

Thou has increased joy.

They joy before thee as with the joy in harvest,

And as men exult when they divide spoil.

The parallelism of lines 1 with 4 and 2 with 3 is in accordance with the laws of Hebrew poetry. See Box, *Isaiah*. (p. 289)

10. The historical character of Is. xxxvi.-xxxvii. and of the parallel passage in 2 Kings xviii.-xix. has been severely criticised by Dr. Cheyne and others, and there do not appear to be amplifications of the original narrative. But I confess myself unable to see why the critics should so persistently reject Rabshakeh's remark that Hezekiah had offended Jehovah by removing His altars and high places (Is. xxxvi. 7). The very contradiction implied in xxxvii. 11, 12, where Rabshakeh expresses his utter disbelief in Jehovah's power, seems an argument in favour of the verse. The movement in favour of a single sanctuary must have been going on long before the Deuteronomic reformation under Josiah, and naturally it would have divided the people. Rabshakeh tries to profit by the factions. He is an astute diplomatist, speaking the language and knowing the politics of the kingdom of Judah. See G. A. Smith, *Book of Isaiah*, p. 347. (p. 291)

11. It seems impossible to reconcile the first campaign of Sennacherib with the destruction of his army by pestilence. The first expedition into Syria was a complete success. The story in 2 Kings xviii.-xix. and *Isaiah* xxxvi.-xxxvii. implies that the retreat was shortly before the death of Sennacherib, B.C. 681, whereas the campaign mentioned on the Taylor Cylinder was B.C. 701. Dr. Cheyne (*Introduction to Book of Isaiah* and *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Hezekiah*) thinks the narrative fictitious, but admits the possibility of two campaigns. So does Dr. Sayce, in *Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Sennacherib*. The question is discussed in the *Expository Times*, XII., XIII. (1901-2) and a second campaign is deemed possible. Dr. Cheyne remarks, *Encyclopædia Biblica*: "A thorough criticism

of 2 Kings xviii.-xix. and Is. xxxvi. ff. in connection with the Assyrian annals, raises the character of Hezekiah considerably: he was a true hero, who, unlike the cowardly Luli of Sidon, stuck to the post of duty," etc. (p. 292)

Chapter XII

1. The death of Isaiah may be alluded to in Heb. xi. 37. Josephus says nothing about it. Ewald says it is a late Jewish tradition, *History*, vol. iv., p. 211, Eng. Tr. Justin Martyr, *Trypho*, cxx. (p. 295)

2. Professor Davidson says of Jeremiah (Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Jeremiah*), "Strictly speaking, we have no literature from him"; meaning that his prophecies were collected by his friends. The book of Jeremiah with its two recensions, Hebrew and Greek, presents a complicated problem. It has to be rearranged to be understood. No argument can be founded on the references made in it. The general impression it leaves on my mind is that the prophet was not an original thinker, but borrowed largely from the earlier literature of his people. Gautier, *Introd. à l'Ancien Test.* vol. i., p. 464. (p. 297)

3. The authorship of Deuteronomy, or rather chs. v.—xxvi., is generally attributed to this age, and it certainly does seem to re-echo its sentiments. It is neither pleasant, nor necessary, to believe that it was deliberately forged to induce Josiah to make his reformation. It seems more likely that it was written during the period of the troubles and that the writer believed he was giving the Law of Moses with the exhortations necessary for his age. Cheyne (*Jeremiah, his Life and Times*, chs. vi., vii.) has some interesting remarks.

Dr. Duff's *Theology and Ethics of the Hebrews*—a book, in my opinion, singularly out of sympathy with any orthodox interpretation of Holy Scripture—has an excellent chapter on the book of Deuteronomy. He thinks it incredible that the work was a forgery by Hilkiah, as this priest could not have sympathy with a movement like that of the Deuteronomists. He had, in fact, been reproved by Josiah for neglect of duty in repairing the Temple. Dr. Duff then goes on to give Dr. Carl Steuernagel's theory of Deuteronomy, in which the inspiration of a part of the book is traced to Hosea and the Northern Kingdom rather than to Isaiah.—pp. 137-141. For the effect of Deuteronomy on Jeremiah see Gautier, *Introd. à l'Ancien Test.*, vol. i., p. 461. Prof. Naville suggests (see *Expos. Times* for October, 1909) that Deuteronomy was put under the foundation of Solomon's Temple, where it was discovered by Josiah. The title of his paper, read before the French Academy, is *Une interprétation égyptienne d'un Texte biblique: la Découverte de la Loi sous le roi Josias*.

There seems to be a growing feeling that part, at any rate, of Deuteronomy originated in Northern Israel. Prof. Kennett has emphasised both this and the late date of Deuteronomy in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, July 1906. He argues that Jeremiah inspired the writing of Deuteronomy, rather than, as has been

generally assumed, Deuteronomy Jeremiah. Indeed, this critic places the Law of Holiness (Lev. xvii. ff.) before Deuteronomy, assigning the latter book to the sixth century B.C. It was, he thinks certainly completed before the time of Zerubbabel. (p. 297)

4. As regards the date of Nahum's prophecy, see Driver, *Introduction to Literature of Old Testament*, p. 315. He thinks it may belong to the decline of Nineveh after the death of Asshur-bani-pal, B.C. 626. As regards Judah the terms of the prophecy seem to point to some invasion not recorded in the historical books. (p. 298)

5. Professor Barnes, *Chronicles* (Cambridge Bible for Schools) says that the captivity and restoration of Manasseh is not incredible, though supported by no Assyrian inscription. Necho I. of Egypt was put in fetters and afterwards liberated. That the Assyrians should have taken him to Babylon is suspicious. A tradition of his captivity may have survived till the age of the Chronicler, B.C. 200. (p. 298)

5a. The prophecy of Zephaniah deserves careful study if only because its date and genuineness is comparatively undisputed in the article on this prophet in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* by the late W. Robertson-Smith; it is admitted that Zephaniah must have prophesied before the reforms of Josiah, as the idolatry condemned is just such as existed before the purification of the Temple. The prophet's dependence on Isaiah is also insisted upon. Dr. Cheyne supplements the article by showing how certain passages have been questioned, but on the whole agrees with what Robertson-Smith has said. (p. 301)

6. Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii., p. 513. Driver, in his *Translation of the Book of Jeremiah*, p. 21, says on ch. iv. 5—vi. 30: "The foe whom Jeremiah had in mind when he originally delivered the prophecy was in all probability the Scythians . . . who actually as Herodotus tells us (I. 105-108), overran Western Asia at about 625 B.C., and advanced through Palestine as far as Ashkelon, intending to invade Egypt." (p. 301)

6a. The reforms of Josiah as related in 2 Kings xxii.-xxiii. depend of course on whether they were in obedience to the commands in Deuteronomy or are related by a writer who made so pious a king as Josiah conform to the laws of that book: see Kennett, 'The Origin of the Aaronite Priesthood' (*Journal of Theological Studies*, January 1905). (p. 304)

7. In Deut. xiii. 1 ff. there is a warning against prophets who endeavour to ensnare the people into idolatrous practices. Nothing like this is found in the other codes, and it is an example of that dread of false prophets so conspicuous in the prophetic writers of this period. Driver, *Deuteronomy*, *in loc.* (p. 305)

8. In Jer. xxii. 15 there are two most difficult words. The verb-form (thou viest ?) is anomalous and the word for 'cedar' is read in the LXX. Ahaz or Ahab.

