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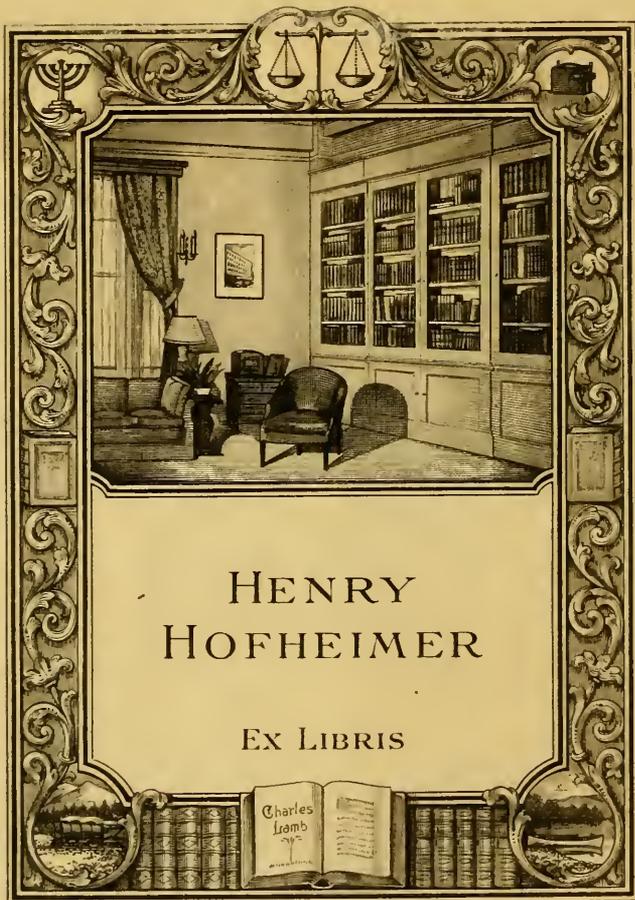
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MISCELLANEOUS
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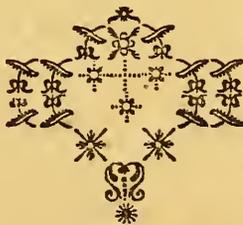
OF THE

BOOK of JUDGES.

BY

The Rev. Mr. JOHN COLERIDGE,

Vicar of, and Schoolmaster at, Ottery St. Mary, Devon.



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LORD BISHOP OF EXON,

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MISCELLANEOUS
DISSERTATIONS.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.

AN Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament at the head of a study recommend at first sight the possessor, as a friend to Christianity, learned in languages, and employing his leisure to the best improvement of learning; and the prime position is justly assigned to these books for their superior excellence, since all other tracts of learning fall short of their doctrines, either in point of antiquity or in respect of truth. If we consider them as one volume, they contain the most elevated language and poetical diction, the most

remote as well as true history, the most ancient geography, and the only perfect system of ethics.—Their most abstruse parts, when well explained, afford the true knowledge of ancient Jewish customs, notions, and idioms, and often trace out — what without them would be more perplexing to find than the head of the Nile—the origin of the religious practices and opinions that prevailed in the Heathen world.

The spirit, indeed, of sublimity and poetry pervades all the Eastern languages; but in the writings of the prophets and poets, in those divine books, appears with superior lustre. The words and expressions do not only there instruct, move the passions, and delight the reason of man; but often strike in the strongest glare of eloquence and figure. Amplification, for instance, is a favourite figure of orators and poets, and often arises *from a various definition, or description of the same thing* (Thus we find God described, Amos iv. 3. by, *He that formeth the mountains, that createth the wind, that declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, that treadeth upon*
the

the high places of the earth), or from consequences amassed together; by which we may see, Lamén. iv. 3 and 4, &c. a famine set forth in striking colours, by that obdurateness which self-preservation at that time causes men perishing to practise to each other, by the blackness of the skin, and by the eating of human flesh, even the flesh of their own children; and each consequence exaggerated by the most striking circumstances. *Even the sea-monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones; the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness. The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst; the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them.* How strongly painted is this misery, when the once tender parent can see her little babe to perish for want of the breast? Again, after enumeration of the great change in “the features of the
 “Nazarites, which were purer than snow,
 “whiter than milk, more ruddy than rubies,
 “smoother than sapphires; but now blacker than
 “coals, with bones jutting out thro’ the skin,
 “which is withered, like the dried skin of a
 “branch of a tree;” we have the fury of fa-

mine drawn in its extreme horrors, when
 “ the hands of the *pitiful* women broiled their
 “ own children for food, in the destruction of
 “ their city.” If we turn our eyes to that species of amplification which consists in a collection of similitudes, we may find thicker and more striking comparisons in the Scriptures, than in any the most celebrated profane writer. The coming of the Chaldean in Habakk. i. 7, 8. represents the sudden inroads of Tartarian robbers, whose speed is expressed by the swiftness of leopards and hungry wolves swiftly ranging in the evening for prey; by the flight of eagles hastening to their carnage, and the violent east-wind devouring all obstacles, and carrying away before it clouds of dust, as the Chaldeans drove their flocks of captives. In short, we have here the most exalted idea of God’s attributes by the use of the figure *protopopœia* *. In these sacred volumes the mountains and forests do not only tremble, as in Homer, but melt like

* See Adventurer, vol. II. page 123, 173; and Pf. xcvi. 5; xviii. 10; xcvi. 8; xcvi. 11; Nahum i. 5, to whom we owe the following instances.

wax at the presence of God. The God of the prophets doth not ride over the level waves, in a swift chariot, like Neptune, but comes flying upon the wings of the wind; while the floods clap their hands, and the hills and forests, and earth and heaven, all exult together before their Lord. In what uninspired writer is the universal presence of the Infinite Mind represented in so exalted a manner as in the divine poet? “Whither shall I go from thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, thou art there! If I go down to hell; lo! thou art there also. If I take wings †, and fly toward the morning, or remain in the uttermost parts of the western ocean; even there also thy right-hand shall hold me.”

† Our translation stands thus: *If I take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea.* But the wings of the morning have nothing to do with what the Scripture calls the uttermost sea, that is the Western Ocean. Our poet in the original, and translation of the LXX, continues an antithesis with, “Though I fly to the farthest east, where the morning first dawns, to the utmost limits of the western ocean.”

The subjection of all created nature to the great Creator's will, is beautifully impressed on us by this *personification*. "To say that the lightning obeyed the command, of God, would of itself be sufficiently sublime; but a Hebrew bard expresses this idea with far greater energy and life: *Canst thou send lightings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are.* How animated! how emphatical is this unexpected answer,—**HERE WE ARE.**—And how daring is this figure, when **DESTRUCTION** and **DEATH** say (of Wisdom) *We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.*" See Job xxviii. 22.

Permit me to add, from the *Adventurer* referred to, these excerpts out of the Scriptures. "The sun rising and breaking in upon the shades of night, is compared to a bridegroom issuing out of his chamber, in allusion to the Jewish custom of ushering the bridegroom from his chamber at midnight, with great solemnity and splendor, preceded by the light of innumerable lights and torches. How is the divine favour painted by the following similitudes: *I*
" will

“ will be as the dew unto Judea. He shall grow up
 “ as a lilly. His branches shall spread, and his
 “ beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell like
 “ Mount Lebanon †. — Not one of the Grecian
 “ poets has spoken so feelingly, so eloquently,
 “ or so elegantly of beauty, as the emperor
 “ Solomon of his mistress or bride, in images
 “ perfectly original and new. *Thy hair*, says
 “ *he, is a flock of goats that appear from Mount*
 “ *Gilead*; where we may see her light-yellow
 “ tresses wantoning by the wind around her
 “ neck. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep, that are*
 “ *even shorn, which come up from the washing*; by
 “ which similitude their exact equality, even-
 “ ness and whiteness, are justly represented.
 “ *Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for*
 “ *an armory*; whereon there hang a thousand buck-
 “ *lers, all shields of mighty men*; that is, straight
 “ and tall, adorned with golden chains and
 “ the richest jewels of the East. *Thy two breasts*
 “ *are like two young roes, that are twins, which*
 “ *feed among the lillies*; the exquisite elegance
 “ and propriety of which similitude need not
 “ be pointed out, and cannot be excelled.”

† See Hosea xiv. 5.

I shall add only one comparison, taken from Job, that our translation may be illustrated. “ My friends have dealt treacherously with me. They are like torrents, which when swollen and increased with winter-showers, promise great and unfailing plenty of waters; but, in the times of violent heats, suddenly are parched up and disappear. The traveller in the deserts of Arabia seeks for them in vain. The troops of Sheba looked, the caravans of Tema waited for them. They came to the accustomed springs for relief; they were confounded; they perished with thirst.”

To prove that the history contained in the Scriptures is the most remote, as well as most true, is needless; and, in the opinion of Cicero, would be culpable, since he justly thinks it blame-worthy to cite unnecessary proofs upon subjects not at all disputed; and the same observation will hold of the antiquity of its geography, and the morality of its doctrines. That it is full of Jewish old customs and idioms, I may elucidate by extracting only the seventeenth and eighteenth chapter

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ter of Judges, where the account of Micah's setting up his images, and entertaining a priest in his house, seems, at first sight, not very deserving of record; and the other part of the relation is not only dark and abstruse, but conveys to the mind an uneasy doubt, whether idolatry was not here unrebuked by God himself; since the Danites who carried away Micah's images, —in order to provide themselves with a public worship,— were notwithstanding prosperous in their enterprize.— This part of Scripture is therefore certainly worthy of an examination; and amongst many other dissertations, which will branch out from the body of this composition, and which are intended to please the reader by their variety, will establish these following points of ancient knowledge to us.

1. That the Jews, besides their tabernacle, and, in later times, temple, had in every city and large town a synagogue; and in almost every village, and in some families of distinction, a *proseucha* or praying-house.

2. A praying-house, as well as the temple, is in scripture-language stiled, “an house of God.”

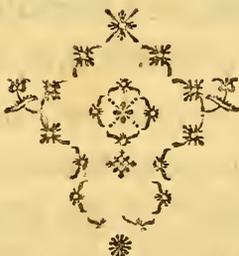
3. These praying-houses were furnished somewhat in imitation of the tabernacle, afterwards the temple at Jerusalem, according to the riches and ability of the village and family.

4. A Levite was generally the priest in those *proseuchas*, who wore an ephod of *linteum*, or common linen, though not of *byssus*, or fine-twined linen.

5. A Levite in those houses was priest, but not a sacrificing priest; and in the *proseucha* was an altar or pillar, but not for sacrifice. The altar was only a symbol, that the people, who met there to pray, were in allegiance to the God of heaven.

6. The Jews had a reasonable opinion, that angels are conversant in an house of God, appointed by God, as good genii, to protect the wor-

worshippers. These angels are in Scripture sometimes stiled Elohim ; and sometimes the One God only, in the singular number as to sense, is stiled Elohim, according to the Eastern sublimity of expression.





C H A P. II.

A Digression concerning Names.

BUT before we proceed with our proofs on these heads, we shall observe, that the man's name in the original, Judges xvii. 1, 4, is Michajehu, and Michah in other parts of the chapters; or Micalah *, if you express the Hebrew letter *caph* by *c* only. It is usual, indeed, with the Hebrews, to alter names of men and places. 1. By addition of some paragogical † letter or letters. Thus Elijah in

* Caph pronunciatur ut χ Græcorum, vel *k* (sive *c* durum) Anglorum. *Bennet's Heb. Gram.* p. 1. The English spelling, therefore, may stand, and I have followed it accordingly.

† Sex literæ ת נ י ׳ ך ך ם sunt paragogicæ, & fini vocum euphoniæ causâ sæpe adduntur. *Buxtorf's Heb. Gram.* p. 4. To these we may add *mem*. Thus the city Laish, in Judges xviii. 27, is called Leshem in Josh. xix. 47. These letters are not only added to the end, as it seems to be implied by the word paragogical, but to the beginning or middle of the word. The Rev. Dr. Kennicott, a man who really does an honour to

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the original is generally Elijahu; Oshea or Hoshea, Deut. xxxii. 44, is new-named Jofhua or Jehofhua, Numbers xiii. 16, which word signifies a *deliverer*, and denotes that he was appointed by God to deliver the Israelites from their natural enemies; whence twice in the New Testament, viz. in Acts vii. 45, and in Heb. iv. 9, he is called *Jesus*; tho' for distinction's sake, in my opinion, it would have been better to have translated the word *Jofhua*, in those places, lest the shadow should be taken, by common and inattentive minds, for the substance; the saviour of the Isra-

his college, to his university, to his country, to his age, and to learning itself, in his dissertations entitled *The State of the printed Hebrew Text of the Old Testament considered*, has observed, (see Vol. I. page 24, 28, 36, 83,) that the letter Vau is often inserted *in*, or dropt *from*, words in the sacred writings. He observes also, an insertion of Aleph; and of Jod it is evident in Michajehu instead of Micah; and those other subservient letters, by observation may possibly be found to be inserted or dropt also. In these Dissertations, which have already visited a greater part of the known world, he has beyond the power of jangling contradiction proved, that very surprising errors have been introduced by copyists; and has demonstrated many alterations to be only corruptions, occasioned by the carelessness of transcribers, who were often misled by the similitude in the formation of some Hebrew letters.

elites

elites for the Saviour of the world, or all the true Israelites of God. 2dly, By subtraction of a letter or letters, especially the first. Thus Jeconiah, in Jer. xxii. 24, is named Coniah. 3dly, By putting one letter for another, where by chance errors have been introduced by the inadvertency of transcribers, and the great likeness of some Hebrew letters to one another. Thus Berodack, in 2 Kings xx. 12, is the same with Merodack, in Isai. xxxix. 1. Nebuchadrezzar is the same man with Nebuchadnezzar; Ahimelech, 2 Sam. viii. 17, is the same with Abimelech, 1 Chron. viii. 16. 4thly, By the common change of vowels. Thus Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1. Isai. i. 1, is the same as Uzzah, 2 Kings xxi. 26, and is called Ozias, Matt. i. 8, and Azariah, 2 Kings xv. 1, and xiv. 21. 5thly, By transposition of letters. Thus Ammiel, 1 Chron. iii. 5. is the same as Eliam, 2 Sam. xi. 3.—I shall here present the reader with a short table of men or women, who, through these causes, and their having two names (as will be hereafter proved) are mentioned in one place of Scripture by one of their names, and in another place by another, which he may enlarge at his own pleasure;

his father, viz. his *agnomen*; and Justus was his surname or *cognomen*, given generally from some quality of the man, or accident of life. Some men had a great many of these surnames: thus Solomon was called Jedidjah, or Favourite of God, 2 Sam. xii. 25. Lemuel, or a Man taught of God, Prov. xxxi. 1, as learned men agree upon the place. Choheleth, or the Preacher, Eccl. i. 1. Yea, some will have him to be Agur, Prov. xxx. 1, that is, *a man collected or recovered* from his idolatry, into which he had been drawn aside; and in such case his mother is called Jakah, from her *obedience* to him, and *gathering* of him to her by prudent counsels, which she is supposed to give in the next chapter. There was also among the disciples of Christ, Judas Iscariot: another disciple was called Thomas Didymus, John xi. 16, and xx. 24. If we compare the names of the apostles in Matt. x. 2, 3, 4, and Acts i. 13, we shall find that Simon the Canaanite was called Simon Zelotes; and that Judas the brother of James was called Lebbeus, and surnamed also Thaddeus; and yet he is mentioned by his *name* Judas *only* in one of the places, and by Leb-
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beus Thaddeus in the other. Hence it beyond contradiction, appears, that in two different places of Scripture, the same man is sometimes mentioned by different names.—If we compare Matt. ix. 9, and Mark ii. 14, we shall find that the same man was called Matthew and Levi. *And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom; and he saith unto him, Follow me; and he arose and followed him. And it came to pass as he sat at meat in his house, &c.* Matt. ix. 9, 10. *And, as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphæus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, &c.* Mark ii. 14, 15. — All men confess, and indeed it is self-apparent on a slight comparison, that St. Mark's Gospel is barely an abridgment of that of St. Matthew. That the transaction recorded by these two Evangelists in the above-cited places, is one and the same, is as clear as circumstances can make any thing whatever.— In each Evangelist the *person* sits at the receipt of custom, who is called to be a disciple immediately after our Saviour's

curing a man of the palsy. This *person* in *each* is a publican, who provides a dinner, where many publicans are present. The same reflection is made by the Pharisees in each place, and the same answer retorted on them. It must be therefore very certain, that Matthew was called Levi, and mentioned by one of his names in one place of Scripture, and by his other name in another.

Again, almost all learned men agree, that Bartholomew the Apostle was Nathaniel *the Israelite, in whom was no guile*, John i. 47. And in this assertion they are strongly authorized, not only by his being peculiarly called, as all the chosen disciples of Christ were; but also by John xxi. 2, where Nathaniel by name is reckoned *amongst these chosen disciples*. Indeed we do not always read both these names; but, whenever it is necessary to distinguish them from others, the distinguishing name is generally added. I may observe also, that as *Bar* is the Chaldee-Hebrew word for *son*, it is probable that words beginning with *Bar* may be the
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the family-name, in the same manner as words beginning with *mac* are in Scotland and Ireland, or words ending with *son* are in England, in Johnson, Richardson, Williamson, Harrison, &c. Hence we may well allow that the last mentioned apostle was called Nathaniel Bartholomew. In this manner we read Acts xv. 22, of Judas Barfabas, who is thereby distinguished from Judas Iscariot, as well as from Judas Lebbeus Thaddeus. In the same manner we find that Simon, afterwards surnamed Peter, was called Simon Barjona, to distinguish him from the other disciple called Simon Zelotes.— This custom also was very ancient; for Josephus expressly tells us, that *Jethro* §, the father-in-law of Moses, Exod. iii. 1, or (as he renders it in his Greek expression) *Jetheglæus*, was the *surname* of Raguel or Reuel, Exod. ii. 18; or by chance the *family-name*, since ἐπίκλημα properly signifies a name super-added to the former, whether surname or family-name. From these proofs it is put beyond

§ Παρὰ τῆ Ἰεθρολαίᾳ τῆτο γὰρ ἦν ἐπίκλημα τῷ Ραγουηλω. Jud. Antiq. Lib. 2.

all dispute, that Jewish men and women had sometimes, if not always, two or more names; and that it is usual in the Jewish inspired writers, to mention the same person sometimes by one name, and sometimes by another; and of consequence that we have one key for resolving some recondite places of Scripture.

In Mark ii. 25, 26, we have these words: *Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred? How he went into the house of God, in the days of Abiathar the high-priest, and did eat the shew-bread.*—But we see in 1 Sam. xxi. 1, and the following verses, that *Abimelech* was at that time high-priest. —This seeming inconsistency will vanish at once, by allowing, as we may well do, that the high-priest was called *Abimelech Abiathar*, and that therefore his son, 1 Sam. xxii. 20, had the name of his father given to him; which custom was as usual to the Jews as with us, who gave to their children, and assumed when men, the names of their nearest relations; as we may see in Luke i. 59, 60, 61, and in 1 Esdras v. 38, where we read that

that Addus married Augia, one of the daughters of Berzerus, and then took the name of his father-in-law. Our Saviour in the place cited did nothing unusual when he called the high-priest by one name, though he is mentioned in the book of Samuel by his other.

Again, there have been great disputes, who that Zacharias, the son of Barachias, might be, who is mentioned in Matt. xxiii. 35, as a very righteous man, slain between the temple and the altar. Our Saviour by his mention of *Abel*, in conjunction with that Zacharias, seems to refer to some righteous man of that name, who is recorded in Scripture. Some think this righteous man to be Zacharias the father of John the Baptist, whom Baronius, from some doubtful authors, affirms to be slain by Herod for not delivering up his son when the infants were massacred. But this has scarce one degree of probability on its side; since this fact, being so important, would scarce have been passed over in silence by all the Evangelists, and because this Zacharias the son of Barachias

chias is said by Christ to be slain by the Jews, and not by Herod,

Our Dr. Hammond would have him to be Zacharias the son of Baruch, mentioned by Josephus to be slain in the temple a little before the dissolution of the Jewish nation and the destruction of the last temple. — But this event mentioned by Josephus happened after the death of Christ; whereas Christ himself speaks not of a thing about to happen, but which had happened already.

Some others would have the man to be Zechary, the last but one of the twelve prophets, who, Zech. i. 1, is said expressly to be the son of Barachiah; but many objections arise even here. For, 1st, this prophet seems to be just come from Babylon at the time of his prophesying. He prophesied in the second year of Darius, about the time of the restoring of the Jews to their native land, and the rebuilding of the temple by Zorobabel, as the drift of the whole prophecy (see chap. ii. 7, and iv. 9, and Ezra v. i.) declares: and though he might live to see the

the temple repaired, yet it is not probable that the Jews, so soon after their captivity, should arrive to so great wickedness, as to kill God's prophet, who foretels nothing but ensuing prosperity to them; and, 2dly, we neither in Scripture, which, as we observed before, Christ seems here to refer to, nor in any ancient Jewish writer, can find that this prophet was put to death by the Jews.

The person marked out by our Saviour, therefore, seems to be Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, mentioned in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, to have been slain by the Jews at the commandment of king Joash, *in the court of the house of the Lord*, flying doubtless towards the altar for protection. In such case the name of Jehoiada, that worthy priest and zealous worshipper of his God, was Jehoiada Barachiah; so that Barachiah was the family-name. He was the father of a good son, and probably of as good a grandson, viz. of Zechariah, mentioned 2 Chron. xxvi. 5, to have *understanding in the visions of God*, and whom Isaiah, chap. viii. 2, calls the son of Jeberechiah. Indeed, it is probable that Ze-

chary the prophet, and by chance Zechary the father of John the Baptist, might be derived from this good family by a continual succession in the priesthood. Let us hear the account given us of this matter. *And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord. Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done unto him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it.* 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, 22. Thus Zechariah died in defence of the true worship of God, and therefore his blood may well be called *righteous*; and Our Saviour in the words cited, “that upon you may come all the *righteous blood*,” seems to refer to this holy man’s last words: “The Lord look upon *it*, and require it.” Other observations of this kind may be made; but these are sufficient

ficient to shew the usefulness of such a table, if properly conducted and explained throughout the Scriptures.

Another observation may stand thus. We have seen from 1 Esdras v. 38, that it was usual for the Jews to assume names, sometimes when adult, from some kinsman; and from Gen. x. 25, we may collect that names were *sometimes*, and in all probability *frequently* given and superadded to the family name of *a man* from some great occurrence in *his* time; since one of Eber's sons was called Peleg, which signifies as a verb, *he divided*, and as a noun, *a thing divided*, because in his days the earth was divided. Hence some very ingenious men have with great shew of reason collected occurrences from the name. Adam, we read, had his name from the red earth from which he was created. Eve received her name, *because she was the mother of all living*. Eve, in her foolish pride, called her first-born son *Cain*, i. e. *acquisition*, because she imagined that she had *acquired a man from the Lord*: her notions of deity had not yet subsided; she thought her
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son like that Divine Appearance which she once saw in the garden; and that he was nothing less than an angel of God: or if God explained to Adam the redemption of man by the Messiah, as a sacrifice for sin, and ordered him to offer sacrifices, as types of that great sacrifice by faith in his meritorious death to come; then she fondly supposed him to be the Messiah; for her words may be better translated, *I have gotten the man the Lord*. She certainly supposed him to be the son of God, by a wanton pride, who was the son of the devil, and full of malice and murderous revenge. As she thought so highly of her first-born son, so she seems to have entertained poor notions of her second son Abel, if we may judge by the signification of the name, which denotes *vanity*, or *evanescence*.—A full proof of that error which had after the fall possessed the human mind.—But if we suppose that names were first imposed characteristical of the man, and predictive of some great event, as all the Jewish writers, with St. Paul, universally explain them; then we must allow with Philo Judæus, that Cain had his name of *Acquisition*, because

because he seemed to himself to have *acquired* all things, and that his own merits were self-sufficient; and that Abel was so called, because he referred all things to God, considered himself as *vanity*, and his own offerings of no value without the atonement of the future sacrifice. Hence *by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, by which he being dead yet speaketh, or preacheth.* Heb. xi. 4.— And what doth he preach?— but that men have been justified in the sight of God, from the beginning of the world, by the blood of Christ. And in what manner did God testify that the gifts of Abel were accepted? — Why, *say the Jewish doctors, with great appearance of reason*, by the appearing of the great light upon his sacrifice.— Abel offered a lamb for a sin-offering, and shewed his humiliation; but Cain offered not from the first-fruits, but from fruits of inferior goodness, for a thanksgiving - offering, thinking his own merit self-sufficient to atone the Deity.

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The name of Abel, as it signifies *evanescence*, shews also, that Abel shewed in a figure the death and shedding of the blood of Christ, as Seth, or *substitute*, raised in the place of Abel, prefigured the resurrection and reviviscence of Christ.

The next son of Cain mentioned is Enoch, or a *thing dedicated* to God, which implies that the divine worship was continued pure in his family. His son was Irad, which St. Jerom explains, *a city lying low*; or *descending*; which implies his *humiliation* also before God, if we suppose that names are characteristic of the man and times, as in general they certainly were. Mehujael, his son, is, by interpretation, *troubled of God*, and seems to intimate an introduction of idolatrous worship, and some divine punishment following it. His son's name *Methusael* contains in it *death and the grave from God*, and implies a farther increase of idolatry, and a greater plague following it. Lamech implies in his name *consumption*, and shews the troubles which the divine wrath had brought on the ground. This is the last father that is mentioned

tioned of the family of Cain, who married two wives, one called *Adal*, from *ornamental drefs*, the other *Zillah*, from *witty conversation*. He begat three fons, *Jabal*, *Jubal*, and *Tubal-cain*; all which names feem derived from a word which fignifies *to be worn out, to be confumed*, and intimates that the family in them was diminished by fome diforder, or confumed by toil and ftudy. Their fifter was called *Naamah*, viz. *beauty and harmony*, who feems to be the ante-diluvian *Venus*, as *Tubal-cain* was their *Vulcan*.

Men who are curious, may in the fame manner carry along the family of *Seth*, whose firft fon was called *Enos*, which fignifies *mortal man*, and fhews that the family of *Seth* were confcious of the difmal effects of *Adam's fall*, and began to intitute publick worfhip and prayer to the true *God*. He is fupposed to be the firft patriarchal prieft; for, *Gen. iv. 26*, in his time *began men to call upon the name of the Lord*. Hence began that diftinction, that the defcendants of *Seth* were called *sons and daughters of God*, whereas the defcendants of *Cain* were
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stiled *sons and daughters of men*, because the former maintained the worship of God more pure, even unto the days of another Lamech, when, by means of intermarriages, an universal idolatry had almost seized the world.

Idolatry being washed away by the universal deluge, the true religion was re-instituted by Noah, and came down with great purity to Heber, who, according to the Jews, taught the Noachical precepts and divine laws with great exactness ; for, as the learned *Francis Lee*, in his *Dissertations*, vol. II. somewhere observes, the grandson of Shem is called Salah, that is, *one sent of God*. By him the prophetic or priestly college, where the precepts of Noah were taught, seems supported. Hence in the Arabic historians, and apocryphal pieces, he is called Sala, the *prophet of God*. The son of Sala was Heber, that is, a *pilgrim or passenger*; so that, in his name, Sala foretels that his seed should *pass over* Euphrates into Canaan; and as Shem, Gen. x. 21, is said to *be the father of all the children of Heber*; and as *father* is, by Jewish writers,

writers, attributed to a *teacher* or *instructor*; it seems that all Heber's children were educated in the religion of Noah by the institution of Shem. In the days of Peleg the son of Heber happened the confusion of languages, and the general dispersion or division of lands; whence Heber, from whom the Hebrews took their name, seems to be the last man educated in, and a supporter of, the school of Shem; tho' probably the worship of the one true God continued in that family to the days of Reu, the seventh in line from Noah, whose name may be interpreted *the breaking off*. Eusebius and Epiphanius say, the true religion began to be adulterated in the time of Serug the son of Reu. Serug signifies, *a thing entwisted* into another. Serug's son was Nahor, which signifies *large nostrils*, or *a full nose*, and stands, by the symbolical characters of the Hebrews, for *patience* and *long forbearance*. By this name it looks as if the pure religion was much decayed, and God's patience exercised. Terah his son has the *moon* for the radix of his name. He by his attention to the heavenly bodies seems fallen into astral idolatry,

and probably from the ascendancy of Saturn at the birth of his son, might give him the name of Abram, or *high father*, prognosticating that he would be some high doctor or great man; and if that supposition is true, it is not wonderful that God should alter his name into Abraham, or the *father of multitudes*, by adding *He*, the letter, say the Jews, which imports fecundity. Abraham, amidst this idolatry, seems to have stuck close to the doctrines of Heber; whence he is called Abraham the Hebrew or Heberite, and the friend of God.

We may observe also, that fathers first built cities, and called them by the name of their son. Thus Cain, Gen. iv. 17, builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch. In the same manner *Sichem* or *Shechem* was probably built by *Hamor*, who gave it its name from his son; whence it is stiled Gen. xxxiv. 20, *their city*; whereas before their time it is called *the place of Sichem*, Gen. xii. 6, or the place on which *Sichem* was afterwards built. This name is used then, wherever it occurs before

fore the days of Hamor, by the sacred scribe, in the way of anticipation, that city being not before founded, though there might be a small town; for all fortifiers or enlargers of towns are perpetually said by the Eastern people to *build them*: hence when we read, 1 Kings xii. 25, that Jeroboam *built Shechem*, we must understand that he secured and enlarged the town.

Its name, which was given to the place or village by Abraham, was *Moreh*, or *Allon Moreh*, interpreted by our translators, *the plain of Moreh*; by St. Hierom, *the illustrious vale or plain*; and by the Jerusalem Targum, *the valley of vision* (from רָאָה Raah, *he hath seen*); because of the vision of the glory of the Lord, which was there seen by Abraham, as soon as he came thither from Haran or Charran. Others render it *the oak of Moreh*, *the illustrious oak*, or *the high oak*. And it is more than probable, says the learned Dr. Lee, that there was in this place a very famous oak or tree of long duration, under which Joshua afterwards erected a sacred monumental pillar.

But how shall we reconcile this seeming contradiction between Gen. xxxiv. 26, 27, &c. where it is said that Simeon and Levi, the sons of Jacob, took the city and spoiled it, without the approbation of their father; and Gen. xlvi. 22, where Jacob himself is said *to take the city out of the hands of the Amorite, with his sword and his bow?*

To reconcile these places, we may note, that the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, slew the males, and spoiled the city of Shechem. On this Jacob, with good reason, dreads an insurrection of the people of the land; and though it is not expressly mentioned in the Scriptures, yet it plainly appears from this verse, that the Amorites, or people belonging to king Hamor, seized the town after this massacre, and issued forth to revenge their king's injury on Jacob; but that Jacob came off victorious, and took the town by force of arms. Hence we see the reasonableness of Dr. Kennicott's alteration in his Dissertations, vol. I. page 59, wherein he turns the words, Gen. xlix. 6, *in their self-will they digged down a wall, and in their fury they*

they destroyed the princes, viz. Hamor and Shechem. For if this account is truly stated, that Jacob took the town himself by his sword and his bow; then it is evident that his sons did not dig down the wall of it, except we imagine it to be built again by the Amorites in the intermediate time.

One very useful observation of an Hebrew idiom more I shall make, which I have not met with in any author. We may observe that, Gen. xlviii. 22, Jacob gave *Joseph one portion above his brethren.* The word *Shechem* is the word there used in the original for *portion*, and was certainly also the name of that town delivered to him over and above the share of his brethren. *The Hebrews made use of one word to serve a double end, to express the name of a town or man, and at the same time, without repeating the word, to explain some other idea.* The words in Genesis should have been translated thus, to express the force of the original: *I have given thee Shechem, as one portion above thy brethren.* The Septuagint, who seem much more versed in the original than our translators, express this

Hebrew idiom: Ἐγὼ δὲ δίδωμι σοὶ Σικιμα ἕξαιρε-
τον ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου. *I give thee Shechem, a
chosen part, above thy brethren.*

This observation on a Hebrew idiom will enable us to explain an expression of St. Matthew, which deistical men have greedily caught at. In Matt. ii. 23, we read, *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.* St. Matthew here, says the deist, asserts a falsity; for the words, “He shall be called a Nazarene,” are not in any one prophet.

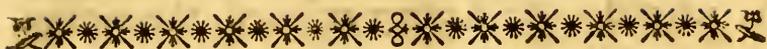
In order to clear this very knotty point, we must remark, that the latter part of the verse in the Hebrew St. Matthew of Sebastian Munster, and also in the Greek Testament, has a word which is omitted in our translation; and which, by comparing the Hebrew and Greek words with each other, plainly signifies, *because, or inasmuch as*, ὅτι Ναζωραῖος κληθήσεται: *inasmuch as he would be called a Nazarene.* Our translation should therefore stand thus; *And he came and dwelt*

dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "inasmuch as he would be called a Nazarene."

This alteration, agreeable both to the Greek and Hebrew, cuts off the whole force of the objection, by confining the prophecies to the single word Nazarene.—Now the word Nazer or Netzer signifies, amongst other things, *a branch*, and is the word used of the Messiah Isai. xi. 1, *A branch (Netzer) shall grow out of his roots.* But St. Matthew, who knew the Hebrew idiom of comprehending both a name proper and appellative by one and the same word, observes only, that the town of Nazareth gave him a name characteristic of his being the true *Nazar*, or *Branch*, foretold by the prophets.

By this peculiarity of the Hebrew language, as Shechem in its full sense, in the place cited, must be translated both ways, if we would give, in our language, the full meaning designed by the inspired writer; so the prophet Isaiah may be translated, *A Nazarene as a branch shall grow out of his roots;* though it is sufficient to our purpose, that

the word *Nazarene* includes the signification of *Branch*, since that will justify St. Matthew by the Hebrew idiom of using names. In Jer. xxiii. 5, and xxxiii. 14, God promises to raise up a *righteous branch* unto David; and Zechariah vi. 12, prophesying of the Messiah, says, *Behold the man whose name is The Branch*; to which words the evangelist chiefly refers in these words, *inasmuch as he would be called a Nazarene, or Branch*.—Instances we have of this double use of words in the Hebrew tongue. Thus, *Melchisedec king of Salem*, is explained by St. Paul, by this Hebrew idiom, to be *king of righteousness, king of peace*; and in that respect, as well as others, the apostle declares him to be a just type of the Messiah, inasmuch as Hebrew names are characteristic of the man.



C H A P. III.

*The Argument, and a New Translation of the
Seventeenth and Eighteenth Chapters of Judges.*

MICAH'S mother, living at a distance from any place of public worship, had set aside some money to build a *proseucha* or house of prayer, and had bound her son under an oath to lay out the money in that use. Micah being allowed, as 'tis likely, to use her money as his own (since he would claim it by and by through right of inheritance), had taken it; but considering the obligation which he lay under, and being also himself willing to have her design performed, put her in mind of it, brings the money to her, and obtains her blessing. She then fully certified him of her design of giving it him (probably at her death), that he might provide the proper furniture for an house of prayer, in order to have the worship of the

true God kept up in their family and neighbourhood.—He having restored the money, she herself employs a proper workman.—Being not able for the present to obtain a priest, Micah, through necessity, appoints one of his sons, till a Levite came, when he joyfully entertained a regular priest according to the law of Moses, and rejected his son. Some time after certain Danites passed that way, as spies of the part of the country yet unconquered. These finding by the Levite, that Micah had an house of God, turned in to enquire about the event of their way, and obtained an answer of success. These Danites execute their commission, return and acquaint their brethren with the condition of the land, and people who inhabited it, and undertake to conduct them to it.—The spies knowing that there was no house of God in the place which they were about to seize, inform their brethren about Micah's house of prayer. They all being willing to settle a divine worship amongst themselves, carried off with them the furniture of Micah's *proseucha* and his priest, on this maxim, *That a lesser good ought to give way*
to

to a greater; and accordingly constituted an house of God at Dan, formerly Laish.

CHAP. XVII. translated.

Verse 1. AND there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

2 And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken by thee, and about which thou didst oblige me in a most sacred manner, and didst also strictly charge me; behold, the money is with me, I took it. And his mother said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my son.

3 And he restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver unto his mother; and his mother said, I wholly dedicated the silver unto the Lord, for my son to make a *graven thing*, and a *molten thing*. Now therefore shall I return it unto thee?

4 So he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven thing, and a molten thing, and they were in the house of Micah.

5 And

5 And the man Micah had an house of God, and made an ephod and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

6 In those days there was no governor in Israel ; but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

7 And there was a young man out of Bethlehem-Judah, of the tribe of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there.

8 And the man departed out of the city, even from Bethlehem - Judah, to sojourn where he could find a place ; and he came to mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, as he travelled.

9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou ? And he said unto him, I am a Levite from Bethlehem-Judah, and I go to sojourn where I shall find a place.

10 And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me for a father and a priest ; and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in.

11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man, and the young man was with him.

12 And

12 And Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah.

13 Then said Micah, Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.

CHAP. XVIII. translated.

Verse 1 IN those days there was no governor in Israel: and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.

2 And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, men of valour, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land; who when they came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, they lodged there.

3 When they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite, and they turned in thither, and said
unto

unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what doest thou in this place? and what hast thou here?

4 And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest.

5 And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God; that we may know, whether our way which we go, shall be prosperous.

6 And the priest said, Go in peace. Before the Lord is the way which ye go.

7 Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein; how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing; and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no connexion with any man.

8 And they came unto their brethren, to Zorah and Eshtaol; and their brethren said unto them, What say ye?

9 And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them, for we have seen the land, and

and behold, it is very good ; and are ye still ?—Be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land.

10 When ye are come, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land for you ; for God hath given it into your hands ; a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth.

11 And there went from thence of the family of the Danites out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol six hundred men, furnished with weapons of war.

12 And they went up and pitched by Kirjath-jearim in Judah : wherefore they called that place Mahaneh-Dan unto this day.—Behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim.

13 And they passed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah.

14 Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye not know that there is in these houses an ephod and teraphim, and a graven thing, and a molten thing ? Now therefore consider what ye have to do.

15 And they turned thitherward, and they came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted it.

16 And the six hundred men furnished with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate.

17 And the five men that went to spy out the land, went up and came in thither, and took the graven thing, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten thing; and the priest stood at the entering of the gate with the six hundred men that were furnished with weapons of war.

18 But these (*five*) men went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved thing, the ephod, and teraphim, and the molten thing. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye?

19 And they said unto him; Hold thy peace, lay thy hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou
be

be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?

20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven thing, and went in the midst of the company.

21 So they turned and went their way, and put the youth, and what they had gotten, and the precious things, before them.

22 And when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were called together, and followed after the children of Dan.

23 And they called out unto the children of Dan, and they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company?

24 And he said, Ye have taken away my divine furniture which I had prepared, and the priest, and ye are going away. — And what have I left? And yet ye say unto me, What aileth thee?

25 And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest
men

men of passionate minds fall upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household.

26 And the children of Dan went their way; and when Micah saw they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house.

27 And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people that was at quiet, and secure; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire.

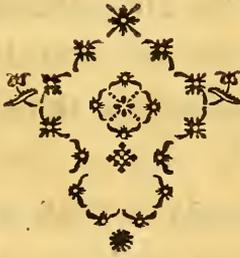
28 And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no connection with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-rehod; and they built a city, and dwelt therein.

29 And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel. Howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.

30 And the children of Dan set up the graven thing; and Jonathan the son of Ger-shom, the son of Moses, he and his sons
were

were priests to the tribe of Dan, until the days of the captivity of the land.

31 And they set up Micah's carved thing which he had made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.





C H A P. IV.

The Chronology of this History.

Chronology and geography are allowed to be the two eyes of history. The time, in which these things of Micah and the Danites were transacted, evidently appears to be shortly after the death of Joshua, about the year of the world 2500, or 1460 years before Christ, by these reasons.

1. The tabernacle of God is said to be set up at Shiloh, Josh. xviii. 1, and then Joshua sets about the division of the land to the several tribes. In this division the lot of the tribe of the children of Dan is reckoned up, Josh. xix. 40; and this expedition of the Danites is mentioned verse 47, as if it followed soon after.

2. When it is said that the Levite, whose name probably was Jonathan, Judg. xviii. 30, and his sons were priests *all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh*, it looks as if the first setting up of the tabernacle was then in view.

3. Since the Danites sent spies, it appears that they had not been long enough in the land to be acquainted with it; and therefore that this must happen soon after their settlement.

4. We read in Judg. i. 3, 22, 23, 24, &c. that, immediately after Joshua's death, each tribe for himself was endeavouring to subdue that part of the people belonging to the country allotted them by Joshua, which remained yet unconquered, and also that spies were commonly sent. This expedition of the Danites therefore was of the same nature, and doubtless made in the same time; and so this relation should follow in order of time after the first chapter of Judges.—Indeed, in many places of the sacred writings there is a transposing of relations; and

that is sometimes placed first, which is done last. To this purpose the Hebrew doctors have long since pronounced that there is neither BEFORE NOR AFTER in the law. Things are not related in Scripture according to regular succession of time.

Now, whereas it is said that this Jonathan and his son were priests to the tribe of Dan, until the day of the *captivity* of the land, and it has been disputed what captivity of the land is here meant; it is to me clear, from the last verse of the chapter, that it implies the carrying away of the people, and the taking of the ark by the Philistines, when it had been fetched from Shiloh into the camp, in the last day of the life of Eli; which happened in the year of the world 2850, or 1110 years before Christ. For *the posterity of Jonathan were priests until the captivity of the land, and Micah's furniture was in their praying-house, while the ark of God was in Shiloh*, are expressions which refer to the same time. This taking of the ark the Psalmist also expressly calls a *captivity*, in Pf. lxxviii. 60, 61. *He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed*

placed among men; and delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemies hands.

COROLLARY.

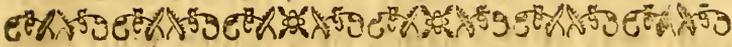
Since this affair happened probably in the next year after the death of Joshua, and Joshua was co-temporary with Moses, and Gershon the son of Moses may be proved younger than Joshua; it is reasonable to think, that this Jonathan was the very son of Gershon, and not one of his descendants at a distance, as Grotius will have it.—And here I shall just take notice of one alteration which I have made in the translation, and observe the rest as they happen to fall in my way; since a long dissertation, or notes, on that head would appear too formal and dry to those men, who relish only the pleasurable part of writing, though men of critical dispositions can digest the useful only. — I have in chap. xviii. 30, turned *Manasseh* into *Moses*, for these reasons.

1. Because in manuscripts, yea in Hebrew editions, the letter *n* in *Manasses* is suspended as a suspicious letter. In Arias Montanus it is printed thus מִנִּישָׁה. If you take off that letter, the word in Hebrew becomes Moses.

2. Because the Masorites amongst the Jews rejected it, and asserted that *Moses*, not *Manasses*, is the right reading.

3. Because the alteration makes Scripture agree with Scripture; for in Exod. ii. 22, and xviii. 8, and 1 Chron. xxvi. 24, Gershon is said to be the son of Moses.

4. Because by the old translation a priest is derived from Manasses, contrary to God's commandment, who confined the priesthood to the tribe of Levi.



C H A P. V.

*A Digression concerning Insertions in the Scriptures
by Scribes.*

THE Danites at this time *after Joshua's death* had not obtained all the lot which Joshua assigned them, and sent those spies. And since this happened *after the death of Joshua*, we may find a full proof, though hitherto, as I imagine, un-noticed by any author, that *some part at least* of the book of Joshua was not written until some time after his death, but probably was composed by the same person who wrote the book of Judges. This expedition of the Danites happened after the death of Joshua: *There was then no governor in Israel.* In verse 6 of the xviiith chapter, and verse 1 of the viiith chapter, I have turned the word *king* into *governor*, because kingly power had not yet been settled in the Jewish state; but the go-

vernment under God, or in subordination to God, was in the hands of a judge, who here, and in the 1st verse of the sixth chapter, and the 25th verse of the xxist chapter, is called *governor*. GOD properly was their king, and in a manner visibly ruled over them. Under GOD was the judge, as a deputy-governor, joined generally with the high-priest; and sometimes, as in Eli, the offices of judge and high-priest were invested in the same man. These the people were ordered by GOD, Deut. xvii. 12, to obey under penalty of death. The judge had a dictatorial power under GOD; he was GOD's vicegerent.—The Carthaginians, who sprung from the Phenicians, called their rulers or consuls *suf-fetes* or *sufetes*, from the Hebrew name of these judges, viz. *Sophetim*. From this kingdomly power, which God exercised by these judges, God tells Samuel, that the Israelites who requested to have a king, *had not rejected him, viz. Samuel, but had rejected God himself that he should not rule over them*. Samuel was governor only under God, and consequently was not king in his own right.—But at present there was a sort of interregnum.

regnum. — Jofhua was dead, and no new judge established in his room. Now the book of Jofhua, at least a part, must be written after this expedition, since this fame is recorded in Jofhua, chap. xix. verfe 47, where *Laiſb* is called *Leſhem*. — So that Mr. Mede has reason for *his opinion*, that the book of Jofhua was written after his death. — In my judgment, every judge was generally a prophet; and every prophet, from the first to the last, from Moses to Malachi, wrote exact records of his own time, under the guidance of God's holy spirit. Hence there were not only the chronicles of the kings of Judah written by the prophets in their days, which are so often referred to, and a short extract of which we have, but other historical writings of the prophets. That these records were made by the inspired prophets, we may learn from St. Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 16; but more plainly in 1 Chron. xxix. 29, where we see that the prophets *Samuel*, *Nathan*, and *Gad*, were the historiographers of David †. One of these, viz. either Nathan or

† See also 2 Chron. xxxiii. 19, where the life of Manasse is recorded in the sayings of the seers, i. e. in the writings of the

Gad,

Gad, I think, had the name of *Jasher*, or *upright man*, assigned to him; who is mentioned in 2 Samuel i. 18, as an historian of David; who recorded that David first taught the children of Israel the use of the bow; probably on account of the Philistines having galled Saul's troops with their arrows at a distance, and by that means, in human judgment, gaining the victory. David not only lamented the loss of his sincere friend Jonathan, as well as his stout father in the battle; but, in order to set the Israelites on an equal advantage with their enemies, taught them an improvement of the use of the bow. And this piece of his generalship is mentioned in the book of Jasher, who was plainly therefore an historiographer of David. Now Samuel was dead before this occurrence, and Gad is little mentioned in this early part of David's life; and therefore Nathan seems to be the man, though mentioned by his other name, which thing we have already proved

prophets; though Arias Montanus for *seers* puts Hozai, a proper name of a prophet, whose Prayer of Manasses is yet extant, and who is supposed to be Ezra by some. Our translation, as I think, is right.

to

to be very usual in Scripture. — From these histories thus written, under the guidance of God's spirit, the Bible seems to have been compiled by some scribes faithfully comparing these inspired records, and making just extracts from them ; and sometimes — to illustrate or compleat any relation,— inferting some pieces of genealogy or history from other records, though of a much later date, yet equally authentic.

This book of Jasher, indeed, is referred to in Josh. xviii. 13. but the reference is not in the Greek version, and therefore seems to have no proper right to be there. However, if we suppose that Nathan, or whoever wrote the book of the *Just Man*, took notice of the event there recorded ; it must then be granted, that the scribes did make these remarks in their transcribing, which I have mentioned ; since the author of this book must be alive *in* or *after* the days of David, and write *in* or *after* his time ; and therefore the person who cites that book must live *in* or *after* that time also ; since no man surely can cite a passage from a book, who lives before

before the book is written.—Neither doth this observation, as I have stated it, derogate from, but confirms the sacred authority of the Scriptures; since, on this supposition, they must be all taken from the writings of inspired men by the greatest care of transcribers, to whom every little error is imputable; for I no where find the scribes represented as inspired men, or invested with infallibility.—Whoever shall read over the Scriptures, will pardon me for my opinion, if not assent to it. I shall desire, however, to explain my sense to be this: *That these transcribers did not vary a word from the very expressions of the prophets; but only inserted from other records some remarks to illustrate or perfect any volume.* This is the middle way between two contending parties; one of which will not allow it necessary for *Moses* to be the writer of any part of his *Pentateuch* in the very same words in which we now read it, but only that some scribe expressed his exact sense; and the other will not admit of one syllable being inserted by any other hand. Now I believe, that it will be easily granted that truth generally lies in the middle between warm polemical

mical writers.— As for my part, I verily believe that the books of Moses were transcribed from his own writings in the very same words; so that in the most literal sense it is true, which is asserted in Deut. xxxi. 9, that *Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord; and verse 24, that Moses made an end of writing the words of the law in a book, until they were finished; and that he commanded the Levites to take this law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord their GOD.*— It seems almost certain that by the word *law* here are meant the five books of Moses; since their *law*, Deut. xvii. 19, 20, contained all the statutes of the Lord, both moral and ceremonial, and therefore is ordered by God to be read by *kings*, or rather in that place, as well as in those places of *Judges*, by *governors*, all the days of their life, for the guidance of their lives and state. This book of the law of the LORD given by Moses was found in the house of the Lord by Hilkiah, in the days of Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. This law God ordered Joshua to meditate

meditate in day and night. This same law of Moses Joshua recommended to the Israelites, and David very fully to his son Solomon, 1 Kings ii. 3. *Keep the charge of the Lord thy God to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses.*—But, to mention no more proofs, Our Saviour, we know, divides the Old Testament into the *law* and *prophets*; where by *law*, are manifestly meant the five books of Moses. It is therefore proved beyond dispute, in my opinion, that the scribe copied the books of Moses from his very identical words.—But though this may be well granted, yet I think that it must be allowed that Joshua, or Ezra †, who is said, Ezra vii. 6, 11, 12, or

† This Ezra certainly transcribed the whole law and prophets, and sealed up the canon of the Jewish Scriptures. He delivered also, in great probability, some *apocryphal* books to the Jewish Sanhedrim, *so called* because they were kept from the inspection of the people, who were supposed incapable of taking their spiritual meaning. Of this kind might be the second book of Esdras, if it could be stript of those interpolations and corruptions which appear in it. He is supposed

as some men will have it, Esdras (which men suppose him different from Ezra, though in my opinion Esdras and Ezra are two names for the same man), added the last chapter of Deuteronomy, either from inspired record, or by the inspiration of God, concerning the death and burial of Moses. To the same

also to have composed the book of Esther and the two books of Chronicles from some sacred memoirs, which he preserved, as he was the public register and chancellor of the nation. He established some *constitutions* about public prayer, in which he introduced at the end of each prayer, *men hazolim war hazolim*, i. e. *from world to world; from this world to the next*; having received the true faith of the resurrection of the dead from the divine word, as we may see 2 Efd. vii. 28, 29, &c. whence it appears that the unadulterated part of this book has true tokens of divine inspiration, and seems to be the book referred to by Christ, under the name of the *Wisdom of God* (see Luke ii. 49, 2 Efd. i. 30, 31, 32,), in imitation of other sapiential or sophical books, stiled *The Wisdom of Solomon*, and *The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach*; and was kept probably amongst those cryptical and cabbalistical books, which were read only by their wise men and masters, who were admitted within the veil of Moses to perceive the spiritual meanings of the law. His *Constitutions* also settled the reading and interpreting the Scriptures; the magistrates and judges; the priests and Levites, with their courses and offices, according to the methods of David and Solomon; and also the schools; about all which see the learned Francis Lee, vol. I.

hand

hand we may allow the catalogue of Edomite kings, declared to be carried on to Saul the first king of Israel in Gen. xxxvi. 31, and 1 Chron. i. 43, 51. To the same is due the remark concerning the bedstead of Og, king of Bashan, Deut. iii. 11 ; and that expression taken out of *the Book of the Wars of the Lord*, mentioned in Numb. xxi. 14, 15. These insertions taken out of other authentic records, for the greater clearness and perfectness of relating, render a book only more valuable.—In the same manner we may well allow that some scribe inserted in the book of Joshua the account of the expedition of the Danites, since it happened after the death of Joshua. The observation of David's teaching the children of Israel the use of the bow, manifestly breaks in in an abrupt way, and claims the same origin. The scribe indeed sometimes acquaints us when the words of the prophet are ended, and consequently that the remainder belongs to some other hand. Thus Jer. li. 64, *Thus far are the words of Jeremiah*. In the next chapter, therefore, that writer from some inspired record

cord gives a short history of the accomplishment of some of the foregoing prophecies of the book. This is my opinion of the writing of the Scriptures; but I shall leave, as it becomes me, the free decision of this thing to men of superior judgment.





C H A P. VI.

The Topography.

IN describing the places mentioned in these chapters, I shall take them in the order in which they lay in this relation; and we first arrive, verse 1, at mount Ephraim.

Mount Ephraim, in the tribe of Ephraim, is a chain of hills about nine miles in length; but a tract of land for some considerable breadth on each side the hill, was certainly included under that denomination. This will appear, if we observe from Josh. xvii. 15, that it was at first the designed, though afterwards found an insufficient, allotment for the whole tribe of Ephraim.

Jacob prophesies, Gen. xlix. 22, that *Joseph would be a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall;*

wall; and this prophecy chiefly refers to *Ephraim*, which, Gen. xli. 52, in Hebrew signifies *fruitful*. Jacob gave Joseph two portions, Ezek. xlvii. 13, assigning one for each of his sons; and Josephus tells us; in his *Antiquities*, book iii. chap. 11, that *Manasses his eldest son was taken in for a tribe instead of Levi, and Ephraim instead of Joseph*.—This shews that *Ephraim* was chiefly intended by the prophecy under the word *Joseph*: and the event fully verified the prediction; since Ephraim arrived to that greatness, that the ten tribes of Israel are sometimes denominated in Scripture by the single name of *Ephraim*. Thus in Jerem. xxxi. 20, *Is Ephraim my dear son?* Thus when Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Isa. vii. 1, 2, conspired against Judah, *It was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim, i. e. with Israel*.—You may see more instances in Hosh. vi. 4, and clearly in 2 Chron. xxv. 7, where *Israel* is explained by *all the children of Ephraim*. As to the fruitfulness of the tribe, we read that at Mount Sinai, Numb. i. 3, 4, *Of the children of Joseph, namely, of the children of Ephraim*

were numbered forty thousand and five hundred fighting men : and when these were all dead, excepting Joshua, in the wilderness ; yet still thirty-two thousand five hundred went in, Numb. xxvi. 37, with Joshua, to take their portion in the Land of Promise. Now as each of these men was a master of a family, we may see that under *Mount Ephraim* must be included the adjacent towns on each side ; since a thin group of hills of nine miles in length only, could not afford room sufficient for the habitation and sustenance of so many families. Amongst these adjoining towns, under the name of *Mount Ephraim*, we find, besides Micah's house, the town *Timnath-ferah* allotted to Joshua for his portion, Josh. xix. 20 ; *Shechem*, allotted to the Levites the children of Kohath, Josh. xxi. 21, the residence of the prophetess, she-judge, and warrior, *Deborah*, Judg. iv. 5 ; and the town *Ramathaim-Zophim*, so called from *Zophim*, one of the hills of *Mount Ephraim*, which is otherwise called *Rama*, *Ramath*, and *Arimathea*, where *Samuel* was born and buried, and where *Joseph* lived who buried Our Saviour.