The following are different renderings :—

Vulgate	confers te cedro.
LXX.	παροξυνῆ ἐν Ἀχαζ or ἐν Ἀχαάβ.
Luther	thou adornest thyself with cedar.
A.V.	thou closest thyself in cedar.
R.V.	thou strivest to excel in (<i>margin</i> , viest with the) cedar.
Cheyne	thou viest with Ahab.
Driver	thou strivest to excel in cedar (<i>i.e.</i> Does building palaces of cedar make thee a king ?). (p. 309)

9. Rawlinson (*Ancient Monarchies*, p. 501) calls Nebuchadrezzar "one of the most remarkable characters in Scripture." Sayce (*Religion of the Ancient Babylonians*, p. 97) says that "we gather from his monuments that Nebuchadrezzar was a man of peculiarly devout and religious character. This is borne out by the book of Daniel, which, though late, has preserved a true tradition of this monarch's disposition." In Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Daniel, the name is spelt Nebuchadnezzar (LXX. Ναβουχοδνόσσυρος). But Josephus and Strabo have Ναβοκοδρόσυρος. (p. 310)

10. The arrangement of the historical parts of the book of Jeremiah is as follows : *The Reign of Jehoiakim*, chs. xxvi., xxxvi., xlv., xxxv. *Zedekiah's reign* (early), xxiv., xxix., xxvii., xxviii., li. 59-64 ; (during the siege of Jerusalem), xxi. 1-10, xxxiv. 1-7, xxxvii. 1-10, xxxiv. 8-22, xxxvii. 11—xxxviii. 28a, xxxii. *After the fall of Jerusalem*, xxxix.—xliii.

The LXX. text and arrangement of the book of Jeremiah differs more than that of any other part of the O.T. About one-eighth of the total words are not translated in the LXX. ; and the prophecies against the nations come themselves in a different order to the Massoretic text after xxv. 13a. Driver, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, p. xlvi. f. (p. 315)

Chapter XIII

1. The authorities for Alexander's visit to Jerusalem are Josephus, *Antiq.* viii. 3-6, and the Talmud (*Yoma* 69). In Josephus, Jaddua is the High Priest ; in the Talmud, Simon the Just. The Classical historians do not mention the circumstances. The visit, however is not impossible. The date assigned is B.C. 332. (p. 316)

2. The chapters in Jeremiah referring to the history of this period (excluding the prophecies against the nations) are :—

xiii., referring probably to the very end of Jehoiakim's reign or even to that of his successor.

xx., xxiv., xxvi.—xxviii., xxxii., xlv., see Dr. Streane in the Cambridge Bible for Schools, *Jeremiah*, Introduction. (p. 319)

3. See note in Toy's *Ezekiel* (Polychrome Bible), p. 112. "The persistence of these cults among the Jews after the reform of Josiah (B.C. 621) is noteworthy." See also T. P. Smith, *Old Testament Hist.*, pp. 304 ff. (p. 320)

4. Of this earliest 'dispersion' in Egypt nothing is known. The *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Dispersion*, § 7, quotes the letter to Aristaeus, which says there were Jewish mercenaries in the army of Psammetichus I. (B.C. 633-609). Jer. xlv. 1 (thought to be an insertion of as early a date as the fifth century), mentions Jewish settlements in Migdol (Noph) and Pathros, all in Upper Egypt. For Pharaoh Hophra, or Apries, see Herodotus ii. 169. See also Rawlinson, *Ancient Egypt*, vol. ii., p. 487. Ewald (*History of Israel*, vol. iv., p. 276, Eng. Tr.) thinks this settlement became a numerous one.

An amazing light has been thrown on the dispersed Jews in Egypt by the so-called *Mond papyri* published in facsimile in 1905. These are Jewish documents carefully dated between B.C. 471-411, belonging to a family resident at Syene (Assouan). The language, Aramaic, the character is legible with a little practice to anyone who can read ordinary Hebrew. They are purely secular, relating to transfers of houses and marriage settlements. The sacred Name, however, occurs in the form Yahu, and there was an altar to Him on which the Jews swore fidelity to their agreements. The text has been edited by Drs. Sayce and Cowley of Oxford. See S. A. Cook, *The Jews in Syene in the Fifth Century B.C.* (Palestine Exploration Fund). (p. 324)

5. This is the view of Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Israel*. "Judah" says Professor Barnes, the writer of the article "never recovered from the brutal devastation wrought by Sennacherib." (p. 325)

6. The first batch of exiles certainly received indulgent treatment. They were settled in houses of their own, Jer. xxix. 5 ff. They were allowed self-government under their own elders, Ezek. viii. 1; xiv. 1: xx. 1. Jehoiachin, after the death of Nebuchadrezzar, received special marks of favour from his son. (2 Kings xxv. 27 ff.) According to some critics, only a small minority returned to Jerusalem, the majority preferring to remain behind. Milman (*History of the Jews*, vol. ii., p. 151) speaks of the great prosperity of the Babylonian community, and remarks: "The singular part of their history is this, that though willing aliens from their native Palestine, they remained Jews in character and religion; they continued to be a separate people, and refused to mingle themselves with the population of the country in which they were domiciled." (p. 325)

7. Good examples of the moralising tendency of later writers in telling the ancient stories are seen in Wellhausen, *History of Israel*, pp. 237 and 286, the accounts of Gideon and Elisha. The speeches of St. Stephen (Acts vii.) and of St. Paul (Acts xiii.) are thoroughly in accord with the later Old Testament method of making the facts of history point their own lesson (p. 327)

7a. The vicissitudes of the Levitical tribe as revealed in the Bible are very strange and perplexing.

Levi was the third son of Leah and is mentioned in close connection with Simeon. For their violence to the Shechemites the two tribes are cursed by Jacob and are to be divided and scattered. (Gen. xxxiv. 25-29, xlix. 5-7.) According to 1 Chr. iv. 39-42, the Simeonites had some successes in their southern inheritance in the days of Hezekiah; but they are not mentioned in "Moses' blessing of the tribes" (Deut. xxxiii.). S. A. Cook, *American Journal of Theology*, 'Simeon and Levi.' The tribe in fact disappears early, and Levi, as a 'secular' tribe, probably vanished even earlier. But there is a uniform tradition that the Levites were the tribesmen and supporters of Moses, see Ex. ii. 1 (E); Ex. iv. 14 (RJE); Ex. xxxii. 26 (J), even as against his brother Aaron in the matter of the Golden Calf (for this see Kennett, 'Aaronic Priesthood' in the *Journal Theol. Studies*, Jan. 1906). It is also generally implied that the terms 'priest' and 'Levite' are interchangeable. Even in Malachi the priestly covenant is with Levi (ii. 4). In Deuteronomy the priests are Levites, and the law as contrasted with that in Ezekiel is as follows: Deut. xviii. 6, "And if a Levite come from one of thy gates, where he sojourneth, and come with all the desire of his soul to the place which Jehovah shall choose, and ministers in the name of Jehovah's God like all his brethren the Levites which stand before Jehovah, they shall eat their portions." (Driver *in loc.*) The separation of the Levites from the Aaronic priesthood was unknown to Ezekiel, whose regulations seem to have led to the promulgation of the Priestly Law on the subject in Numbers. (p. 331)

8. Toy (*Ezekiel* in the Polychrome Bible) notes on ch. xviii. In this chapter Judah and Benjamin are made to change places.

For a plan of the restored Temple of Ezekiel see *The Second Temple in Jerusalem*, by W. Shaw Caldecott. (p. 331)

9. Davidson, *Job* (Cambridge Bible for Schools), p. xx. On p. xxv. he remarks: "Moreover, though Job be an individual, he is more than an individual. The national history reflects itself in his." (p. 334)

10. Cox, *Commentary on the Book of Job*, pp. 55-57: "If Eliphaz is the prophet and Bildad the sage of the trio, what shall we say of Zophar? So far as I can read his character in his words, Zophar is the common good man of his day, the vulgar but sincere formalist; the man who thinks that what he says will become true if only he says it often enough or forcibly enough." (p. 334)

Chapter XIV

1. Herodotus (i. 95) says that he knows three accounts of the birth and origin of Cyrus, and relates (i. 107-130) that which he considers the true one. Cyrus was the son of Mandane, daughter of Astyages, and was ordered by his grandfather to be put to death. Harpagus, who was commanded to kill the child, gave Cyrus to a herdsman and

commanded him to expose the boy. But instead of doing so the herdsman brought up Cyrus as his own son. Harpagus in the end persuaded Cyrus to revolt against Astyages; and in this way the Persian empire was founded. Cyrus afterwards captured Babylon during a festival by diverting the course of the Euphrates. So great was the city, that many of the inhabitants whilst engaged in the festival did not know that the city was taken (i. 191). Cf. the account of the capture of Babylon in Daniel v. The Belshazzar there mentioned was Bel-shar-uzur the son of that Nabu-nahid who was actually king when Cyrus entered Babylon. Belshazzar was defeated outside the city when Cyrus was advancing. (p. 337)

2. Herodotus says of the Persian religion: "They have no images of the gods, no temples nor altars, and consider the use of them a sign of folly. This comes, I think, from their not believing the Gods to have the same nature as men, as the Greeks imagine." (i. 131.) Yet Cyrus says in his inscription: "The gods dwelling within them to their places I restored. Daily I addressed Bel and Nebo, that the length of my days they should fulfil; that they should bless the decree of my fate, and to Merodach my lord should say that Cyrus the King thy worshipper and Cambyses his son," etc. Cheyne, *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, vol. ii., p. 288. The religion of Cyrus does not seem to have been that of the Persians, who were certainly in sympathy with the later Jewish hatred of idolatry.

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3. For the description of Cyrus' entry into Babylon, see Driver, *Daniel* (Cambridge Bible for Schools), p. xxix. See also Ball, *Light from the East*.

(p. 338)

4. For the translation of the edict of Cyrus on the so-called Cylinder Inscription see Ball, *Light from the East*, p. 224. Cyrus in a proclamation issued by him shortly after his entry into the city, shewed that he understood how to utilise the popular disaffection: he represented himself as the favoured servant of Mardak, specially chosen by him to become sovereign of Babylon, in order to undo the evil deeds of Nabu-nahid and to redress the grievances of the people.

(p. 340)

5. Professor Kusters of Leyden is of opinion that there was no return in the time of Cyrus, and that the people who rebuilt the Temple were those who had been left behind at the time of the Captivity. The passages which allude to the foundations of the Temple being laid before the reign of Darius (Ezr. i. 3, 5; iii. 8-13; iv. 1, 2; vi. 21, 22) belong to the age of the Chronicler, circa 250 B.C., whilst the contemporary prophets Haggai and Zechariah ignore both the laying of the foundations and the supposed return of the 'Captivity' from Babylon. See Cheyne, *The Book of Isaiah*, Introduction, p. xxxv., for an exposition of this strange view.

The subject is dealt with in *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, 'The History of the Jewish Church from Nebuchadrezzar to Alexander the Great,' by Prof. Kennett. According to this essay Zerubbabel

was governor of Judah, appointed by the Persians. He tried to fortify Jerusalem despite the remonstrances of Zechariah, and aspired to the throne of his ancestors. (p. 340)

6. The Samaritans are not called by this name in Ezra or Nehemiah. Bishop Ryle (*Ezra and Nehemiah*, Cambridge Bible for Schools, p. xxxv.) says that the foreign settlers were the result of three deportations from the East to Palestine: (1) by Sargon, 2 Kings xvii. 24; (2) by Esar-haddon, Ezra iv. 2, between B.C. 681-668; (3) Ezra iv. 10, by Asshur-bani-pal (Asnapper), B.C. 668-626. (p. 343)

7. The letters in Ezra present some difficulty. As the text now stands events took place in the following order:—

- (1) The return under Cyrus after B.C. 538.
- (2) The altar set up and the foundations of the Temple laid.
- (3) The 'adversaries' ask to help to build the Temple.
- (4) Letters in the reigns of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes accusing the Jews of wishing to rebuild the walls and city of Jerusalem.
- (5) Correspondence with Darius about the Temple, which he allows to be completed.