2. Bethlehem-Judah, from which the travelling Levite came, next presents itself, Judg. xvii. 7.—The learned *Lewis*, in his *Hebrew Antiquities*, vol. I. chap. xii. seems to think, that the Levites in *David's* time were first divided into *templar* and *provincial* Levites. But it appears here, that long before David, immediately after the settlement of the Israelites in the Holy Land, the Levites were divided into Levites attending on the tabernacle, afterwards the temple, and Levites dispersed thro' the provinces.—A modern writer treats our Levite as a renegado, not considering that the very request of Micah and the Danites to him, fully proves it customary to entertain Levites in their houses of prayer at that time. Yea, we may observe, that *father* was a title given by the Jews to those provincial Levites who served in their houses of prayer, from their authority *over*, and tender care and *instruction of*, the family in which they lived; and that it was an antient Jewish custom for masters of houses, where the tithes could not maintain the Levite, to endow themselves their chapel of ease; or, which is the same, to pay by agreement an annual salary. We

may also observe, that since those Danites knew the Levite only by his voice, before they entered the house, Judg. xviii. 3, that it is more manifest that he was one of the provincial travelling Levites, *who went to sojourn and settle in whatever place he might meet with*, ὃς ἐπορεύθη παροικησαι ἐν ᾧ ἔεν ἔυρη τοπω. Judg. xvii. 8. — It is evident that he had been before that time amongst those Danites.—Does it not appear from these words, *Micah hath hired me, and I am his priest*, that it was customary to hire priests in those days? Why else should he sojourn in order to find such an house, if it was not usual in those days to hire those travelling Levites to be priests? —But as we shall consider that more largely by and by, we will return to the town, and observe, that there were two towns by the name of Bethlehem (or Bethlechem, i. e. the House of Bread, as predictive of the true bread, which should there come down from heaven); one in the tribe of Zebulun, Josh. xix. 15, in Lower Galilee; and another in the tribe of Judah, in the district of Ephrata; for Ephrata contained not only the town, but the adjoining grounds.

We read in Gen. xxxv. 16, of the city Ephrath in the days of Jacob ; and we are told in verſe 19, that Ephrath is the ſame city with *Bethlehem*. Here is another inſtance of an explanation given by the ſcribe, who alſo, in Gen. xlvi. 7, informs us, that the old city Ephrath, near which Rachel died, was the ſame city as was afterwards called Bethlehem. Ephrath, or Ephrata, ſeems ſo named by Caleb the ſon of Hur, 1 Chron. ii. 50, (which Hur is, Joſh. xv. 13, called, by his other name, Jephunneh) to continue the name of his grand-father Ephrata ; and probably took the name of Bethlehem from his grandſon of that name, 1 Chron. ii. 50, 51, 54. Some indeed think that Caleb gave the name of his wife, 1 Chron. ii. 19, to the city.—But if the name was affixed at all by Caleb, it muſt have been inſerted by the ſcribe in Gen. xxxv. 19, or from ſome explanation in the margin ; ſince the name was in ſuch caſe affixed after the death of Moſes, and probably of Joſhua ; and hence the city Bethlehem is not mentioned in Joſhua amongſt the cities aſſigned to the tribe of Judah. — We ſee here alſo that David is

rightly said, 1 Sam. xvii. 12, to be the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem-Judah, whose name was Jesse.

The term *Judah* is here, therefore, annexed to Bethlehem, to distinguish this town, from which the Levite came, from the other town of the same name. Hence in Judg. xvii. 7, I have turned the words, *of the family of Judah*, into *of the tribe of Judah*, because the words ought to be referred to the town, and not to the Levite. No priest, till the priesthood was changed in Christ, was made from the tribe of Judah. — The Hebrew word, מִשְׁפָּחָה, for *family*, sometimes signifies *nation, land, or tribe*; and these words of the text under consideration, as well as of *Micah*, chap. v. 2, are included in Matt. ii. 6, *And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah art not the least among the princes of Judah.*

But how shall we reconcile this place of Scripture with the prophecy in *Micah* v. 2? *And thou Bethlehem - Ephrata art little to be among the thousands of Judah. Out of thee shall come forth to me one, who shall be a ruler in Israel.*

So

So the words of the prophet would stand, if literally translated.—These places may be reconciled,

1st, If we read the words of the prophet with an interrogation: *And thou Beth-lehem - Ephrata, art thou little among the thousands of Judah? since out of thee shall come forth to me one, who shall be a ruler in Israel.* Questions of this kind imply the contrary to the thing required; so that, *art thou little?* and *thou art not little,* intimate the same thing. And as the Hebrew language amidst its many accents, has no distinguishing mark for an interrogation, except interrogating adverbs, which do not always take place, it is allowable to suppose an interrogation any where.

2. If we observe that many Hebrew words contain in themselves contrary significations. The same word נָכַר, *nakkar*, signifies *to be known*, and *to be unknown*; עוּף, *wuph*, *to shine*, and *to be obscure*; נָצַר, *natzar*, *to save*, and *to destroy*. In the same manner the
word

word *tzawir* * may signify both *little* and *great*. Dr. Pocock faith, that a very learned Jew assured him that the word *tzawir* had these different significations; and the same is asserted by Dr. Hammond and other learned men. In such case, by comparing the two texts together, it will appear that the words of Micah should be translated thus: *And thou Bethlehem-Judah art great among the thousands of Judah; out of thee shall come a governor of Israel. Among the thousands* in the prophet, is rightly turned *among the princes*; since their principalities were over *thousands*. Thus Numb. i. 16, *These were the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their families, heads of thousands in Israel.* See also 1 Sam. x. 19. By this correction the prophet and evangelist will agree, since *great* and *not the least* are the same. Indeed, it is not likely that Bethlehem should be an obscure place, ef-

* In the word צָעִיר, *tzawir*, I must beg pardon for expressing the letter *hajin* by our *w*. But since *hajin* is a spirit rough in the superlative degree, our *w* most fitly answers it. Hence *Fauces*, in Æolic Greek, is *vinum* in Latin, *vin* in French, and *wine* in English. Buxtorf laughs at those who express this letter by *gn*.

pecially after the days of David, who, as well as his father and grand-father, Ruth iv. 11, 17, was born there. As I have by me the Gospel of St. Matthew in the original Hebrew, as the editor would insinuate, published by Sebastian Munster, I shall in Latin letters express the words of the prophet and evangelist.

“ Micah V. Ve-attah Beth-lechem Ephratah
 “ tzawir lihjooth be - alphee jehudah.
 “ Mimmecha lei jeetzee lih-jooth moosheel
 “ be-israel.”

“ Matt. II. Ve-attah Beth-lechem Ephratah
 “ loo tzawir lihjooth be - alphee jehudah.
 “ Mimmecha lei jeetzee lih-jooth moosheel
 “ be-wammei israel.

Here we may observe, that the common Hebrew Bibles in the prophet have *tzawir*, *little*, and Sebastian Munster's edition of St. Matthew has *loo-tzawir*, *not little*. Is not this a sort of proof, that *loo*, *not*, has been dropt by transcribers in the Hebrew Bible? This observation, as I suppose, never before made,
 may

may induce that *instar omnium eruditorum*, Dr. Kennicott, to search, whether some ancient manuscript has not *loo* in the prophet. The other words of the evangelist are agreeable to the prophecy; only that the evangelist has *be-wammei israel, of my people Israel*, instead of, *be-israel, of Israel*.

3. Zorah and Eshtaol, whence the Danites came, are two cities, first assigned, Josh. xv. 33, to the tribe of Judah; afterwards to the tribe of Dan. In Zorah, or between it and Eshtaol, was born and buried the mighty Sampson, Judg. xiii. 2, 25, and xvi. 31.

4. Kirjath-jearim, or, The City of Woods, as it signifies by interpretation, was one of the cities of the Gibeonites, Josh. ix. 17, who obtained by prudence a peace from Joshua; and is called Baalah, Josh. xv. 9; Kirjath-baal, Josh. xv. 60; and was within the tribe of Judah, Josh. xviii. 14.—But as the first distribution of cities seemed to be found not proportional; this city, as well as Zorah and Eshtaol, was surrendered over to the allotment

lotment of the tribe of Dan, by the name *Baalath*, Josh. xix. 44. It is also called simply Baale, 2 Sam. vi. 2; Pharasim, Is. xxviii. 21; and Baal-pharasim, 2 Sam. v. 20. Here the ark of God remained twenty years in the house of Amminadab; and *nigh this* (not *in this place* †, as our translation, Judg. xviii. 12. has it, in contradiction to the words following in the same verse) the Danites encamped in a place called from that fact Mahanah-dan, i. e. the encampment of Dan.

5. Zidon, or Sidon, mentioned Gen. x. 19, as a boundary of the Canaanites; and Gen. xlix. 13, as the border of Zebulun; was probably built by Canaan, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, and denominated, Gen. x. 15, from Sidon his first-born son; tho' Justin* and other historians say, that it had its name from the abundance of fishes in those seas, because *Sidon*, in the Phenician language, signifies *a Fish*. The Canaanites, or Zidoni-

† The prefixt preposition *Beth*, signifies not only *in*, but *nigh to*.

* *Conditâ ibi urbe, quam a piscium ubertate Sidona appellarerunt; nam piscem Phœnices Sidon vocant.*

ans, are often in Scripture-language but another word for Phenicians ; and hence Zarephath or Sarepta, 1 Kings xvii. 9, is said to belong to Zidon. The territory of the Zidonians is, by a small correction in the translation, on the northern side described in Josh. xiii. 5, 6, *The land of the Giblites and all Lebanon toward the sun-rising, (or east, for the western side of Mount Libanus belonged to the Amorites) from Baal-gad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath, all the inhabitants of the hill country from mount Lebanon unto Misrephothmaim, even all the Zidonians, not and all the Zidonians, since there is no word for and in the original. That this part belonged to the Zidonians, we may judge from Deut. iii. 9, where we read that the Zidonians gave to mount Hermon the name of Sireon, but the Amorites the name of Shenir ; and as the Amorites manifestly possessed one side of that mountain ; so the Zidonians may justly be presumed to possess the other. Hence we may easily settle the ancient limits of the Zidonians in the days of Joshua.*

The

The town itself was so great and well-fortified, that the inhabitants despised any enemy, even to a proverb; since the people of Laish are said to be careless of danger, or confident of their security, as the original word imports, after the manner of the Zidonians. It was assigned to the tribe of Asher, Josh. xx. 28, but continued an unconquered town between that tribe and the tribe of Zebulun; so that, even to the time of Christ, it with Tyre remained under the idolatrous worship of Baal and Ashtaroth its gods, and Astarte a goddess; which last Solomon, by his heathenish wives, was seduced to worship; and Ahab marrying Jezebel, the daughter of Eth-baal the king of the Zidonians, was brought to worship Baal, and greatly to provoke the Lord God of Israel. It, however, very early received the Christian faith, Luke vi. 17; so that St. Paul found christian friends there, Acts xxvii. 3; and hence by it Christ, Luke x. 13, reproacheth the unbelieving cities of Judah.

6. Laish, or Layish, or Laifa, or Layfa, or Lefen, or Lefhem, seems to be originally a colony

colony from the Zidonians, whose distance from them, however, occasioned a want of confederacy or commerce. In Judges xviii. 7, 28, I have turned, *They had no business with any man, into, They had no connection with any man.* The Hebrew phrase precisely answers to this Latin one, *non illis cum quopiam res fuit, they had nothing to do, no intercourse with any man*; for some interpret the Hebrew word by *commerce*, and some by *alliance*, both which senses are included in the word *connexion*.

This city the Danites called *Dan*; but by Greek and Latin historians it was called *Paneas*. It was one of the ten famous cities of Decapolis, and the metropolis of Iturea and Trachonitis. Here Philip, the son of the elder Herod, and brother of Herod the tetrarch of Galilee, resided, who enlarged it, and called it *Cæsarea-Philippi*, in honour of Tiberius Cæsar. King Agrippa added other works to it, and called it *Neronia*, or *Nerodias*, in honour of the emperor Nero; which name it soon lost, and resumed its old name *Paneas*, and sometimes in authors, *Cæsarea-paniæ*, or *-pania*, or *-paneadis*.

Of

Of this city it appears from Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, b. vii. ch. 14, and other writers of the church; was the woman whom Christ cured of an issue of blood by the touch of his garment. Here, for some ages, was seen her house; and before her door, on a base or pedestal by a fountain, were erected two brazen statues; one in the habit of a woman, in the most humble posture of supplication, with bended knees and extended hands; the other in form of a grave man, in a decent doublet, extending with a compassionate aspect his right hand to the woman; which last was allowed by all the ancients to bear a very expressive likeness of Christ.—Eusebius the historian says, that he saw it with his own eyes in the days of Constantine the Great. This image Julian the Apostate, in the year of Christ 363, threw down, and erected his own in its place; which, as say Sozomen and Nicephorus, was dashed in pieces by lightning.

This city, Dan, was built nigh the conflux where the streams *Jor* and *Dan* unite into the river Jordan, and lieth in the valley

Beth-rehob, otherwise called Rehob, a city belonging to the tribe of Aſher, Joſh. xix. 18, and given to the Levites, Joſh. xxi. 31.—But Dan, to which Abraham is ſaid to purſue the invaders, Gen. xiv. 14, is ſaid by Joſephus, b. i. chap. 11, to be one of the ſprings of the river Jordan.—We may add alſo that the expreſſion or proverb, “From Dan to Beerſheba,” aroſe from this city, which bounded the Holy Land on one ſide, as Beerſheba did on the other.



C H A P. VII.

A Digression concerning the Conjunction Vau.

IN Judg. xvii. 24, I have turned, *yet he restored the money, into, so he restored the money.* *Yet*, in its sense, is somewhat adverbative, and implies something said or done in contrariety to another thing which had happened before; and in this place it would convey this sense: *Notwithstanding what she said to him, yet he returned the money.*—But he had returned the money before she spake last, and so that contrariety has no place.—*So* is recollective and confirmative by repetition of what has been said; *So*, that is, *as it was before observed, he returned the money.* The conjunction *vau*, here translated *yet*, signifies often *so*; and is rightly turned by *so*, Judg. xvii. 10, and xviii. 21, and in various other places. How ob-

servant, indeed, ought we to be of every minute word in the original! How many texts have a false turn given them, for want of attending to the force of some little particle! I shall exemplify this in the conjunction *vau*, which, besides its being interrogative and converse, signifies *and, but, although, when, then, now, so, even, or, nor*. To give instances of each might favour of pedantry. I shall confine myself therefore to the last sense, and remark, that when this conjunction follows a negative sentence, it often conveys a negative virtue to the following sentence, and should be translated *nor*. Thus in Agur's prayer, *Give me not poverty nor riches*, it is rightly turned by *nor*. By *nor* it is also rightly turned in Pf. i. 5; *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*. We should be therefore very observant of this force of it. David's character has been certainly vilified by the misinterpretation of this single letter. This great prince, as we read, forgave Shimei his offence against him, and swore to him by the Lord, that he should not die for it; and yet on his death-bed he is described,

in our translation, as ordering Solomon to put him to death; *not to hold him guiltless, but to bring down his grey hairs to the grave with blood.* Here the conjunction *vau* is translated by *but*, whereas it should have been turned by *nor*. Let us transcribe the order, 1 Kings ii. 8, 9: *And behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, the son of Gera, a Benjamite, who cursed me with a grievous curse, in the day when I went to Mahanaim. But he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless (for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do), nor his hoar head bring thou to the grave with blood.* The plain meaning of which last words is this: “Keep a jealous eye over him as a
 “ Benjamite of the tribe of Saul, a man dis-
 “ affected to our family, and inclinable to
 “ rebellion; but put him not to death for
 “ his former crime, because I have sworn
 “ unto him by the Lord, that he should not
 “ die for it.” And in this sense Solomon understood his father; for he ordered Shimei to confine himself at Jerusalem under his own inspection, but put him not to death till he

had flighted his own positive order, which Shimei, under the penalty of death, had sworn to obey. — The merciful David feared lest Solomon should of his own resentment put Shimei to death, and mentioned his oath to deter him from his purpose ; for how absurd is it that David should mention his oath, and break it in his dying moments, by ordering the breach of it, in the same breath ? or that Solomon should not execute the orders of his father ? — The conduct of the son shews that compassion, not vengeance, directed the heart of the dying father.

As it gives great light to any passage of Scripture, when we can ascertain on what occasion it was delivered, a supposition will be allowed me, that part of the eighth chapter of Ecclesiastes was delivered by Solomon to Shimei, when he obliged him under an oath to confine himself in the city of Jerufalem, viz. from the first to the sixth verse ; and that the reflections from the sixth to the twelfth verse, have in view Shimei's transgression of that commandment, and his untimely death consequent thereupon. — We may remark,
first,

first, that the former part of the first verse in Hebrew Bibles is generally adjoined to the last verse of the seventh chapter ; but that our English division of the chapters may here be admitted, and that *יָ, wooz*, which is translated *boldness*, may better take the signification of *fortitude* ; *The former fortitude of his face shall be altered* ; that is, he shall grow by wisdom more courageous : or, since some Hebrew words have two different significations, it may signify *fearfulness*, or a fortitude which is little : *Wisdom gives a man presence of mind, and changes the fearful shyness of his face.*

This alteration is not only agreeable to natural truth, but exactly to the case of Shimei, who doubtless was full of confusion and fear, when brought before Solomon ; whom we suppose to conclude his order of staying at Jerusalem to him with these words : *Who is as the wise man ? and who knoweth the meaning of an order ? A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the fearfulness of his face shall be changed. I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God. Be not hasty to go out of his sight ;*

stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, What doest thou? Whoso keepeth the commandment, shall feel no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment. The words are certainly applicable to the occasion, and the following expressions naturally result from Shimei's fool-hardy confidence, transgression, and death. He found himself rescued from immediate death; that for every purpose there was time and judgment allowed, and therefore his malignity of nature (רנת, Ranath) was great upon him. For he knew not what should happen; however, he could not by his wickedness deliver himself from death. He found at last, that there is a time when a man may insult over another to his own hurt. The tenth verse seems more clearly to point at Shimei: *So I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the holy place; and they were forgotten in the city, where they had so done.* Some benefit at least will arise from this my observation, since all precepts are best explained by examples. To return.

In Gen. ii. 5, 6, we should read thus ; *In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew ; the Lord God †, indeed, had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground, nor did a mist go up from the face of the earth, and water the whole face of the ground.* In these words we find this particle to join the negative sentence, *there was no man to till the ground, with the following, nor went there up a mist.* The learned Dr. Shuckford justly remarks, that it was an ancient opinion, and *very early in Egypt*, where Moses had his birth and education, that the earth originally of itself brought forth its fruits, plants, and trees, yea all kinds of living creatures and men. This productive quality of the earth was, as they imagined, assisted by rains and fertilizing mists. Moses on the contrary shews, that God by *his word only* caused every tree and herb to spring from the earth, without the assistance of rain, culture, or even a mist.

† Chi sometimes signifies *nempe, quidem, indeed.*

Hence

Hence the Arabic version, *nec exhalatio ascendebat*, is right.

The Russians, as we read in *The Life of Peter the Great*, had a notion that the world was made in the spring, until by a globe introduced it was proved to them, that when it was spring in one part of the world, it could not be so in another; and that therefore their notion was insignificant and trifling. Virgil, however, from the Egyptian philosophy, was whimsical enough to entertain this notion, and plausibly tells us, how men started up from the ground.

*Non alios primâ crescentis origine mundi
Illuxisse dies, aliumve habuisse tenorem
Crediderim; ver illud erat, ver magnus agebat
Orbis, et hybernis parcebant flatibus Euri,
Cum primùm lucem pecudes hausère, virûmq;
Terrea * progenies duris caput extulit arvis.*

Georg. II. 341.

* Mr. Warton in the last line reads *ferrea*, which Dr. Bentley has fully proved to be *terrea*.

“ Such

- “ Such were the days, the season was the same,
 “ When first arose this world’s all-beauteous frame.
 “ The sky was cloudless, balmy was the air,
 “ And spring’s mild influence made young nature fair.
 “ When cattle first o’er new-born mountains spread,
 “ And *Man*, an iron race, up-reared his hardy head.

The same poet in his Sixth Eclogue, l. 31, introduces his Silenus singing the creation of the world ; and without mentioning once a Creator, assigns, according to the Epicurean philosophy, every effect to natural causes, and trees, in particular, to rain.

*Namque canebat, uti magnum per inane coacta
 Semina terrarumq; animæq; marisq; fuissent,
 Et liquidi simul ignis ; ut his exordia primis
 Omnia, et ipse tener mundi concreverit orbis.
 Tum durare solum et discludere Nerea ponto
 Cæperit, et rerum paulatim sumere formas.*

Jamq;

*Jamq; novam ut terræ stupeant lucefcere solem,
 Altius atq; cadant submotis nubibus imbres,
 Incipiant fylvæ cum primùm furgere, cumq;
 Rara per ignotos errent animalia montes.*

- “ He fung at univerfal nature’s birth
 “ How feeds of water, fire, and air, and
 earth,
 “ Fell thro’ the void; whence order rofe,
 and all
 “ The beauties of this congregated ball.
 “ How the moist foil grew ftiffen’d by de-
 grees,
 “ And drove to deftin’d bounds the nar-
 row’d feas.
 “ How earth was feiz’d with wonder and
 affright
 “ Struck with the new-born fun’s refulgent
 light;
 “ How clouds condens’d in liquid fhow’rs
 diftill’d,
 “ Dropp’d fatnefs and refreshment on the
 field;

“ * When first up springs sublime each
 branching grove,
 “ And scatter’d beasts o’er pathless moun-
 tains rove.”

WARTON.

I shall propose one text more, viz. Job iv. 18, *Behold he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly.* Here we may observe that אָמֵן, Amin, which we translate, *he put trust*, is in the future tense of the conjugation *Hiphil*, which conjugation generally denotes efficiency on some other. Hence the word here, I doubt, not only signifies, *he will trust*, but *he will make to trust*. And in this we shall be more confirmed by considering, that an adjective, deduced from this verb, signifies not only *faithful*, but *stable, firm*. Hence the first part of the verse will

* I must beg this elegant translator’s pardon for turning *how* into *when*; but by this alteration the showers have their efficacy designed by the poet, who expresses himself by *Inci-piant sylvæ cum primùm surgere*, *when* the woods first began to spring up; and who had not used *cum*, *when*, before, in his description of creation.

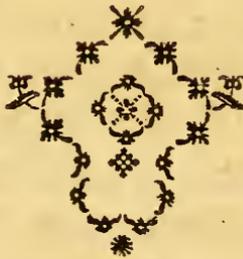
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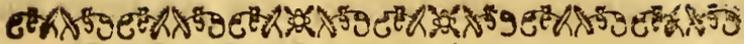
stand thus: *He will or hath put no stability or self-dependence in his servants; or, word by word, He will not make his servants to confide; that is, he will not put in his servants a confidence independent of himself.*—The word which in the latter part of the verse is explained by *folly*, signifies also *light, praise, boasting*; for *Tobolab* has the same root as *Tehillab*, being both derived from הלל, *Halal*, which properly signifies to *praise* or *boast*. Arias Montanus translates here the word *Tobolab*, by *gloriatio, boasting*. Hence the whole verse will stand thus: *He will put no self-dependence, or stability, in his servants, nor put boasting in his angels; and will convey to us this sense: As great and good as the angels are, yet they are not sure of standing, nor have any occasion to boast before God. How much less has a poor mortal creature, who dwells in an house of clay, and is crufted like a moth!*

R E M A R K.

The Latins also, in imitation of the Hebrews, give a negative virtue to *et, que, atque, aut,*

aut, ve, &c. which signify *nor*, when a negative sentence goes before, *Non jam mater alit tellus, viresque ministrat. Virgil. Æn. II. 71.* “Mother earth doth no longer support it, “*nor* supply strength.” See *Virg. Georg. IV. 211, 212. Æn. II. 21. Horace, Od. L. II. Od. 9. Yea*, a following negative, sometimes throws back a negative virtue on the foregoing part. See *Hor. Carm. L. III. Od. 15, line 12, 13, 14, &c.*





C H A P. VIII.

Other corrections in these Chapters accounted for.

THE other alterations which we have made in those chapters, will best appear at one view, in which we shall only note, that,

In the second verse of the seventeenth chapter, I have turned *the eleven hundred shekels of silver, which were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears; into, the eleven hundred shekels of silver, which were taken by thee, and about which thou laidst me under the obligation of an oath, and also strictly chargedst me.* To justify which alteration we may observe, that the Hebrew verb לקח, Lachak, signifies not only *to take away*, but simply *to take*. Thus this verb is used in Gen. xxvii. 46, *If Jacob take a wife.* Here it plainly signifies, *to take to himself.* In the same manner

manner Micah's mother had *took this money to herself*; that is, she had taken out this from her whole substance, and had consecrated it to GOD's worship. Hence Arias Montanus translates the words by *quod captum est tibi, which was taken by thee*; and the Greek version, ἔσ' ἔλαβες σεαυτη, *which thou tookest to thyself*, more fully favours us. Hence this correction has reason and authority on its side.

Again, in the Hebrew there are no words to signify *about which*, though they are implied; but there is the word for *me*, after the verb, which the English translation rendered here by *curstedst*. The Greek version answers here again exactly to the original, Καὶ με ἠρασω, *and thou devotedst me*. The Hebrew word הלא, *Alah*, signifies both *to swear*, and *to make another to swear*; which last signification it generally takes, when it has a word after it. Thus, 1 Kings viii. 31, this word is rightly rendered by, *cause to swear*: *If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him, to cause him to swear*. The same word hath the signification of laying under the obligation of a curse, in 1 Sam: xiv. 24.

The men of Israel were distressed that day, for Samuel had adjured the people, i. e. had laid them under a curse.—The word then has the signification of *making to swear*; and since a mother's cursing *her son* seems so harsh that the English translators leave out *me*, which is in the original after *cursedst*; yea, since cursing at all is unbecoming of a woman who was religious, that signification, *thou madest me to swear*, or *thou laidst me under the obligation of a solemn oath*, is most natural, and therefore preferable. If we consider also the custom of binding relations by oath to fulfil the intentions of the party, we shall be more induced to admit this alteration. Thus Abraham made his servant swear about taking a wife for his son, Gen. xxiv. 3; Jacob makes Joseph swear concerning his burial, Gen. xlvii. 31; Joseph makes the children of Israel to swear concerning the removing of his bones, Gen. l. 25; Joshua lays the people under the obligation of an oath never to rebuild Jericho, Josh. vi. 26. It was customary among the Jews to swear their friends to the performance of their will; and therefore Micah's mother did no more than what was usual,

usual, when she obliged her son by oath *to lay out that money, which she had allotted for that purpose, on the worship of God.*

As for the other alteration, *Thou chargedst me strictly also*, instead of *Thou spakedst also in mine ears*; we may observe, that *to speak in one's ears* is an Hebrew idiom for *to charge strictly*. Thus Deut. v. 1, *Hear, O Israel! the statutes and judgments which I spake in your ears this day*, i. e. obey the statutes and judgments which I strictly charge you this day. *To speak* and *to command*, are synonymous words often with the Hebrews. *These are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel*, Deut. iv. 45, is the same *with the commandments which Moses commanded*, Deut. viii. 1.—There is another Hebrew idiom in the third verse of this seventeenth chapter, where *from my hand*, is put for *entirely*, or *so as to have no farther right in it.*

I have also turned *carved image* and *molten image*, into *carved* or *graven thing*, and *molten thing*; because the word *thing* will take

in the sense of *image*, or whatever else it might be. But as I shall treat largely of this matter hereafter, I must beg the reader to permit me to consult brevity, and to avoid repetition.