Now the kings of Persia were:—

Cyrus	B.C. 538.
Cambyses	B.C. 529.
Pseudo-Smerdis	B.C. 522.
Darius	B.C. 522.
Xerxes	B.C. 485.
Artaxerxes (Longimanus)	B.C. 465.

It is not easy to identify the Ahasuerus and the Artaxerxes of Ezra iv. 6, 7, with Cambyses and Pseudo-Smerdis. Ahasuerus is the Hebrew equivalent for Xerxes. The narrative of Ezra iv. is very fragmentary and the letters are probably misplaced. See Ryle, *Ezra and Nehemiah*. (p. 343)

8. The identity of Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar used to be generally admitted. The names are mentioned in different places. In Ezra i. Cyrus gives the vessels of the Temple to Sheshbazzar. In Ezra ii.-iii. the leader of the Return is Zerubbabel. In Haggai and Zechariah, Zerubbabel is addressed as the leader of the people, viz. in B.C. 519 when the building of the Temple commenced. In 1 Esdras ii. 12, he is called Sanabassar (LXX. cod. B Σαναβάσσαρος). In 1 Esdras iii., iv., Zerubbabel is a young man at the court of Darius who, by declaring to the King that Truth is the strongest thing on earth, obtains leave to go and rebuild the Temple. Thus in 1 Esdras, Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel are distinct from one another: the first being apparently a Persian entrusted with the care of the returning Jews in the time of Cyrus: whilst Zerubbabel is a Jewish exile at the court of Darius. It may be noted that Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar are both Persian names, and consequently the parallel between them and the double names borne by Daniel and his three companions is not to be maintained. Sellin has advanced

a theory that Zerubbabel was not a Persian nominee at all, but was a descendant of David, whom Haggai and Zechariah the prophets set up as king and who was put to death by the Persians. He maintains that Zerubbabel is the victim alluded to in Isaiah liii. In Ezra v. 16, however, Sheshbazzar (see also 2 Esdras v. 16) is said to have laid the foundations of the Temple, and in 1 Esdras vi. 18 it is said that Cyrus handed the holy vessels to Zerubbabel and Sanabassar the governor. The identity can scarcely be proved or disproved. Sayce, *Higher Criticism and Monuments*, p. 539. Ryle, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, p. xxxi. (p. 345)

9. In this case the *Birah* would be north of the Temple; *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Jerusalem*, § 27 and § 28. The fortress was called *βᾶρις*, and was converted by Herod into the strong castle of the Antonia. (p. 345)

9a. In the subsequent history it will become evident that what was established at the Return was a priestly aristocracy. Once the Law, as it now exists, was fully accepted, the priests became the ruling class. Strangely enough this aristocracy which had been created by the "Law" was less zealous than the common people; and in the days of the Maccabees, as in the time of Nehemiah, the priests of high rank were lukewarm and even inclined to Hellenize, whilst the people were fanatically religious. The Sadducees or priestly party in later times were never popular, whilst their opponents the Pharisees attracted the people by their zeal for the Law. (p. 346)

9b. The Book of Esther was written to account for the Purim festival. It is intended to be received as historical; but, despite many evidences that the writer was not unacquainted with the Persian Court, there are discrepancies even in the story itself which make it scarcely credible as a narration of actual facts. The name of God is never mentioned throughout the book, which is animated by a vindictive spirit against the Gentiles, contrasting unfavourably with the utterances of many of the prophets. No character shews any noble traits with the exception of Esther, who is patriotic if revengeful. The earliest Christians who mention the Canon of the Old Testament, Melito (A.D. 170) and Origen (A.D. 225) disregard *Esther*; the early Syrian Church rejected it, nor is it in the Nestorian Old Testament. The latest commentator, Dr. Paton, in the *International Critical Commentary* (1908), says: "The book is so conspicuously lacking in religion that it should never have been included in the Canon of the Old Test., but should have been left with Judith and Tobit among the Apocryphal writings." For an extraordinary theory of the Feast of Purim and the hanging of Haman see Frazer, *Golden Bough*, vol. III. (1903), pp. 138-200. (p. 349)

10. For Nehemiah's ride and the places mentioned see the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Jerusalem*, § 24; G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem from the Earliest Times*, vol. ii.; Conder, *The City of Jerusalem*; and Caldecott, *The Second Temple in Jerusalem*. (p. 353)

11. It is a much-disputed question as to what Law was read by Ezra on this occasion. Scholars are divided, some maintaining that the law book was the book known as the Priestly Code, others that it was the Pentateuch. Undoubtedly the Law of Holiness, if not the laws of P, was known at this time. (cf. Neh. viii. 18 with Lev. xxiii. 36, etc.) *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Art. *Law Literature*, sec. 19.

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12. In 1907 Professor Sachau of Berlin published some newly discovered Aramæan papyri relating to the affairs of the Jewish community at Assouan, *Drei Aramäische Papyrusurkunden aus Elephantine*, Berlin, 1907. They consist of two almost duplicate letters to Bagohi, Governor of Jehûd (Judæa); and a short memorandum, the writers being Yedonyah and the priests of the fortress Yeb (Elephantine). It appears from the letter that when Cambyses invaded Egypt B.C. 525 the Jews had a temple at Yeb, which the Persian conqueror, whilst destroying the Egyptian temples, respected. In the fourteenth year of Darius Nothus (B.C. 424-404), the Jewish temple was destroyed at the instigation of the Priests of Chnum by Waidrang, the Persian commander (*rab hêla* as he is called in Sayce and Cowley's papyri, *vide* note on Chap. XIII., p. 418). The Jews of Yeb had already written to the High Priest at Jerusalem, Jehoanan, and they tell Bagohi that they are now writing to Delajah and Shelemijah, the sons of Sanaballat. Thus in a document dated B.C. 408 we come across the names of Scriptural characters, and are brought closely into touch with the days of Nehemiah, whose second visit to Jerusalem was in B.C. 432. See *The Guardian*, Nov. 6th, 1907; *Expositor*, Dec. 1907; *Irish Ecclesiastical Review*, Feb. 1908.

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Chapter XV

1. The Apocrypha was printed in all English Bibles down to the time of the foundation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In this enterprise Churchmen and Dissenters acted together, and the Apocrypha was in much disfavour with the latter, who disliked it partly because it was not scripture, and also because in 1662, when the Prayer Book was revised, lessons from it were insisted upon by the Church party. As a compromise the British and Foreign Bible Society agreed to print the Apocrypha, and other printers have followed this example. It appears in all English Bibles, even in the Genevan version, so popular with the Puritans.

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2. The date of the Books of Chronicles is generally agreed to have been not earlier than B.C. 332, for Jaddua the High Priest in Alexander the Great's time is mentioned, nor later than the middle of the second century B.C. Probably it belongs to the third century B.C.

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3. The letter of Aristeas purports to be a contemporary record of a Greek courtier of Ptolemy Philadelphus (B.C. 285-247). It has been described as 'Jewish propaganda under a heathen mask.'

It has been dated variously from B.C. 200 to A.D. 37; and it is generally admitted that the letter cannot be genuine. See Swete, *Introd. to the Old Testament*; it has been translated recently by H. St. J. Thackeray. S.P.C.K., London, 1917. (p. 362)

4. Alexander the Great was besieging Gaza in B.C. 322, after he had taken Tyre. Josephus is our only authority for his going to Jerusalem. The city did not lie in the direct route to Egypt; but to dismiss the story of the visit altogether seems to be hasty. The only authority for the campaign of Alexander is Arrian, who flourished in the second century after Christ; and though he doubtless had earlier authorities, he was posterior to Josephus. Mahaffy points out that the Jews must have been valuable guides owing to the constant pilgrimages from Babylonia to Jerusalem. (p. 363)

5. Alexandria became almost the second metropolis of Judaism, as Mommsen says, 'in acknowledged independence, in repute, culture, and wealth, the body of Alexandrian Jews was, even before the destruction of Jerusalem, the first in the world' (*Roman Provinces*, ii. 267). The Talmud preserves a very florid tradition of the great synagogue there. Strabo says the Jews had their own 'ethnarch.' But for the Christians having preserved the writings of Philo and Josephus our information about them would be exceedingly scanty. (p. 363)

6. The ferocity of the Maccabees as conquerors has, I think, often been overlooked. It is important, as it accounts for the hatred with which the Jews were regarded by the surrounding Gentiles. See 1 Macc. v. 1-8, Judas' murderous campaign, and compare 2 Macc. x. 16 ff., where he is credited with killing twenty thousand Idumeans. The whole chapter in 1 Maccabees is a tale of slaughter, burning cities, slaying every male, etc. Josephus records almost unbelievable massacres by Alexander Jannaeus, who, to do him justice, was no more merciful to the Jews than to his Gentile enemies, but treated both with impartial barbarity. (p. 370)

7. The Assideans are described as a synagogue (*συναγωγὴ*) and are called strict and willing observers of the law (1 Macc. ii. 42). In 2 Macc. xvi. 6 they are wrongly confounded with the followers of Judas, whom they deserted (1 Macc. vii. 13). From the resemblance of their name to the Hebrew *hasid*, the saint or holy ones in the Psalter, they are said (1 Macc. vii. 7) to be alluded to in Ps. lxxix. 2, 3. Whether they can be identified with any later sect is doubtful. (p. 370)

8. The Pharisees and Sadducees. The origin of these famous parties is very obscure. It may be that the Pharisees continued the unworldly policy of the Assideans. The Talmud relates a dispute between King Jannai and the Pharisees; whether the King

is John Hyrcanus or Alexander Jannaeus is doubtful. It is also said that Hyrcanus in his old age joined the Sadducees. They seem always to have opposed the worldly policy of the Hasmoneans.

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9. The Hasmonean kingdom was evidently widespread, and included many Greek and Gentile cities. Josephus gives a long list of places conquered by Alexander Jannaeus. (*Antiq.* XV. 13, 4).

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10. Herod the Great was a typical 'mediatised' prince in the Roman Empire, not unlike a Rajah in India under British rule. The same game was played on a much larger scale in Galatia. Herod had the wisdom to see that his interest lay in being faithful to Rome, but to no particular party in the state. Unfortunately the life of Herod by his contemporary, Nicolas of Damascus, is not extant, and is only known from quotations by Josephus. There is an excellent vindication of Herod by John Vickers, *The History of Herod*, Williams and Norgate, 1901.

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Chapter XVI

1. The most famous example of ultra-Sabbatarianism is 1 Macc. ii. 29-41, when the Jews allowed themselves to be massacred rather than fight on the Sabbath. They afterwards agreed to fight if attacked.

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2. The origin of the Feast, like its name, has been hotly disputed. It is connected with the victory of Judas Maccabaeus over Nicanor, which is celebrated the day before 13th of Adar. It has been connected with various heathen rites. Mordecai and Esther have been identified with Marduk and Istar. As celebrated by the Jews it is a secular festival accompanied by much merriment. The only religious feature is the reading of the Book of Esther in the synagogue. For an account of the festivities see *Jewish Encyclopedia*, art. "Purim," and Morris Jastrow in Hastings' *Dic. of Religion and Ethics*.

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3. Examples of this tendency are Ps. xlv. 1, 'Ἐξερρεύσατο ἡ καρδία μου λόγον ἀγαθόν, 'My heart overfloweth with a goodly matter'—the speaker being the author of the Marriage Psalm. The Christians, arguing for the doctrine of the Second Person of the Trinity, made God the speaker, and applied to the word *Logos* its theological meaning. Another is Proverbs viii. 22, where Wisdom is made to say 'The Lord created (ἐκτίσεν) me.' This perplexed those who maintained that the word was 'uncreate'; whereas, as Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, observed, the Hebrew word means 'possessed.'

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4. For an account of the Hebrew fragments see the Introduction to Ecclesiasticus in Charles *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. I.

Edwyn Bevan, in his *Jerusalem under the High Priests* (pp. 49-68), gives an excellent sketch of the book. (p. 390)

5. Who the Sibyl was is discussed in Charles *op. cit.*, Vol. II., X. 12. The invitation to become Jews by lustral washing, and not p. 368, by Mr. Lanchester. See also Sir G. Frazer on Pausanias, by circumcision, is interesting. (p. 393)

6. See R. H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, and also his *Apocrypha, &c.* (p. 395)

7. The Third and Fourth Books of Esdras are placed at the very end of the Vulgate after the New Testament. The Fourth Book has not been preserved in Hebrew or Greek. There are Syriac, Arabic and Armenian versions. Fragments of the Greek are preserved in patristic literature, Clement Alex (*Stromatris* iii. 6) and in the *Apostolic Constitutions*; see G. H. Box, *The Ezra Apocalypse*, Introd. (p. 395)

8. The references to the Essenes are Josephus *B.J.* II. and *Antiq.* XVIII. 1, Philo *Quod omnis probus liber* 12, Pliny *Nat. Hist.* V. 17. The Christian fathers, Hippolytus and Epiphanius, are confused and almost unintelligible on the subject. Lightfoot's essay on the Essenes in his commentary on Colossians is still most valuable. (p. 398)

9. The only information about the Therapeutae is the treatise on *The Contemplative Life*, attributed to Philo. The correctness of this attribution is upheld by F. C. Conybeare in his edition, but is denied by Schürer and others. No other trace of the sect has been discovered. (p. 399)

10. The Covenanters of Damascus, like the Therapeutae, are only known from a single document. For a fuller discussion see Foakes-Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. i., pp. 97 ff. (p. 400)

11. See J. A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans* (Philadelphia, 1907), and *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. i., pp. 120 ff. (p. 403)

II.