In verse the fifth, I have turned *House of Gods* into *House of God*, so the Greek version has it; ὁ οἶκος Μιχαῆλ ἀντὶ οἶκος Θεοῦ : *The house of Micah was to him the house of God.* He had laid out the money in the service of that Jehovah, to whom it had been consecrated; and had an house of prayer for himself and his neighbours.—The pursuit of those neighbours with Micah after the Danites, who had taken away *the divine furniture*, not only shews Micah's great interest amongst them, but that they thought themselves *interested in it*.—The word *teraphim* I might have turned by *forms of cherubim*, on the authority of St. Jerom, who says, that some *teraphim* were made in imitation of the *cherubim* by the ark in the tabernacle or temple.

In the eighteenth chapter and fifteenth verse, I have turned *saluted him* into *saluted it*. The Danites came to the house of Micah, and
saluted

saluted *it*, viz. the whole house or family. In the original it is, *They wished peace to it*. Micah, at the arrival of the Danites, does not seem to be at home, but to arrive there in a little time after their departure; otherwise it is not well to be accounted for, by what means the five Danites, without any opposition, took away the furniture of his house of prayer.—But there is another reason to be assigned for the alteration. The words *Peace be to this house*, appear to be the common salutation of all travelling Jews at the entering of a stranger's house. This we may support by 1 Sam. xxv. 5, 6, where we read that *David sent out ten young men; and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name, and thus shall ye say to him, For life peace be to thee, and peace to thine house, and peace to all that thou hast*. This salutation, therefore, was like to the carrying of the olive-branch in their hands, to shew that they came peaceably, and without any hostile design. Hence Matt. viii. 12, 13, Our Saviour orders his disciples, when they came into an house, *to salute it*; that is, *to let their peace come upon it*, or to say, Luke x. 5, *Peace be to this house*.

In the eighteenth chapter, verſe the twenty-ſiſt, I have turned *the little ones, and cattle, and the carriage before them*, into words which will bear the ſame ſenſe, viz. into *the youth, and what they had gotten, and the precious things before them*; not being certain but that the words might include the young Levite, and their booty: though I verily believe that the words are rightly tranſlated; becauſe it was uſual for the unfettled Iſraelites to carry their wives, children, and ſubſtance with them, and in time of battle, to leave them in the camp under a ſufficient guard. Indeed the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manaſſes, built cities, Numb. xxxii. *for their wives, their little ones, and their flocks*, becauſe their ſettlement was fixt, but the perſons unfettled carried them with them; and therefore 'tis likely that theſe Danites had theirs alſo with them.

In the eighteenth chapter, verſe the twenty-fourth, I have turned *Elohim*, by *divine worſhip*, or *furniture*, and not by *Gods*. It is plain that the Danites had taken away all the furniture of Micah's houſe of prayer, viz.

his Ephod, and his forms of cherubim, as well as his graven thing and his molten thing, and that he must mean his whole furniture by *Elohim*. This appears from the words of Micah himself: *Ye have taken away my holy furniture, even every part thereof, for what have I left?* The expression, *What have I left?* opens the meaning of the foregoing words. — The word *Elohim*, indeed, sometimes signifies *angels*, and so might refer to the *teraphim*, those representations of angels. But there is no necessity for such restriction, since *Elohim* sometimes signifies *divine worship*, or the *altar*, the principal place of divine worship, in the same manner as the owner is sometimes put for the house. Thus, in Psalm xliii. 4, *Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy.* Here, *unto God* is plainly put for *unto divine worship*, or *unto the altar*, the principal place of divine worship. We shall find the same in that difficult passage of the eighty-fourth Psalm, a passage not yet well explained by any man: *How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea even fainteth, for the courts*

Here we see the Ignorance of a ^H 4 learned Man, tho' of
Clergyman, he knows not what the Seraphim was.

of the Lord ; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young ; even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God." This is our translation.—But surely we cannot imagine, that the swallows built, or the sparrows lodged, upon the altars.—Let us attempt a solution by observing,

1st, That Eastern writers delight to take their images from simple nature ; and as David had been shewn by divine instruction, either by inspiration or by vision, (see 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, &c. to 19) the whole structure of the temple which should be built by his son Solomon, he expresses, in rapturous fervor of soul, his own desires of entering into such a glorious place of worship, and his warm wish of fixing on the place and building of the edifice ; and in the most exalted manner of sublime simplicity he images out that anxious wish by the sollicitude which birds plainly express, till by flying here and there they have found some place of seemingly

ingly safe retreat by night for themselves, and of a nest for their young.

2. He fixt on swallows and sparrows, not only as frequenting houses, but in those countries making their lodgments on the outside of temples. This we may collect from that story of Herodotus, where he tells us, that Aristodicus, going on purpose about the temple of Apollo amongst the Branchidæ, afterwards called Didyme, in Milesia, a country on the confines of Ionia, took down the nests of sparrows and other birds that lodged there.

3. Buxtorf, in his Hebrew Lexicon, tells us, that when the particle גַּם , *gam*, is repeated in the same sentence, it signifies *as* in the first particle, and *so* in the other. “*Repetitum in continuatione sententiæ est, tam, quam : Being repeated in the continuance of a sentence it means, so, as ; and we may observe, in the original, that this particle is repeated. Also by supposing the paragogicum put to the infinitive mood, which all Hebrew grammars prove usual ; the word bath found will be*
turned

turned into *to find*. By which observation, without altering one letter, and only by putting the comparison into a parenthesis, an easy sense will arise thus: “*How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My flesh longeth and so pineth with desire for the courts of the Lord, and my flesh so crieth out for the living God (as the sparrow to find an house and the swallow a nest, where she may lay her young) even for thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God.*”

R E M A R K.

Gam signifies *so* in this connectively-relative sense, though it stands single, and the first *gam* or *chi* is suppressed. Thus in Hof. iii. 3, *Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man; so will I also be for thee.* Here the sense runs thus: *And as thou shalt be for me only, and not for another man; so will I also be for thee.* Here the word signifying *as* is suppressed in the original, and hence not taken notice of in our translation.—Sometimes the
word

word *gam* for *so* is suppressed. Thus in Hof. iv. 6. *For thy people are, as they that strive with the priest; that is, thy people are so, as they that strive with the priest.* In these places, *gam* signifying in one verse *so*, and in the other *as*, continues the comparison; and as this use of a single *gam* is scarce observed in any Hebrew lexicon, this short remark may not be useless.





CHAPTER IX.

Micah's Character.

BY almost all writers has Micah and his good mother been roughly handled. The son in particular has been treated as an innovator in religion by consecrating one of his sons, and an idolater in setting up graven images, in which the mother is intermixed. But if we consider that Micah was certainly one of those friends to all mankind, who kept a house of public hospitality for all strangers; that singular virtue lays an obligation on all men to see what may be said in his favour. In Judges ii. 7, we read, that *the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that out-lived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel.* Now we have before proved that Micah lived in this time. And

it

it appears from the name *Jehovah* made use of both by him and his mother, that they served the true God. They both also had manifestly a religious turn of mind; for as mount Ephraim, or that part of it where Micah lived, was somewhat distant from Shiloh, where the tabernacle of the Lord at this time was, this family was thereby deprived of the happiness of serving God before his altar. To remedy this unhappiness of situation as much as possible, this religious woman had taken out money to establish an house of prayer for her family and neighbours, and had dedicated it from her hand entirely to the Lord.—She had dedicated it to the Lord (in the original, to *Jehovah*) the same Supreme Being to whom she before had recommended her son for a blessing: *Blessed be thou to Jehovah, my son.* This shews that she was a worshipper of the true God, because the name *Jehovah* in scripture is never given to any other God, either false or figurative. And whereas she dedicated eleven hundred shekels to God, and *her graven thing and molten thing*, whatever they were,
cost

cost but *two hundred*, ver. 4. it is not to be doubted, but she laid out the remaining nine hundred in the house, and preparing a proper salary for a priest, if any should pass by that way.

It has been one objection to the good Micah, that he could have no right to consecrate his son or the Levite. He might have no right to consecrate his son, though great allowance must be had for cases of necessity, especially where the intention is pious. Thus in 2 Chron. xxix. 34, and xxx. 17, in a case of necessity the Levites were admitted to perform a part of the priest's office.

As for the Levite, in the case of Micah, he was doubtless a *praying priest* before his arrival at the house of Micah; and therefore the words *he consecrated*, can have no other signification than *he made him his priest*, by delivering the ephod, we may suppose, into his hands. What we translate *he consecrated*, in Hebrew, is *he filled the hand*; which idiom began from the custom prescribed by God at the consecration of Aaron
and

and his sons, Levit. viii. 25 ; where we find that the fat, the rump, the fat that covered the intestines, the caul above the liver, the two kidneys, and the fat upon them, the right shoulder, one loaf of unleavened bread, one cake and one wafer of the meat-offering, were put into the hands of Aaron and his sons ; and Moses keeping his hand under theirs, that they were waved by them all up and down, all manner of ways, towards the east, west, north, and south, to signify that He to whom the offering was made, was Lord of the whole world. Moses therefore *filled their hands* ; and hence the phrase *to fill the hand* signifies the same as *to consecrate*. But there was no sacrifice in the case of Micah ; for though it will appear hereafter, that they had altars at this time in their houses of prayer, yet they were not designed for sacrifice : consequently the words here can have no other signification, than that he made him his priest by delivering something (most probably the ephod, which was the distinguishing garment of the priesthood) into his hands.—Indeed we are much in the dark as to the customs of those days ; and therefore

we have a strong reason to imagine, that all Levites *were inducted* into their houses of prayer by some peculiar ceremony of the kind above observed, and that here is preserved a curious piece of Hebrew antiquity. Charity at least would incline us to think so, besides the reasonableness of the thing itself, rather than to treat the character of the universally-charitable Micah and his mother in that scurvy manner in which almost all writers have done. I am sure that the reflection that Micah makes on having a regular priest, is very remote from deserving that derision and contempt to which it has been subjected: *Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.* The word *Lord* in the original is *Jehovah*, which shews that Micah, as well as his mother, was a worshipper of the true God. It appears also that his consecrating his son to be their praying priest, was occasioned by mere necessity.—To correct this imperfection in Micah's worship, God seems to have directed the Levite there;—at least Micah considers it in that light,—whose words paraphrased will stand thus: *I have now a regular worship*

of the God of Heaven in my house, and I am certain that the Supreme God, who has sent me a regular priest, will prosper me. This warm expression of confidence in God pleads strongly for him, and argues, that he was not only a worshipper of the true GOD, but an adherent to the worship instituted by Moses.

It has been also observed, that those words, *In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes,* are inserted to shew some irregular practices. The observation is reasonable; and I think that in chap. xvii. ver. 6. it intimates that Micah had no right to consecrate his son; and he himself seems sensible of his error, since, on the arrival of a regular priest, he sets aside his son, and then expects God's blessing upon his house.—And it may reflect upon his *mixt* worship—if he was guilty of it; though we shall strive in that to make our best apology for him.—But the words in the eighteenth chapter plainly refer to the Danites, who unlawfully robbed him of the furniture of his house of prayer.

Ἔσθα ἡγιασὰ τὸ ἀργυρίον τῶ Κυρίῳ ἐν τῆς χειρὸς μου.

“ I have wholly consecrated the silver to the
“ LORD from my hand,” says Micah’s mother.

4. A greater good ought, doubtless, to take place of a lesser.

These things may be said to alleviate, but not to justify their action; since,

1. By this action they deprived the good Micah of the public worship of God, which at a great expence his mother had settled.

2. Though these holy utensils were consecrated to God, *yet the use of them in religious acts* is still reserved to the consecrator, or church, on which they have by him been bestowed, and were deposited. Hence the man or church is *robbed of the use*, even though the vessels in another church are reserved for the service of God.

3. The Danites could not plead absolute necessity, though they might allege a present occasion. They might have provided those things from the spoils of enemies.

4. They, besides the robbery before-mentioned, most ungratefully violated the rules of hospitality ; and acted (Gen. xlix. 17.) like the serpents by the way, or the adders in the path, which do mischief to the unsuspecting traveller.

But the Levite was not faulty in going with the Danites, for these reasons :

1. He had agreed only for a yearly salary. This he received only while he staid. When he went away it ceased, and another travelling Levite might be glad of it. Micah could not command his stay, and therefore his departure was no injustice.

2. By departing and following the Danites he was advanced ; and advancement, when justly attained, is lawful.

3. He may charitably be presumed to pursue a greater good in religion, in preserving the worship of God amongst a large town in Israel, rather than in a private house,

This

This part, however, of the Levite's conduct has been overlooked; but the request of the Danites to him to consult God, and the answer of this priest, has been treated in a very ridiculous way; and the Levite has been taxed with the gross impiety of answering these Danites suitably to their own wishes, out of his own conceit, and yet pretending to an authority from God. These censurers can have no authority, from God or man, to lay such an uncharitable accusation; especially when the answer which he gave them was true, and probably directed by the God of truth.—These men surely do not consider the importance of the question, nor the danger which the Levite must expose himself to, if his words should be found false.—The spies were but five men, who, as well as the Levite, were doubtless ignorant of the temper and way of life of the inhabitants of the place, which they were going to search; and should they be discovered and intercepted, they must perish; at least fly for their lives.—And should that have happened, which none but God could foresee that it would not, then let us see (in Deut. xviii. 20, 21, 22) what

the Levite was to expect from men enraged at their disappointment and their past perils, and authorized by God to take vengeance. *The prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath spoken? when the prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass; that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously. Thou shalt not be afraid of him.* Every modern annotator, which I have seen on these chapters, exclaims every now and then at the ignorance of the Levite, or of Micah, or of the Danites; as if they knew no more of the law of Moses, than a poor Mahometan. *By chance* the ignorance lies in our own minds, who have not duly considered the customs of those days.—*By chance* here may be traced some exquisite pieces of Jewish antiquities. The affair, however, is worthy of an enquiry.



C H A P. XI.

The high-priest only was allowed to wear the Ephod (in which were placed the Urim and Thummim) and to consult God by Urim; but other inferior priests might request an answer from God in another way.

THE most reasonable account that I can collect of the Urim and Thummim, seems to be this: That the *Urim* was an image representative of the *Seraphim*, an order of angels, and assigned to the high-priest in token of his prophetic office only, when he went to enquire of God in some embarrassed affairs of the state, for a person, or about a thing of the greatest importance; and the *Thummim* was an image made in likeness of that image, which the Egyptian high-priests,

who were also chief judges, wore, as the ensign of the judicial office. These two images were the ensigns to the high-priest of his two great offices, viz. that of consulting God, as high-priest, and that of chief judge. These were kept from common defilement, as well as from common eyes, by being put into the breast-plate, which was made square, and being doubled was sown firm on three sides; and the fourth side not being sown together, was made in form of a little square bag, or purse; and so it inclosed the images, the *Urim* and *Thummim*; which were probably never taken out but in the time of the discharge of the particular office hieroglyphically specified by each; and which in their names conveyed the virtues also, which a priest and a judge should be endowed with, viz. Light, or sound Knowledge, and Truth and Uprightness of Mind. They were likewise very expressive of the clearness and perfectness of the answers given by God to the high-priest who wore the breast-plate. In matters therefore which concerned the whole state, or a principal member, such as Joshua was; for whom therefore the priest Eleazar,

Numb.

(Numb. xxvii. 21) is ordered to *ask counsel after the judgment of Urim before the Lord*;—on affairs, or for men, of such importance, when the will of God was necessary to be known, the high-priest put on his robes, and over them the breast-plate, in which the Urim and Thummim were.—The priest thus arrayed, and taking out the Urim in his hand, presented himself before the ark of the covenant; and in extraordinary and unavoidable cases, as in that of David, mentioned in 1 Sam. xxiii. probably before some little altar erected for that present occasion. There he asked counsel of God, with his face turned directly towards the ark, and the mercy-seat over it; upon which the Divine Presence rested. There he humbly proposed what he wanted to be resolved about; and had, as it is plain from scripture, an answer in an audible voice. *The LORD said*, introduces almost every answer given in this way of consultation; and men thus consulting, are said (Isai. xxx. 2. Josh. ix. 14) to ask counsel *at the mouth of God*. Hence the place where the ark and mercy-seat stood, from whence the answer was given, is in scripture stiled the *Oracle*.—And I may add,

add, that since the *Divine Presence*, which appeared and returned answers, was manifestly the second person in the ever-blessed Trinity, (see 1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 9) hence one reason appears, why the Son is often stiled *the Word*. The answer given by God, when enquired of, by *Urim*, by his lights, was plainly vocal.

This majestic method of consulting God, was doubtless confined to the high-priest, whose office, in this respect, was the most august in all human nature.—But was it not lawful for any other man, besides the high-priest, to consult God; or in any other place besides the tabernacle? In my opinion, we may safely assert the lawfulness.—Joshua, indeed, in Numb. xxvii. 21, seems ordered to apply to Eleazar for counsel; but that by the context was plainly designed, that his orders might have the greater weight with the children of Israel.—But where is there any command, that no man should be applied to but the chief-priest, and in no place but before the tabernacle? Why should God give that order of punishing false prophets with death, and give the signs of a false prophet, who

should presume to speak from his own heart, and yet use the name of the Lord, if no man was permitted to prophesy but the chief-priest? Was not the will of the Lord revealed unto Samuel (1 Sam. iii. 19, 20) when as yet he was not chief-priest? Did not Samuel pray unto God at Mizpah, and was heard, 1 Sam. vii. 9? Did he not consult God at Ramah about choosing a king, 1 Sam. viii. 7, 21? Did not Saul go there to consult God by means of Samuel, 1 Sam. ix. 9, compared with 1 Sam. vii. 17? Did not David consult God at Keilah, 1 Sam. xxiii. 8? Did not Saul seek to consult God not only by Urim, but also by dreams and by prophets, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6? Is it not very plain, therefore, that other men were consulted besides the high-priest; and that God sometimes did reveal himself to them, though not with an audible voice, as when he was enquired of by Urim?—The Levite doubtless was not permitted to consult God by Urim. But does not the request of the Danites to him to consult God, shew, that it was permitted to the Levites, on some extraordinary occasions, to present themselves before the altar in the
house

house of prayer, arrayed with their ephod, and with a little teraphim in their hand, made in imitation of the Urim, and humbly petition an answer from God? It is not said that he obtained his answer here by a voice. It is almost certain, that he had his information by a revelation conveyed directly into his mind, by the spirit of GOD, by an immediate inspiration. This was often conferred on other men besides the high-priest. Thus this immediate irradiation of the spirit of God fell, we read, upon Saul. Had the Levite received an answer by a voice, he would have expressed himself, as in cases of that kind, by *God said*, or *Hear the word of the Lord*, or the like. His prediction or answer seems therefore directed by the divine illapse into his mind. His answer was certainly true, and, in all probability, guided by the God of Truth. In such case, again, the worship there paid to God does not appear disagreeable to him.

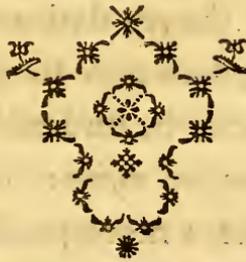
R E M A R K.

BY chance it may be expected, that I should at least give a short reason, why I have rejected the fanciful accounts which have been given of the Urim and Thummim by some writers of no small name. I would have given it, but found that it would draw me into a large dissertation. Let me note only, that Spencer, Selden, and other writers, have fully proved, that God condescended to accommodate his worship, as much as possible, to the notions of the Jews, who were apt to be seduced by every thing gaudy; and, to suit his service to their weakness, selected, for the dress of his high-priest, every grand ornament that was wore by the heathen priests throughout the world. Agreeable to this conduct towards his people, he selected the Thummim, and, in my opinion, the Urim also, from the Egyptians. The Egyptian high-priests were, as well as the Israelitish, among the chief-judges; and if we observe that the Septuagint turn Thummim by *ἀληθείας*, *truth*, we shall find that the Egyptian

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tian judges wore it, from Ælian's Various History, B. 14. Chap. 30. Δικασαί δε το ἀρχαίου παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις ἱερεῖς ἦσαν. Ἦν δὲ τῶν ἀρχῶν ὁ πρεσβυτάτος, καὶ ἐδικάζεν ἀπάντας. Ἔδει δὲ αὐτοῦ εἶναι δικαιοτάτου ἀνδρῶπων, καὶ ἀφειδέστατον. Εἶχε δὲ καὶ ἀγάλμα περὶ τοῦ ἀνχέου ἐκ σαπφείρου λίθου καὶ ἐκαλεῖτο το ἀγάλμα Ἀληθεία. "In ancient times, among the Egyptians, the priests were their judges; and the oldest man was the president of them all, and judged all men. But it was expected in him, that he should be the most just and temperate of all men. He had also an image of a sapphire-stone round his neck, and that image was named TRUTH." Diodorus Siculus also, in his first book of the Egyptian affairs, describes Ἀρχιδικαστὴν ἔχοντα τὴν Ἀληθείαν ἐξηρητημένον ἐκ τῆς τραχήλου, "the chief judge having TRUTH hung on his neck;" and again he says, Συνταξέεις τῶν ἀνάγκαιων παρὰ τῆς βασιλεως τοῖς μὲν δικασταῖς ἰκαναὶ πρὸς διατροφὴν ἐχορηγούτο· τῷ δὲ ἀρχιδικαστῇ παραπλήσιοι. Ἐφορεῖ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ τραχήλου ἐκ χρύσεου ἀλυσέως ἠρητημένον ζῶδιον τῶν πολυτελέων λίθων, ὃ προσηγορεῖτο Ἀληθείαν· τῶν δὲ ἀμφισβητήσεων ἤρχοντο, ἐπειδὴν τὴν τῆς Ἀληθείας εἰκόνα ὁ Ἀρχιδικαστὴς προσθεῖτο. "Very handsome salaries were allowed by the king for the maintenance of the judges;

judges ; but, for the chief judge, salaries adequate to his dignity. But he wore on his neck, suspended by a golden chain, a little form of precious stones, which they called TRUTH. And they began their pleadings in their courts of judicature, when the chief judge had put on this image of TRUTH."





C H A P. XII.

The nature of Divine Vision largely explained.

WE may collect * from scripture, that God manifested his will to the high-priest by a voice; to his prophets by dreams and visions; and to other men, by what the Jews themselves called the Holy Spirit. It was the received opinion of all the Jewish doctors, that all the revelations made by God to the prophets, however they are expressed or described, are to be understood as made to them in a *dream* or *vision*: only that God vouchsafed Moses a more peculiar favour by conversing with him face to face, for forty days, in mount Sinai. And, indeed, the words of God (Numb. xii. 6) seem to favour this opinion: *Hear now my words, if there be a*

* The ingenious Treatise of the learned Mr. Peters on Job, has greatly assisted me in this dissertation.

prophet

prophet among you ; I the LORD will make myself known to him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth.

If it is here said, that indeed we can apprehend what a discovery *by a dream* may be, but cannot conceive the nature of vision ; it must be allowed to be difficult to apprehend in what precise manner the prophets received the certainty of any inspiration that way from God, because vision is now entirely ceased. —A man who never had spiritual sight, can have no exact notion of perceiving spiritual objects ; no more than a man, who never enjoyed natural sight, can entertain of natural objects. God, however, who is an eternal Spirit, and the father and life of our spirits, can easily communicate to the soul of man the knowledge of his will in an extraordinary way ; and that with so much certainty and light, that the man may be assured, that God is the author of those things, which are at that time communicated to him. God

must thus enlighten the minds of the prophets, who alone fore-knew the future events of things.

There may be also powers in our minds, which are now clogged, and, as it were, swallowed up in the heavy dregs of this earthly body, which sleep for a time; but, when "we have shuffled off this mortal coil," will be awakened, or rather relieved, from the oppressive weight, and exercise themselves with freedom and pleasure. By these means, we shall at once see, and be able to converse with, spiritual beings, and enjoy the true vision of God. Men, who have made the deepest researches into the nature of our future happiness, have concluded this to be truth with the greatest degree of probability.—Perhaps the power of vision in the prophets may be something of this kind: a new power of the mind, or a new sense awakened in them. The film which their earthy body spread over *the eye of the soul*, τὸ ὄμμα τῆς ψυχῆς, as Philo Judæus calls it, may be removed; and by that means they may enjoy the sight of God, and hear his orders with as much certainty,

tainty, as they hear or see men with their bodily senses. This manifestation of the Deity, made to them by this kind of vision, 'tis almost certain, conferred on the prophets the names of *seers*. Thus Gad was David's *seer*, נביא חוזה, *nabia chofeh*, *seeing prophet*, in the original.

If we view the account which the Scriptures give us, we shall find a very great agreement and uniformity in their description of the manner of these visions. In condescension to our present apprehensions, God is there described as holding a consultation among his heavenly nobles, that host of angels, who wait around his throne. Into this grand assembly the prophet is admitted, and there permitted to see and hear what God decrees shall come to pass, and from thence is commissioned to declare these things to men. Hence Jeremiah proposes this very remarkable question to the false prophets in his days: Jer. xxiii. 18, *Who, or which of you, hath stood in the council of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word?* i. e. Which of you hath been admitted into that assembly, which

composes the council of Jehovah? Which of you hath been wrapt in true vision, and, as a stander-by, hath heard those consultations which are held in the presence of God, and been commissioned to publish his great decrees to mankind? These false prophets, therefore, deceived the people with promises of happiness from God, and made them vain; pretending a vision of God, which they received not from the mouth of the Lord, but invented out of their own heart. For thus in ver. 21, the true prophet proceeds: *I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied: but if they had stood in my council, amidst that assembly of heaven before mentioned, and had caused my people to hear my words, then should they have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.* And ver. 32, *Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them, saith the Lord.* It is plain that the Scripture speaks here of God after the manner of men; and it is probable, that in our present state of

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being,

being, we cannot apprehend otherwise these divine representations. Our understandings are limited, and things must be brought down within these bounds, or otherwise we can have no conceptions of them. As kings therefore transact their most important affairs by convening a council of state; so God is pleased to represent himself as surrounded by his council also, and passing the high decrees of his will and providence in the assembly of his holy angels. Then the prophet, to whom God is pleased to reveal such his will, is admitted *in a vision* to this solemn consultation, as a stander-by, and hearer of what is there decreed and resolved. He stands in the council or assembly of Jehovah as a waiter, or servant, ready to carry his message to his people. He sees, and hears his word; sees what is there transacted; and hears the decree that is past, and the message which he is to carry. And hence came the reproof of Jeremiah to the false prophets, who had never stood in the council of the Lord, and yet presumed to carry messages as if sent by God.

Here then we may see the privilege allowed to many of the ancient prophets. They declared their words from the order of the Most High, being admitted into his presence, and hearing his commands. Hence Isaiah chap. ii. ver. 1) is said *to see the word*; that is, to hear it immediately spoken from God's mouth. So Rev. i. 12, *I turned to see the voice that spake with me*. Indeed these prophets seemed freed from the weight of mortality for a while. They were carried *without* or *outside* their bodies, being overpowered by the spirit of God.

- - - - *Corpus mortale tumultus*
Non tulit æthereos.

- - - - The mortal frame
 Could not support the strong æthereal
 flame.