STELE OF MENEPHTAH, B.C. 1277. (HOMMEL.)

Libya is laid waste, Kheta has been pacified, Canaan with all its ill-disposed ones has been captured, Ashkelon has been led away captive, Gezer taken, I-no'am has been annihilated. Is-ra-e-ru has been laid waste and its seed destroyed, Khar has become even as the widows of Egypt, all lands are together at peace. Every man that roameth about has been chastened by the King Menephtah.—HOMMEL, *Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, Eng. Tr., p. 216.

This is a large stele of black syenite originally sculptured by Amenophis III., but utilised on the other side by Menephtah for an inscription.—BALL, *Light from the East*, p. 129.

III.

PALESTINIAN CITIES CONQUERED BY SHISHAK (B.C. 960 ?).

The record of Shishak's invasion of Palestine is on the southern wall of the great temple of Amon at Karnak. The gigantic figure of the king is surrounded by the names of the places conquered by him. Only a few can be identified with certainty, among them Taanach, Shunem, Rehob, Adullam, Gibeon, Beth-horon, Kedemoth, Ajalon, Megiddo. Most of these places belonged to the northern kingdom, so the theory that Shishak helped Jeroboam against Rehoboam must be abandoned. The third name on the third row is Jûd-hamâlek, perhaps the king's hand or monument (2 Sam. xviii. 18): some think it should be read Juda-melech; "but this," says Mr. Ball in his *Light from the East*, p. 138, "is philologically impossible." —BAEDEKER'S *Upper Egypt*, p. 123.

IV.

THE MOABITE STONE.

Mesha's inscription describing his victory over Israel, 9th century B.C.
(See Numb. xxxii. 1-5; Josh. xiii. 15-19; Is. xv.; Jer. xlvi. 1; and 2 Kings iii. 4, 5.)

I am Mesha (2 Kings iii. 5) the son of Chemosh-melek,* King of Moab the Daibonite. My father reigned over Moab for thirty years, and I reigned after my father. And I made this high place for Chemosh in QRHH, [a high place of salvation, because he had saved me from the king's assailants and because he had let me see my desire upon mine enemies (Ps. lix. 10, cxviii. 7). Omri was king over Israel (1 Kings xvi. 23), and he afflicted Moab many days because Chemosh (Numb. xxi. 29) was angry with his land. And his son succeeded him; and he also said I will afflict Moab. In my days said he thus, but I saw my pleasure on him and Israel perished with an everlasting destruction. And Omri took possession of Mehedeba (Medeba) and (Israel) dwelt during his days and during half his son's days forty years; but Chemosh restored it in my days. And I built Baal-Meon and I made in it the reservoir (?); and I built Qirathen (Kiriathaim). And the men of Gad had dwelt in Ataroth from of old; and the king of Israel built for himself Ataroth. And I slew all the people from the city a gazing-stock (Nahum iii. 6, Ez. xxviii. 17) unto Chemosh and unto Moab. And I brought back thence the

* Name uncertain: Chemosh-[kan] in *Encycl. Bibl.*

altar hearth of Dawdoh (?) and I dragged it before Chemosh in Qeriyoth (Kerioth or Kir of Moab?). And I settled there in the men of SRN and the men of MHRT. And Chemosh said unto me, Go take Nebo against Israel (Josh. viii. 1, etc.). And I went by night and fought against it from the break of dawn until noon. And I took it, and slew the whole of it 7000 men and male-strangers and women, and [female-stranger]s, and maid-servants: for I had devoted it to 'Ashtor Chemosh. And I took thence the vessels of Jahveh, and I dragged them before Chemosh. And the king of Israel had built Yahas (Jahaz), and abode in it while he fought against me. But Chemosh drave him out from before me; and I took of Moab 200 men, even all its chiefs, and I led them up against Yahass and took it to add it unto Daibon (Dibon). (*The rest of the inscription refers to Meshah's buildings.*)—DRIVER in *Samuel*, Introd. p. lxxxvii., and in *Encyclopædia Biblica*, art. *Mesha*.

V.

THE QARQARA INSCRIPTION OF SHALMANESER II., B.C. 853.

To the cities of Irkhuleni the Hamathite I approached. The cities of Eden, Barga, and Argana his royal city I captured. His spoil, his goods (and) the riches of his palaces I removed; his palaces I delivered to the flames. From the city of Argana I departed; to the city of Qarqara I approached. Qarqara, his royal city, I overthrew, dug up and burned with fire; 1200 chariots, 1200 riding horses (and) 20,000 men belonging to Hadad-idri of the (country) of Damascus; 700 chariots, 700 riding horses and 10,000 men belonging to Irkhuleni the Hamathite; 2000 chariots (and) 10,000 men belonging to Ahab the Israelite (Ak-hab-bu mat 'Sir'alâ); 500 men belonging to the Guans; 1000 men belonging to the Egyptians; 10 chariots and 10,000 men belonging to the Arkites; 200 men belonging to Matin-ba'al of Arvad; 200 men of the U'sanations; 30 chariots and 10,000 men belonging to Adon-ba'al the Sianian; 1000 camels from Gindibuh the Arabian (and) . . . men belonging to Baasha the son of Rehob of the country of Ammon; these twelve kings he took to his assistance; to (offer) battle and combat they came against me. With the mighty forces which Asshur the lord has given (me), with the mighty weapons which Nergal who goes before me has granted (me), I fought with them; from the city of Qarqara to the city of Kirzau I utterly defeated them; 14,000 of their fighting men I slew with weapons, etc.—SAYCE, *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 390. (*With the permission of the S.P.C.K.*)

VI.

THE SIEGE OF DAMASCUS BY SHALMANESER II., AND THE TRIBUTE OF JEHU, KING OF ISRAEL, 842 B.C.