Hence their bodily senses were at once closed, and the senses of their soul opened; so that they were in a manner spiritualized by the spirit of God. Thus we read of St. Peter (Acts x. 10) that he fell into a trance, ἐπέ-

πεσεν ἐπ' αὐτου ἐκστασις, *a standing-without fell on him.* The description of Balaam is very remarkable and explanatory; Numb. xxiv. 3, 4, *And he took up his parable and said: Balaam the son of Beor hath said; and the man, whose eyes are opened, hath said; he hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, sinking down, but having his eyes open.* Here we may observe (ver. 2) that the spirit of God came first upon him; then he *sinks down*, נפל, *nophel*, as if his bodily senses were at once locked up in sleep; whence the Septuagint turn the word by ἐν ὕπνῳ, *in sleep*, and our English translators very rightly by, *falling into a trance.* In this sleep his eyes are opened; for so the original has it, as well as the Greek translation, ἀποκεκαλυμμενοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν, *his eyes are uncovered.* It is plain here, that his eyes are the eyes of his mind. Hence in ver. 3, he is called the man, whose eyes are opened, ὁ ἀληθινῶς ὄρων, *that sees really*, יען חתשׁ, *shethum hawajin*, which Buxtorf turns thus: *cui oculi nunc illustrati sunt ad res futuras prævidendas, whose eyes are now enlightened to foresee things to come.* There is a *spirit in man*, saith Elihu (Job xxxii. 8) and

the spirit of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Here he intimates to us the operation of the spirit of God upon men's minds in those visions. Hence prophets are so often said to be in the spirit, viz. under this influence of God's spirit. Hence a man only pretending to this inspiration of God, is called *spirit*; 1 John iv. 1, 2, 3, *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; i. e. Believe not every man who claims divine inspiration, but try these men whether they are of God; because, as he adds, many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the spirit of God, i. e. the operation of God's holy spirit, or a man under that operation. Every spirit (i. e. man pretending to inspiration) that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God, is moved of true inspiration of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist. And hence to perceive what man, claiming inspiration, had the true spirit of God, and who had not, is called by St. Paul (1 Cor. xii. 10) a discerning of spirits. In this case, therefore, we may almost use our Saviour's words,*

John

John iii. 6, *He that is born of the flesh is flesh, and he that is born of the spirit is spirit.*

Many instances we find in Scripture, where the eye of the mind hath been thus enlightened, and men have been able to see beings, which otherwise would have been invisible to mortals. Thus, 2 Kings vi. we read that Elisha's servant, going forth early in the morning, saw a great army of their enemies, the Syrians, encompassing the city, and in his terror cries out, *Alas! my master, what shall we do? But Elisha bids him, fear not; for they that be with us be more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, as it follows, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.* When God had opened his eyes, he could see the hosts of angels, which encompassed his master to secure him, with the same certainty as he saw the Syrians lying round the city to apprehend him.—Balaam, as we find, never perceived the angel, till *the Lord opened his eyes; Numb. xxii. 31.*—Job had also

also this eye of his mind opened. Job. xlii. 5, *I have heard of thee*, says he to God, *by the hearing of the EAR, but now mine eye seeth thee.* The knowledge of God had been delivered to him by the tradition of his forefathers; but he now clearly perceived his divine perfections. He had some light thrown in upon his mind, which carried its own evidence with it. He had a vision allowed him, which it is difficult for us to form an exact notion of, who never felt such; but to him it carried the clearness and certainty of light itself.

But the prophets not only were endued with this extraordinary sight, but they saw things transacted in the heavens. *It came to pass*, says the prophet Ezekiel, in the beginning of his prophecy, *as I was by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened* (which usually introduced a divine vision) *and I saw the visions of God.* In the same manner (Rev. iv. 1) St. John tells us, that he *looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which he heard, said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter; and*
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immediately I was in the spirit, and behold a throne was set in heaven. The vision described in the sixth chapter of Isaiah, is a very remarkable one, where the prophet sees the LORD sitting upon his heavenly throne, high and lifted up, and that his train of angels filled the temple. Also, says he, ver. 8, I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send? Then said I, Here am I, send me. And then he receives his commission from God and the decrees of heaven. For the honour of our Blessed Redeemer, let us hear the commission: Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat; and make their eyes heavy; and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. This was the order of that God, who sits on the throne of heaven, with all the armies of bliss (ver. 3) adoring him.—But this blessed Being, this King of Angels, is expressly declared by St. John (chap. xii. ver. 39, 40, 41) to be our all-adorable Saviour. Therefore they would not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart,

heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. In ver. 37, it is manifest that the apostle is here speaking of Christ, on whom they could not believe, and it is undeniable that he refers to the prophecy before-mentioned by Isaiah; and his following words are greatly remarkable: *These things said Esaias, or Isaiah, when he saw his glory and spake of him.* The prophet saw his glory, saw all the angels of God worshipping him, and prophesied also of him.—Let therefore the proud reasoners of this world glory in their strength of knowledge; but let the faithful submit their thoughts to the truths revealed, and always worship him who is LORD and GOD. I shall not ask pardon for this digression, but return.

St. Paul, describing his vision, 2 Cor. xii. 2, tells us, that he was caught up into the third heaven, which third heaven he (ver. 4) calls *Paradise*, and there heard *unspeakable words*, mysterious things, which he was unable to utter. His vision, however, *made so strong an impression upon him, that whether he saw*
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it in the body, or out of the body, he could not tell. He doubted whether his soul remained in the body, or was actually separated from it for a time, and carried to paradise or heaven.—And whether the soul, in these visions of the prophets, is separated from the body or not, yet it is perhaps affected in the same manner as separate souls are with impressions of things in the next world. It is plain that the thing was as certain and real to St. Paul, as if he had been actually transported to heaven or paradise, and had heard and seen things with his ears and eyes; for how else should such a doubt arise in his breast?—And, till we know more of the human soul, and what it is capable of; or how it may be affected by other spiritual beings, and especially by its Almighty Creator; this scripture-account of prophetic revelation, is the best that we can expect in this world.

We have two representations of those divine consultations, which are described in the Eastern figurative boldness, and may be considered in a parabolical light. The first we find 1 Kings xxii. 19, and following verses.

verses. *I saw the Lord, says the prophet Micah, describing his heavenly vision, sitting on his throne, and all the hosts of heaven standing by, on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also. Go forth and do so.* Now, though this consultation was probably not real, but described only by the Eastern boldness; yet still the substance or meaning of it was an infallible truth, viz. that Ahab's prophets prophesied lyes, being instigated by that wicked spirit, who was a liar from the beginning, and the father of lyes; and the representation of it was doubtless impressed upon the prophet's mind in vision, and he was directed by God to use this account of the decrees of heaven, as it is plain from the solemn words which introduce it, viz. *Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord.*

Agree-

Agreeable to this account is that passage of Job, where we read that *there was a day, when the sons of GOD came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also amongst them to present himself before the LORD.* Here, as we see, is the same grand assembly held in the case of Job, as there was in the case of Ahab; the same hosts of heaven, called here the *sons of God*, presenting themselves before Jehovah, who in the vision of Micaiah are said *to stand on his right hand and on his left.* Here a wicked spirit appears amongst them called *Satan*, or *the adversary*; and there a *lying spirit*; both bent on mischief, as far as God would give them leave; both subject to the controuling power of nature's universal Lord, and suffered only to answer the ends of his justice and providence.—Jacob saw, in a dream, a ladder which reached from earth to heaven, and the angels of God descending and ascending upon it, continually employed in receiving and executing the orders of the Most High. Thus God in the figurative and visionary relations of the Scripture, is, with just magnificence, described to survey all things from his supreme throne in the heaven of heavens; to govern

govern his obedient angels with his golden sceptre, and to commission them for the good of mankind; while he controuls the malicious designs even of devils, and makes them the executioners of the decrees of his wisdom and justice.





C H A P. XIII.

Proseuchæ, or praying-houses, in the very beginning of the Jewish state.

TO vindicate, if possible, Micah's character from the charge of idolatry, and to open the condition of the Jewish church in the very beginning of their state; we may observe that the Jews, besides their temple at Jerusalem (and before that, their tabernacle) had in every city and large town a synagogue; and in every village, and in some families of distinction, a proseucha, or praying-house.

That there was a synagogue in every large town, we may plainly perceive by Acts xv. 21, where it is said, that *Moses* in old time *bath, in every city, them that preach him, being*

read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day. That there were *profeuchæ*, or *ædes sacræ*, may be collected from various places of Scripture. The sanctuary at Sichein, which is mentioned Josh. xxiv. 26, was plainly a *profeucha*, or praying-house, which had been first set aside for a place of divine worship by Abraham (Gen. xii. 6, 7); though probably it might be fallen into decay, and had been repaired by the Israelites (at least by the men of Ephraim, in whose territory it was) after the conquest of the land. Hence (Josh. xxiv. 1) Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and there he and the elders of Israel, and their heads, and their judges, and their officers, presented themselves before God. Here again, since it was a place more holy than others (Judg. ix. 6), the men gathered together to make Abimelech king: for it was an ancient custom (2 Kings xi. 13, 14) to anoint kings in places consecrated to God, if such a place was at hand.—Hence also we hear of so many Levites coming to Mount Ephraim, where they attended on the service of God: for Shechem (1 Chron. vi. 67) was in Mount Ephraim, and given to the Levites, 1 Chron.

vi. 64, 67.—Yea, in this place, a praying-house continued to the times of Christ.—Epiphanius,* a Jew, born and bred in Palestine, in his tract against the Maffalian heretics, after he hath told us that the Maffaliani built themselves houses, or large places like the places of market of the ancients, which they called *proseuchæ*, goes on thus: *That the Jews of old (as also the Samaritans) had certain places without the city for prayer, which they called proseucha's. This appears out of the Acts of the Apostles, where Lydia, a seller of purple, is said to have met with the apostle Paul, and to have heard him preaching in that place, which place, in Acts xvi. 13, is said to be a place of prayer. He next informs us, That there is still at Sichem, now called Neapolis, above a mile without the city, a proseucha, or place of prayer, like a theatre which was built without a roof, and in the open air, by the Samaritans, who affected to imitate the Jews in all things. Shechem, or Sichem, or Sychem (for the place is the same), was manifestly a place of prayer, called therefore the sanctuary of God (Josh. xxiv. 26) in the days of Joshua, while the ark of God was then at Shiloh.*

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Another

* See Mr. Mede.

Another of these houses of God, or praying-houses, we may well grant to be at Mizpeh, where *the chiefs of the tribes of Israel presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God*, Judg. xx. 1, 2. Here the ark of God seemed to be, in the time, when the things, related in this chapter, were transacted; at least it seems clearly intimated, in ver. 27 of chap. xx. compared with ver. 1 and 5 of chap. xxi. Hence Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 5) says, *Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord*. We could as fully prove that praying-houses were at Bethel and Gilgah (1 Sam. vii. 16) where Samuel came in his circuits, as well as at Shiloh, 1 Sam. iii. 15, where Samuel is expressly said *to open the doors of the house of the Lord*, but that the task is unnecessary. The reasonableness of the thing itself is a sufficient proof. For when the Israelites were settled in the Holy Land, doubtless they built some places of divine worship in every town and village, where they might meet together to offer up their prayers to God. Since the ark could be but in one place of the Holy Land, it was impossible that they could all keep the Sabbath-day *there*; and there-

fore reason itself would instruct us, that they prepared some places, where persons, who lived near together, might present themselves before God. These places, let me observe, were not places of sacrifice. That privilege, except when a prophet was commissioned on an extraordinary occasion, was reserved (Lev. i.) for the place of the tabernacle.—Indeed we may remark, that though these houses, as being devoted to holy uses, are called houses of God; yet God is not said to dwell in them, as in the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple; and therefore came the custom among the Jews of praying (either singly or in their congregation) in the houses of prayer, with their faces turned towards the tabernacle, or the temple. Hence we hear, in 1 Kings viii. 30, 35, 38, of the assembly's praying towards the temple; and Daniel, while a captive in Babylon, prayed with his face turned towards Jerusalem, and in consequence towards the temple.—From this account it appears, that Micah and his mother did a very charitable thing in providing a house of prayer.

What seems to incline men to an aversion against houses of prayer, is this : God (Deut. xii. 5) orders all the tribes of Israel *to assemble to the place which he should choose out of all their tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation ; there to come and bring all their burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and tithes, and heave-offerings, and vows, and free-will-offerings, and firstlings of their herds and of their flocks.* And ver. 13, God orders his people *to take heed that they offer not their burnt-offerings in any other place.*—Would these men, however, consider, that these places were designed for prayer only, and not for sacrifice ; and that sacrifices, and all vows and offerings, were, notwithstanding these houses of prayer, always carried to the tabernacle ; they would reconcile their own difficulties from these texts, and admit the force and truth of the former arguments.

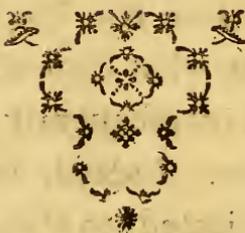


C H A P. XIV.

Praying-houses called houses of God.

A PRAYING-HOUSE, and also a synagogue, is, in Scripture-language, styled a house of God, or God's sanctuary, as well as the tabernacle, afterwards the temple. The praying-house at Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 26) is called the sanctuary of the Lord; and Micah, we read here, Judg. xvii. 5, had an house of God; which evidently appears to be a profuecha, or little praying-house, for himself and his neighbours. His neighbours pursuing with him after the Danites, shews that they were somewhat interested in Micah's furniture, and consequently frequented his house of prayer. Indeed, since these buildings were dedicated to the divine worship, they are properly styled houses of God. Hence these holy houses, or sanctuaries, as well as

synagogues, are comprehended in that complaint of David, Pſal. lxxiv. 7, 8, that *the enemy had burnt up all the houſes of God in the land*: and Pſal. lxxxiii. 12, that *the Moabites and Iſhmaelites, &c. had conſpired together, and ſaid, Let us take to ourſelves the houſes of God in poſſeſſion*. In David's time, therefore, there were houſes of God, the deſtruction of which he looked upon to be a very great calamity; and by that expreſſion, *all the houſes of God in the land*, we may ſee that ſuch houſes were built throughout the country, as places of prayer and devotion. Indeed, without ſuch houſes, it would be difficult to conceive, how the Sabbath-day could be well obſerved, or even the knowledge of God retained amongſt them.



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CHAP. XV.

Praying-houses furnished in imitation of the temple.

THEY not only had such houses, as it has been abundantly proved, but these *profeuchæ*, or praying-houses, were furnished somewhat in imitation of the tabernacle, afterwards the temple, at Jerusalem. A *profeucha*, by comparing authors * and things, seems to have been a plot of ground encompassed with a wall, or some enclosure. All the space within this inclosure was called the house of prayer, or house of God. On the inside of this inclosure a grove of trees was generally planted; and in the grove was probably a *delubrum*, or chapel, *in* or rather *before* which was an altar, and some utensils like those of the temple, or tabernacle. This fur-

* See Mr. Mede, Lewis's Hebrew Antiquities, &c.

niture

niture gave it some resemblance of that place, which was chiefly sanctified by God's glory.

The inclosure appears from the words of Epiphanius already cited. The planting of groves in them may be collected from Philo Judæus, who, relating the barbarous usage of the Gentiles at Alexandria against the Jews, there dwelling in the time of Caius, saith, that the citizens of that vast city συνταξαμενοι σιφη πολυανδρωποτάλα των προσευχων· πολλαι δε εισι καθ' ἑκασον τμημα της πολεως· τας μεν ἐδενδροτομησαν· τας δε αυτοις θεμελιοις κατεσκαψαν, “drawing up together in large companies, cut down the trees of the proseuchæ, or praying-houses, of which there are a great number in every division of the town, and demolished others to the very foundations.” Hence Juvenal, in his sixth Satire, calls a Jewish priestess *interpres legum Solymarum, magna sacerdos arboris*, “an explainer of the law of Moses, a great priestess of the tree;” for the Jews built proseuchæ, or some sorry imitation of them, in that poet's time, in Italy; and, by pretending to divine oracles, carried on in them a sort of a begging fortune-telling trade; and, in particular, had hired a grove

and chapel consecrated to Egeria and the Muses, for this purpose.

*Hic ubi nocturnæ Numæ constituebat amicæ,
Nunc sacri fontis nemus, & delubra locantur
Judæis, quorum cophinus fœnumq; supellex.
Omnis enim populo mercedem pendere jussa est
Arbor & ejectis mendicat sylva camænis.*

Where Numa met Egeria — heav'nly
maid! —

And in wise consultations nightly staid;
The grove and chapel's let to Jews, who
lay

Their wealth in basket mean, or wisp of
hay.

To pay its poll each tree must beg around,
While banish'd muses fly the grating sound.

David certainly refers to these profuechæ in Psal. lii. 8. *I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God*; or, more properly, in an house of God. And again, in Psal. xcii. 11, 12, *The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree, and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Lebanon. Such, as be planted in an house of the Lord, shall flourish*
in

in the courts of the house of our God. And that they had some furniture *in or before* their chapel, it appears from this house of God, which Micah endowed, and will appear more fully hereafter. But here it may be asked, whether this planting of trees within their houses of God (for the whole enclosure, as I before observed, had that name) does not contradict that command of God, given in Deut. xvi. 21, 22, *Thou shalt not plant a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee; neither shalt thou set thee up a pillar (or statue) which the Lord thy God hateth.* I shall prove hereafter, that many prohibitions of this kind are to be understood in a restrained sense, and are supposed to have these words understood after them: *so as to convert them or it to idolatrous purposes.* This will be seen to be true in images set up in houses of prayer, in pillars or *στυλαί*, in keeping teraphim. For the present, we shall only observe, that though it was not lawful to plant a grove of trees near the place of the altar before the tabernacle, yet it was lawful, and customary too, to plant groves of trees within the inclosure, which went by the name of

of a profœcha. *The altar of the Lord thy God,* in the Scripture cited, infers the altar for sacrifice, which altars in praying-houses were not. They were symbols only, that the praying persons were in covenant with God, as we shall shew hereafter.—Indeed, Philo Judæus, in his book of the Law of Allegories, has an observation which is ingenious, and by chance true. Ζητησεις δὲ οὐ τις, &c. *A person may enquire, says he, wherefore, since it is both just and righteous to imitate the works of God, that I am forbidden to plant a grove by the altar; whereas God himself planted Paradise. For the law says, Thou shalt not plant to thyself a grove, viz. every tree near the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make.* And the result of his answer is this, that you may plant fruitful trees, but not a grove consisting of a mixture of trees, fruitful or unfruitful. Ἐν ἀλσει γὰρ καὶ ἀγρίας ὕλης ἐστὶ καὶ ἡμερᾶ δένδρα, &c. *for In a grove are both wild and mild trees, but we ought not to mix fruitful with unfruitful.* As this author was himself a Jew, this bears great probability of truth. His translation is certainly preferable to ours; for, in the original, it is not *a grove of any trees, but a grove, viz. every tree.*

tree. In such case, we shall see a reason why the olive-tree is mentioned by David as planted in the house of God; and the very oaks with which their sacred groves were chiefly planted, have been found, by all travellers, to be of that species, which the Romans named *æsculus*, or rather *esculus*, because in that country in particular its fruits are very esculent and eatable.





C H A P. XVI.

A Levite was priest in the profeucha, with his ephod.

A LEVITE was priest in these profeuchæ, who wore an ephod, though not of fine-twined linen. These profeuchæ were not for sacrifice, but for prayer only, as their name implies; and the Levites were designed by God to be the praying priests. To preserve the religion of God, it was necessary that there should be sanctuaries (as these holy houses are called Lev. xxvi. 31); and if there were sanctuaries, it was necessary that there should be priests. And that the Levites were chosen to be the praying priests, we may see in Deut. x. 8. *At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister*

minister unto him, and to bless in his name unto this day. Some of the Levites waited before the tabernacle, and others must therefore sojourn; and those provincial and sojourning Levites were to be received at the altar on their return, as we may see in Deut. xviii. 6. *If a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourned, and come with all the desire of his mind unto the place which the Lord shall choose, then he shall minister in the name of the Lord his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, which stand there before the Lord.* Is it not plain from this, that there were travelling Levites designed by God from the very beginning of the Jewish state? The Levites indeed were not permitted to offer sacrifice at the altar of the Lord God, as we shall observe hereafter; but they were designed, when the tabernacle and ark was fixed, to be the praying priests. This is very plainly intimated in Numb. xviii. 2, 3, and following verses; and in those places of Scripture, where we read of *Levites within their gates*, Deut. xii. 12, whom they were not to forsake in whatever part of the country they lived, Deut. xii. 19. Hence, when a murder was
com-

committed nigh any city throughout the land, the priests, the sons of Levi, were to come near (for them the Lord had chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord) Deut. xxi. 5, and to decide any controversy. Hence, in fine, they are so often called priests, as in Josh. iii. 3, 17. It follows, as I observed before, that if the worship of God was to be celebrated, that there must be houses of worship and priests; and since the sons of Aaron were wholly employed about the service of the tabernacle, the other Levites must serve in other houses of prayer.

It may be here asked, if these Levites did not succeed, or find employment, what provision was made for them? On which we may observe, that the tenth part of the products of the ground, or of herds and flocks, was consecrated to God, or reserved for the use of his priests. Lev. xxvii. 32, *Concerning the tithe of the herd or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.* — Where we may observe the custom of tithing the lambs or calves amongst

the Jews; which was most probably this: They inclosed, in a fold or pen with a little door, all the lambs or calves, and placed the dams on the outside. At the entrance stood the keeper, either shepherd or herdsman, with a rod coloured with oker in his hand, which he held over them in numbering as they passed; and every tenth calf or lamb, which came out at the call of its dam, belonged to the Lord, whether good or bad. These tithes we read, Numb. xviii. 24, 26, were assigned for the use of the Levites, with this restriction only, that they were ordered to take out the tithe of the tithe for the sacrificing priests of the house of Aaron. These tithes were all brought to the place where God's ark was, and there proper divisions made; and if the Levites returned from sojourning, there was a present maintenance for them; Deut. xviii. 6, 7, 8.

These Levites had ephods of common linen, or *lintheum*; for though an ephod made of fine-twined linen, or *byssus*, was a garment to be made for the high-priests only; yet an ephod of common linen might be worn by any
man

man that was consecrated to the service of God. Thus Samuel (1 Sam. ii. 18) is said to *minister unto the Lord, girded with a linen ephod*. Thus Doeg (1 Sam. xxii. 18) is said to *fall upon the priests, and to slay in one day fourscore and five persons, that wore a linen ephod*. Some of these fourscore and five persons were doubtless Levites; whose office it was, as inferior priests, to assist the other priests at the tabernacle. The ephod was plainly the distinguishing garment of every priest; and hence we see that Micah acted agreeably to the will of God and religious customs established, both in entertaining a Levite as his priest, and providing an ephod for him, as a distinguishing vestment of a priest usual in those days.



C H A P. XVII.

Many places in Scripture explained from Levitical customs.

FROM these travelling Levites we may see the exact completion of two prophecies; the one recorded in Gen. xlix. 5, 6, 7. *Simeon and Levi are brethren. Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.* Jacob here points out the desperate murder committed by these two brethren (Gen. xxxiv. 25, 26) on Hamor and Shechem, and all the males of their city. And his prophecy

of their being scattered, was fulfilled; for Simeon (Josh. xix. 1) had scattered towns in Judah allowed for his settlement; and the Levites, we find, were in a great measure travelling Levites, going about sometimes from place to place, and seeking to be employed in some house of prayer, and so were dispersed through the whole land. Hence, according to the prophecy in Gen. xlix. 7, *Levi too was divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel.*

The other prophecy which is expressed by this order of travelling Levites, is in Deut. xxxiii. 8, 9, 10. *And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim * be with thy holy one* [in Hebrew, with thy holy man, viz. Aaron, or rather Levi, as representative of all priests; *with which Aaron, or with which Levi, as expressed by the priests in general, the Israelites strove at Massah, Numb. xx. 2, 13. Exod. xvii. 7.] whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive, or rather, whom*

* Whoever considers the signification of Urim and Thummim, viz. of *Lights* and *Perfectiones*, may think that St. James, chap. i. 17, had the prayer of Moses here in view, when he assures us, that every good and every *perfect* gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of *lights*.

thou causedst to contend, at Meribah. *Who said, or who shall say, unto his father and his mother, I have not seen him, neither shall he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children. For they have observed (shall observe) thy word, and kept (keep) thy covenant. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law; they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt-sacrifice upon thy altar**. Here Moses indeed includes all the descendants of Levi, both the high-priests in the line of Aaron, and the Levites properly so called. However, since the Levites left often their parents, brethren, and children, to seek some profeucha, which wanted a man of their order, Moses here plainly describes their departure from their family; and if we convert the eastern description into our idiom of speech, makes them say to their friends, *You are to me no more than*

* I here explain the words according to the prophetic intention; for the words also refer to a thing past, when Aaron and the tribe of Levi did not join in murmuring against God and Moses at Massah nor Meribah, with the rest of the people; yea, the Levites did not join with the people in making the golden calf, but expiated the sin with the blood of their own relations. Hence God gives that eulogium of Levi, Mal. ii. 4, 5, 6.

strangers;

strangers ; for I am about to leave you, in order to serve God in some house of prayer.

To this custom of leaving their dearest friends amongst these provincial Levites, our Saviour refers, when he says, that *if any man come to me, and hate not (i. e. flight not, and leave, in respect of me) his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple ; Luke xiv. 26 ; and in ver. 33, Whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. And in Matt. x. 37, He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me ; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* If it is true, also, what the Jews with great probability affirm, that these travelling Levites always took with them a staff and a purse, and a copy of the law ; then we shall see the propriety and force of these proverbial expressions of our Saviour ; who, proposing a speedy setting out, orders his disciples to *provide neither purse nor staff, nor victuals for the way.* And it is not to be doubted, but the *shaking off the dust of their*

feet against towns and houses which would not receive them, is deducible from some obscure custom amongst those Levitical travellers; who, by that ceremony, testified their great inhospitality, as if they would have grudged them even the dust of the ground; or rather, would not afford water to wash the dust off their feet; which water was the first and most unexpensive token of hospitality.

Philo Judæus, in his *Book of the Sacrifices of Abel and Cain*, mentions this voluntary departure of the Levites from their friends for the sake of publishing the law of Moses; and as this passage illustrates what has been said, it well deserves a translation. Ἄξιον δὲ μὴ παρεργῶς σκεψασθαι τι δηποῖε τὰς πόλεις τῶν Λευιτῶν ἀνηκε τοῖς Φυγάσι, &c. “We ought also carefully to consider, why God should grant the cities of the Levites to those who fled for involuntary murder; permitting the profane to cohabit with the most sacred men. We must first allege, what is consequent on observations already made, that a good man is a redemption for a bad man; so that sinners with good reason fly to sacred persons in order to be purified. Besides, the Levites reasonably entertain
wanr

wanderers, as being in some degree wanderers themselves. For as the fliers are forced from their country; so the Levites leave children, parents, brethren, every thing that is most near and dear; that for a mortal they may obtain an immortal inheritance. Here is the difference, that the one are banished, though against their inclination, for a crime which against their inclination they committed; the other wander voluntarily for the love of what is best." This conduct of the Levites fully explains our Saviour's orders, when he bids men do, for the sake of publishing the Gospel, that better administration, what the Levites, for the sake of the law of Moses, did with free-will, when they left their nearest and dearest friends and abodes for the sake of it.—This observation will also set our Saviour's own conduct in a just light in some occurrences, in which annotators have grossly stumbled. He considered himself, in the execution of his great commission, as a man thus divorced from parents, whose authority, after the entrance upon the ministry, plainly ceased from over the priests and Levites, if it interrupted the performance of their great office. Hence, as a man disengaged from his
rela-

relations and abode, he tells the scribe, Matt. viii. 20. that *he had not where to lay his head*; and ver. 22, *would not suffer a disciple to return and bury his father*, since that disciple should have addicted himself to his gospel only. Hence, Matt. xii. 46, 47, &c. he disregards the call of his mother and brethren, when it interrupted the execution of his office, and seemed, as prophesied of true Levites on these occasions, *not to acknowledge them*, Deut. xxxiii. 9. but declared that *whoever did the will of his Father which was in heaven, the same was his brother, and sister, and mother*. Hence I should be inclined to read, with Gregory Nyssen, the words in John ii. 4, thus, *Woman, what have I to do with thee? Is not mine hour yet come?* which in our language would stand thus, supposing that his mother intimated their want of wine, either willing that he should supply it by a miracle, or, what is more likely, intimating to her son that it was proper to withdraw themselves, *Mother, why do you lay your injunctions on me? Is not my ministerial office begun?* As if he had said, “Why do you hint to me, mother, that
 “ it is time to withdraw because the wine is
 “ spent?”