In the eighteenth year of my reign for the sixteenth time the Euphrates I crossed. Hazael (Ha-za'ilu) of Damascus in the multitude of his troops trusted, and his troops in great number he assembled. Saniru, the summit of the mountain, is at the entrance to Lebanon, as his fortress he made. With him I fought; his defeat I brought about; 16,000 of his warriors with weapons I overcame; 1121 of his chariots, 470 of his horses, together with his camp I took

from him. To save his life he made off; after him I went; in Damascus, his royal city, I besieged him; his plantations I cut down. To the mountains of Haurani (Ha-u-ra-ni) I went; cities without number I destroyed, I burnt; their spoils without number I carried off. To the mountain of Ba'lira'si which is at the head of the sea I went; my royal image there I set up. At that time the tribute of the Tyrians (Sur-ra-ai) the Sidonians (Si-du-na-ai) and of Jehu (Ia-u-a) the son of Omri, I received.—*By permission, from KING, First Steps in Assyrian*, p. 37 (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.).

This inscription is on the famous Black Obelisk now in the British Museum.—BALL, *Light from the East*, p. 166.

VII.

TIGLATH-PILESER III. REDUCES HAMATH, circa 740 B.C.

Nineteen districts of the city of Hamath (Ha-am-ma-at-ti) together with the cities round about them which are on the shore of the sea of the setting of the sun, which in sin and iniquity to Azariah (Az-ri-ia-a-u) they had detached, to the territory of Assyria I brought back. My officers as governors over them I appointed; 30,000 people I carried away from their cities, and in the district of Ku—(?) I settled.—KING, *First Steps in Assyrian*, p. 40.

Considerable difficulty has been found in the mention of Azariah's name in connection with Hamath. How could a king of Judah have been influential at this time in the politics of Northern Syria, especially if Jeroboam II. were still alive, and Israel a great power? Then Uzziah or Azariah, if alive at all, must have been a very aged man, and a leper in addition, in the days of Tiglath-pileser. An attempt has been made to identify the Ia-u-di of Tiglath-pileser with a kingdom in the neighbourhood of Hamath.—See the Article by Mr. S. A. COOK, *Encyclopædia Biblica*, and M'CURDY, *History of Prophecy and the Monuments*, vol. i., p. 413.

VIII.

MENAHEM PAYS TRIBUTE TO TIGLATH-PILESER III. (2 Kings xv. 19), B.C. 738.

The tribute of Kustaspi of Kummuh, Rezin (Ra-sun-nu) of Damascus, Menahem (Me-ni-hi-im-me) of Samaria, Hiram (Hi-ru-um-mu) of Tyre (Su-ra), Sibitti'i of Gebal [and of others including Zabibe the Queen of Arabia], gold, silver, lead, iron, elephants' hides, ivory, garments of variegated stuffs, cloth, purple wool, crimson wool, (various) kinds of wood, every valuable thing, treasures of royalty, fat sheep whose fleeces with crimson are dyed, birds of the heaven that fly, whose wings with purple are dyed, horses, mules, oxen, and sheep, camels and female camels with their foals I received.—KING, *First Steps in Assyrian*, p. 41.

IX.

THE DEATH OF PEKAH AND THE ACCESSION OF HOSHEA TO THE THRONE OF ISRAEL. TIGLATH-PILESER III., 734 B.C.

The cities of Gal'za and Abilakka which are on the border of Israel (Bit Hu-um-ri-a, *i.e.* the House of Omri) . . . the wide-spreading in its whole extent to the territory of Assyria I restored.

My officers as governors over them I appointed. Hanno (Ha-a-hu-u-nu) of Gaza (Ha-az-za-at-ai) before my arm fled and to Egypt escaped. Gaza (Ha-az-zu-tu) I conquered. His property, his possessions, his goods I carried off. The land of Israel (Bit Hu-um-ri-a) . . . the whole of his people together with their possessions to Assyria I carried. Pekah (Pe-ka-ha) their king they overthrew, and Hoshea (A-u-si') to the kingship over them I appointed.—*From KING, First Steps in Assyrian, p. 45.*

X.

THE FALL OF SAMARIA. SARGON, B.C. 722.

The city of Samaria (Sa-me-ri-na) I besieged, I took; 27,290 of the people that dwelt therein I carried away; 50 chariots from them I took, and the others their share I caused to take. My officer over them I appointed, and the tribute of the former king I laid upon them.—*From KING, First Steps in Assyrian, p. 47.*

XI.

SARGON'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST ASHDOD, 711 B.C.

Azuri, king of Ashdod, to no longer bring tribute in his heart planned, and to the kings of his neighbourhood proposals of hatred against Assyria sent. Because of the evil he had done, over the people of his land his rule I changed and Ahimite his twin brother to the kingship over them I appointed. The Hatti planning iniquity his rule hated, and Iatna with no claim to the throne, who like them reverence for authority did not know, they raised over them. In the anger of my heart with the chariot of my feet and my horses, which during . . . from my side do not depart, to Ashdod his royal city in haste I went, and Ashdod, Gintu and Asdudimu I besieged; I conquered. The gods that dwelt therein, himself, together with the people of his land, gold, silver, the possessions of his palace as booty I counted. Those cities anew I took. People from various land, the prisoners of my hands, therein I settled; my officer as ruler over them I set and with the people of Assyria I reckoned them.—*From KING, First Steps in Assyrian, p. 48.*

XII.

THE SILOAM INSCRIPTION.

Not later than the time of Hezekiah.

(2 Kings xx. 20; 2 Chr. xxxii. 30; Isaiah viii. 6.)

[Behold] the piercing through! and this was the manner of the piercing through. Whilst yet (the miners were lifting up) the pick each towards his fellow, and whilst there were yet three cubits to be (cut through, there was heard) the voice of each calling to his fellow, for there was a fissure of the rock on the right hand. . . .

And on the day of the piercing through the miners (lit. hewers) smote each so as to meet his fellow, pick against pick; and there flowed the water from the source to the pool, 1200 cubits; and one hundred cubits was the height of the rock over the head of the miners.—*DRIVER, Samuel, Introd. p. xv.*

XIII.

SENNACHERIB AND HEZEKIAH, B.C. 701.