“ spent? Is not my office begun? and can-
“ not I therefore restore some by a miracle?”
It is certain, that his mother understood his words, as if he had intimated that he would supply their defect in wine, since she, on his answer, bids the servants to obey his orders.— When he was amongst the doctors in the Temple, and his mother sought him, and having found him, mildly rebuked him for leaving her and his father and friends, he replied—*How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not, that I must be about my Father’s business?*” This reply we read, Luke ii. 50. that his parents at that time understood not.—But he afterwards, doubtless, revealed to them, that he should soon leave their care and power over him, and enter upon his ministry. And this answer to his mother in the beginning of his ministerial office, seems to be to the same purport. This interpretation is, I suppose, new: but recommends itself, if examined according to the approved customs amongst God’s ministers under the law.

Since persons also, who had dedicated themselves to the service of God, were considered

sidered by themselves and others as alienated from their parents and relations, we may trace out, perhaps, the origin of that obscure tradition of the Scribes and Pharisees mentioned Matt. xv. 3, 4, &c. *He answered and said unto them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother, and he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest have been profited by me, he shall even by no means honour his father and mother. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.* This is the exact translation of the words in the original; whereon we may observe,

1. That τιμαω signifies not only to honour, in the sacred writings, but *to entertain handsomely, or to relieve handsomely*, or, in one word, *to take a decent care of*. Thus, 1 Tim. v. 3, we may turn the words in this sense; *Relieve handsomely widows, that are widows indeed*; as we may see, if we compare this verse with 1 Tim. v. 16. where *επαρξω*, *to relieve sufficiently,*

ciently, is used for τιμαω, to honour. In short, כבוד chabad, in Hebrew, τιμη in Greek, and sometimes honos in Latin, may signify an handsome present, whether it be a maintenance, entertainment, or reward. Thus Acts xxviii. 10, Οἱ πολλοὶς τιμαῖς ἐτιμησαν ἡμᾶς, who entertained us with many entertainments in an handsome manner, viz. while we staid; and, when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary. The words medico honos debetur, in Cicero, mean that a physician deserves a handsome fee. And Let the elders, which rule well, be counted worthy of a double honour, in 1 Tim. v. 17, might be better turned by, Let the elders, which rule well, have a double maintenance allowed to them; for the apostle seems to have respect to the double portion allowed to the eldest brother among the Jews. Hence also ἀπονεμεῖν τιμῆν, &c. to give honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, 1 Pet. iii. 17, may be also turned by, to afford a handsome maintenance to the wife, as a weaker vessel, or one who is dependent on her husband, as not being equally capable of providing for herself. Hence our church catechism rightly paraphrases the words honour thy father and mother, by love, ho-

nour,

nour, and succour thy father and mother. The words therefore in Matt. xv. 4, 6, might be better translated, *Honourably relieve thy father and mother*; and, *He shall even by no means honourably relieve his father and mother.*

2dly, We may observe, that the Scribes and Pharisees not only would have persons devoted to God's service to be estranged from their parents, so that their parents should have no farther jurisdiction over them; but that they excepted things also devoted to God, from that right which parents, by the commandment of God, had otherwise to them. They seem to have persuaded their followers, that, though they were, otherwise, obliged to provide for their parents, in obedience to God's command; yet, if they would leave their substance, probably at their death, to the use of the temple-ministry, they might be free from that injunction. This any man will see to be the plain beginning of this tradition, who knows that קרבן, corban, (Mark vii. 11) that is, a gift, signifies always *an oblation to God*. Therefore (Matt. xv. 5) we may, according to the original Hebrew, turn thus:

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It is dedicated as to whatsoever thou mightest have been relieved by me.

Thus these sons of rapine and avarice made the religion of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, patronize that cruelty and ingratitude to parents, which an honest heathen would be shocked to hear. Hesiod only dreads, lest the growing iniquity of the world should arrive at so unnatural a wickedness.

Αἰψά δὲ γηρασκούϊας ἀτιμησῶσι τοκῆας,
 Μιμψούϊαι δ' ἄρα τῆς χαλεποῖς βαζούϊ' ἐπέεσσι
 Σχετλιοῖ, ἔδε θεῶν ὅπιν εἰδοτες· οὐδὲ μὲν οἶγε
 Γηροντεσσι τοκευσιν ἀπο θρεπτήρια δοιεν.

Here βαζούτε, in the dual number, agrees with τῆς τοκῆας in the plural, which concord is allowable amongst the Greeks.

Sons aged parents soon will disregard,
 Nor their past cares with honours due reward;
 And when, with harsher words, they angry chide,
 Will call them peevish dotards, and deride.

Vile

Vile wretches!—to some fearful vengeance giv'n!

Who slight th' inspecting eye of righteous heav'n;

Who, to requite, ungratefully forbear,
Their aged fathers pains, their aged mothers care.

Returns for nourishment and education paid to parents, are called *θρεπτήρια*, and by Homer, *θρεπτήρα*, who, bemoaning the untimely fate of the young handsome Simoifius, adds this, as an aggravation to his unhappy lot, that he was deprived of rendering a recompence to his parents by his early death.

- - - - - Ουδε τοκευσι

Θρεπτήρα φίλοις ἀπέδωκε • μινυνθᾶδι⊙ δέ οἱ αἰῶν
'Ἐπλεῖδ' ὑπ' Ἀϊανί⊙ μεγαθύμου δαρι δαμνίι.

By him unpaid, his parents' cares remain.

So short his date!—by valiant Ajax slain.



C H A P. XVIII.

*Levites no sacrificing priests in the Jewish church.
Laymen not to be priests in the Christian church,
according to a prophecy.*

NO man, not even a Levite, could take upon him that part of the priestly office, which consisted in attendance upon the altar of God in the tabernacle or temple, so as to sacrifice or to offer incense. This appears from the destruction of Korah, the Levite, for attempting such a thing. The Levites, we find, in Numb. xvi. 10, must not seek the priesthood in that sense. They were empowered, indeed, to pray and explain the law in their houses of prayer, and so are called priests in Deut. xviii. 1, 3. Josh. iii. 3, 17. and xviii. 7, and in other places probably of Scripture.—If we enquire by what presumptive right Korah invaded the priesthood, we

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shall

shall find that it was occasioned partly by his mistaking one text of Scripture; by which place he thought that *he and every Israelite* had an equal right to take upon him that office with Aaron and his sons. The place upon which Korah and his company grounded their presumption, is in Exod. xix. 3, 4, &c. *Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of 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 you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be unto me a peculiar treasure above all people, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.* This text the unlearned and unstable Korah wrested unto his own destruction. He thought that all the people were sanctified by God's presence in the camp; and, as Moses has it, Deut. vii. 6, that *all Israel was an holy people to the Lord their God.* He imagined that every Israelite had a right to the priesthood, because the Israelites were said to be *a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.* This appears from the application which he makes of these words in Numb. xvi. 3, *Ye take too much upon you, say*
Korah

Korah and his confederates to Moses and Aaron, *seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?* Thus Korah made the whole nation at once a *kingdom of priests*, not in holiness of life, according to the true meaning of the text, but in attendance upon the altar; and, with his companions, adventured to offer incense before God. Their error God rebuked by a most fearful judgment; and ordered their very censers to be made broad plates for the altar, that they might be there for a memorial unto the children of Israel, *that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord, that they be not as Korah and his company.*

St. Peter, in his 1 Ep. ii. 5, writes thus to all Christians in general: *Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* And in his 9th verse, he styles all Christians *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood.* But is it not a great and presumptuous mistake in these men, who affirm from these

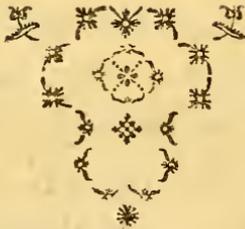
texts, that every Christian has an equal right to the priestly office without a regular ordination? Christians are *priests*, as the Israelites were, *in holiness of life*, if they walk worthy of the vocation whereunto they are called; but not priests attending on the altar. Christians may offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, the sacrifice of a contrite spirit, the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and the incense of prayer and praise; but they must not presume to administer sacraments in the church. St. John, Rev. i. 6, tells us, that *Christ hath now made us kings and priests unto God*; i. e. kings and priests in a spiritual sense, in governing our passions, conquering vice, and offering up the sacrifice of a good life. Christians must not pretend, from such a text, that they are all empowered to take on them the kingly power, and govern the civil affairs of state, because they are stiled spiritually kings; no more must they presume to conduct the ecclesiastical affairs of the church, because they are stiled spiritually priests. Christians are *kings and priests unto God*, but not kings and priests of the earth. Men who profess and practise Christianity are *reges*, in St. Peter, *sacrificers*; but

but the preachers with him are bishops, elders, pastors, rulers, teachers, ministers, in the house of God. The Christians whom St. Peter writes to, are stiled by him, babes new born; but persons ordained to preach the gospel, are every where by him stiled elders and fathers. Christians who truly embrace the gospel, are the sons of God, and babes in Christ; churches are branches of the family of Christ; and persons ordained and set over them are stewards over those branches of the family, and dispensers of the mystery of the gospel.—To make the kingly or priestly office common, every one must know, on the least consideration, would introduce confusion into state and church.—But God is not the God of confusion, but of order, as in all churches of the saints. Thus therefore St. Peter is to be explained: *Ye Christians are an holy priesthood*, not in administering the sacrament and preaching the word of God, but in offering to God, through the intercession of Jesus Christ, the spiritual sacrifice of true repentance and a good life. Thus we see, that Christians are priests to God, to offer up spiritual sacrifices of a contrite heart and

broken spirit, but not the sacrifices of the temple; in the same manner as Levites might pray and be devout in houses of prayer, but were to be cut off, if they touched the proper duty of the altar in the tabernacle.

It will not be looked upon as quite foreign to the present subject, if we establish this distinction of the preaching priesthood of men regularly ordained to administer the sacraments, and of the spiritual priesthood of all Christians in general, from a prophecy of Isaiah, who (Is. lxvi. 20, 21) has this remarkable prediction of the Christian church: *They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel unto the house of the Lord.* Here is the general admission of all Christians for spiritual priests. Out of them we find, in the next verse, some are to be selected for the administration of sacraments and public prayers; *And I will also take of them for priests, and for Levites, saith the Lord.* God promises to take of them, *excerpere quosdam ex illis*, as the original may be justly turned, *to take out some from-among them*; for the preposition here used
has

has the signification of *from-amongst*. And I will also take *priests* for the administration of the sacraments, and *Levites* for public prayer *from-amongst* them. God therefore proposes to select some amongst them for priests, not to make them all priests; since that would introduce a disorder sufficient to subvert his own worship.





C H A P. XIX.

Altars in praying-houses, but not for sacrifice.

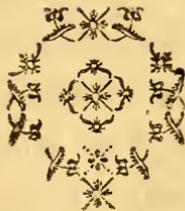
THAT they had altars in these houses of prayer, we may safely collect from an altar built, and probably afterwards inclosed, in some large profœchæ, by the Reubenites and Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, on the borders of Jordan, as it is recorded Josh. xxii. 10, 11, and following verses; which altar, we there find, was not built for sacrifice, but as a symbol that they were in allegiance to the God of heaven. *The Lord God of Gods, say these Reubenites, &c. the Lord God of Gods, he knoweth.—If it be in rebellion that we have built an altar, to turn from following the Lord; or if to offer thereon burnt-offering or meat-offering; or if to offer peace-offerings*

ings thereon, let the Lord himself require it.—And if we have not rather done it for fear of this thing, saying, In time to come, your children might speak to our children, and say, What have you to do with the Lord God of Israel? For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you. Ye children of Reuben, and ye children of Gad, ye have no part in the Lord. Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering or for sacrifice, but that it may be a witness between us and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the Lord before him, with our burnt-offerings and with our sacrifices, and with our peace-offerings, that your children may not say to our children, in time to come, “Ye have no part in the Lord.” This altar was manifestly set up as a token of their being the people of God (though they lived too remote to offer up their prayers before the tabernacle) as well as those who served God there. And this altar we read (ver. 28) was a pattern of the altar of the Lord, or was made in the likeness of that altar, which was in the tabernacle. Now, since this was much approved of by all the people of Israel, (as we read in ver. 30, 33) and since the case of all
7 men,

men, who lived at any distance from the tabernacle, must be exactly the same with this of the Reubenites and Gadites; can there be any doubt but that, in *their* houses of prayer, they built altars for the same end, viz. to testify, that though they lived too remote from the tabernacle to serve God constantly there, yet that the altar (Josh. xxii. 34) might be Υ , wed, *a witness*, that *the Lord was their God*. It is plain, from Hosea iii. 4, that there was an altar, or pillar of memorial, of this kind, in their houses of prayer; tho' the word there, as it will be shewn hereafter, is falsely translated *image*. Is it not plain, that when the children of Israel, in the days of Ahab and Jezebel, had almost totally thrown off their allegiance from the God of heaven, that they testified this their rebellion from God, by *throwing down these altars of memorial* through the land? *The children of Israel*, says Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 10, *have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword*. We have proved, therefore, that they had altars too in their houses of prayer; and if they had, then it is not to be doubted, but that they had

had

had some representations of the cherubim too by the sides, or one on each side of the altar, together with a laver, candlestick, &c. and in their ephod a teraphim made in imitation of the urim of the high-priest; since in this description of Micah's furniture, the ephod and teraphim are eternally joined together, as things connected with each other.





C H A P. XX.

Elohim often signifies one God in the singular.

THAT Elohim is often put for God only in the singular, is so well known to every man the least conversant in the Hebrew language, that it is needless to cite passages. We may only note an error in Gen. iii. 5. where the serpent's words are translated thus: *For God (Elohim) doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods (Elohim) knowing good and evil.* Here, in the last part of the verse as well as in the former, Elohim should, without doubt, have been translated by *God* in the singular. Eve's notions yet must have been very plain and simple. She had an high idea of God, we may well imagine, from the majesty of the voice described
to

to her by *Adam*. But it is very ridiculous to think that she had any conception of other spiritual beings besides him. The serpent knew that she had a lofty opinion of the majesty of God (*Elohim*); he tells her, therefore, that by eating she should become like *God*, and increase in the knowledge of good and evil. This alteration adds a grandeur to the expression, and a strength to the temptation.—But in the case of Micah, it restores a pious character. “To have an house of God, and to have an house of gods,” found very differently in our language. I would mention one other place of scripture, where the word *Elohim*, or *Elohin* in the Chaldean way, is turned by *Gods* instead of *God*. In Dan. iv. 8, Nebuchadnezzar observes, that *the spirit of the holy Gods* is in Daniel; but I think that the verse should stand thus: *At the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my God, and in whom is the spirit of THE HOLY GOD.* Nebuchadnezzar knew, Dan. ii. 45, 47, that Daniel served the great God, the GOD of gods, and the LORD of kings; and that he was instructed by him, who alone was

was

was the Revealer of secrets, and therefore that in him was the spirit of that holy God. It may be objected, that the adjective here has a plural termination. It has indeed, but that is not sufficient to determine the matter. It is common with this word Elohim to take a verb or adjective plural, even when the one God is meant; so that such agreement is *according to termination*, not *according to sense*. Thus Josh. xxiv. 19, *And Joshua said unto the People, Ye cannot serve the Lord; for he is an holy God* אלהים קדשים, Elohim Chedosim, which are the very words used in Daniel, allowance being made for the difference of dialects.

Some are of opinion, that the Trinity in Unity is intimated in this word; and indeed it cannot be denied, but that the Jews had some notion of God as a Father, of a Lord or Son of God, and of the Spirit of God; but this mystery is more clearly asserted in the New Testament. There are indeed many places in Isaiah, where our translation adds words which are not in the original, without which additions one would think that the
 Trinity

Trinity was meant. Thus Isai. xliii. 11. *I, I, the Lord; and besides me no Saviour. Ver. 15, I, the LORD, your holy one; the Creator of Israel, your King. Ver. 25, I, I, He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*





C H A P. XXI.

Elohim often signifies angels.

THAT Elohim sometimes signifies angels, we may prove thus: In Pſal. lxxxvi. 8. 1 Sam. xxviii. 13. Pſal. lxxxii. 6. the Hebrew bibles have Elohim, Gods, in our tranſlation; but the Chaldee readings expreſs it by אַנְגְּלִים, angels, or מַלְאָכִים Malachia, Angels. The LXX often alſo, as in Pſal. xcvi. 7, and other places, turn Elohim by ἀγγελοι, *angels*. Hence Origen, in his 5th book againſt Celfus, rightly obſerves, εὐριſκομεν ἀγγελους δια το θεους εἶναι καὶ θεους ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς ποτε ὀνομαζομενους γραφαις. “ We find that angels “ are ſometimes, on account of their divine “ nature, ſtiled Gods in the holy ſcriptures.” And Grotius, upon Matt. i. 20, obſerves, that “ the Hebrews call thoſe ſpirits, which “ are

“ are employed or stationed between *God*, the
 “ Creator of the world, and men, sometimes
 “ Elohim Gods, and sometimes Melachim
 “ angels.” — But this observation might be
 proved true without the use of learned au-
 thors, since God is often stiled God of Gods,
 which appellation is varied by God of Hosts,
 or God of Sabaoth, Jam. v. 4, that is, God
 of the armies of heaven. Hence God of
 Gods is sometimes the same as God of An-
 gels. This was symbolically expressed by
 the two cherubim placed one on each side
 of the mercy-seat; between which cheru-
 bim, though superior in height, appeared
 the divine light, the שְׁכִינָה Shechinah, the
 ἀπαυγασμα της δοξης, Heb. xiii. 3, *The shin-*
ing forth of the glory, or the glorious efful-
 gence. The word Shechinah comes from the
 root *Shachan*, which signifies *to inhabit, to*
abide, to tabernacle, and properly signifies
 therefore *the light resident in the tabernacle*. In
 allusion to which St. John tells us, chap. i.
 14, that the *Word was made flesh and taber-*
nacled amongst us; and David, Pf. lxxx. 1, prays
 thus, *Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, thou that*
leadest Joseph like a flock, shine forth thou that sit-

test between the cherubim, in the old version of the Psalms ; *upon the cherubim*, in the new version ; but according to the Hebrews, *irradiate the cherubim, thou that art resident*. The *darting-upward* or *out-shining* of the light was not constant, we find by this prayer, but betokened God's favour, when the brightness streamed forth, on any prayer which had been offered up. At such times then it shone bright upon the cherubim, so as in a manner to illuminate them and the temple. That the glory of God appeared superior * to the cherubim, we may see in Ezek. x. 18, 19, and xi. 22, where *the glory of the God of Israel* is always represented as *over the cherubim above* ; and in Exod. xxv. 22, where God promises Moses to commune with him *from-*

* As the station of the light is not in general rightly conceived, I may be well allowed to confirm my assertion, that it appeared higher than the cherubim, though between them, by a citation from Philo Judæus, in his book *De Profugis* ; where, when he has told us, that the winged cherubim placed by the mercy-seat were characteristic of GOD's creative and kingly power, he adds, *ὁ δὲ ὑπερῶτα τῶν αἰμάτων θεὸς ἐπὶ σρατῆν αὐτῶν ἠλθὼν ἰδεῖν, ὅτι μὴ εἶναι τῶν κατὰ δόξαν ἐμφερῆς ἄν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἕκαστον ὑπερῶτα θεῶν*.—But the Divine WORD, who is *superior* to those cherubim, does not fall under any visible shape, as being like to no sensible thing whatever, but is himself the image of God.

above

above the mercy-seat, from-between the two cherubim. Since then to pray to God that he would shew the light of his countenance, in the Jewish idiom of speech, is to pray that he would favour and prosper the man; or as this shining forth between the cherubim, so as to illuminate the temple, was a token of the Divine favour among the Jews; and as the appearance of the bright light upon their sacrifices was the same good omen from the creation of Adam to the erecting of the tabernacle amongst all the patriarchs; we may safely thence deduce the opinion of the heathens, that the fire of a sacrifice blazing upward strongly was a good omen.

*Ter liquido ardentem perfudit nectare Vestam,
Ter flamma ad summum tecti subjecta reluxit:
Omne quo firmans animum, sic incipit ipsa.*

VIRG. GEOR. iv. 385.

Of purest nectar thrice the sea-green dame
Libations pour'd upon the sacred flame.
The sacred flame thrice blaz'd, and born a-
loof,
With springing light illumin'd all the roof.

An happy omen ! whence she thus began
With chearful heart.

— *Et, amici numinis omen,
Flamma ter accensa est, apicemque per aëra dixit.*

Ov. Met. x. 278.

The flame——a sign that God had heard their
pray'r,
Thrice blaz'd aloft, and mounted thro' the
air.

with my whole heart; even before the Gods, the Elohim or angels, will I sing praise unto thee. In conformity to this opinion, the angels are said to be *ministring spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation*, Heb. i. 14. Hence the angels of little children are said by Our Saviour to see the face of God in heaven. Hence the disciples, at the house of Mary the mother of John, imagined that Peter's angel, not Peter himself, stood before the gate; and hence St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 10. exhorts women *to have a veil over their heads in churches*, to behave with the greatest modesty and decency in such places, *because of the angels*, in reverence to those superior beings, who, though invisible, yet saw their deportment.



C H A P. XVIII.

Many prohibitions in Scripture to be understood with an exception, especially those which concern Images and Pillars.

IT remains now to take a short view of Micah's worship; and in order to this we must lay down, by way of preliminary, that many prohibitions of Scripture have an exception always implied, which bounds their force. Thus in the second commandment, Exod. xx. 4, we are forbidden *to make any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.* But these words must be understood to stand thus: *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, so as to think it like unto God, and to worship it.* Otherwise it was lawful to make

graven images, and to set them up even in the place of divine worship, while they were considered as ornaments only. This appears from hence, because God himself ordered cherubim to be made, and to be set up by the mercy-seat in the tabernacle; and, in the temple afterwards, the figures of cherubim were set up, as well as the figures of oxen under the brazen-sea.—We are forbidden, indeed, to make any graven image in order to worship it, Lev. xxvi. 1. But men have set up in houses of prayer images and representations of angels, or other images, for ornaments and decoration.

In this manner it was lawful or unlawful to have teraphim in a man's house, according to the use for which they were designed. For ornaments they were lawful, for worship unlawful. The teraphim were images [#] of some order of good angels, or of some heathen deity. *Est enim* (says Grotius) *vox media ad bonas malasq; imagines pertinens.* "It is a common word applicable to lawful and unlawful images." Hence he translates the word by *μορφωματα*, *shaped things*; and Josephus by *τῶτοι τῶν θεῶν*, *figures of gods*. In

[#] The Teraphim were an exact figure of houses the Cherubim; only smaller, so as to be portable. For an exact representation of the Cherubim, see Ezekiel's Prophecy, 1st & 10th Chapters. 41. Ch. 18th 19th Ver. 1. Kings 6th Ch. 23—29th Ver. And for a Picture thereof, see Mr. Pates on the Pentateuch; or Parkhurst's Hebrew & English Lexicon.

houses of prayer we may well allow that they were images of the good kind, and either copies from the cherubim in the tabernacle, as Grotius, in this place of Micah, will have them; or forms of the Urim to be put in the linen ephod.—The cherubim in the temple, Ezek. xli. 18, 19, had two faces, one on each side of their head; the face of a man on one side, and the face of a lion on the other. And if the teraphim of the good kind were like the cherubim, it appears likely that the image (in the original the teraphim) which Michal put in the bed, 1 Sam. xix. 13, instead of David, was of this kind; for though the face was covered with a cloth, yet the form of an human face probably was visible. David himself, indeed, would not have suffered an unlawful image to be kept in his house, if it came to his knowledge. The teraphim, which Rachel stole, Gen. xxxi. 19, from Laban, on the contrary, were doubtless of the bad kind, little starry images of the Syrian gods. This distinction is worthy to be noted, in order to understand those places of Scripture where

where

where they are mentioned, at least in the original. In this account of Micah's house of prayer, and in Hosea iii. 4, they are most probably of the good kind; but in Zech. x. 2, and in Ezek. xxi. 21, they are certainly of the bad kind.

These observations may be extended also to *pillars*, *στυλαι*, which are forbidden to be set up, Deut. xvi. 21, *Thou shalt not plant thee a grove*, viz. every tree, *near unto the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee. Neither shalt thou set thee up any image* (rather pillar), *which the Lord thy God hateth*. The custom of planting groves in houses of prayer has been already considered; and we shall now shew that those last words are to be understood as if expressed thus, *Neither shalt thou set thee up any pillar*, "so as to make it subservient to idolatry." This latter clause is implied in these words, *which the Lord thy God hateth*. The word here translated *image*, is, in the original, *מצבה*, *Matztzebah*, which, throughout the whole Bible, signifies a *pillar*, often that pillar on which the idol was placed; whence, in a large figurative sense,

fenfe, our tranflation too often turns it by the image itfelf placed on it. This word properly fignifies a *pillar*; and as pillars were fometimes ordered by God to be fet up in commemoration of his own great works, Exod. xxxiv. 4; which pillars are expreffed by the fame word in the original; it is plain, to a demonftration, that pillars too are lawful or unlawful, according to the ufe to which they are applied. All commands of this kind therefore take the form of prohibition, in Levit. xxvi. 1, *Ye fhall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a pillar; neither fhall ye fet up any image of ftone in your land, to bow down unto it, for I am the Lord,*



C H A P. XXIV.

Micah's Graven Thing probably an Altar, and his Molten Thing a Laver, Candlestick, or something of that kind.

THE graven image and molten image of Micah I have turned into *graven thing* and *molten thing*. The other part of the furniture of his house of prayer has been fully proved to be lawful; and could this be cleared up, every difficulty would cease, and this hospitable man be freed from the charge of idolatry. In order to this we may first cite the words of Grotius on this place. *Sculptitia et fictilia erant altaria, candelabrum, aliaq; ejusmodi minuta, vice magnorum, quæ erant in sanctuario.* “ His carved thing
and

and molten thing were an altar, candlestick, and other things of that kind of lesser sort, instead of the large ones which were in the tabernacle. If it is observed, that the Hebrew word for altar is מזבח, Mifebbeach, or, in Chaldaick, מרבחא, Madabbecha, neither of which words are here used, but instead of them מסל, Pefel, which properly signifies a graven thing, and often an image; and מפכה, Maffecah, which sometimes signifies a molten image; it must be allowed: but then it must be allowed too, that many words of the Hebrew language have a greater extension, as well as variety, than lexicons discover. *Illud prætermittendum non est, says Montanus, sacram Scripturam adeò uberem et fœcundam esse, ut sæpius duplicem sensum in se contineat.* “We must observe that the holy tongue is so copious and extensive, that it very often contains a double meaning in it.” Hence we are often obliged to the LXX interpreters for the meaning of a word, which peculiar meaning we cannot find elsewhere. Happy should I be if Grotius had proved his interpretation; but Grotius has left his explication unsupported by any
 1 authority

authority but his own, and truth here is thickly clouded by remote antiquity. Conjecture, however, is left free to all, and humanity teaches benevolence towards every man.





C H A P. XXV.

To set up an Altar the same as to constitute Divine Worship. God's Presence first fixt the Place of Altars.

AMONG the Jews, *to set up*, or *to build*, an altar, expressed the same sense as *to constitute divine worship*. Altars, we may observe, were first erected on that spot of ground wherever God appeared. It was a strong opinion, both of the Jews and Gentiles, that the appearance of the Deity sanctified the place where his glory was seen; and therefore in such places they built altars, and came to worship.—To trace this truth from its original we may note, that there is the greatest probability that God taught Adam to build an altar, and to sacrifice to him; that Cain and Abel offered on
that

that altar; that other altars were built as men increased; and sacrifices continued by the worshippers of God, in their different settlements, to the time of the general deluge, when the worship of the true God was probably confined to a very few, though Scripture is not express in those points. After the deluge in Gen. viii. 20, we read of the first altar; and there it plainly appears (since Noah built it without the least command or instruction of God about it) that it had been customary before the flood to offer sacrifices on altars; for how else, without any order from God, should it at once come into his mind to build an altar at that time?—That God's presence sanctified the place, we may see in Gen. ix. 1, because God is there present to bless Noah and his family.—But this truth appears more evident from Gen. xii. 6, 7, where we read that *Abraham came to Sychem, unto the oak-grove* (for so the words might be translated, as it will appear by and bye, instead of *unto the plain of Moreh*). *And the LORD appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land;*
and

and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. God appears at this place; and for that reason Abraham builds this altar in this oak-grove in Sychem, and constitutes, by that means, a place of divine worship. *There builded he an altar* is the same as *There constituted he divine worship*. In the next verse he builds another on a mountain on the east of Bethel, that is, he constitutes another place of divine worship; and here God seems to appear to him; ver. 14. His third place of divine worship, or his altar, was in the *oak-grove* of Mamre, again translated the *plain*, Gen. xiii. 18. Thus Abraham built three altars, which are recorded, in an oak-grove near Sychem, on an high hill near Bethel, and in an oak-grove near Mamre, in which last place God is also said to appear to Abraham, Gen. xviii. 1.—The next altar of note that we meet with, is built by Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 24, 25, at Beer-sheba, where it is also mentioned that God *appeared to him*. Jacob also, Gen. xxxv. 7, builds an altar near Bethel, because God there appeared. For the same reason, because God appeared to Moses at Horeb, Ex. iii. 5, and had there-

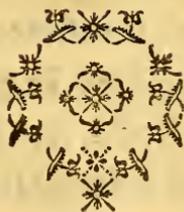
by sanctified the ground; Moses, Ex. xvi. 6, 15, built there an altar. Gideon, Judg. vi. 24, built also an altar, where the angel of the LORD's host appeared.

That these places were considered as set apart for divine worship where an altar had been erected, we shall see in Gen. xxviii. 13, and following verses. We read there, that Jacob going to Padan-aram lay down and slept on the place where Abraham had built one of his altars near Bethel; whose stones being fallen down, he took them for a pillow. Here God appears to him in a dream, and informs him, that he was the God of Abraham his father. Jacob being awoke reflects at once, that this place must have been consecrated; that it was therefore visited by the presence of God, and appropriated to his worship. *Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but an House of God, and this is the gate of Heaven.* He therefore took the stone, probably the shaft of the former altar, and set it up for a pillar; or

שןלן, to consecrate it again for an altar, and then vows that on his safe return to that place the Lord should be his God. *And this stone, says he, which I have set up for a pillar shall be GOD's house; and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.* Nothing surely can be fuller and plainer than that an altar or consecrated pillar was considered as a place of divine worship, and that Jacob here vowed tithes to the support of that worship. These tithes were not commanded by a ceremonial law, since the law of Moses had not yet its being; nor is it likely that they were fixt by any human law; since it is almost certain, that the laws at this time were only commands of God delivered down from father to son by oral tradition; and the payment of tithes to religious houses has not the least obscure stamp of any human invention. It claims to itself therefore a place among these precepts, not recorded indeed in Scripture, but given by GOD by chance to Adam, and thence handed down from generation to generation, and in all probability of the same antiquity as altars or places of worship, viz. almost co-eval with the

world. We may reasonably, at least, think it the ordinance of God; and since it was ordained before any of the ceremonies of the law took place, the ordinance of it must be of the moral kind, that is, of that sort which is always obligatory; and the perpetual obligation to the payment of tithes is from this place as easily proved, as the perpetual obligation to keep the Sabbath-day can be shewn from any other text of Scripture; though that obligation has been clearly and evidently demonstrated by many able writers. According to this vow Jacob is ordered, Gen. xxxv. 1, to build an altar *at Bethel*, or *nigh Bethel*, rather in that place; and then God there appears to him, and Jacob erects his pillar or *שן*, ver. 14, which he consecrates for an altar, or place of divine worship, by pouring a drink-offering and oil upon it. Thus it is plain, that to set up an altar is to fix an house of God, or to constitute divine worship. *This stone*, says Jacob, *shall be God's house*; i. e. a place of divine worship. Hence it is that we find posterity still frequenting the place where an altar had been erected. Thus Jacob, Gen. xlvi. 1, offers a sacrifice on the altar

altar erected by his father Isaac at Beersheba. We have traced then this Hebrew idiom, and find that *to erect or set up an altar* is the same expression as *to constitute divine worship*. Now, since these Danites under our particular consideration manifestly designed to ordain divine worship, it is one reason to turn ver. 30, 31, of the xviiiith chapter of Judges thus: *And the children of Dan set up the altar, &c. And they set up Micah's altar which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.*





C H A P. XXVI.

Altars erected originally in groves or on hills.

AL T A R S were first erected in groves or on high hills. Noah's altar was doubtless built on the mountain where the ark rested. Abraham is said to build his altar when he went unto the place of Sychem, Gen. xii. 6, 7, *unto the plain of Moreh* in our translation, ἐπι την δρυν την υψηλην in the Greek version, *unto the high oak-grove*; for the word δρυς should not here be translated by *oak*, but *oak-grove*; though one tree in particular, under which the altar stood, is signalized by it. We have observed before, that the word *Moreh* in one sense signifies properly *vision*, and that God appeared to Abraham in that place, which probably was a large oak-grove. But I cannot but give my vote here for the Greek transla-

translation, since Moreh signifies *high*, as it is deduced from the verb מָרָה, *Mara*, to raise up or to erect. Hence the word *Moreh* high, and *Moriah* hilly or mountainous, in Gen. xxii. 2, (for the land of *Moriah* is the Hill-country of *Judea*, as it was called) may be derived. From this verb, in Job xxxix. 18, we read of the ostrich, that *she will lift herself up on high, sese elevaverit*, in the original תַּמְרִיא *Tamria*, which is the future tense of the conjugation *Hiphil*, directly deduced from that verb. The word אֵלֹן *Ælon*, signifies both a *plain* and an oak-grove; and as the first places of worship were fixt amidst the awfulness of groves, which were therefore condemned when converted to idolatrous purposes; and as these groves were generally planted with oaks, whence

Habitæ Graiis oracula quercus. VIRG.

“Oaks were accounted oracular by the Greeks;”

the reason of the thing requires, that altars should be here set up in oak-groves or under

oaks, but not in the midst of a plain. In Judg. ix. 6, we read that the men of Shechem proclaimed Abimelech at the oak-grove *of the pillar*, or by the pillar, or altar rather, erected there: hence Jotham assumes his apologue or fable of the trees from the place itself. Hence Gaal saw people come along by the oak grove, ver. 37, according to Arias Montanus, of Meonenim; and Abimelech, ver. 48, cut down his boughs. Hence Jacob is said to hide away the ear-rings and false deities of his family and attendants, Gen. xxxv. 4, under this oak-grove, which was by Shechem.—The correction then is fully proved.—Abraham again, Gen. xiii. and xiv. 13, is said to dwell in the oak-grove of Mamre, and to build there an altar unto the Lord. On which altar under the tree, Gen. xviii. 8, Abraham served up his meat to the Lord, who there appeared unto him. We may observe also from Deut. xi. 30, that Gilgal was by high oak-groves, not by the plains of Moreh; for if the plain of Moreh was by Shechem, we cannot well suppose it to be by Gilgal too.

To

To shew farther this false translation, and that the first altars were often in oak-groves, *not in a plain*, we may note from Gen. xxv. 3, that Jacob built an altar nigh Bethel, and ver. 8, buried Deborah beneath Bethel under the oak-grove. Gideon, Judg. vi. 11, sees an angel under an oak, or in an oak-grove, and offers him up meat on an old altar or rock that was there, ver. 20, *under the oak*; and Joshua, Josh. xxiv. 26, set up a pillar or *σηλην* in the famous oak-grove at Shechem. This custom we find II. i. 29. Ezek. vi. 13. Hof. iv. 13. introduced idolatry; and so groves for that bad purpose were forbidden. Indeed the native gloominess of those places made weak people very visionary and fantastical. Hence Virgil adds, in his description of the Capitol, or the temple of Jupiter at Rome, which was in his time like gold, but in ancient times awful with woody thickets,

*Jam tum relligio pavidos terrebat agrestes
 Dira loci; jam tum sylvam saxumq; tremebant,
 Hoc nemus, hunc, inquit, frondoso vertice collem
 (Quis deus incertum est) habitat Deus. Arcades ipsum
 Credunt se vidisse Jovem, cum sæpe nigrantem
 Ægida concuteret dextrâ, nimbosque cieret.*

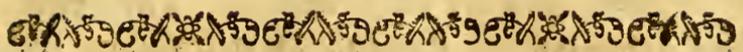
The gloomy grove and mountain's fullen
height

Did then the tim'rous rustic herd affright.

Struck with religious awe, Some God, *says he,*
Frequents—(though doubtful who that God
may be)—

This woody-topped hill, this deep'ning grove.
Arcadians think t' have seen majestic Jove;
When oft' his dark'ning ægis shakes the sky,
And clouds tempestuous o'er the welkin fly.





C H A P. XXVII.

Pillars for what purpose and when lawful.

PILLARS and columns were set up for three purposes which were lawful. First, they were erected as a standing monument of some agreement which had been made between two great men or states, or in memorial of some public order of the state. An instance of this custom we have in Gen. xxxi. 41, 51, 52, between Laban and Jacob. Articles of peace in nations were engraved upon *σηλαι* or pillars, and these public memorials sometimes kept in their temples. Thus Isocrates, in his panegyric mentioning the contract made between the Persian emperor and the Athenian state, adds, *και ταυτας [συνθηκας] συνθημασιασεν ημας εν σηλαις λιθιναις αυχγραψαυλας εν τοις κοινοις των ιερων αναθειναι, And he compelled us,*

us to engrave these contracts on pillars of stone, and to set them up in the public temples. Thus when the Athenian people obliged the priests, the Eumolpidæ, to devote Alcibiades by curses; that the monument of the curse might be more public, a copy of it was cut in a stone pillar *, in *pilâ lapideâ*, says Cornelius Nepos, which was erected in a public place. Secondly, these pillars were set up as a memorial of some memorable person. Thus Absalom in his life-time, 2 Sam. xviii. 18, had reared up for himself a pillar of this kind to keep his name in remembrance, and doubtless designed to be buried under it, for these pillars were generally erected on the graves. Thus Gen. xxxv. 20, *Jacob set up a pillar upon Rachel's grave, that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.* A pillar of this kind was without doubt the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, mentioned Josh. xv. 6; and the stone of Abel, mentioned 1 Sam. vi. 18; and other remarkable stones mentioned throughout the Scriptures, as in 1 Kings i. 9, and 2 Sam. xx.

* Hence *στυλαίον* signifies to publish, by engravings in pillars, the crimes of any convict. This was the first method of punishing by pillory.

8. These pillars on graves probably were first plain, but were very early engraved with the actions of the deceased, whom blind posterity not only admired but worshipped: and hence these pillars became the causes of idolatry. Hence *Pefel*, which properly signifies an *engraved stone*, came also to signify a *graven image*, from the images afterwards placed on these engraved pillars. In latter times we find that they also adorned those pillars with elegant figures. Thus Simon, 1 Maccab. xiii. 27, *built a monument upon the sepulchre of his father and brethren, and raised it aloft to the sight with hewn stone behind and before. Moreover he set up seven pyramids one against another for his father and his mother and his four brethren; and in these he made cunning devices, about the which he set great pillars, and upon the pillars he made all their armour for a perpetual memory, and by the armour ships carved, that they might be seen of all that sail on the sea.* And in 1 Mac. xiv. 27, we have a full account of the inscription of Simon's achievements on a pillar of this kind. These pillars were inscribed with the name, and family, and actions of the buried person after the early times, and were
confi-

considered as very honorary. Hence Juno, in Homer, Iliad xvi. comforts Jupiter on the ensuing death of his son Sarpedon, by enumerating this honour among the rest to be conferred upon him.

Ἐνθα ἰ ταρχυσοσι κασιγνητοι τε, ἔται τε
 Τυμβῶ τε, σπηλη τε· το γαρ γερας ἐσι γεροῦλων.

His friends and people to his future praise
 A marble tomb and pyramid shall raise,
 And lasting honours to his ashes give :
 His fame ('tis all the dead can have) shall live.

Thirdly, these pillars were erected in order to eternize the memory of some great favour or wonderful work of God, and so were used for altars. Thus Gen. xxxv. 13, 14, God vouchsafes Jacob a gracious appearance; and then *Jacob set up a pillar in the place where God talked with him, even a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.* Moses, Exod. xvii. 15, 16, builds an altar of this kind (for these pillars being used as altars take often the name of altars) inscribed, says Josephus, after his conquest

conquest over the Amalechites, TO GOD THE CONQUEROR, and for a memorial that God would utterly destroy Amalek; and, Exod. xxiv. 4, twelve pillars near Mount Sinai are raised to keep in perpetual remembrance God's delivery of the law there; and Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 12, set up a stone to be token the place, to which God had assisted them. I shall add to the instances already produced but one more in this place, taken out of Joshua, chap. iv. where we read that *twelve men, chosen out of every tribe a man*, verse 3, were to take on their shoulders twelve large stones out of the river Jordan, to be erected as a memorial of that wonderful work of God, when Jordan fled back before his presence to give a dry passage to the Israelites. These stones were set up in Gilgal, and were manifestly, therefore, twelve pillars, and, in all probability, engraven with the description of that wonderful action; which is almost intimated verse 7, since they were *to be a memorial to the children of Israel for ever*, and since Joshua, chap. viii. 32, was instructed to carve in stones in great perfection;

perfection; which art of carving was, in my opinion, derived, through Noah, from the ante-diluvian race of men, who, doubtless, in two thousand years, had learnt many curious arts, and in particular the necessary one of leaving their transactions in some method of record.—These stones or pillars, therefore, near Gilgal must be very remarkable; and since *Pefel* signifies any carved or graven thing, are doubtless meant by *Pefelim* in Judg. iii. 19, 26, which the Greek version expresses by τα γλυπτα, *carved things*, whether images or pillars, but our translation by quarries. On these pillars they seem to offer sacrifice, 1 Sam. xi. 15, and xiii. 8, 9, since we read of no other altar erected for that purpose; and those pillars were, as it has been proved, sometimes converted to that use, on extraordinary occasions, by a prophet of the Lord. Here then we have found that *Pefel* may signify a carved pillar or altar, as well as a carved image. Now since the good Micah manifestly served the true God, and had a regular priest, after the law of Moses, to perform divine service; yea, a priest who seems to be a grandson of Mo-

ses; since also the word *Pesel* will bear the signification of *pillar* or *altar*; and since altars in houses of prayer have been proved to be only pillars of memorial; it is surely agreeable to the character of the man to affirm with Grotius, that his carved thing was an altar, with some inscription carved on it, shewing the dedication of the worshippers to the true God. If this is allowed, there will remain no difficulty in the word which signifies or is explained by *molten image*, since it is a common word signifying *fusion*, and every thing made by fusion, be it image or vessel.



C H A P. XXVIII.

A Pillar of this kind their Altar in Houses of Prayer.

A Pillar of this kind was considered as their altar in houses of prayer. This will appear from the third chapter of the prophet Hosea. *Then said the Lord unto me, Go, yet love a woman (beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress) according to the love of the Lord towards the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and for an half homer of barley. And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man; so will I also be for thee. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without a pillar or altar, and without an ephod, and with-*
 out

out teraphim. If we keep our eye steady on the allegory of this chapter, and explain it by a similar place in Isaiah lvii. 6, 7, 8, we shall find that God is the husband; the house of Israel the wife, who had acted the adulterers by going after other gods; that God still was willing to take his wife into favour; but, in order to prove her future chastity, that he would absent himself a while. This absence the prophet describes in the 4th verse. *For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar,* or *שןלן,* and *without an ephod, and without teraphim;* that is, without civil and ecclesiastical government, and without divine service in any house of prayer. — The absence of God is surely here described in the strongest and fullest terms. The children of Israel would have no king, nor their princes, viz. the sanhedrim, the supreme council of the seventy chiefs, the most powerful assembly that ever sat in judgment in any state, made up of the rulers and princes of every tribe. They could cite even a king before them, say the Talmudists. Josephus records, that

they called Herod before them for putting a notorious robber to death without their sentence. Indeed, we may see in Jer. xxxviii. 5, that their king without their suffrage had a very confined power in capital affairs; and some think, that if David could have protected himself and Bathsheba from their power, he would never have signed the death-warrant of Uriah. — The Israelites wanting a king and these princes, must want civil government; and since they were to be without a sacrifice, they would be deprived of their temple-worship. Nor was their unhappiness in being left by God to stop here. Even the houses of prayer were to be shut up; they must want too their pillar, ephod, and teraphim. The word Matztzebah in this place is strangely turned by *statue*, whose only proper signification, as I have before observed, is that of a *pillar*, or *στηλη*, which in a good sense signifies an *altar*, and is accordingly in this place rightly turned by *θυσιαστηριον*, *altar*, in the Greek version. It is surprizing that this good sense of the word should not be observed by any Hebrew Lexicon; especially when these pillars, unless designed for

for idolatrous uses, were lawful, and erected for God's honour. Thus *Is. xix. 19, 20, In that day shall there be an altar unto the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD. And it shall be for a sign, and for a witness unto the Lord in the Land of Egypt.* Had Grotius considered this, he would not have paraphrased these words of the prophet Hosea thus: "The children of Israel shall be without any worship, either true or false." For, though it is a great unhappiness, indeed, for a nation to be without a true religion, yet surely it cannot be so to be without a false one. But this place of the prophet will be now much clearer, when this pillar, ephod and teraphim have been proved to be furniture in their houses of prayer. Thus in the prophet Hosea we see Micah's furniture to be that which was usual in houses of God. Since therefore, in houses of prayer, there was a pillar or little memorial-altar, in imitation of the great one in the sanctuary; and since the word *Pesel*, in its largest extent, may signify such a pillar; surely my translation, which turns the word by *carved thing*,

will be justified, if not Micah's character vindicated. Since also in houses of prayer these pillars have been proved to be symbols of the worshippers being in allegiance with the God of heaven, and, in all probability, marked with some inscriptions; why may not St. Paul, 2 Tim. ii. 19, be thought to refer to those inscribed monuments betwixt God and his true worshippers, when he tells us, that the *foundation, or memorial-stone, of God standeth sure, having this seal, or engraving on it, The Lord knoweth who are his*; and, on the other side of the stone, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.*



C H A P. XXIX.

*Many absurd Translations in Scripture by turning
Names proper into appellative.*

AS the Hebrews have no distinction of letters into great and small, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish a proper name of a *man*, or *place*, or false deity, when the name also is common to some other things; especially if we disregard the Hebrew vowels, as the translators of our Bible manifestly did. *Moloch* or *Molech*, or *Melech*, is the name of a false deity, and also signifies a *king*. I shall submit it to the judgment of learned men, whether the word *Moloch*, in Is. lvii. 9, should not be put instead of *king*. The prophet is certainly complaining of his unworthy countrymen, who turned to the worship of idols, and, ver. 5, who sacrificed their children to some grim deity. But this dreadful devil,

who is described as chiefly delighted with human sacrifices, is Moloch :

Moloch, horrid king besmear'd with blood
 Of human sacrifice, and parents tears ;
 Tho' for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
 Their children's cries unheard, that past thro'
 fire
 To his grim idol. MILT. *Par. lost.* B. 1. L. 395.

It is surely more agreeable to the context, and more easy to be understood, if we read that place of the prophet thus: *And thou wentest to Moloch, viz. to his worship, with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and thou sentest thy messengers afar off, viz. to bring home other strange gods and ways of worship, and didst debase thyself even to hell.* I do not think it safe to alter one word in the original; but here conjecture seems allowable.

In this manner whereas we interpret Zech. xiv. 21, *There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord;* the Vulgate, as the word *Canaanite* signifieth also a *merchant*, rendereth it, *non erit mercator, there shall not be a merchant,*

chant, very agreeably to the text, and to the completion thereof by our Blessed LORD, who, Matt. xxi. 13, John ii. 16, drove out the buyers and sellers, and would not suffer his father's house to be an house of merchandise. So also the LXX interpreters turn *Huzzab*, Nahum ii. 7, by ὑποστασις; by which they mean the constitution, the internal support of the state of Nineveh. In these instances a proper name is falsely put down for an appellative. The Targums of Jonathan and Onkelos thus render Gen. xxxviii. 2, not the daughter of a certain *Canaanite*, but of a certain *merchant*.

In Pf. cxli. 7, we read *Our bones lie scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth*; which may be turned into "Our bones lie scattered *before Saul*, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth." The Psalmist might here commemorate the dreadful slaughter 1 Sam. xxii. 17, 18, when Doeg, before Saul, slew the priests of the LORD, and hewed them probably in pieces with his sword. This mistake in a translation may easily happen by the likeness

ness to each other of שְׂאוֹל Sheol, a pit or grave, and שְׂאוֹל Saul, the name of a king.

I would note also that 1 Kings xvii. 4, הָעֲרָבִים, the Worebim, *the ravens*, are said to feed Elijah at the brook Cherith before Jordan. Now there is a town mentioned Josh. xv. 6, called Beth-warabah, or simply Warabah, whose inhabitants would be called Worebim, or Haworebim, the men of Warabah. Hence it is probable that the translation 1 Kings xvii. 4, 6, should stand thus: *And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the men of Warabah to feed thee there. And the men of Warabah brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening, and he drank of the brook.* This observation, which I suppose I may justly claim as my own, will take off one topic of ridicule from deistical men, and be more confirmed by noting that the town is, Josh. xviii. 22, in the tribe of Benjamin, and seems not far from the river Jordan.

I may add another observation, though not my own, on Judg. xv. 19, and advise that
Lehi

Lehi signifies both a jaw-bone and a place. Sampson threw away the jaw-bone, ver. 17, and called the place Ramath-lehi, that is, *the casting away of the jaw-bone*; which place is called, ver. 19, simply *Lehi*. And if it is a proper name in the latter part of the verse, why should it not be in the former, and the verse stand thus? *But God clave an hollow place, which was in Lehi, and there came water thereout. And when he had drank, his spirit came again, and he revived; wherefore he called the name thereof Enhakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.* Sampson called the well which sprung forth *Enhakkore*, viz. *the well of him that called*; and that well is in *Lehi* unto this day. It is in *Lehi*, not in the jaw-bone of the ass, and therefore from some pit in *Lehi* must it first spring.



C H A P. XXX.

The Israelites had many of them a mixed worship.

TO revise the Jewish church in its first settlements we must consider, that many of the Jews mixt the worship of the Egyptian and Syrian gods with the worship of the true God. Terah, the father of Abraham, and Nahor his brother, Josh. xxiv. 2, appear to be worshippers of Syrian gods, and Rachel seems too much touched with the Syrian infection; since she stole away and concealed her father's gods, called teraphim in the original, εἰδωλα, idols, by the LXX, and τυποὶ τῶν θεῶν, figures of gods, by Josephus. The word teraphim here plainly has a bad signification, since, in Gen. xxxv. 2, Jacob orders his household to put away all the strange gods which were amongst them. Accordingly,

cordingly, verse 4, *They gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their ear-rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak-grove which was by Sychem.* Their ear-rings, we must remark, were stamped with the star of the deity which they worshipped, and therefore superstitiously worn in honour of him. Grotius says, that their ear-rings were hence called σφραγίδες, impressed jewels; but, according to the Greek translation of Exod. xxxv. 22, σφραγίδες, impressed jewels, were bracelets stamped; though, doubtless, their ἐνώτια, ear-rings, were stamped also. Hence Augustin, in his seventy-third epistle, has these words: *Quid cum eis agendum sit, si solvere in aures timent, et corpus Christi cum signo diaboli accipere non timent. What can be done with such men, if they are afraid to take off their ear-rings, but fear not to receive the body of Christ, while they wear the mark of the devil.* Their ear-rings were worn as charms, like the ring of Gyges mentioned by Plato, to drive off evil spirits and diseases forsooth. Josephus tells us, that Rachel carried off her father's gods to secure herself from her father's indignation, if he should

should overtake them; so that these teraphim too were charms against future damage. Hence it is very plain that the Syrian superstition and idolatry was strong in Jacob's family, though, doubtless, he himself ordered and taught them to serve the true GOD of heaven only; and it may be doubted whether his house was ever truly purged. The going of the children of Israel into Egypt, and their long stay there, renewed, I doubt, their worship of their starry gods. Notwithstanding they had seen such mighty works in Egypt, and at the Red-Sea; yet at *Sin*, Exod. xv. and at *Rephidim*, Exod. xvi. they began to question whether God was among them or not, and to say with their idolatrous country-women in Jer. xliv. 18, *Since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out (rather to pour out) drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all things.*—While God was commanding Moses not to make a graven image, Exod. xx. 4, 25, nor *his sacrificing altar of hewn stone*, lest it should be like the pillars of the Heathen; yea, while, Exod. xxiii. 24, he is ordering the *Israelites indeed to pull down, and utterly to overthrow the gods of the*
the

the Heathens, into whose land they were to come, quite to break down their pillars, or *σηλας*, according to the true Greek version; even at that time these backsliders, Exod. xxxii. were with Aaron making a god in imitation of an Egyptian idol.—It appears from this, that they had not left the Egyptian idolatry behind them, but what is very notorious, carried their starray gods still in their *ear-rings*, ver. 2, 3, which they then collected to make their graven image. From this time they seem to have continued in their idolatry till they came to the Holy Land, as we may see in Acts vii. 41, 42, 43. *They made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the hosts of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices for the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them.* The place here referred to by St. Stephen is that of the prophet Amos, chap. v. ver. 25, 26, with this difference only, that

that Remphan is there called Chiun. But the note of Grotius on that place of the prophet very well reconciles; as well as explains these passages; only that he erroneously turns, *Have ye offered unto me?* into *Have ye not offered unto me?* He would have observed his mistake, if he had carefully compared the two places with the 14th verse of the xxivth chapter of Joshua. I shall translate therefore the useful part of the note only, and leave the other part as if not appertaining to the subject.

1. He notes that the tabernacle or $\zeta\kappa\eta\eta\eta$, in which the idol was born, was a $\nu\alpha\iota\sigma\kappa\epsilon$, or $\nu\alpha\zeta\epsilon\upsilon\gamma\omicron\phi\omicron\rho\epsilon\mu\epsilon\nu$ a little sort of chapel or chair in which the image was inclosed, and born by a sort of yoke by two men on each side.

2. He notes that Moloch is the name which the Ammonites give the star Saturn; that Chiun is the name of the same planet among the Arabians and Persians; and that Rimmon, 2 Kings v. 18, or Remvan, or Remphan in the Greek pronunciation, is its name among the Syrians.