The Taylor Cylinder in the British Museum contains a record of eight years of the reign of Sennacherib, including his third expedition against the kings of Phœnicia and Palestine. After the defeat of the Egyptians at El-tekeh, Hezekiah was attacked—

And of Hezekiah (Ha-za-ki-a-u) of Judah (Ia-u-da-ai) who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six of his strong cities, fortresses, and small cities which were around them, which were without number, with the battering of rams and with the assault of engines, the attack of foot-soldiers, of mines, breaches, and . . . I besieged, I captured, 200,150 people, small and great, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep without number from their midst I brought out and as spoil I counted. Him like a caged bird within Jerusalem (Ur-sa-li-im-mu) his royal city I enclosed. Entrenchments against him I cast up, and whosoever came forth from the gate of his city I punished his sin. His cities which I had taken from the midst of his land I separated to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Sillibel, king of Gaza, I gave and I diminished his land. Besides the former taxes, their yearly gift, tribute and presents to my dominion I added and fixed upon them. As for him, Hezekiah, fear of the majesty of my dominion overwhelmed him and the Urbi and his trusty warriors, whom to strengthen Jerusalem his royal city he had brought in, deserted—with 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver (2 Kings xviii. 14), precious stones, stibium, great stones, couches of ivory, seats of ivory, elephant-hide, ivory, various woods, divers objects, a heavy treasure, and his daughters, the women of his palace, male musicians, female musicians into Nineveh the city of my dominion after me he despatched, and to give tribute and to make submission he sent his messenger.—KING, *First Steps in Assyrian*, p. 61. BALL, *Light from the East*, p. 187.

XIV.

THE MURDER OF SENNACHERIB, B.C. 681.

On the twentieth day of Tebet Sennacherib king of the land of Assyria his son in a rebellion slew him. For twenty-three years Sennacherib the kingdom of Assyria ruled. From the twentieth day of Tebet to the second day of Adar the rebellion of Assyria continued. On the eighteenth day of Sivan Esarhaddon (Assur-ah-iddin) his son in Assyria on the throne sat.—KING, *First Steps in Assyrian*, p. 67.

XV.

THE TAKING OF BABYLON BY CYRUS, B.C. 538.

He (*i.e.* Marduk) sought out a righteous prince (Is. xli. 2) after his own heart (1 Sam. xiii. 14), whom he might take by the hand (Is. xlv. 1); Cyrus king of Anshan he called by his name (Is. xlv. 4), for empire over the whole world he proclaimed his title. The land of Kutu, the whole of the tribal hordes he forced into submission at his feet, the men whom he had delivered unto his hand with righteousness and justice he cared for (Is. xi. 4). Marduk, the great lord, the protector of the people, his good deeds with joy beheld. To

his city of Babylon that he should go he commanded, he caused him to take the road to Babylon ; like a friend and helper (Is. xlv. 2) he went at his side. His wide-spreading troops which, like the waters of a stream not to be known is the number, with their weapons girt, advance at his side. Without contest and battle he made him enter into Babylon his city ; Babylon he spared from tribulation. Nabonidus the king that did not fear him, he delivered into his hand. The people of Babylon, all of them, the whole of Sumer and Akkad, princes and governors, beneath him bowed down, they kissed his feet, they rejoiced in his kingdom, bright was their countenance. To the lord, who through his strength raises to life the dead, and from destruction and misery had spared all, joyfully they paid homage, they revered his name. I am Cyrus (Ku-ra-ash), king of the world, the great king, the king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters, son of Cambyses (Ka-am-bu-zi-ia), the great king, king of Anshan, the grandson of Cyrus the great king, king of Anshan, descendant of Teispes (Shi-ish-pi-ish) the great king, king of Anshan, eternal seed of royalty, of whom Bel and Nabu love the reign, and for the delight of their heart desired his kingdom. When into Babylon I entered, favourably and with exultation, and with shouts of joy, in the palace of the princes I took up a lordly dwelling, Marduk the great lord, the great heart of the Babylonians, inclined to me ; and daily do I care for his worship. My wide-spreading troops into Babylon advance in peace. The whole of Sumer and Akkad, the great race, no trouble I caused to have. For the affliction of Babylon and all its cities thoroughly did I care. And the gods of Sumer and Akkad which Nabonidus to the anger of the gods had brought into Babylon, at the word of Marduk, the great lord, in (their) entirety in their own shrines did I cause to take up the habitation of their hearts' delight. May all the gods whom I have brought into their own cities daily before Bel and Nabu for the lengthening of my days pray, let them speak the word for my good fortune and unto Marduk my lord let them say, " May Cyrus the king that feareth thee, and Cambyses his son have prosperity."—KING, *First Steps in Assyrian*, p. 102.

XVI.

THE TAKING OF BABYLON BY CYRUS. (ANOTHER ACCOUNT.)

In the month Tammuz Cyrus a battle in Upe on the banks of the Zalzallat against the forces of Akkad when he had waged, the people of Akkad he conquered ; when they rallied (?) the people he slew. On the fourteenth day Sippar, without fighting, was taken. Nabonidus (Nabu-na'id) fled. On the sixteenth day Ugbaru, the governor of Gutium, and the soldiers of Cyrus, without fighting, into Babylon entered. Afterwards Nabonidus when into Babylon . . . was taken captive. . . . Peace for the city was established ; Cyrus peace to Babylon, the whole of it, proclaimed. Gubaru, his governor, as governor in Babylon he appointed, and from the month Kislev to the month Adar, the gods of Akkad, which Nabonidus to Babylon had brought down, and their own cities returned.—KING, *First Steps in Assyrian*, p. 112.

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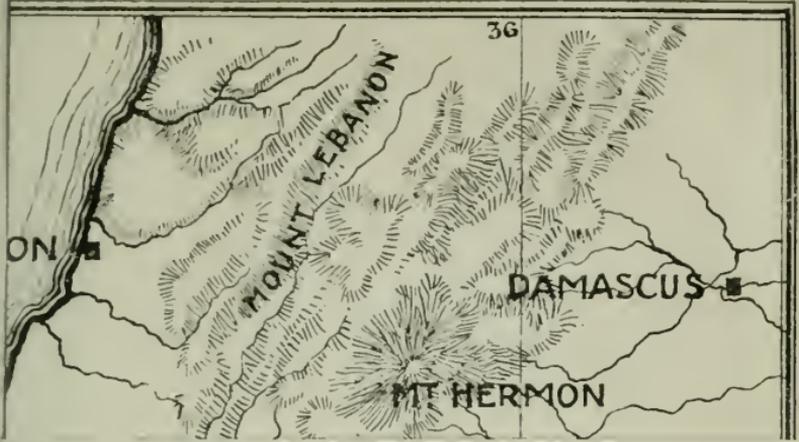
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THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF PALESTINE.

Attention is called to the variety of the country, the plains, valleys, and mountains, and the extraordinary depression of the Jordan valley, the descent from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea being 3800 feet.

N.B.—The 'Shephelah' should have been placed a little more to the East, as the land adjoining the coast is usually described as the 'Maritime plain.'

The Student is strongly recommended to have a large map of Palestine to refer to



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