3. He remarks, that though the same planet was worshipped, yet he was worshipped as two gods under different names, in the same manner as Diana and Luna among the Romans; that in particular Moloch was habit-ed like a king, and Chiun figured like a star. When the Israelites were now arrived to the bounds of the holy land, and had conquered some enemies; yet, Numb. xxv. we see that they quickly fell into the worship of Baal amongst the Moabites.—Indeed after the death of Moses, during the life of Joshua and his cotemporaries, Judg. ii. 7, the greater part of the Jewish nation seems to have adhered to the worship of the true God. They had the drying up of Jordan, and the great success which God wonderfully afforded them against enemies superior in strength, before their eyes. The greater part then in this interval worshipped the true God. I say the greater part; for the whole people are denominated true worshippers or idolaters, according to the affections of the majority. We may take notice, that some men, in the most idolatrous times, stuck close to God's true worship. There were always

some *who had not bowed the knee to Baal*. On the other hand, some men worshipped images in the purest times of religion. Even in the days of Joshua, Josh. xxiv. 23, they had still strange gods amongst them; and too many, therefore, mixt the worship of the true God with that of idols, or, in Elijah's words, *halted between two opinions*. Now, since *Pesel* does generally signify *a graven image* that was worshipped, and *Massekah* often *a molten image*; it has bore hard upon Micah, as if he also had a mixt religion, and worshipped the true God together with idols; but yet I could wish that Micah, who himself established an house of prayer to worship the God of heaven in; who entertained regularly a Levite for his priest, and expected the blessing of Jehovah on himself and family, could be allowed one of those, who made no other use of images, (supposing them to be such) but only as ornaments about the house of prayer. —There is certainly no example, where any other Levite besides Micah's, *whose sole inheritance was the LORD*, should so early revolt from his God and his interest, as to permit such a mixture of worship where he was

em-

employed. The Jewish writers all agree, that no Levite joined in murmuring against God and Moses; no Levite joined with Aaron in making the calf; but that every priest of that order retained his integrity to God. Hence God, by his prophet Malachi, Mal. ii. 4, 5, 6, saith, *Ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace: and I gave them to him, for the fear wherewith he feared me; and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.*—And it looks now as a flat contradiction to common sense, to imagine that Micah's mother would wholly and entirely dedicate money to Jehovah, and yet make with it graven images, in order to worship them.



C H A P. XXXI.

The original of starry Gods.

I Have mentioned the Egyptian and Syrian starry gods; and as the Israelites (see Ezek. xxiii.) were chiefly drawn away after them, we may observe, that it was the opinion of the Egyptians, and of the other nations under the doctrine of the Zabians, that the intellectual part of the soul of their great heroes was advanced to a god, and made the ruling power of some star; and that it from that star shed down its influence upon its worshippers. The soul of Isis in particular was supposed to reign in the dog-star. Diodorus Siculus tells us, that the inscription upon her pillar was, *Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἢ ἐν τῷ Ἀστρῷ τῷ Κυνι ἐπιτελλεσσα*, *I am she who arise in the dog-star.* The Romans too, had strongly imbibed

bed

bed this opinion. *Post necem Julii Cæsaris, fays Suetonius, stella crinita per septem continuos dies fulsit exoriens circa undecimam hōram, creditumque est animam esse Cæsaris in cælum recepti, et hâc de causâ simulachro ejus in vertice additur stella.* “After the death of Julius Cæsar, a comet shone for seven continual days, arising about the eleventh hour; and it was believed that it was the soul of Cæsar received into heaven; and for this reason a star is added to his image on his head.” Virgil in his ixth eclogue 46th line mentions this new star of Cæsar.

*Daphni, quid antiquos signorum suspicis ortus ?
Ecce, Dionæi processit Cæsaris astrum ;
Astrum, quo segetes gauderent frugibus ; et quo
Duceret apricis in collibus uva colorem.*

Why still consult for ancient signs the skies ?
Daphnis, behold the Julian star arise !
Whose pow'r the fields with copious corn
shall fill,
And clothe with richer grapes each sunny
hill.

WARTON.

R 3

The

The same poet, complimenting his great patron Augustus with the choice of his future honours, fixes him at last in a star.

*Tuq; adeò, quem mox quæ sint habitura deorum
Concilia, incertum est, &c.*

Georg. I. lin. 24.

And thou, thou chief, whose seat among the
Gods

Is yet unchosen in the blest abodes ;

Wilt thou, great Cesar, o'er the earth preside,
Protect her cities, and her empires guide ?

While the vast globe shall feel thy genial
pow'r,

Thee as the god of foodful fruits adore ;

Sov'reign of seasons, of the storm and wind,
And with thy mother's boughs thy temples
bind ?

Or over boundless ocean wilt thou reign,

Smooth the wild billows of the raging main ?

While utmost Thule shall thy nod obey,

To thee in shipwrecks shiv'ring sailors pray ;

And Tethys, if some watery nymph should
please,

Would give in dowry all her thousand seas.

Of

Or wilt thou mount a *new bright sign* on high,
 Betwixt the Maid and Scorpius deck the sky?
 Scorpius ev'n now his burning claws confines,
 And more than a just share of heav'n resigns.

WARTON.

Thus the poet places Augustus to support the ballance or Libra, which office before was assigned to the Scorpion, which before that time held it up with his two fore-claws extended. And as Libra was the sign which was said to preside over Italy, the poet did his part to continue to his prince the honour of the guardian-angel of his country; and accordingly on gems and medals, on which after the death of Augustus the signs of the zodiac are impressed, the ballance between Virgo and Scorpius is seen supported by a man. In the same manner, Ovid in his *Metamorphosis* describes the infatuation—pardon the new-coined word—of Julius Cæsar.

*Vix ea fatus erat, mediâ cum sede senatûs
 Constitit alma Venus, &c.*

R 4

Lib. xv. 843.

Scarce had he ended, when the Cyprian dame
 Swift as wing'd thought amid the senate came;
 Invisible to mortal eyes there stood;
 And from her Cæsar's corpse defil'd with blood,
 His spirit just dislodg'd did kindly bear
 Heav'nward, nor suffer'd to dissolve in air.
 In ambient sky well-pleas'd she could perceive
 It gather light, and growing flames receive:
 Then let it from her bosom spring;—when
 soon
 It mounted up superior to the moon;
 And a long train of light ascending drew;
 Then shone a star to the beholder's view.

SANDYS.

This opinion of the Egyptians is more than once mentioned by Philo Judæus their philosopher. Ἄσπερες ζῶα εἶναι λεγούσιναι, καὶ ζῶα νοερά· μάλλον δὲ νῦν αὐτοὺς ἕκαστος, ὅλος διὰ ὅλα σπυδαῖος καὶ παντός ἀνεπίδεξιός κακῆ. Phil. in Cosm. *Stars are said to be creatures, and intelligent creatures; or rather each of them is itself an intelligence; the whole entirely good, and incapable of any evil.* Though the great archbishop Usher seems to be of a different opinion; yet I must think that it is reasonably concluded, that

that the place of the burial of Moses, Deut. xxxi. 6, was concealed, lest the children of Israel should build a *pillar* over his grave, and by degrees worship him as some benign star, even as the Egyptians had deified the heroes of their country, their *Indigetes Dii*, known to them by pillars of that kind.

We may remark also, that as the Platonic philosophy divided the soul of man into two parts, viz. the soul properly speaking, and the intelligence or *νοῦς*, which they considered as the governing principle of the soul; which *νοῦς*, or intelligence, they supposed to be converted into a star; from which division of the soul, or rather from which super-induction of this intelligence to the soul, Juvenal says, that God gave to other creatures *animas* souls, but to man *animam quoque*, an *intelligence* also; and as they employed some souls in stars, or converted them into stars; so they employed others in the government of states, or as the guardian angels of mankind. Old Hesiod so clearly and poetically describes this their office for the good of mankind, that I shall transcribe his words, lest my translation should fall short of the original.

Ἄυτάρ ἔπει κεν τῆτό γενεῶν κατα γαῖα καλυψέ:
 Τοι μὲν δαιμόνες εἰσι, Δίος μεγαλήθ δια βελας,
 Ἐσθλοὶ, ἐπιχθονιοὶ, φυλακὲς θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων.
 Ὅι ρα φυλάσσει δικὰς καὶ χετλια ἔργα
 Ἥρα ἔσσαμενοι, πάνη φαιτῶνες ἔπ' αἴαν
 Πλετοδοταί· Καὶ τῆτό γέρας βασιλῆιον ἔσχον.

These heroes, when they mortals ceas'd to be,
 Demons became by Jove's supreme decree;
 Benign in nature, though terrestrial Gods,
 Still man they friendly guard, and man's
 abodes.

Conceal'd from them nor crimes nor virtues
 lie,

Tho' cloth'd in air, conceal'd from mortal
 eye;

Roaming the earth with wealth they crown
 the just,

Their dispensation such, and such their kingly
 trust.

Indeed since, in order to exercise their
 obedience, the blessed angels, and perhaps
 glorified faints, are employed by God for the
 good of his other creation; and since there
 are different orders and powers among them;

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I can see nothing inconsistent with the honour of God, or repugnant to the cause of religion, though we should imagine, that the difference of their power consists, while one oversees and guards a good man, another a city, a third a state, and another fixed in a star, which is a sun to its system, presides as it were over one of the creations of God. We read in St. Luke xix. 16, 17, &c. of some that are set over two cities; others over five, and others over ten; in Dan. x. 13, 20, 21, of angels who preside over states; in Rev. xix. 17, of an angel in the sun. In Job xxxviii. 7, we read, that at God's creation *the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy*; where by *morning stars* are certainly understood angels of a very high order; since we read in Rev. ii. 26, 27, of this great reward given to a saint or martyr of persevering virtue, that he should have a morning-star. *He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations (and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers) even as I received of my Father, and I will give him a morning-star.* Thus whoever

will carefully revise the Scriptures, will see that this notion of mine is not quite owing to a sprightly imagination; that it is not the *το εικη προσαναπλαττομενον* of Longinus, the *conceit slightly framed*, but that it may be founded on certain truth.

The devil deceived mankind by counterfeiting the other ordinances of God; and it will not therefore be wonderful, if his subtlety perverted to idolatrous purposes this decree of heaven also.—This opinion, at least, gives us a delightful prospect of the glorious employments of the heavenly inhabitants, who are made, as St. John expresses it, *kings and priests unto God*.

The worship of the true God under the representa-
 tion of an image, the common idolatry.

CHAP. XXXII.

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IT is possible that Micah might worship the true God in some image, but not probable; for it is strange that the Levite his priest (whose office it was to explain the law and commandments to those under his care, Deut. xxxi. 9, and Deut. xxxiii. 10; and whose sole inheritance was the LORD GOD of Israel, Numb. xviii. 24. Deut. xviii. 12,) should be so ungrateful to his supreme Lord, so blind to his own interest, so ignorant in his duty, or if not ignorant, so hardened in sin, as to admit of such a worship in an house, and afterwards in a tribe, where he was employed. If he did transgress in that gross way, he could not plead ignorance, as the Levites

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(supposing that any had been concerned with Aaron in setting up the calf) might in some measure have done. Moses had continued forty days in the mount; the people despaired of ever seeing him more, and desired a God to go before them—*one* God, not *gods*.—In Exod. xxxii. 1, 23, we must turn *Up, make us gods, which may go before us, into Up, make us a God, which may go before us;—These be thy gods, O Israel, ver. 4, 8, into This is thy God, O Israel;—and gods of gold, ver. 31, into a God of gold.* It was but one calf which Aaron made, and the people knew that it was but one God which brought them out of Egypt. It must be therefore a contradiction to common sense, as well as to common speech, to say of one calf or idol, *These be thy gods*. This, by the bye, is one proof more, that Elohim may be singular in its signification, though verbs or adjectives adjoined to it are plural, which in such case have respect to termination only in the agreement.

To pass on, Aaron certainly designed this image for a representation of the true God to the people; since in ver. 5, *he built an altar before*

before it, and made a proclamation and said, *To-morrow is a feast for Jehovab*; for so the word LORD is in the original; a name throughout the Scriptures appropriated to none but the true God only. Thus *the children of Israel changed God their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass*, Pf. cvi. 20. Now, though Aaron was with Moses, in all probability, Exod. xix. 24, when the ten commandments were delivered, and so could not be ignorant that such a representation of God was forbidden; yet the Levites might not then know the will of God exactly, since Moses had not yet brought down the tables from the mount. —Moses certainly charges the cause of the sin on Aaron alone, Exod. xxxii. 21, *And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?* — But whatever Aaron's Levites might do thro' ignorance; yet Micah's Levite must know both the sin and God's indignation against it, in the punishment of it.

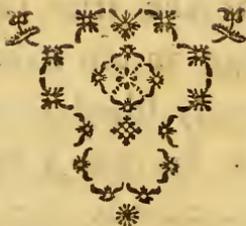
That the Levites, in general, had a great aversion to such a gross worship of God, we may see by reviewing the sin of Jeroboam; the

the son of Nebat. This politician considered, that if he should suffer the ten tribes which God had withdrawn from the house of David, to go up to Jerusalem to worship thrice a year, Deut. xvi. 16, after the established custom; that his people might reflect on the good which Solomon the father of Rehoboam, *from whom they had revolted*, had conferred on the children of Israel; how he was honoured by God with building that glorious house in the place which God chose! how they were indebted to David for their extent of empire! and what promises God had made to David and his seed! He thought that the sight of the temple might be dangerous, and the conversation of the loyal subjects of David's grandson infectious; and therefore, *in his worldly wisdom* erected one calf in Bethel, and another in Dan, 1 Kings xii. 26; and insinuating convenience of worship to his new subjects, proclaimed,—*Behold thy God, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.*—But what priests had he to serve before those pretended images of the true God? Did one of the Levites join him?—He would have accepted them; it is highly probable, if they would

would have submitted to his new worship. The compliance of the priests would have given a fine colour to his innovation in religion. He certainly rejected them, because they rejected his idol. Hence he was obliged, 1 Kings xii. 31, *to make priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.* The Levites and regular priests, 2 Chron. xiii. 10, stuck fast to the true God, and left those new-fashioned priests and the king to the dreadful punishment, which, from the case of Aaron, they could not but think would ensue.

Thus Jeroboam established the worship, as he pretended, of the true God under the shape of an image in ten tribes; and therefore is emphatically stiled *the man who made Israel to sin.* This sin is as great a dishonour to God's majesty, as it is even for a man to worship false gods; since this sin affects God's essence, so as to establish, as much as such sinners can do, an unworthy apprehension of it in men's minds; whereas false worship affects chiefly his power and commands. Hence we find that God always shewed the

greatest abhorrence to this vice, and punished it with the greatest severity. How came it to pass then, that a sin of this high nature should pass uncensured by GOD in Micah and the Danites; yea, that the last should, at the time of settling it, be absolutely prospered by God? God's ways, indeed, are unsearchable; but would not this tempt us to imagine, that the charge against them is laid unjustly?





C H A P. XXXIII.

The true distinction between the first and second commandments taught by Moses.

SOME divines divide idolatry into two kinds; one of which is, *renouncing the true God, and worshipping the images of false deities*, which they apprehend to be the only thing forbidden in the first commandment; and the second kind of idolatry is, *worshipping the true God, but as represented by an image*, which they imagine to be an offence against the second commandment. This distinction *between*, or explanation of these two commandments, is neither exact nor true.—When the young man asked our Saviour, what he should do to attain eternal life, he refers him to the ten commandments; assuring him that on the performance of them he should live. This is

a full proof that the ten commandments require all kinds of virtue, and guard against every kind of vice. All false worship therefore, as well as idolatry, is forbidden in the two first commandments. If there is any kind of false worship, therefore, which these commandments, explained as above, do not reach nor comprehend, the explanation cannot be perfect; for that is a just *definition of any thing, which leaves out nothing of the things to be defined*; ὅρος ἐστὶ ὁ μηδεν τῶν ὀριζομένων καταλιπών. Longinus in his Fragments.—Now Justin tells us, that the Persians worshipped the rising sun.—They paid their devotions not *to the image* of the sun, but to the *substance*. Were these Persians guilty of false worship, by transgressing any commandment of God? *They never renounced the true God, and then worshipped the image of a false deity, nor worshipped the true God in the shape of an image.* They transgressed, therefore, neither of the two first commandments, if the given explication is perfect. Some nations, again, bowed down to the queen of night, as she shone in the heavens, and kissed their hands in token of adoration.—But were those men guilty of false worship?

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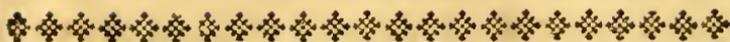
They were, if we may believe Job, xxxi. 26, 27, 28 ; *If I beheld the sun when it shined ; or the moon walking in brightness ; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand ; this surely were an iniquity worthy of judgment ; for I should have denied the God that is above.* This is certainly a false worship, but it falls not under the first or second commandment, explained in the manner above proposed. Besides, if the first commandment implies renouncing of the true God, and worshipping the images of false deities, it is very surprising that there should not one syllable be there mentioned about images.—Those, therefore, who would justly distinguish those two commandments, must go another way to work.—The first commandment has nothing to do with *idolatry*, as the word strictly signifies the *worship of images*. It is restrained to that worship which was paid to the sun, moon, and stars, as well as other demons which were worshipped without an image. The second commandment forbids any image-worship, whether directed to the true God, or the false and fictitious deities. For *Pesel* signifies any graven image,

whether the deity represented by it is true or false. Thus in Deut. vii. 5, it signifies the image of a false deity. *Thus shall ye deal with them* (the false deities); *ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images* (Pefilhem) *with fire.* The first commandment then respects all false worship; the second respects all image-worship. This explanation is comprehensive and easy, and belongs to Moses himself, who explains the second commandment in Deut. iv. 15, 16, 17, 18, and the first commandment in the 19th verse. *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude in the day that the LORD spoke unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire) lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, the likeness of any figure; the likeness of male and female; the likeness of any beast that is on the earth; the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air; the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground; the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth.* As this precept was given to the Jews, no doubt it forbid, chiefly in respect of them, the worship of the true God in the shape of any image; but as this precept was designed

signed also for all mankind, it forbids plainly all image-worship whatsoever.—After this, follows an explanation of the first commandment. *And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and, when thou seest the sun and moon, and the stars, even all the hosts of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and to serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.* In the second commandment, then, *Pesel* signifies a graven image in general, whether of the true God, or of any fictitious deity.—Julian the apostate indeed, the revolting Jews, a few men of that stamp may be said to have renounced God, and then to have worshipped false deities; but the wisest philosophers, and a great part of the heathen world worshipped what they thought the true God, though unhappily in the shape of an image. Socrates no more worshipped another god than Jeroboam; only that Socrates was somewhat excusable in bowing before an image, if he ever could be brought to act so low beneath his natural light, for want of a divine revelation; whereas Jeroboam sinned against the revealed light, the

expres will of God, and was therefore altogether inexcusable. *Thou hast gone*, says God to Jeroboam, 1 Kings xiv. 9, *and made thee other gods*. His pretending to worship the true God under a representation, was rather an aggravation of his idolatry.





C H A P. XXXIV.

The conclusion, with a vindication of Micah's character attempted.

WE have seen that *Pesel* is a general word for any *graven image*, and Gro-tius affirms that it signifies also an *altar*, viz. one of those engraved, memorial-stones, which we have, with great probability, concluded to be in their houses of prayer. In this dissertation therefore, I pretend with justice to propose such an hypothesis; and this hypothesis partly depends on the great skill of Gro-tius in languages. Had that truly learned man undertook to prove that *Pesel* signified such a little stone-altar, plated probably with silver, to give it the greater resemblance to the altar in the tabernacle, he would, doubtless, have given greater satisfaction to men
of

of learning ; and every candid man will pardon me, if I fail only for want of greater strength. I have indeed produced the word *Pesilim* in Judges iii. 19, 26, where the word is translated *quarries*, but seems plainly to denote those memorial-stones, set up to keep in remembrance God's wonderful goodness and power exerted in favour of the children of Israel, when the river Jordan was driven back at the presence of God, in order to permit them a dry passage. These stones Josephus says that Joshua turned afterwards into an altar. These stones were, doubtless, held in great veneration, though not worshipped ; and therefore I thought that they might be stiled *Pesilim* in a good sense. I have demonstrated some words to have a good sense, which have hitherto been, *in general at least*, confined to a bad one ; and it will be hard to prove, why this word should not be capable of a good sense also. Most interpreters in Judg. iii. 19, 26, have certainly given it a good meaning, since our English translators turn it by *quarries* ; Arias Montanus by *dolaturæ*, carvings, or carved stones ; Pagninus by *lapidicina*, *vel loci ubi dolabantur lapides*,

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carving-places; so that I am far from being singular in imagining the word capable of a good sense.—The sight of these stones in the altar, was certainly very proper to strengthen Ehud's resolution of delivering Israel, or the twelve tribes; the name of each of which was probably engraved on them; since a man of each tribe was ordered to bring a stone out of Jordan for his own tribe. The testimony of those stones, as to what God had done, must give him confidence in the same Almighty power.

Stones or altars too erected as a testimony of a covenant subsisting between God and a people, or family, would also, doubtless, be had in veneration; and therefore might, by chance, be stiled *Pesilim* in a good sense: and that such memorial-stones were in groves and houses of prayer, we have in a manner demonstrated. I hoped therefore, that I had found out the reason why Grotius turned the word in this description of Micah's sacred furniture by an *altar*; and had thence vindicated God's conduct towards man from a seeming inconsistency, and a
good

good man's character from hitherto-imputed impiety.

But have I not turned Elohim, Judg. xviii. 24, by *divine worship*, or divine furniture? And since I allow this *Pesel* a principal part in the divine worship, will it not thence follow, that it was worshipped? Should such an objection arise, it will shew only the sophistry of the proposer, in confounding the object of divine worship with the furniture used in it. It is certainly no uncommon figure of speech, to put the *possessor* for the thing *possessed*; and if the context will allow it, we may suppose it here. Now if we paraphrase the verse, it may stand thus: *And he said, Ye have taken away my divine furniture, which I made, and the priest, and ye are going away; ye have left nothing at all of my consecrated things, but have taken them all, and yet ye say, What aileth thee?* In Pf. xliii. 4, David says, *Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy.* Now David, while clothed with mortality, could not go unto God by way of *vision or immediate fruition*, but only by way of *service*; and therefore *to go unto God*, must mean to go unto *God's service*;

vice; or unto *the altar*, the principal part of the service, as furniture used in worship, but not as the object of worship.

Suppose that a man had robbed a church of the consecrated plate, and a religious man of the parish, who constantly attended the sacrament, on knowing and seeing the sacrilegious person, should say to him, that he had robbed him of his *divine worship* at the altar; will it follow that the religious man worshipped the consecrated plate? Would it not be understood that he spoke figuratively?—And why, then, may we not suppose that Micah, in his warmth and hurry, put one word to express a great many, by a way of speaking familiar to authors, especially when the sense of the place conducts us to give the word that turn? for why should he say, *And what have I left?* unless he meant by *Elohim* all the furniture in his house of prayer. Grotius indeed turns the word there by *angels*, which he would have to be the teraphim; and if that signification takes place, still Micah, as to what any man can prove to the contrary, will be free from the sin of idolatry.

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Spencer in his learned Treatise of the Urim and Thummim would have the *carved thing* and *molten thing* of Micah to be the two cherubin, and the teraphim to be a representation of the urim in the ephod; and then if Micah's *Elohim* refers to one part of his holy furniture more than another, it will refer to the ephod with the teraphim; because, in less important affairs of state, the Levite, probably arrayed with that, prayed to God for his counsel. But the altar seems, if an altar was erected, which appears now indubitable, to have the best title to the name, since it represented in some measure the ark in the tabernacle; and the ark is oftentimes stiled *Elohim*. Thus 1 Sam. xiv. 18, Saul orders Ahijah *to bring hither the ark of God*; and ver. 36, the priest said, *Let us draw near hither unto God*, that is, unto the ark of God. Thus Numb. xxvii. 21, *He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord*; that is, before the ark of the Lord. In Exod. xvi. 33, 34, we see that *to lay up before the Lord*, is explained by *to lay up before the testimony or ark of the Lord*; and Bertram with just reason ob-

ferves, that *before the LORD* or *to the LORD* are forms of speaking, which are generally understood of the ark or tabernacle. Thus *Elohim*, in Scripture, is often put for the place or chief furniture of divine worship; and therefore Micah may be allowed to express his memorial-altar, or rather his whole divine furniture by it; as well as David, 2 Sam. vi. 5, be said to play *before the Lord*, that is, without doubt before the ark of the Lord, since he was then playing with musical instruments before it. My opinion, upon the whole, is this, which (if I can find time to write a dissertation on the teraphim of the Sabians, the image called ἀληθειᾶ TRUTH, worn as an ensign of their office by Egyptian chief-judges, and the urim and thummim of the Hebrews) will be seen founded on reason and antiquity; That Micah was praiseworthy in his design of preparing and furnishing an house of God; that Grotius is right in fixing on the *Pesel* or carved thing to be the altar, which I think to be sufficiently proved; that the molten thing was somewhat in imitation of the laver, Exod. xl. 7, 30, before the altar, where they washed before they

entered upon their devotions; and that Spencer is right in thinking the ephod and teraphim made in imitation of the *ephod and urim* which the high-priest wore; and that this latter part might have a tendency to keep men from the altar of the LORD, and therefore, only, as the beginning of evil, blameable.

F I N I S.

Trebor W. S. nilmot.



Published by the same AUTHOR,

A Critical Latin Grammar, built on the plan of Dr. Lowth's English Grammar, compared with the *Hermes* of Mr. Harris, and the best ancient grammarians as well as modern grammars; with an Introduction considering the natural divisions of time in general; and by the use of Latin authors, shewing the number, names, and nature of Latin tenses, and the reason of the convertibility of tenses, which often finds place in the purest Latin writers. There is also added a very useful Index, shewing the word governing, and the rule in the grammar by which it governs a particular case; so that it exhibits the regimen of almost every word in any Latin author.

The Author teaches the Latin and Greek languages at Ottery St. Mary, Devon, with any branch of mathematics if desired. His general method is to teach,

1. His Critical Grammar, (notes excepted,) and Verbs in Eton way; Sententiæ; Corderius without translation, because the lad may translate; and for exercises, either translate Latin into English, or Turner's Examples to Accidence into Latin. Then he proceeds with Phædrus' Fables; some select Colloquies of Erasmus, Martial's select Epigrams, Ovid's select Epistles, and Terence; and for exer-

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cises,

cises, translation from Latin authors; or into Latin from Pantheon, Roman Antiquities, or Roman History by way of question and answer.

At this time boys begin their Eton Greek Grammar, and learn to make Latin verses and themes, with other translations. I then put into their hands Græcæ Sententiæ; Moral Sentences in Poetæ Minores; two of Isocrates' Orationes to Demonicus and Nicocles; Apollodorus' Fabulous History; Lucian's Dialogues; and in Latin Eutropius, Justin, Cæsar's Commentaries, Ovid's Metamorphosis; with the Geography of each explained by Cellarius: after this, Hesiod with Virgil's Georgics; Theocritus with Virgil's Eclogues; Homer with Virgil's Æneids; Pindar and Horace, with a Satire or two of Juvenal and Persius. If the boy's age admits of it, then he reads a few Greek Comedies from Aristophanes, Tragedies from Euripides; with a few select Orationes from Cicero, Cicero's Epistles, Pliny's Epistles; or, indeed, any good author.

If the boy learns figures, then I use Ward's Introduction to Mathematics, Euclid, Use of the Globes by Watts, Emerson's Trigonometry and Mechanics, La Hire's Conic Sections, Keil's Astronomy, Rowe's and Emerson's Fluxions, and Newton's Principia, with Martin's Philosophia Britannica.

N. B. I read Greek according to quantity, as to length in the long or short vowels, and observe accent in height by a quick elevation or sharpening of the voice without extension on an acute accent. A man who plays on a harpsichord, spinnet, or organ, will easily conceive that a sound may be heightened and not lengthened, & *vice versâ*, and have a just idea of reading conjointly by quantity and accent.

As the author is willing to confine his application to the instruction of twenty boys, he proposes sixteen guineas *per ann.* for boarding and teaching; with one guinea to the writing-master, and two guineas entrance.

Vale, prælum.

Hic cæstus atque arma repono.

